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3. *Notes of a Journey from Ching-too to Hankow.*

By ALEXANDER WYLIE.

THE voyage up the Yang-tsze as far as Hankow, 588 miles from Shanghai, is one of such constant occurrence, and has been so frequently described by European travellers,* that it would seem superfluous to dwell on particulars regarding it. Beyond that port comparatively few Europeans have yet ventured, and the most notable expedition is that of Captain Blakiston, who made his way to a distance of 961 miles farther up the great river, and has given to the public a very trustworthy and interesting account of his trip;† while Mr. Pumpelly, the American traveller, has described, from personal observation, the leading geological features as far as the prefectural city of Kwei-chow.‡

From Hankow to within a day's sail of the city of I-chang, the course of the river is through an alluvial plain, with occasional clusters of hills here and there. From the last-named city the upper river navigation begins, and we enter upon the long series of gorges by which the stream makes its way through the great longitudinal mountain-chain of Central China. These are a formidable obstruction to the free navigation of the river; but, in that respect, they are surpassed by the numerous rapids, which occur in continuous succession, from I-chang to the highest point attainable by boats. The chief points of commerce are Sha-she, I-chang, Kwei-chow, Yang-heen, Foo-chow, Chung-king, Loo-chow, and Seu-chow; and at most of these there is a navigable tributary of considerable length. At the city of Seu-chow the River Min forms a confluent, almost rivalling in magnitude the main stream, and up this river we tracked our way to the provincial capital.

As I have elsewhere given a minute description of this part of our journey, § I will not here reiterate the details. The volume of water is but slightly diminished till we reach the city of Kea-ting, though the depth varies greatly in places from the widening of the channel. From this point upwards we observe a gradual diminution, and, as we approach the capital, the shoals offer a good deal of obstruction to the free passage of boats. It is only during the summer months that that portion of the river can be travelled, and in the winter time boats do not go higher up than Kea-ting. For picturesque beauty this river is nothing inferior to the Yang-tsze, the scenery offering many exquisite points of view. The prefectural city of Kea-ting is an important centre of trade, standing, as it does, at the confluence of the Min and Yang rivers, two principal arteries of communication with the northern and western parts of the province.

There are several great branches of industry along the banks of the Min. The coal-mines form a perennial source of prosperity and wealth, extending for many miles on both sides of the river. The salt-wells, so remarkable for their construction and numbers, are an equally indispensable institution, upon which the western provinces are entirely dependent; while the oil-wells, not far distant, furnish another, though less extensively used, article of domestic economy. The wax-tree plantations, chiefly in the vicinity of Kea-ting, supply

* 'An authentic Account of an Embassy from the King of Great Britain to the Emperor of China.' London, 1797. 'Narrative of the Earl of Elgin's Mission to China and Japan.' London, 1759.

† 'Five Months on the Yang-tsze.' London, 1862.

‡ 'Geological Researches in China, Mongolia, and Japan.' New York, 1866.

§ 'Journal of the North China Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society.' New Series, Part 5, 1869.

the material for the coating of common candles, this being necessary to impart the requisite solidity, the inner part being made of vegetable tallow, which is excessively sensitive to heat. Many of the natives occupy themselves during the winter months gathering the minute particles of gold which are washed down that and the adjacent rivers, and become deposited towards the lower parts of the bed, which are only accessible in the winter months, when the water is at its lowest. Another speciality of that region is silk, which is largely cultivated, Kea-ting and the neighbourhood being famous for the production of white silk.

As an object of antiquarian interest, there are few things in China that surpass the remarkable caves of the Man-tsze, one of the early races, who were exceedingly numerous and powerful in that part of the country. Their dwellings in the cliffs still remain in great numbers, alike suggestive to the archaeologist and the historian.

The provincial city of Ching-too is one of the largest in the empire, and has some streets equal, if not superior, to any that I have seen elsewhere. Extensive warehouses abound, both in the city and suburbs. The shops are well stocked; almost every commodity is to be found, and English, French and Russian goods are no rarity. Being the seat of the provincial government, of course the official establishments are numerous and imposing, and those connected with literary advancement are on a scale indicative of the prominent position held by such attainments in the national estimation. Like many of the cities in China, Ching-too can boast a very respectable antiquity, and during the third century of our era it was the site of the imperial residence. The only description we have of the city by any European is that of Marco Polo, whose brief, but graphic, account might, with slight modification, answer very well to its condition at the present day, although he portrays a state of things six centuries past.

This city stands in a level plain, probably about a hundred miles from north to south, and nearly as much from east to west, irrigated by a number of streams. The River Min rises in Tartary, and is augmented by numerous tributaries, being confined within its rocky banks for several hundred miles, till it reaches the district city of Hwǎn. There, emerging from all restraint, it divides into a series of branches, spreading like a network, and fertilising the great plain. The larger number of these run south of the capital, and become concentrated again in the main trunk of the Min; but one system of branches flow north of the city, and are diverted into other channels.

