

have painfully dragged themselves through a course six to ten times as long. This is not the place to discuss the causes which may explain the difference. For me at the time it was enough to have personal evidence how well the linguistic training needed for access to Western knowledge could find its place in a mind still fully imbued with the tastes and ideas of traditional Chinese culture.

Mr. Li's son, an intelligent, sturdy boy of ten, was summoned from the master who was introducing him and a few other boys from the local officials' families to the rudiments of Chinese classics. In neatness of dress and quiet, courteous manners he seemed the very replica of his father. I had nothing quite suitable to offer in return for the exquisitely written fan which Mr. Li presented to me as a parting gift. But I hoped that my An-hsi friend's taste would appreciate Dr. Bushell's *Handbook of Chinese Art*, with its cleverly chosen illustrations, when the copy I ordered from London should after a year or so have found its way to these cross-roads of Asia.

What with the officials' return visits, the distribution of *douceurs* to their myrmidons detailed for my camp, etc., it was 2 P.M. before I could set out for Ch'iao-tzü. I had not been able to gather any definite information about the position of the place; but from the vague indications of the Ya-mên attendant who was to serve as guide, it appeared that it lay somewhere beyond the low hills to the south-east and a long way off. So we hurried over the bare steppe which extends east of An-hsi town, though much hampered by the numerous shallow channels, in which the rain water from that weather-worn range had for once spread itself.

After some six miles we struck the canal which brings the water of the Su-lo Ho to the An-hsi oasis. There we left the bumpy track that figures as the imperial high road into Kan-su, and turned to the south towards the hill range which, though low and entirely barren, promised welcome coolness; for in the absolutely clear atmosphere the sun's rays burned fiercely. While crossing the desolate steppe some three miles broad to the foot of the hills, I noticed on a stretch of bare gravel