



*The Djentai and Hsietai
with their guests drinking
tea on the veranda of the
drill-ground pavilion
at Hami.*

still indicate to this day the zigzag road on the northern slope of the pass that had been constructed by them. Not a single detachment had taken the camel route from Suchow direct to Barkul. On the other hand quite a number of camel transports had been taken over Kanchow—Chouti—Chinta—Chin Shen—Barkul—Kucheng—Urumchi.

The Sarts' version of the recent disturbances is worth mentioning, as it seems to be nearer the truth. A letter, in which the population declared that it could no longer bear the burden of taxation and labour imposed upon it, had in some mysterious way reached the Prince. Enquiries were made, but as nobody would admit to being the author of the letter, the Prince ordered three men, on whom suspicion had fallen, to be banished to some place in the mountains. Thereupon a second letter was discovered containing upbraidings for the sentence and a declaration that the people were willing in future to pay taxes either to the Chinese authorities or to the Prince, but not to both as in the past. As a measure of reprisal 5 Sarts were caught and flogged. In the meantime the Djentai arrived from Barkul. When the flogging had been carried out, a few hundred Sarts assembled at a bridge outside the town wall not far from the palace. The Djentai's demand that they should state the cause of their grievance produced a written reply, pointing out that the population was unable to fulfil the demands of the Prince. Besides heavy taxes in grain, calculated according to the cupidity of his representative, it had to sacrifice about a week in every month to doing unpaid work for the Prince. If sheep were being tended, the shepherd was made responsible for any harm that might come to the animals, besides which he had to produce as many lambs as there were sheep in the flock or in other words replace the missing number. In ploughing or sowing the labourer was bound to undertake to deliver a harvest of 10 times the measure used for sowing, irrespective of weather and wind. The document pointed out in conclusion that the population had resolved to perform its duties