Leaving Ching-too on the 27th of July, 1868, to traverse the plain in a northerly direction, we passed the first branch of the river, named the Yew-tsze-ho, a few miles from the north gate, by a bridge at the village of Sze-ma-keau. The continuation of this forms the navigable river flowing past the east gate of Ching-too, and known as the Outer River. The Pih-muh-ho and Seu-yen-ho, two other streams radiating from Hwǎn, unite their waters to the south of the district city of Tsung-ning, under the name of the Tó River. This we crossed by a handsome stone bridge, at the town of San-ho-chang, about a dozen miles beyond the Yew-tsze-ho. Below this it flows in an easterly direction, receiving two accessories from the north-west, a tributary from the south-west, and an affluent combining the waters of two branches on the north side, a little beyond which it unites with the Meen-yang River, and flows south, under the name of the Tó, to the departmental city of Loo, where it dis-embogues into the Yang-tsze. The Tae-ping-ho, another of the streams that radiate from Hwǎn, divides into two branches, which re-unite lower down, and again divide into three branches, the southern of which passes north of the city of Tsung-ning, and south of that of Sin-fan; after which it bifurcates, forming the above-mentioned two accessories to the Tó from the north-west. A little below San-ho-chang we crossed one of these arms, named the Kwan-

keau-ho, being the boundary between the districts of Hwa-yang and Seu-too. There is a fine stone bridge, ornamented with a series of figure-heads of dragons and other fabulous animals. A short distance further brought us to the Kin-shwuy-ho, the northernmost of the two arms, a broad shallow stream made up of several confluent streams, spanned by a stone bridge. A mile or two beyond this is the district city of Sin-too, of medium size, with a tolerably prosperous appearance.

Three miles north of this city we reached the Tuh-keau-ho on the morning of the 28th. This is the second branch of the stream formed by the union of the two branches of the Tae-ping-ho, and passes north of the district city of Sin-fan. Flowing eastward, it passes the district city of Kin-tang, and, uniting with another stream, enters the Tó as an affluent from the north. Two or three miles beyond is the Tseen-shwuy, the third branch of the stream formed by the union of the two branches of the Tae-ping-ho. This passes south of the district city of Páng, and forms the boundary between the district of Sin-too and department of Han. Flowing eastward, it passes the city of Kin-tang on the north and east sides, and unites with the Tuh-keau-ho, forming an affluent of the Tó. Immediately north of this stream stands the town of Heang-yang-chang, at the other end of which is the Tsing-pih-keang, a branch of the Tseen-shwuy, which flows east to the Meen-yang River. There is a fine level bridge roofed over, forming a long arcade. The Me-mung-shwuy is a tributary to the waters of the Tae-ping-ho, from the north, near the point of divergence; and the Ma-shwuy-ho is a river branching out from that tributary, which passes north of the district city of Páng. This we crossed by a long level bridge of about twenty arches, at the town of Se-ching-keau, three or four miles north of the Tsing-pih-keang. Flowing eastward it unites with the last-named stream; and this is the last of the system of interlacing waters joining the Min and the Tó. Six or seven miles further on the road brought us to the departmental city of Han, a busy, and apparently prosperous place, with some handsome temples and good shops. Eight miles beyond this city is the Meen-yang-ho, a river rising in the north-west of Meen-chuh district, and forming the northern boundary of the Ching-too Plain, which we crossed in a ferry-boat in the morning of the 29th.

On leaving the capital we found a good broad highway, but at a few miles' distance it narrowed down considerably, and in some places it was little better than a footpath. A vast concourse of people thronged the road on our first day's journey, but the numbers diminished as we receded from Ching-too. There were pedestrian travellers of the humbler class by far the most numerous; while those in easier circumstances were borne in sedan chairs; heavily-laden mules, and coolies with their ponderous burdens suspended at the ends of a bamboo pole, made up the bulk of the traffic. Our own party travelled in chairs with coolies to carry our luggage.

Much the largest proportion of the land was occupied with rice, and occasional fields of maize, sorghum, and *Koau-leang*, a grain from which spirit is distilled. The bamboo was abundant, but forest-trees were rare and fruit scarce. A few pears and apples of an inferior kind, crab-apples and greengages, formed the principal articles exposed by the dealers; but vegetables were to be had in great profusion and variety. Agriculture was in a flourishing condition, and the population generally bore an appearance of comfort.

After crossing the Meen-yang-ho, we began to ascend rising ground, and found the cultivation diversified with the ground-nut, sweet potato, tobacco, and other plants requiring less water. On reaching the ridge of the first hill by a gentle rise, an agreeable view burst upon us; on the right lay a fertile valley, and, round in the south-west direction, ranges of low hills and undulating ground, all richly cultivated. Continuing the ascent by a moderate gradient,

a mile or two brought us to the *Pi-ma-kwan*, or "White Horse Pass,"* a spot famous in early history. This is a large walled enclosure on the summit of the range, planted with cypress trees, and entered by a gate which bars the highway. The chief and almost only object of note inside, is the mortuary chapel and tomb of Pang Tung, one of the heroes of the Three-kingdoms period (3rd century), who was killed near this site. The building is large and handsome, being kept in a state of order and cleanliness not commonly met with in similar establishments. The first hall from the entrance contains the effigies of Pang and his friend Choo-ko Leang side by side. The hall behind has the single image of Pang Tung, and a courtyard at the back contains the hero's grave, a circular mound with a low stone wall round it, out of which grow some fine old specimens of the weeping cypress. The whole establishment was restored in 1697, and a gravestone erected, bearing the inscription, "The tomb of Pang Sze-yuen, Pure Marquis, of the Han dynasty." Many ancient tablets of bygone dynasties decorate the building.

