

and level. There was a great deal of traffic, one procession of arbahs succeeding another. — Wheat, peas, tchinkho, tchumiza and opium are grown. The crop is 4—5 fold. — Snow falls between the 9th and 3rd months, but seldom lies. There is rain between the 4th and 8th months. Burans from the W are frequent and severe in summer and autumn.

The ground to the E of the village of Hsin Kou was uncultivated and lay in very slight, long undulations. The greater part of it was grassy. The soil became slightly stony and the ground rose evenly, but slowly, towards the small group of mountains coming from the S, which later intersected the road. 25 li from Hsin Kou lay the little village of Feng-cheng-pu with about 20 tja. It was surrounded by ruins of deserted houses. 15 li beyond we came to another ruined village, Hsia ku. There were 50 houses there and it had the appearance of having been bombarded recently. The Dungs sacked it on several occasions, the last time during a minor local revolt, in 1895 if I am not mistaken. After the great Dungan revolt had been quelled about 30 years ago, bands of Dungs from the south sacked the neighbourhood during a couple of local risings. The neighbourhood of Hsia ku contains a lot of saltpetre which is refined by the local people and sold to the extent of 3—4,000 djin annually to the Titai at Kanchow (sulphur is bought at Suchow) and to manufacturers of Chinese fireworks. It is extracted from the ground, strained and boiled in large pots. At Hsia ku there is a tusy in command of 1 in of 39 men and 3 officers, one of whom is stationed with a detachment at the Chin tchia miao. January 9th.  
Hsy-tja-chuan,  
village.

From Hsia ku, which lies on very stony ground at the foot of the mountain already mentioned, the road runs eastward along a stony gorge. The mountain, which has no immediate connection with the Nanshan chain, but rises from the lower part of its northern slope, was soon passed, though on the left it extended further east in the same direction as the road. The ruins of the Chinese Wall, completely collapsed at this place, lie along its foot. We continued across the lower slope of the Nanshan mountains, constantly ascending eastward.

A little east of the mountain we met the Roman Catholic missionary Heiremans from Kanchow and his colleague van Ostade, the oldest Roman Catholic missionary in Kan Su, a splendid jovial fellow, more like an old sergeant than a man of God. They persuaded me to turn aside and visit his country house, about 40 li to the west. Our road ran across the same slope, intersected by numerous water-channels and led us much nearer to the Nanshan mountains than I had been. The little village of Hsy-tja-chuan and its pretty church lie embedded among small hills, one of which is decorated with a clay wall crowned with a large cross. It is said to have been erected by the Christians during one of the Dungan revolts as a defence. Van Ostade's parish consists of 2—300 Christians and 3 small churches. The community was founded about 150 years ago by a Chinese Christian who came here from Shui-chuan. Van Ostade has been in Kan Su since 1878. I had hoped to secure some old Chinese songs with his help, but was disappointed and my jaunt of about 40 li was rather unnecessary in this cold weather. The only thing I discovered in the house of my jovial host was that my thermometer had gone wrong and that the tape of my second camera had snapped. My thermometer indicated +3.5° R., while