

beautiful trousers with a Chinese design embroidered at the foot where the hem is turned up about 20 cm, hung in rows outside a couple of shops and tempted us for the last time. These furs, and dried melons, are the specialities of Hami. The seeds are removed from the melons, which are then cut into slices; these, when dried, are plaited into rather an intricate, large, solid cake. The first time you see such an object, you find it hard to believe that it is a melon. It is by no means easy to scrape anything edible from the shrivelled, sticky slice, but the effort is worth while, for the melon is unbelievably sweet and aromatic. Hami melons are known far and wide as the best in Central Asia and are exported northward to Barkul, Uliasutai and Kobdo.

The road runs through the Chinese fortress and out at its E gate. The parade ground and shooting range of the infantry in are situated along the inner wall. The range is 200—250 paces in length and ends in a clay wall, about 10' high and 5—6 paces wide, against which the target is placed. This wall is next to the street along which our way leads. It is strange that no accidents occur under such circumstances. Chinese practice firing, however, is done as a rule in the direction of a town or some other inhabited point. In Urumchi, for instance, the wall of the range is built $\frac{1}{3}$ of a mile from the town and the firing is done in the direction of the town. And yet Chinese soldiers cannot be accused of being exactly crack shots. To-day, however, things were different. I had to wait outside the wall for Tchao for some time and listened to the drum signals that record hits. At least 80 per cent of the shots were hits. The men might almost have known that I was behind the wall.

We took the northern of two roads leading to Ikoshuor. The southern road goes through the S gate of the town over Langar and is mostly used in winter. E of the town at a distance of $\frac{1}{3}$ of a mile lies the village of »Central Ajar». Just before it we crossed a solid bridge over the Ajar river, about 1 fathom wide and 0.4 m deep. The villages »Upper Ajar» and »Lower Ajar» lie about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile from here on the upper and lower course of the river. From the bridge a populated area, with a thin growth of trees, runs along the northern wall of the town. With the exception of the slight valley formed by the river, the ground is level, tilled and strewn with single houses, clumps of trees and trees standing by themselves. The course of the road is ENE. The soil is clayey with pools of water in many places. The village of »Upper Ajar» lies close to the road on the left, on the right Savash. There is a group of houses belonging to the village of Debesjin about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile further on at the side of the road and about $\frac{2}{3}$ of a mile further we enter the area of the village of Tsei huos. At the end of it the road takes a SE course.

At a bend in the road I was greatly surprised to see the old Djentai apparently waiting for me. He said he had spent the night at a cottage in order to offer me a rest as I was passing. I felt quite overwhelmed by such kindness. It was a cloudy day and a strong NE wind chilled us to the bone. I accepted the old man's invitation with alacrity. However, my emotion and gratitude were quite uncalled for, as is usual in Central Asia; it turned out that the old fellow had merely been spending a voluptuous night with his young wife. A year ago this erotic old warrior of 64 had married, as his second wife, the 18-year-old daughter of a poor farmer of 32. The wife had now been fetched from Barkul and was staying for a time with her parents. The old rascal departed from the strict rules of Chinese