

Sun-shui-tang has 3 sarais and 3 houses; there is good water from springs, grass and hay for sale at times at high prices. There is no agriculture. 10—20 burans from the S in winter. Snow from October or November to May, 1 1/2—2 m in depth.

*October 22nd* After an unusually comfortable night, thanks to the Djentai, we resumed our journey at 6.30 a.m. The road ran in a SE direction up the snow-covered slope up the foot of the *The temple on the Tian Shan pass.* Tian Shan mountains. We crossed two or three stony river beds. The ascents and descents are difficult for arbahs. The mountains that close the valley in front and on the left, do not run in a N—S direction, as it seemed yesterday, but NW—SE. They lie in many folds of fair depth. In about an hour we reached the mouth of a gorge that led us southward. It is called »Ku-ming-tzu»? and soon divides, the road following the western branch. We passed three bridges. The bridges and road were in satisfactory condition, though the ground was rather stony at times. The snow was quite 0.3—0.4 m deep. The arbahs found it difficult to make headway. The ascent became more marked. The animals moved forward unwillingly and with frequent halts. The snow grew deeper and the ascent steeper. The arbahs definitely lagged behind, although our 7 horses did their best to break a trail for them.

We followed the sweeping bends of the road and came to a Chinese post. From there the road seemed to zigzag up the mountain in the S in innumerable curves. The height and road were rather reminiscent of Taldik between Osh and Kashgar. As we could see nothing of the arbahs, there was nothing for it but to leave three of the men behind and place the pack-saddles on their horses. I sent orders to the arbahkeshes to harness all the 8 horses to one arbah, most of the contents of which were transferred to the pack-horses.

Now the hard part of the climb began. The way was barred by large snowdrifts up to 1 1/2 metres in depth at almost every turn. By means of bribes and blarney I got a couple of men from the Chinese post, physically quite ruined by opium smoking, to help us with a couple of extremely primitive spades. Where the snow was not too deep, the horses had to act as ploughs, often up to their bellies and going at a gallop. The sweat poured off the lovely animals, but I could allow them no rest. The higher we climbed, the firmer and deeper the snow became. Wide stretches had to be cleared with the spades. At the top of the pass stood a Chinese temple, where we obtained another couple of spades. With our own that made five. Tchao, Djan and the two Chinese and myself worked for hours in the sweat of our brows. When our strength began to give out, I managed, by threats and offers of pay, to get another 3 Chinese, who had encamped at the temple on their way to Hami, to take our places with the spades, while the pack-horses were sent down for more loads. The first arbah was unharnessed halfway up the zigzag road and the arbahkeshes set off for the other, while we tried to get rid of the worst of the snow along the rest of the road. It was only after 12 hours' desperate labour that we finally succeeded in getting the arbahs up to the temple, which is not supposed to be more than 20 li from Sun-shui-tang.

Fortunately the weather was beautiful — sunny and calm. Had it not been so, we should never have reached the pass. We found shelter in the courtyards of the temple, but the situation was trying. The snow was an unpleasant surprise. I had calculated