

extends far to the W in a direction -95° , is the first height due S of Yen-tun at a distance of about 7 miles. Considerably further S a slightly higher line of hills is visible, running apparently in a more NW direction. The road now led for hours over the slightly uneven surface of this raised ground, down into and up out of a slight gully, or up on to and down from a slight mound or long undulation in the ground. Everywhere the same barren waste of gravel and sand. The arbah wheels made deep tracks in the ground and our carts only advanced slowly, stopping from time to time to let the horses get their wind. 30 li from Yen-tun there is a mud shed in the shape of a yurt and 30 li beyond a temple with a watchman. Here we saw a hole, 4—5 fathoms in depth, dug in a vain attempt to find water. There is said to be a well, which I had not noticed, 10 li from here and the watchman gets his supply from there. Another 40 li further on there was a yurt-shaped mud shed, but otherwise nothing but gravel, sand and blue sky, excepting a few carcasses of horses lying by the side of the road.

We met 2 arbahs, the first during these 4 days, and about a dozen Chinese settlers from the province of Khunnan. A couple of them were mounted on donkeys, the rest were tramping the short distance of a few thousand miles on foot. One of them had no equipment beyond a straw hat with an enormous brim which he balanced on a stick. Only one wore a fur and this was so large that it must have been torture for him to walk. The distance to Kufi is said to be 140 li. I make this about 37 miles. In the scorching sun in the summer this must be very exhausting, but at this season of the year it is easy, especially on a day like this.

There are 3 sarais at Kufi and a mapoza station. 2 wells. The water was 4 arshins below the surface. Snow to a thickness of $1/4$ — $1/2$ arshin from December to February. Rain from April to November. Burans from the W and E in spring and winter. — A road leads from here to Tun-huang.

November 3rd. We started at 7 a.m. after a disturbed night, because the arbah drivers and men of an army convoy that arrived during the night raised hell when they found that they were not likely to get all their horses tied to the cribs. I had to use all my energy and threaten to telegraph to the Governor from Ansi, before they would listen to reason and give up the idea of driving my horses away from the cribs. The transport was on its way from Kouli to the Dzian Dziun Tchang. The men were tall and looked healthy, pleasant and agile. Luckily I was not obliged to carry out my threat of despatching the whole convoy to a better world, because I should have had some difficulty in doing so.

The direction of the road was at first 300° . The same mixture of gravel and sand as yesterday. On the left, at some distance, a slight rise in the ground had been noticeable since yesterday approximately in a N—S direction. The ground rose very slightly. We reached the higher ground in about $3\ 1/2$ miles and went along a slight valley that crossed it and again led us up on to it. The road now ran across a large, level plain of sand mixed with gravel. About 14 miles from Kufi or Ku-shui (45 li) we came to the remains of a shed or temple. Next to it stands a cottage inhabited by a Chinese priest. By the side of it there is a well with water $1\ 1/2$ —2 arshins below the surface. — In the SSE at a distance of 10—15