

Two Sarts, who were watching flocks of sheep from Hami, brought me a sheep this morning. I had little difficulty in discovering that they were anxious to obtain a few cartridges from me for a Berdan rifle they had bought for 50 lan in Barkul. It was in good condition and had the forked support that is characteristic among nomads in Asia. I was pleased that I had a few spare cartridges to give them.

Some »tuntai» towers that we passed indicated that there was formerly more traffic on this road. — Near Chu-chi we saw ruins of houses destroyed during the Dungan revolt. On a small single mountain that half closes the valley about a mile E of the sarai, the ruins of a tower surrounded by a low wall are visible. The keeper of the sarai assured me that it was built during the Emperor Tang's reign, but judging by its exterior it must be of much more recent date. Next to the sarai stand the walls of a temple destroyed by the Dungs. This is also said to date from the time of the Emperor Tang. I had the inscription on an over-turned stone monument near the mountain translated and it transpired that the temple had been built a little over a hundred years ago.

Chu-chi contains 6 scattered houses with very little tilled land. There is a well at the sarai, the other houses obtaining water from springs. Wheat (7—8 fold yield), tchinkho (barley without husk) and peas are grown. Frost is a serious enemy here. There is snow from September or October to May, up to 2 arshins in depth. Burans occur in spring and autumn, but are rare.

*October 12th.* I left the smoky hovel at Chu-chi without the least regret. The sooty ceilings were so low  
*Barkul.* that, however much you stooped, you could not help bringing down a shower of soot. After riding 2 miles in a SE direction we reached the southern end of the mountain with the ruins of the tower, which proved to be a whole pile of low mountain tops. For about 3 1/2 miles we rode along the southern foot of the mountain and immediately after there was another which we followed for another 2 1/2 miles. The ground still sloped towards the ENE; close to the mountain the slope grows rather more pronounced and forms a valley. A beautiful view was disclosed on the left across Lake Barkul, now only a little over a mile from the road. From this point we set our course ENE and reached the Katsu station, situated at the junction of our road and »peilu», in a few miles.

Grass grows all along the road which is firm and excellent. Sheep, horses and camels are seen grazing on the plain. — About 15 li from Katsu we passed Khuatchyenza, a village with a couple of dozen houses, on the left. Large quantities of hay stacked on the roofs indicated that cattlebreeding was the principal occupation of the place. We now crossed the plain, which had begun to slope to the north. No fields were visible. We met Chinese driving rough carts drawn by one or two oxen. The wheels in particular were clumsy, the spokes of a European pattern, but the wheel itself exceedingly rough and warped.

Soon after 12, we caught sight of the regular lines of the walls of Barkul. The town lies on the northern slope of the Dangansogo mountains, at such a steep incline that at a distance of a mile or two you see the outlines of the whole town and fortress as if you had a bird's-eye view of them. There are no houses or trees anywhere in the vicinity except close to the wall. The Dangansogo mountains rise here to a considerably greater height than in the