

and the sky was covered with clouds. A squall with almost the force of a hurricane had carried masses of sand from the north and piled them up like a wall. Fine rain beat in our faces. — In the NE a low ridge-like hill could be seen running NE—SW, which completely obliterated the horizon that had been open to the N. — We passed a couple of small Mongol camps with low, blue tents. Strong, saddled horses and a couple of camels that looked pitiful on account of their losing their meagre coat of hair at this time of the year, were grazing close by. Weatherbeaten old faces, blackened by the sun, red and yellow garments, curious headgear, everything formed a glaring contrast to the Chinese surroundings.

After 66 li the village of Siljutsun with 100 houses; 69 li Ehrpu with 20. One li further on we crossed a river, about 30 feet wide, of a slight depth, which made a bend in the form of an S here and had practically no current. It flowed from the WSW to the ENE. — After 71 li the village of Chenchiapu with 200 houses. Just beyond it we crossed the long ridge I have mentioned, which proved to be quite narrow. It consisted of stony sand, possibly diluted with soft earth. After 73 li the village of Huang haling with 15 houses. After 81 li Hsing wang chuang with 90 houses and at 88 li Liu wang chuang with 300 houses. From this place we travelled for a time by a sunken road of slight depth. The ground began to rise slightly and became lightly mixed with stones. Both sand and löss were visible. We were now very near the mountains on the opposite side of the plain. This was a connected chain of appreciable size, though not of imposing height. At a distance it looked like grey granite lying in a multitude of folds.

After 93 li Ehrpu with 17 houses and 103 li Ta yu kou with 100. Here we halted for the night. My sarai was quite comfortable, especially when an armchair was brought from an adjacent temple, and I was able to write, using a packing-case as a table. — Coal is mined in the adjacent mountains. Stocks of it can be seen in several yards. — Tchumiza, millet, shuza (similar to millet), gaolyan, black peas and wheat are grown. Average crop 4—5 fold.

We started this morning with a stormy wind in our faces. Almost immediately after leaving the village we entered a river bed of slightly stony sand, up which we rode in a WNW direction. — The coal mines are said to be only a few li from the village near Utja yao. I did not visit them, however. There are 7 or 8 coal mines (according to other statements 3) employing about 100 workmen each. Some of the shafts are said to be as much as 2 li in depth. They are worked mostly in the winter for two months. During the summer only a few workmen are engaged in mining. The daily production of each mine is about 200 tsou of 80 djin (according to others 100 djin a day). It is sold at 1 cash per djin. The mines supply the neighbourhood as far as Ning yuan ting, Tatung fu, Taichow and Ningyu fu. The coal mined in the winter is carted in the summer.

The ground rose very slightly. There was practically no water to be seen. The river bed lay between conglomerate mountains, partly covered with grass. Further on, the valley became a little more stony and the surface of the rock was frequently denuded, grey and in slanting layers. The direction changed to NNW. After 10 li the village

July 1st
Tintachia
village.