

from the E. Course SSE. After 35 li Muhwa with 50 houses S of a small river bed coming from the E. Course SSW. After 45 li Pati hsia, a small village. Course SSE. After 47—48 li we entered a sunken road of a slight depth that led us, ascending slightly in an ESE direction, up to a pass. This we reached in about half a li (barometer No. 1 641.1). Small hills appeared on the right and left, i.e., in the E or ENE and in the W. For 2 or 3 li we kept at almost the same height, setting a SE course. In the E and SSE we noticed a long and slight dip in the ground. On the other side of this rather lower plain, the ground rises again and changes gradually to two mountain ridges, running approximately NNE—SSW and ESE—WNW and seeming to meet in the SE. Scattered villages and small herds were visible in the plain. — We stopped for our midday halt in the village of Tien chung tsun with 300 houses on a dry river bed, after covering 70 li. Here the same plants are grown as at Suchi. Average crop 9 fold. The sarais along these roads in Northern Shansi have a special local arrangement and stamp that does not occur on other roads that I have travelled. The yards and stables are very roomy, almost all the space that is usually used for living quarters being sacrificed to them, the dwelling space being reduced to a minimum. As already mentioned, they are usually arranged in the form of two large, barrack-like halls with common kang along the side walls.

For a short time we went on in a SE direction. After 74 li Chinglung tsuo with 20—30 houses. Beyond it the road ran in an ESE direction, almost due E, towards a valley at the place, where the mountains I have mentioned seemed to form an angle. On the right the ground was slightly lower and some small villages were visible. After 89 li we crossed a river bed, about 50 yards wide, going off to the right, practically without water. The ground, which had risen a little, now fell just as slightly. After 90 li Ma wang miao with 13 houses. On the left a long, level valley with a couple of small clumps of trees and some small villages. Behind it a mountain went parallel to the road. On the right the ground rose in a gentle, but long slope. In front of us the ground changed to a row of hills, behind which there were one or more chains of mountains running in a direction exactly opposed to our road. After 100 li Machangliang with 40—50 houses. The road led in a slight ascent up to the chain of hills. We reached the crest after about 104—105 li (barometer No. 1 649). A large valley, in a SE direction, was spread out before us. We could see many villages in it with shady trees. They were the only thing visible, for the landscape was bare as far it was possible to see. The mountain that ran parallel to the road at a distance, intersected the valley in a slanting direction. On the right another ridge with gentle slopes approximately in a NE—SW direction. Behind this a solitary mountain rose at some distance from the row of hills on which we were. It was only in front of us on the other side of the valley that the mountains appeared to be slightly higher. There was a fairly large collection of houses at their foot — the town of Fengchen ting, our goal for the day.

The town, which is of a considerable size, is said to have a population of about 3,500 tja and is not surrounded by a wall. You find yourself in its centre quite suddenly. A traveller coming from the east, from China's more beautiful towns, might, perhaps, be struck by the stench and filth of the streets, which are often low-lying, but a nose such as mine, hardened in Central and Western China, is not worried by such a bagatelle. A beautiful