Looking down from the hill, on the farther side, an interesting landscape met the view; a succession of eminences stretching away to the distant horizon, covered for the most part with crops of varied produce, and dotted over with villages and hamlets, while here and there a city or town of greater pretension formed a focus for several converging lines of traffic; and two or three water-courses meandering through the lower grounds served to fertilize the adjacent fields, at the same time that they gave a pleasing relief to the pictures, as they came in view at intervals in the rural scene. A steep and narrow path led us into a valley, where two or three miles further brought us to the district city of Lo-keang. The small portion of the city we passed through was quiet and

* I cannot help thinking that this is the place spoken of by Marco Polo in the following passage:—"This journey of twenty days towards the west being performed, you arrive at a place called Ach-baluch Manji, which signifies the white city on the confines of Manji, where the country becomes level, and is very populous. The inhabitants live by trade and manual arts. Large quantities of ginger are produced here, which is conveyed through all the province of Cathay, with great advantage to the merchants. The country yields wheat, rice, and other grain plentifully, and at a reasonable rate. This plain, thickly covered with habitations, continues for two stages, after which you again come to high mountains, valleys, and forests."—(Wright's edition, p. 250.) Wright confesses himself unable to identify the locality of Ach-baluch. Pauthier takes it to be the ancient town of 白公城, *Pih-kung-ching*, on the north of the Han.

Klaproth thinks it was a place called 白馬城, *Pih-ma-ching*, near the district city of Meen, on the Han. But the distance to these places does not at all agree, as it would make twenty-three days' journey from Se-gan-foo to the Han; whereas that is just about the time required to the "White Horse Pass," at the primitive slow rate of travelling. The position of the White Horse Pass appears to me perfectly to satisfy the conditions of the statement. The twenty days' travelling over the mountains, and sudden arrival at the plain, with all the other details, might serve for a description of the country at the present day. Although there is no town there now, there is reason to believe there was one in Polo's time, for within a century after, at the commencement of the Ming, we know that there must have been one of some importance, as a superintendent inspector was then placed over it. We do not find the word *Ach*, for "white," in the Mongol language now, the equivalent being *chakhan*; but we have no dictionary of that language so old as the Yuen dynasty, since which it is probable considerable changes may have taken place. The natural process, then, is to look for it in some cognate dialect, and we find it accordingly in the Turkish *اق*, *Ak*, with the same meaning, this dialect being one of the most nearly allied to the Mongol.

comparatively clean ; but the suburb where we made a short halt was a scene of great activity, from the concourse of travellers ; and the numerous houses of entertainment full of life and bustle, appeared to be driving a lucrative trade. From this point we coursed along the south bank of the Lang-shwuy-ho for a mile or two, and then crossed it by a long low bridge, about three feet wide, with no parapet. This rises in the west of Lo-keang district, and after a south-easterly flow of about a hundred and thirty miles, in the course of which it passes the district cities of Lo-keang and Chung-keang, and the prefectural city of Tung-chuen, it enters the Pei-keang, and thus opens up a direct communication with Chung-king. There is said to be a connection between the head-waters and the Meen-yang river. A footpath of about a mile brought us to the Hih-shwuy-ho, somewhat narrower than the preceding, into which it flows at nearly a right angle. The source appears to be rather more distant, and the two channels run nearly parallel for the greater part of their length. This we crossed by a bridge similar to the preceding. There are a good many water-wheels on the left bank for the purpose of irrigation, some between 20 and 30 feet in diameter, similar to those we had seen in great numbers before reaching Ching-too. From this the road begins to ascend again, and after passing two villages we arrived at the town of Kin-shan-poo, where we put up for the night. This is a very busy place, but the houses and shops have a mean appearance. Here we began to be subjected to the inconvenience of crowds round the door of our lodging-place, but it was merely the result of curiosity ; a feature, however, of which we had seen but slight indications hitherto in Sze-chuen.

On the morning of the 30th we entered the department of Meen, and during the day passed through several poor little villages and hamlets, with nothing very notable. Just beyond the village of Shih-keou-poo, a handsome stone portal crosses the road, soon after passing which our route lay alongside the Cha-ping-ho, a rapid river, red with mud from the heavy rain during the past night. This rises at Cha-ping-shan, some hills in the western part of the district of Gan, and, flowing in a direction nearly east, passes south of the district city, and enters the Pei a little to the south-east of the departmental city of Meen. Skirting this stream for a few miles, we crossed in a ferry-boat, and a short distance beyond crossed the Pei River to the left bank, but soon after recrossed to the right, and entered the north gate of the city of Meen. There we found troops quartered, who were on their way to engage the Mohammedan rebels in Shen-se.

The following morning we again crossed the Pei, running with a very swift current, about half a mile from the city ; and keeping down the left bank for a mile or two in an eastern direction, we crossed the Tung-ho by a stone bridge. This is a tributary of the Pei rising toward the north-east. Our day's journey took us through a number of poor and insignificant villages, with a military guard station generally about every four or five miles. These are easily distinguished by the rude attempts to depict some of the sons of Mars armed cap-à-pie, of gigantic dimensions and in gaudy colours, on the whitewashed walls, while a rusty spear or two may occasionally be seen at the door ; and an official is said to be attached to each, whose services are sometimes required to forward a despatch. These stations are found throughout the greater part of China, at least the northern portions ; and are ostensibly intended to furnish escorts to travellers whenever demanded : but such an appendage on the road we were travelling would have been an utter superfluity. At many of the stations, three or five turrets, representing the old smoke telegraphs, still remain, but it is almost needless to say, they merely stand as symbols of the past. The road is hilly, with some steep ascents and descents. Half a mile beyond the small town of Yew-heang-poo, a seven-story pagoda stands in a valley on the north side of the road. Some of the valleys are very pretty, and the weeping

cypress grows there profusely. The wax-tree is also found, but rarely with the producing insect on it. Small patches of cotton were seen here and there. We stopped for the night at Wei-ching, a busy town of considerable size, surrounded by a stone wall, the day's route having taken a much more easterly bend than on previous days.

