



*A group of Tangut women in  
a village between Labrang  
and Taochow.*

wide in some places, between grassy hills of soft earth, in which there were many cross-valleys, especially on the left. In all of them there were villages of 20—30 houses and in the valley we rode through one called Itento. The field area of each village seemed very small. This was the case from the time we entered the mouth of the Teisha ho gorge S of Hochow. The ground in which the fields had been made, was very stony everywhere. We saw no large herds; the cattle and horses were of unusually short stature. The sheep were fairly large with horns curving outwards and long, very slightly curled, fine wool. The dogs were magnificent big animals, reminiscent in type and colour of St. Bernards. There were no indications of prosperity.

Leaving the valley, we took a more easterly course. After riding across a slight hill, we crossed another small valley in which a village was visible on the left and further off the white buildings of the Tjamkar sy monastery with 300 lamas. The road now continued in an ESE direction, either following a valley between hills of löss or traversing a hill and taking us once more into a valley. We reached the highest point of the day about 8 1/2 miles from the village of Vankur.

The land became more and more cultivated and had the same appearance as between Lanchow and Hochow, the same hills in tilled terraces leading like huge staircases up to the summits, often crowned by a big upright stone or column of clay. There was not a tree to be seen, not even in the villages. The latter were plentiful, but began to lose their Tangut characteristics more and more. There were fewer flagstaffs, the stands for drying cattlefood, and grain often 3—4 fathoms in height, grew smaller and were sometimes entirely absent, even the buildings began to acquire a Chinese touch and the outer walls were lower. The women wore two long, narrow straps with small copper discs sewn on to them in their hair, hanging down their backs and caught up by their belts. There were scarcely any armed men, but in almost every village you saw a Chinese or Dungan