

nowhere be guarded with greater ease than here. But while the eye took in easily the purpose of the barrier here erected and the natural advantages of the position, I felt puzzled by an archaeological problem of obvious historical interest. What was the relation between this wall, so well preserved and manifestly of later date, and another surviving only in detached segments which I could see stretching away across the plain north-eastwards?

I knew well that all books and maps, whether Chinese or European, made the ancient 'Great Wall' which protects the northern border of Kan-su terminate in an imposing line of wall which bent round the westernmost part of the Su-chou oasis to the very foot of the Nan-shan. But the wall I could now see running in the direction from south-west to north-east was not a continuation of the barrier rising before me. It manifestly adjoined the latter at right angles, yet was so distant from its northern end that a different period of construction and a different purpose at once suggested themselves. It was useless to ply my posse of local people with questions. With that persistent pretence of utter ignorance which seems their favourite line of defence in the face of all strangers, they even refused to recognize any wall at all besides the one just in front of us.

There was enough to look at and enjoy that evening without antiquarian preoccupations. Outside the massively built gate with its imposing tower there awaited me a picturesque band of soldiers and officers whom the commandant of the Chia-yü-kuan garrison, Shuang Ta-jên, had sent out to greet me. A still more formal reception by this 'lord of the Gate' himself, as he would have been called in old Kashmir, had only been obviated by a polite remonstrance on my part sent ahead in the morning. As soon as we had done with this ceremony and had approached the 'Wall,' a pleasant surprise awaited me. Instead of the cluster of mud-hovels and rest-houses which I expected to find behind it, the view from the gravel ridge overlooking the wall showed a delightfully green expanse of tree-bordered meadows close to the south of the little fortified town guarding the great gate. A series of springs, which here issue at the eastern foot of the gravel