



Newly recruited troops during
a halt in the courtyard of
a sarai at Kulang.

our camping place for the night, the village of Chingpienyi, surrounded by a very dilapidated high clay wall. The space inside it was converted during the Dungan revolt into a mass of gravel, from which only two or three new houses had sprung up since. There were some sarais and shops outside the E and W gates. During the day we had drawn much closer to the mountains in the S. Good coal, mined on the spot, is used for heating. Wheat, peas, tchumiza, millet, huma, tchinkho and some opium are grown here. The land yields an average 5—6 fold crop. Snow falls between the 10th and 2nd months, but does not remain on the ground. Rain is rare and falls between the 3rd and 9th months. There are severe northerly burans in the spring. Distance 70 li; I made it 20—21 miles.

In the night I was awakened by monotonous long bugle calls. It turned out that 250 recruits were on their way to Urumchi, and, as usual in the Chinese army, they were marching by night. *January 23rd.*
Kulang.

The road further east has a distinct SSE, at times S direction. The ground was level and tilled, but very sparsely populated, and trees were rare even in the neighbourhood of the houses. We passed the first village in 2 1/2 miles. It contained about 30 houses and was called Yangfanpu. The village of Tatung lay about 2 1/2 miles beyond, numbering about 50 houses. It contained a small temple built on the top of a tuntai tower erected on some rising ground. We had got much nearer to the mountains which seemed to form a large curve, open to the north. The nearer hills were of no great size, but beyond them we could see the back of a higher, snow-clad chain. On the other side of Tatung the ground became more uneven and the loose soil was intersected in various directions by a great many ravine-like hollows, 2—4 fathoms deep. The road often led for several miles along one of these hollows. They were so narrow that donkeys meeting our arbahs had to turn back. There was just sufficient room for an arbah and the axles often scraped the sides. I could not