

towards the Sungari, making this time for Hulan about two hundred miles distant.

This we found to be a new and thriving town only recently built, and surrounded with a strong masonry wall. The shops were excellent, and there was a busy, bustling air about the whole place. But it had in the previous year been attacked by a band of brigands, who had sought out the principal merchants, levied black-mail from them, and then decamped. It was here, too, that a French missionary, Père Conraux, had been most cruelly tortured and almost killed in the year previous to our visit.

From this point we turned to Pa-yen-su-su, a Roman Catholic mission station, where we found both its own director and M. Card from Pei-lin-tzŭ. It was indeed a pleasure to see these men, and to have that warm, heartfelt greeting which one European will give to another, of whatever nationality, in the most distant corners of the world. Except the French consul who had been sent to inquire into the outrage on Père Conraux in the previous year, no European had ever before visited these distant mission stations, and we,