Just beyond Wei-ching, an insignificant stream flows east into the Tsze-tung-ho; and, at a distance of 10 miles, we reached a small stream dividing the department of Meen from the district of Tsze-tung, which flows south, and after a few miles joins the Wei-ching watercourse, when the united waters enter the Tsze-tung-ho. Less than 2 miles further we came to the small town of Shih-neu-poo, or "Stone Ox Stores," which takes its name from a natural stone formation on the top of a neighbouring hill, said to resemble a perfect ox. The road still lay along a succession of hills of no great height and sparsely wooded, but cultivated to a considerable extent with the taro or sweet potato, and occasional spots of rice on terraces. About half a mile before reaching the city of Tsze-tung, a good stone bridge took us across the Tsze-tung-ho, a rather wide and rapid river which rises in the northern part of the district; after receiving several tributaries in its southward course it enters the Pei, making a flow of 160 miles or more. The site of the city may be distinguished at a great distance by a tall white eleven-story pagoda, which stands outside the wall.

Having spent the night in the city, our path next morning lay up a gentle ascent, and at a distance of 3 miles or more we passed a celebrated well, named the Koo-keen-tseuen, or "Ancient Sword Spring," famed for its medicinal virtues. A stone tablet by the side states that to have been formerly one of the most difficult and dangerous passages on the line, till a road was made by public subscription about the beginning of the present century. Three or four miles further, ascending a hill by a long flight of stone steps, we reached the mountain village of Keih-heang-poo, the reputed birthplace of Wan-chang-te, a Taoist celebrity, idolized as the god of literature. A very large and handsome temple to his honour is erected on the slope of the hill, the receding apartments of which are ascended by successive flights of steps. Of course the principal hall is dedicated to Wang-chang, who is there enthroned in state; but several other idols have their shrines in the adjoining apartments. To the right of the main building, a smaller one contains an effigy of the hero seated on his mule; and the attendant priest points to an opening in the rock behind the figure, which he says is the mouth of a subterranean passage, through which Wan-chang was accustomed to make a journey on his mule to the province of Shen-se and back daily when on earth. By permission I got up to examine the hole, and found it scarcely big enough for an ordinary man to crawl into, to say nothing of a mule; but he was ready with the reply, that as no one had passed through for so many ages it was gradually contracting. Several attempts he said had been made in former times to effect a passage, but every adventure had been repelled by strong gusts of wind. The various members of the family of the sage are enshrined in a building higher up. In the centre shrine are his father and mother, and in a smaller one above it the effigy of his grandmother; on the right are the sage and his wife, and on the left his sister. Along the right end wall are his six sons; and against the opposite end, his four daughters and two daughters-in-law, one with a baby at her breast. On the opposite side of the road a flight of steps up a mound leads to a shrine, where he is represented in a reclining posture. Still higher up is a small building, containing nothing but a stone couch with some sculpture on the front, which is said to be the veritable article on which he slept. Adjoining this building is a square stone enclosure, with an old cypress-tree inside, which is pointed out as the tree to which he was accustomed to tie his mule. The local legends about this worthy are very numerous, and few of the Taoist in-

ventions have gained a wider celebrity than that of Wan-chang. The many miniature pagoda-looking structures that are seen all over China are dedicated to him. These are especially numerous in Sze-chuen, and also in Canton province, where they are called Wan-ta or Menta. The Taoists look upon him as the material impersonation of a constellation in the northern hemisphere, which bears the same name, and the six stars of that constellation are frequently symbolized by the hexagon form of the turrets. His recorded biography gives his family name as Chang, and the date of the second century of our era. He is said, however, to have had many incarnations; and there is a small exhortation to virtue, the Yin-chih-wan, which has been handed down as his production, in which such a statement is put prominently forward.

About 7 miles beyond this famous temple we came to *Shan-ting-poo*, which struck me much at first sight with its resemblance to a Swiss mountain-village. The inhabitants in that region are sufficiently poor, and provisions we found scarce. Little was to be had but hard cakes, made of coarse flour and water, besides cucumbers and several other items of vegetable diet. Their tea is one of the most detestable of beverages, and in other circumstances would be unrecognizable to a European palate. These remarks do not apply peculiarly to the village in question, but are common to the route for many days' journey; and this is perhaps the more remarkable as the inhabitants depend in a great measure for their livelihood on supplying the wants of travellers. Such is the hardihood and frugality of these mountaineers. Here for the first time since leaving the plain, we found mules largely employed as beasts of burden; and it required some little skill for our chairs to thread their way through the droves, as we passed up the narrow street where they were halting for their feed. A little beyond this we began to meet with coolies carrying huge packs on their backs, after the manner so picturesquely described by the Abbé Huc. They carry a staff in the hand, by means of which they frequently rest in the road, placing the staff under the pack behind them, to relieve them of the weight as they stand to take breath. We found the tree-insect wax produced on a small scale in the neighbourhood of the village of Yung-woo-poo. Towards evening we reached our halting-place at Woo-leen-yih, after crossing the Se-ho. This river rises among the Woo-tsze hills, in the north-west of the department of Keen, and after a course of about 140 miles, receiving two tributaries on the way, it enters the Kea-ling-keang, the direct course to Chung-king.

