

rejoined me from a successful survey in the mountains. In spite of deep snow already covering the passes towards Bar-kul, he had managed to make his way to the watershed. An icy dust-storm raging through Hami had served to remind me, too, that winter was now quite near.

On the following day, November 2nd, we started from Hami on the journey which was to take us to Turfan. Various considerations obliged me to keep to the rather circuitous high road which for the sake of wells hugs the foot of the T'ien-shan. We managed, however, to cover the 195 miles to Pichan, the easternmost of the Turfan oases, by seven marches. Up to Togucha, our first stage, there extended patches of cultivated ground with ruined forts, attesting the prolonged struggle which the Chinese holding Hami had here fought against Yakub Beg's troops.

From Togucha, where I halted for two days, I was able to visit the ruins of some Buddhist temples near the little stream of Ili-kul. There the German expedition under Professor Grünwedel one year before had brought to light interesting remains, apparently dating from the period of Tibetan occupation. In a broad, gravel-strewn depression descending from Togucha south towards the oasis of Lapchuk, I surveyed a number of small ruined shrines. These evidently belonged to the latest Buddhist times, which, as attested by a record of Prince Shah Rukh's envoy to the Chinese Emperor, extended at Hami as well as at Turfan down to the very end of the fourteenth century. Neither these ruins nor the remains of a small ruined town at the northern end of the Lapchuk oasis seemed promising enough to justify the sacrifice of time needed for their clearing.

But on a long ride down the open fertile valley, where the cultivation of Kara-döbe continues that of Lapchuk down to a point about fifteen miles from Togucha, I could gather a good deal of geographically interesting observations regarding the curious and partly subterranean system of drainage coming from the T'ien-shan, which accounts for these pleasant oases in the midst of a stony wilderness. Fresh as I was from my wanderings on Chinese soil where the innate suspicion and reticence of the people