

ceeded along a level sandy plain, after which we gradually descended along the river Ch'ih-ho, which seemed to flow in a W—E direction. Darkness had fallen. On the right we could just distinguish the faint outlines of buildings. The road goes along the left bank of the river against the current.

Hua-chuang-tzu was 10 1/2 miles from Shengo. W of it, next to the village, we crossed a shallow tributary of the Ch'ih-ho, quite 10 fathoms wide. The village contains 180 households, scattered over an area of 7—8 li to the N, NW and NE. A neglected impanj. 7 or 8 shops, 4 sarais, 1 mapoza station and 1 tindsjy with 6 men (instead of 10) of the Cheng-i garrison. Wheat, millet, peas and a little rice are grown. Snow falls between the 10th and 2nd Chinese months, but is said to melt almost immediately. Burans occur from the west, but very irregularly and they only last a short time. Rain falls between the 3rd and 8th Chinese months, but not frequently.

At first the ground was very sandy. On the right, at a distance of a few miles, we noticed a series of low hills with soft outlines, running eastward. On the left flowed the Ch'ih-ho, which was only visible at times. Groups of trees and single houses indicated the course of the river in the distance. We parted from the river for a time in order to ride round a lake, a couple of miles in width, and then drew near to it once more. The weather was cloudy and grey. Snow, which had begun to fall in the night, continued to fall. A strong NW wind swept away the snow and exposed large stretches of the uneven road, covered with ice. Though the horses walked carefully, they kept slipping constantly. December 17th.
Town of
Kao-tai.

In 7 1/2 miles we reached Khei-chien, a village of 300 houses with a neglected impanj. Wheat, rice, peas, tchinkho, cotton, tchumiza and millet are grown. The average crop is 6 fold. There are a short bazaar street, 4 sarais and 6 men under the command of a nōwāi of the Kao-tai garrison there. From here onwards there is tilled land all the way to Kao-tai. Small tilled fields, often at slightly varying levels, enclosed by low walls of earth and separated from each other by innumerable ariqs, large and small. The road, often passing at some depth between the fields, was firm, the soil consisting of sandy clay, interspersed at times by patches of sand of varying size. Water had collectd and frozen in the low-lying places. The houses were spread out, many being large and enclosed by a high clay wall. The trees were low, many bent and very thin. The bridges were very curved, but in satisfactory condition. We crossed only a couple of deep ariqs. The rest were insignificant. 3 1/2 miles from Khei-chien we came to a tributary of the Ch'ih-ho and continued along its bank for a mile or two. Its name is Khumi ho, and at the place where we crossed it, it was over 15 fathoms wide and shallow with sandy banks. 2/3 of a mile further on lay the village of Yang-ta-tzu or Teining pu with 200 houses and an impanj. About 2 miles from it was the village of Tingjuen pu or Tingnan pu with 400 houses and an impanj. Another 2 miles further Ehr-shi-li-pu with 100 houses and another impanj. 2 1/2 miles beyond, there is marshy ground on the left. A mile from where it begins lies the village of Ba-li-pu with 40 houses and a small impanj.

The distance to Kao-tai was 3 1/2 miles, but before reaching it we crossed a fen-like marshy place, 2/3 of a mile in width, the road leading over a bank. This almost leads into