On August 3rd, after a detention of several hours on account of the rain, we commenced the ascent of a steep hill by a zigzag road. A little beyond the summit is a memorial chapel to Choo-ko Leang by the roadside, and this is but one of some tens, perhaps hundreds, dedicated to this hero, to be found in Sze-chuen, so great are the posthumous honours conferred on him. About 12 miles from our starting place we came to Lew-she-kow; a busy little town, just beyond which a stone bridge led across the Lew-kow, a small river tributary to the Se-ho. Arrived at the village of Chow-ya-tsze, we made a very steep descent into a valley, where a pagoda on a neighbouring hill comes in view, looking down upon the departmental city of Keen. Within 2 miles of the last-named village, a winding and picturesque path led us up to the city, which lies on a declivity, and is closely surrounded by an amphitheatre of steep hills. The wall is in good condition, but there is only one street through the city of any consequence, and a great part of that is poor. The people were very peaceable and friendly. The hills over which we had been travelling most of the day were of moderate height, formed of red sandstone in horizontal strata, with conglomerate cropping out in places, and cultivated in terraces to the top, millet being the principal produce. There is a good stone road the greater part of the way from the district city of Tsze-tung to Keen-chow and a

considerable distance beyond; and the outline may be traced far off by a double line of weeping cypress-trees occurring at intervals; sometimes only one or two together, but in many places forming quite an avenue of fine old specimens. These were planted and the road made by Le Peih, the governor of Keen-chow in the early part of the sixteenth century, so that many of the trees have gone to decay.

Our progress through this country was slow and tedious according to European notions. We had stipulated, on leaving Ching-too, to reach the prefectural city of Hanchung in fourteen days at the outside, and we were anxiously counting the days as we advanced from stage to stage. Not only was the want of provisions and suitable accommodation rather trying to our European constitutions; but there was the farther risk that by delaying on the way, we might be overtaken by the rainy season, when several of the streams that we had to pass would become so swollen as to be impassable for days, and perhaps for weeks; a disaster we wished by all means to escape. Under these circumstances we had been several times irritated by the attempts of our coolies to procrastinate on the way. These men belonged to a hardy race, who possess few of the comforts of life, and care little for them. Their great vice is gambling, to which they are passionately addicted; and for the gratification of which they do not scruple to sacrifice the interests of themselves and their employers. Several times had this proclivity come into collision with our determination to speed on the way, and on the morning of the 4th we came to a dead-lock, by their absolute refusal to move that day. Our only resource was an appeal to the civil power; we were courteously received at the office of the magistrate, and the requisite pressure being put in force, our coolies trotted off with their respective burdens with as good a grace as might be expected. Leaving the city by the east gate, we crossed the Keen-shwuy by a bridge. This small river is formed by the junction of two branches, and enters the Kea-ling-keang, after a course of between 30 and 40 miles. During the after part of the day we had several abrupt ascents and descents, but passed no place of importance till we reached Keen-mun-kwan, our halting-place for the night. This is a busy town and a place of considerable celebrity in early history. We were now at the foot of the Ta-keen-shan, a range of lofty hills which had been in distant view for several days past. They are quite different in character from those over which we had been travelling for a week. The general direction of the range is north-east, with spurs branching out southward. The southern declivity is inclined at about 30° , and covered with verdure, but not cultivated. The crests are serrated in the most grotesque forms, and the northern sides have the appearance of being abrupt precipices. They extend away, range beyond range, till lost to vision. The Wor-tsze or "Five Sons" hills had been in sight for two days past, in a north-westerly direction. These are five remarkable conical peaks of similar outline; four of which appear exactly the same height, and are stated in the topography to have an altitude of 5000 feet, but I do not think they are near so much.

Next morning, following the course of a small stream, named the Keen-mun-shwuy, we soon reached the sombre pass of Keen-mun, an opening in the range of hills less than a hundred yards wide, with precipitous cliffs on either side, the greater part conglomerate, overlaid by sandstone, with some thin strata of the same at intervals. A little way in, at the foot of the eastern cliff, are a number of memorial tablets, which doubtless contain records of interest, but time would not admit of our stopping to examine them. The ancient name of the road through this pass is the Shih-new-taou or "Stone Ox Road," and carries with it a curious tradition to the following effect. In the fourth century B.C., this mountain range formed an impassable barrier between the kingdom of Tsin on the north, and that of Shuh on the south. The King of

Tsin, meditating the conquest of Shuh, was induced to resort to artifice to aid him in his project. Aware of the avaricious propensity of his southern neighbour, he caused five stone figures of oxen to be made, and every night had a quantity of gold secretly scattered on the ground below their tails; till the report gained currency that this was the ordinary excrement of these miraculous animals. Their fame having spread to the kingdom of Shuh, the cupidity of the prince was excited, and he expressed a wish to be the possessor of the wonderful oxen. This desire reaching the ears of the King of Tsin, he gracefully offered them in a present. But then it was necessary to make a road through the mountains for their transport, and the cutting in the Ta-keen-shan was made for this purpose. The breach in the hill once effected, the King of Tsin soon followed the oxen with a large army and subjugated Shuh, the prince of which thus fell a victim to his own avarice.

