



A Tangut woman collecting droppings.

of local trade consist of a kind of mandarin plumes provided by some kind of bird that is said not to exist elsewhere. These plumes are sold yearly to the value of about 200,000 taels and are even supplied to Peiping. About 300 tan of oil are sold annually and deer-horns and musk for about 300,000 taels. — Tchinkho, beans, peas, mustard and potatoes are grown in the valley. The yield is 5—6 fold. — The town population, amounting to 1,200 tja in the town and 1,400 in the suburb, is said to own about 1,000 horses, 6—7000 mules, 5—6,000 head of cattle, 30—40,000 sheep and 8—9,000 donkeys. Over 50% are Moham-medans. The weather is often cold and windy. Snow from the end of the 8th to the middle of the 3rd Chinese months. Rain between the 4th and 8th months, but rare. The distance to-day was about 16 1/2 miles. — Mr William Ruhl, a representative of the American Missionary Society, lives in the town. His work is confined exclusively to the Tanguts.

We had finally left the Tanguts behind us. The inhabitants E of Sin-cheng are entirely Chinese or Dungan. Occasionally you meet a Tangut on horseback, but many of them speak Chinese, wear Chinese shoes and, to all appearances, belong to a class of Tanguts, in which Chinese influence is already very pronounced. I met a couple of women wearing curious dresses, but as I was busy mapping, I was unable to examine them carefully. The dresses seemed to be pretty, in blue, green and red, made of coarse cloth, and the women had long plaits hanging down their backs. One of my two soldiers said that the costume was worn by the local Dungan women, but on closer investigation I found that it, too, was a Tangut costume. The dress did not seem to be worn generally. I did not see it in the town, but only worn by these two women on the road. The Dungan and Chinese women —

*April 1st.
Taochow
(Sin-cheng).*