



A drawing of Lanchow ordered by the author and drawn in Chinese ink by a trained designer on the spot.

mountain just above the water and the road led up to it. On the opposite bank a high ridge jutted out towards the river bed. An angular-looking fortress, with towers and pagodas of wooden fretwork, stood high up near the foot of the mountains on the bare ground SW of the ridge. It seemed to command the whole of the river valley. On the ridge there were 4 low, broad towers with loopholes and crenellated parapets, placed at the corners of a square.

At the foot of the ridge, just E of it, at the bottom of the valley, stood Lanchow, the capital of Kan Su and the seat of the Viceroy of Lanchow and Sinkiang. Its N wall extended to the bank of the river, which formed a whirlpool just above the town, and the water ran in big waves here. On the opposite bank a little suburb was squeezed into the narrow, steep space between the mountains and the river. It ascended in an amphitheatre from the water to the mountains and was further extended by small temples scattered over the nearest mountains. The banks were alive with traffic and the river was incessantly being crossed by large ferries, simply seething with crowds dressed in black and blue.

We crossed the river successfully on a ferry. These ferries replaced a pontoon bridge that had been dismantled for the moment. The ferrymen were dressed in a kind of uniform of red and blue. They were in the employ of the Chinese Government and no charge was made for crossing. The men managed their ferries very skilfully. Tchao met us on the opposite bank. He had secured dirty quarters consisting of 4 dark hovels and a kitchen in a sarai in the W gateway of the town, between the inner and outer gates. A solemn mood came over me as I rode through one of Lanchow's mighty gates and it was a pleasant break in the monotony of the journey to hear the tramp of the horses on the huge stone slabs of the street and to pick our way through the bazaar, seething with people and vehicles.

It grows irksome in the course of time to write up your diary daily and in the end you begin to look for pretexts for avoiding it now and then. My diary has had a rest for a whole month, rather unreasonably, for after a spell of freedom it is all the more difficult voluntarily to get into harness again. February 28th.
Lanchow.

On the day after my arrival, when every one of us was busy with cases and packing and the fuss preceding a lengthy sojourn in a place, Farther Leon van Dijk, one of the two