Towards the middle of the pass the road runs under a building called the Keen-kô, the modern representative of an ancient pavilion, built by Chco-ko Leang, which carries the memory down to the third century of our era. The ground story is surrounded by a battlement, and there are two stories above it. Once through the breach in the loftier range, we found ourselves in a valley surrounded by rugged and barren declivities, in some places perpendicular heights; and after continuing our route for a mile or two, the gradual ascent and descent of a lower range, brought us, at a distance of 10 miles, to the village of Ta-muh-shoo. Near this are several remarkable rugged peaks standing out prominently, high above the general outline; and one of these, with a large temple on the top, forms a very conspicuous object, which we passed very close to, a mile or two after leaving the village. The Keen-mun stream was visible in the valley below us along a considerable part of the day's journey. This unites with the Hwang-sha-keang, a river rising among the Mo-teen hills, on the border of Shen-se province, and flowing east for more than a hundred miles, after receiving several tributaries, the united waters enter the Pih-shwuy River. Cultivation was much more sparse than in the previous part of our journey; the villages and hamlets were wretched enough, and the people miserably poor.

A few miles more brought us to the New-tow-shan, a conspicuous hill, from which we made a steep descent, with the district city of Chaou-hwa in sight in the valley below. The Kea-ling River is seen winding round the east side, and there, for the first time since leaving Ching-too, we found cargo-boats struggling up against the current; so that the passage by water may be made between that city and Chung-king, passing the prefectural cities of Paou-ning and Shun-king on the way. The Pih-shwuy-keang, one of its chief tributaries, is seen entering on the north side of the city. This rises in Tartary, and after a course of 1800 miles enters the province of Shen-se, where receiving some very considerable affluents, it enters the district of Chaou-hwa, and unites with the Kea-ling within a mile of the city.

We made but a short journey on the 6th, from the city of Chaou-hwa to that of Kwang-yuen, about 14 miles, with little worthy of note on the way. About a mile from the former city, where we crossed the Kea-ling River, there is a strong rapid, by which even the skilled ferrymen are sometimes carried away beyond their calculation. The road for the greater part lay along the foot of the hills skirting the river. Within two miles of Kwang-yuen, we entered on a small alluvial plain, and made our way through fields of maize to the Taoa-pa, a small river rising on the north-east, locally called the Nan-ho. Crossing this by the ferry, we were immediately in an extensive and busy suburb, where we put up for the day outside the west gate. There is a lofty cliff on the opposite side of the river, with four huge chambers excavated in it. These I was informed had been inhabited in ancient times, but could not get any definite information on the subject. A little to the north is a

small excavation, said to have been the shrine where the empress Woo-tshiten, of the Tang dynasty, worshipped; and a white building close by, named the Soo-se-low, is pointed out as her habitation when a Buddhist nun. There is a camp on the north side of the city, which rendered it desirable that our stay should be as short as possible, but no persuasion could make our coolies go farther that day; and it was only after some litigation that we could get them away on the next.

Some 3 or 4 miles from the city the following morning, we were at the village of Tseen-fuh-yae, or the "Thousand Buddha Precipice," which derives its name from the cliff immediately beyond, this being one of the most remarkable pieces of Buddhist sculpture in China. Probably the number indicated in the name is no over-estimate, for there would seem to be a shrine to almost every idol in the Buddhist pantheon. Some are in small recesses cut only a few inches deep; others are in caves capable of holding several people, and at one of such a flight of stone steps conducts to the entrance. Every available spot from the highest pinnacle down to the ground seems to be covered, and the names of the principal idols are placed over them. In ancient times, the cliff here rose abruptly from the river, and had a wooden stage suspended to it, by which the transit was effected; but during the Tang dynasty, Wei Hang had a road excavated—a work of great utility, which he supplemented by the highly decorative assemblage of idol shrines, which are supposed to afford a peculiar sanctity and security to the place. I was gravely informed that a golden boat lies embedded in the river just in front, and may be seen occasionally. Possibly the peculiar appearance of the particles of mica at times, may have given strength to the legend. About midday we reached the village of Seu-kea-ho, divided by the river into two parts, the largest portion being on the west side. This is entirely dependent on the coal trade, there being extensive mines in the neighbourhood. The price of good coal at the wharf there is about 8s. the ton. Continuing by a rugged rocky path till we came to the Too-mun Hill, we there deviated from the river-bank for a little, and ascended a steep and narrow path to the hamlet and pass of Fei-seen-kwan on the crest of the hill, where there is a barrier gate in an embattled wall. On the north-east of the pass is a steep pyramidal-shaped, and almost isolated hill, named Wei-fung-shan, with a temple to the ancient sage Shun on the summit. Round this the river makes a circuitous bend, and on emerging from the pass, we find it again flowing past almost beneath. With the exception of this little bend, our path all day lay along the bank of the Kea-ling River; and towards dusk we found the stream suddenly contracted within very narrow limits, between precipitous banks. Overtaken by darkness, we found it necessary to halt for the night in a very miserable village, with accommodation scarcely above zero.

