

"I arrived yesterday in Szemao and to my great joy found your very kind letters and also the telegram which was forwarded from Yunnanfu. The trails run at right angles to mountain ranges 6,000 feet high, only to descend again into the valleys and up again 5,000 feet or more. Fifteen miles per day of travel of that sort means a great deal. The trails are so steep that it is impossible to ride and, of course, I am walking anyway a good deal, as I can collect more that way. So far everything has gone well. Dr. Carthew decided not to go at the last moment so I thought I would go alone. As luck would have it a Dr. C. W. Mason, an American missionary in southern Yunnan, was going back to his station at Keng Hung where there are still Tai or Shan people. He was all alone and dreaded the long trip by himself, especially as he had left his wife and six children in America. So we went together. I left him in Chieng Rung or Keng Hung, as it is called on the maps, and went on to Szemao as planned, and here I am, safely arrived at this queer but interesting place. We had no mishap of any kind. Wild animals are about of course, and we\* were a bit anxious once or twice, especially at a place half way between Keng Hung and Szemao in a deep gorge of evil repute, on account of tigers. We were forced to stay there, although it is always avoided by the caravans. We built a big fire and fed it with large bamboo, the joints bursting as the air became heated, and so it kept up a cannonade all night. The forests here are magnificent. Oh, I cannot tell you how grand it all is, notwithstanding the dangers of the road; the lovely pine forests, jungles, valleys, and streams. Along the small plains nestled within the hills the wild Yunnan pear called Tang li (Chinese characters) was all in flower and was a gorgeous sight. Near Szemao I found one loaded with fruit from last year, and I collected all and am sending you the same. The Chinese here use this wild pear as a stock on which to graft the cultivated varieties. I have several photos showing this pear in flower. They grow with oaks at an altitude of 5,000 feet and higher, always forming groves. They can stand a good deal of cold and drought for 5 or 6 months, also a dry temperature of 100°F. or more in the shade, during the hot season which is in April. There are regular forests of chestnuts, but unfortunately all

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\*I have now a Swiss business man with me from Chiengmai as interpreter, Mr. R. Baer.