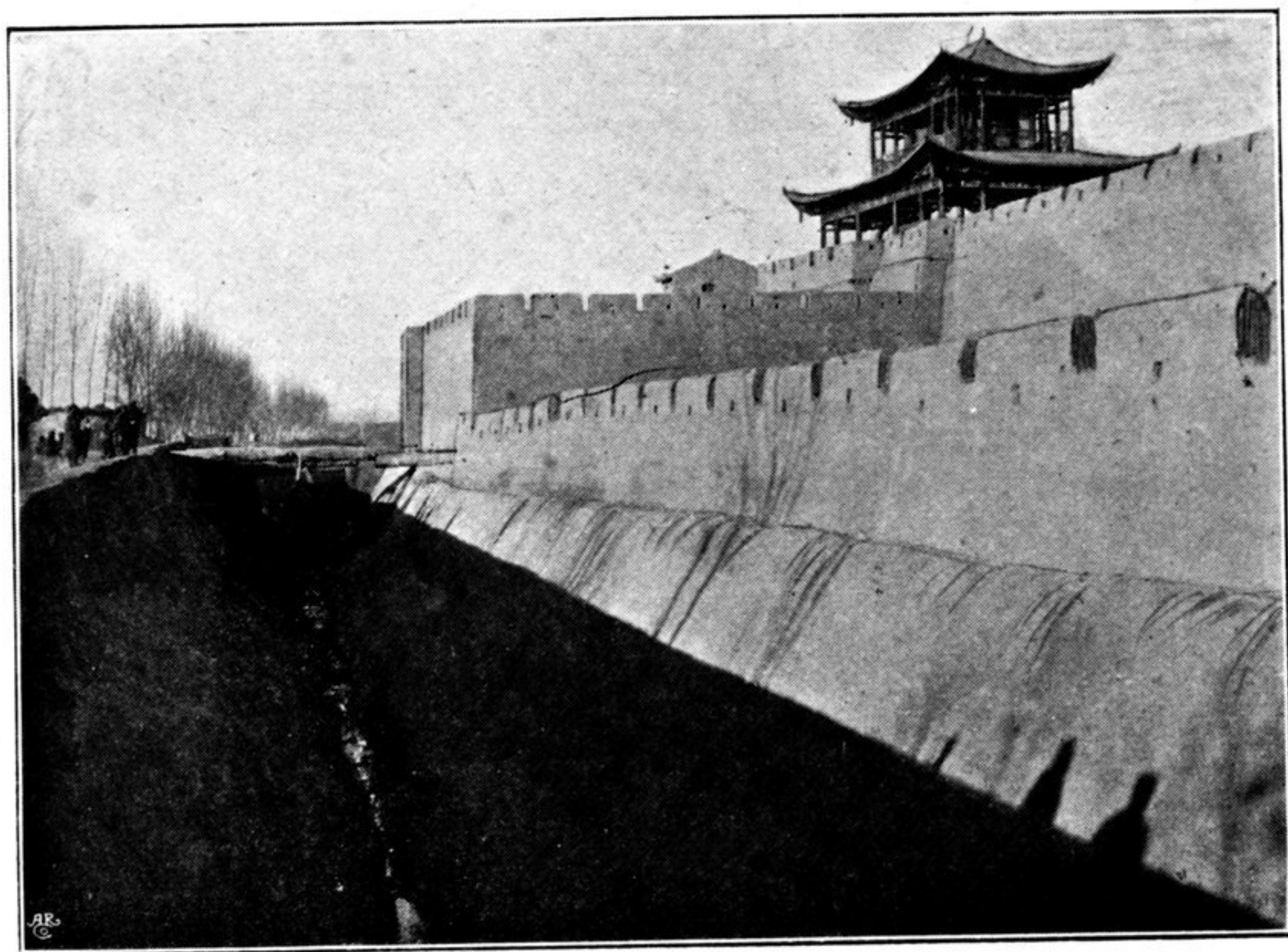


The oasis of Yarkand is a comparatively fertile region, where food stuffs are abundant and cheap, while at Kashgar the local production is insufficient for the local requirements. There is, therefore, a brisk trade between the two towns, flour, rice, and other agricultural produce being sent to Kashgar in considerable quantities. This trade the Chow-Kuan of Yarkand regards as injurious to the interests of his district; he has declared it illegal, and



THE WALL OF YANGI SHAHR, YARKAND.

has stationed officials at Oey Bagh Langar, the limit of Yarkand cultivation, to suppress it. These officials, however, in accordance with Chinese methods, are underpaid, and, for their livelihood, are dependent on "squeezes" and bribes, so that the short-sighted policy of the Chow-Kuan is defeated, and trade takes its natural course.

At Oey Bagh Langar we entered the Takla Makan Desert and traversed a region waterless except at Langar,