On the move at a very early hour next morning, 8 miles over a rough limestone path, brought us, ere the sun was well above the horizon, to the Chaou-teen-kwan, a pass on the top of a hill named the Chaou-teen-ling. A temple covering both ends of the double gateway, with a connecting wing on the east side, contains the effigies of a number of canonized historical personages of the Three-kingdoms period. There is a fine gorge in the river close by, called the Ming-yue-hea, or "Bright Moon Gorge." The descent from the pass is by a long and in part precipitous zigzag road, which led us to the town of Chaou-teen-yeh. Passage-boats come up from the city of Kwang-yuen to this place in a day, and go down in much less time. On the north of the town, the Tseen-shwuy, a broad shallow stream which comes down from the borders of Shen-se, enters the Kea-ling River. After crossing this there was a steep and wearisome ascent of a couple of miles; but on reaching the summit, the road lay along the declivity for 5 miles more, through a landscape of singular beauty, till we stopped at the Lung-mun-ko, an open shed and gateway across

the road, occupied by vendors of comestibles. A very little to the west of this is a natural curiosity of a rare and curious character. A precipitous limestone cliff, near a thousand feet high, has a natural tunnel under it, called the Lung-tung, about two hundred feet high at the mouth, but suddenly contracting to much smaller dimensions. Here the Tseen River enters and becomes lost to view, giving forth a sound like the rush of some great cataract. Passing under the hill, it emerges again some 2 or 3 miles lower down, and enters the Kea-ling on the north of Chaou-teen-yih. This river is mentioned in the "Tribute-roll of Yu" in the "Shoo-king," thus:—"The To and the Tseen were conducted by their proper channels." The Tseen is but a small stream compared with the Kea-ling, but it may have been larger in ancient times. My companion picked up some fossils at the entrance to the cave. From this a tortuous and hilly road led us by a very abrupt descent, just about dusk, to the bank of the Tseen River again, which our coolies forded without difficulty. The local name of the river there is the Yen-kea-ho, where it forms a great bend, nearly three-quarters of a circle, in the loop of which stands the town of Keaou-chang-pa, our halting-place for the night. It is a very quiet retired spot, with scarcely any business doing except on market days, which occur nine times in each month. It is entirely surrounded by high hills, with a dark rugged range appearing above the others away to the east. The river is clear as crystal, with a stony bottom, and convenient places for bathing.

Having spent a day at Keaou-chang-pa, we were on the way by moonlight on the morning of the 10th August, and before daybreak crossed the boundary between the provinces of Sze-chuen and Shen-se, at the Tseih-pwan Pass. A solitary priest was already at his matins by the light of a lamp, the monotonous clang of his sonorous pot, as he sat by the gate, calling upon passing travellers to contribute to the cause. As the light of day burst upon us, it revealed a scene of romantic grandeur, through which we were clambering up and down steep and rugged pathways. During the day we passed through several poor villages, and early in the afternoon arrived at the departmental city of Ning-keang, the first we had come to in Shen-se. The place appeared to be excessively poor, with scarcely any trade. The Pih-yen River takes its rise from a mountain-stream in the vicinity of the Tseih-pwan Pass, and flows north-west of the city, where it is joined by another stream from the north, along which our route lay. The united stream then flows north-east, and, after receiving a tributary from the south, disembogues into the Han.

A great fall of rain had taken place during the night, and it continued till the afternoon of the 11th, when it was most difficult to get our coolies to move, as they declared the river so swollen as to be unfordable. Having ascertained, however, that there was still a chance, we felt that the urgency of the occasion demanded every effort; for, should the rain continue, the case was becoming worse every hour, and we might be detained for many days. At length we succeeded in getting on the way, and though the rush was coming down with considerable velocity we were still able to manage it. The road, if it can be so called, lay up a narrow ravine, cut off alternately on either side by steep rocks, so that we had to ford the stream about ten times and got most of our baggage drenched, coming to a halt at Woo-le-po, a mountain village, scarcely 7 miles from the city.

Next morning the water went down as rapidly as it had risen the day before, and there was no difficulty in fording the stream dry-shod; for some part of the way our path lay in the bed of the current. A few miles on the road we reached the Woo-ting-hea, a gorge in the mountain, named after the five stone-oxen which the King of Tsin presented to the King of Shuh. On ascending a hill a short distance beyond, a stone tablet records the fact of that

being the road that was opened up for the occasion; and about a mile farther is the Woo-ting barrier, adjoining which is a small village, called the Kin-neu-yih, or "Gold Ox Station." Continuing the journey through a narrow defile, we come to the Han-yuen-kow on the left, an insignificant stream, which our coolies walked over without any trouble. This is the source of the great River Han, and rises at the Po-ch'ung hill, only a few miles to the west. This is alluded to in the "Tribute-roll of Yu" thus:—"From Po-ch'ung he surveyed the Yang, which, flowing eastwards, became the Han." This, then, is the ancient Yang River. Two or three miles beyond we stopped for the day at the garrison-town of Ta-gan, where there are three camps, with some 1000 to 2000 troops. There is a tributary stream there, the Ta-gan-shwuy, half as large as the main channel, which is crossed by a wooden bridge and discharges its waters on the south-east of the town.

Our journey on the 13th lay along the left bank of the Han, and, as there had been a heavy fall of rain, the mountain-currents were much swollen and there was some difficulty in fording them. A rather formidable one flows through the village of Tsing-yang-yih, and 5 miles further is a broad and swift-flowing stream, immediately beyond which we halted for the day at the village of Tsae-pa.

