

the south, which is bounded far to the south by the same Nanshan mountain that rises in two considerably higher ridges and connects the group of mountains we had followed so far with another projecting group that bounded the valley in the SE and partly in the E. Straight in front of us, behind Shui-Chuan-tzu, i.e., E of it, there was a smaller mountain which seemed to be connected with the mountains in the N, from which we were now some distance. Between it and the projecting group of the Nanshan mountains a rather lower valley extended eastward, as though it formed the continuation of the broad valley already mentioned, that came from the S or SSW. This was tilled and a few large houses or small villages were scattered over its bare and very stony bottom. Wheat, tchinkho and peas are grown and yield a 5—6 fold crop.

Shui-Chuan-tzu was a small place of about 40 houses. The walls were falling to ruins and beyond them the remains of many houses could be seen, destroyed during the Taiping revolt. — There is snow from the 9th—10th to the 4th month, but it does not lie. Rain between the 4th—5th and 8th months, though seldom. Burans are frequent (mostly in spring and autumn) from the W, S and E. 25 men representing 1 in under the command of 1 shubai formed the garrison here.

About 15 li from Shui-Chuan-tzu we reached the group of mountains we had seen in the E, which proved to be the E side of the valley, coming from the SSW, in which the village lay. Shortly before it we crossed another dry gravelly river bed. The southernmost tip of the mountains is intersected by the road which then runs almost due E. Here the hills consisted of a group of mounds of soft outline. A low creeping plant and a little grass grew here and there on the gravelly surface. I was tempted into the mountains by a small herd of gazelle which appeared suddenly among the mounds on the left of the road. For a couple of hours we rode over a succession of low hilltops in a pronounced easterly direction, crossing deep valleys from time to time. The mountains changed to an ENE direction and retained their character of a cluster of conglomerate hills lightly covered with vegetation. The further we proceeded to the east, the higher they were, though they did not assume mighty proportions. Fortune did not favour our shooting. We saw no more gazelle and we missed a couple of wolves which fled precipitately from the top of a hill on catching sight of us. From the summits we had a wonderful view of the wide valley of the Bei li ho, coming from the SSW. It was separated from yesterday's valley where the village of Shui-Chuan-tzu lay, by the group of mountains, the southern part of which we had just crossed. At a short distance from the foot of the mountains the river winds in several branches, traversing cultivated, low-lying, bare ground with a house here and there, enclosed by high walls. There were large frozen patches on many of the fields. The southern (right) bank of the river is higher and forms a wide terrace from which the Nanshan mountains rise in the S. Far to the SSW, as if at the bottom of the Bei li ho valley, a bit of a higher, white-topped chain of mountains was visible. The road ran between the river and the foot of the mountains, gradually approaching the river. We reached the latter at the village of Humiaotzu tun, a place of about a dozen tja. A small river, Yung Chang-tzu ho, which comes from some springs about 2/3 of

January 12th.
Yung Chang.