

actual observation on ground so near by and so closely corresponding.

Soon the cart tracks disappeared in a broad expanse of marshy ground where large areas were still covered by melting snow and ice cakes. For two and a half miles beyond the first clay ridge I pushed on with Naik Ram Singh and Tila Bai across the belts of boggy ground and the network of water-channels which extended between the chains of clay terraces. At last we forded with some difficulty a channel some twenty yards broad and four to five feet deep in which the icy water flowed briskly; but progress beyond was quite impossible for laden animals. A broad and long sheet of ice sighted to the north from the nearest ridge showed that the main course of the Sulo Ho still lay ahead of us. Whether the ice would hold or not, there was nothing for us but to turn back. By the lagoon we had first met I halted for camp, and there the camels and coolies safely joined us in the darkness.

Next morning I retraced our route to the first clay ridge, and thence turned due east towards the tower we had sighted before. It took us nearly three miles to reach it across a reed-covered steppe where old fields with dry irrigation cuts were still clearly traceable. The tower built on a clay ridge rising about sixteen feet above the depression northward proved exceptionally massive and well preserved (Fig. 162). On a base twenty-six feet square it rose solid to a height of some twenty feet. On its top it bore a brick parapet, and within this a roofless cella open to the south, but provided with that peculiar masking wall which usually faces the street entrances to Chinese temples or mansions. The cella walls, some twelve feet high, still retained much of their plastering.

It was impossible to examine this crowning structure more closely owing to the disappearance of the ladder-like stairs which, judging from holes left for beams in the masonry, seem to have led up the west face. But a late origin, at least for the superstructure, was suggested by the peculiar way in which the bricks were set in alternately horizontal and vertical layers, such as I had never observed