Having now reached the highest point of the river to which boats ascend, next morning we took passage by water for the prefectural city of Han-chung, such being less laborious and more expeditious than chair-travelling. At about 6 or 7 miles' distance the waters of the Meen-shwuy, flowing in from the north, unite with the Han at a spot called Tsin-kow. This river is formed by the union of three confluent, and appears larger and swifter than the Han where the two unite. Three miles lower down are some abrupt cliffs on the right bank, and 5 miles more brought us to the district city of Meen on the left bank. The wall was in very good condition, but the whole enclosure seemed to be one great field of maize, some five or six huts being the only human habitations. The whole population, including the official establishments, is collected in a large suburb on the east side, enclosed by an earth-wall, which is now a ruin. The city was founded by the renowned Choo-ko Leang, whose grave is situated 3 miles to the south-east at the Ting-keun hill. During the summer floods, when the gorges on the Yang-tsze are almost impassable, it is customary for native merchants to reach Sze-chuen *viâ* the Han; and, having reached this point, they take mules to cross the hills, about 40 miles, to the Kea-ling River, by which there is a direct communication with Chung-king and the principal places in the province. From the city of Meen eastward the hills recede from the river, leaving a level valley of several miles in width, which extends some distance beyond the city of Han-chung. Hwang-sha-yih is a considerable town on the left bank, 2 or 3 miles below the city, standing back about a *le* from the river. A few miles below this a stream runs in from the north, and a little way beyond the Pih-yen River, from Nin-keang, discharges on the right bank. Ten or 12 miles further, the Hih-lung-keang, a large river, enters the Han on the left bank. This rises from two sources on the west side of the Tâe-pih mountain, on the southern border of the district of Mei, flows east and then south, receives a number of tributaries, and passes the district city of Paou-ching, discharging its waters after a course of 170 miles. The Ke-tow Pass is seen, far away to the north, on the summit of a mountain range. Overtaken by thick darkness and heavy rain, we came to a halt within a few miles of the prefectural city.

The rain continued during the 15th, and prevented any extensive perambulations through the city, which seems to be of moderate size, with nothing very imposing in the streets. A tolerably extensive suburb separates it nearly a mile from the river on the south, and there is a much larger one outside the

east gate, enclosed by a mud wall, now almost demolished.* We had hoped to hire a boat there to take us down to Laou-ho-kow, but none of the boatmen were willing to start till after the 1st of the Chinese month, which would be four days; and it depended on the state of the river whether they would move then, for they said there was a gorge 30 miles long, which they dared not risk unless the water fell several feet. Ascertaining, further, that the road by land to the eastern end of the gorge was much shorter, and that boats were to be got there, we decided on continuing our journey by chairs as far as the town of Cha-chin.

Having settled all preliminaries for a chair-journey, we left Han-chung in the forenoon of the 16th, and travelled all day over a flat country, chiefly occupied by fields of rice and maize. At a distance of 8 miles from the city we crossed the Han in a ferry-boat, the river there being about 300 yards in breadth, with shallow slope on the left bank and a deep channel and swift current on the right. Eight miles beyond this we arrived at the Nan-sha-ho, a tolerably broad, shallow river, rising in the south, which our coolies were just able to ford, the chairs dipping slightly in the water. Two miles further on we put up for the day at the small village of Tseih-le-teen, where a festival of several days' duration was in process. The peasantry from the neighbourhood were gathered together in their holiday attire, the great object of rustic attraction being a theatrical performance with wooden puppets. One unlucky wight was chained to the stage all day, doing penance for his master, who had refused to contribute his quota towards the fête; but he appeared to bear the penalty with the philosophic resignation of a martyr. The only house of entertainment for travellers was crowded to overflowing and the one private chamber was allotted to us, but it was scarcely equal, in point of comfort, to a respectable coalhole. We had to wait till the company dispersed, to get some boards on which to manufacture sleeping-places. This, however, was not much of an exception to many of our lodgings, but may be rather taken as a sample of the majority.

Next day we made 30 miles, mostly over hills, passing several villages and hamlets on the way, and stopped for the night at the small town of Sha-hokan. Our route, for a great part of the day, lay in the neighbourhood of the Ke-leaou-shan water, a tributary of the Sha-ho, which runs through the above-named town. The Sha-ho rises at Low Hill, in the north-west of Se-heang district. Paper is manufactured among the hills not far distant, which gives rise to a good deal of traffic. Our hotel accommodation was inferior, if possible, to that of the previous night.

Seven miles over the hills next morning brought us to the village of Koo-chuh-pa, where a stream from the east of the Koo-yuh Pass enters the Muhma River; and 3 miles lower down we halted at the town of Ma-tsung-tan, on the left bank of the latter. This river rises at Me-tsang Hill, in the south-west of Se-heang district, on the border of Sze-chuen province, and, flowing north-east, enters the Yang on the east of the district city. Taking a boat at Ma-tsung-tan, we floated down rather rapidly with the current for 17 miles to the city. This seems to be a busy, thriving place, and there is a considerable suburb on the south side. Entering by the east gate, we left by the north, and scarcely a mile beyond our men forded the river, opposite the village of Tung-too-kow. Passing another village, we soon crossed the Yang in a ferry-

* This appears to be the capital of the country named by Marco Polo *Cuncun*, or *Cuncun* (Han-chung), where he says:—"We will now take leave of this kingdom, and give account of a province abounding in mountains which is called Cuncun, and is a very wearisome road to travel. . . . And at the end of three days one meets with lofty mountains and great valleys, which pertain to the province of Cuncun."

boat. This river rises in the south-east of the district of Se-heang, among the hills to the north of the Yen-chang Pass, on the border of Sze-chuen, and, flowing north, receives the waters of the Muh-ma and another affluent before it enters the Han. Four miles farther on we stopped at a solitary house on the top of a hill, our coolies absolutely refusing to go farther that night; so our whole party of twenty-four persons, besides the family, including pigs, fowls, and dog, had to put up in a common apartment—and that not a very large one either—except that three or four of the coolies stowed themselves away in a closet too begrimed with dirt and loaded with dust for us to venture in. For the past two days we had had a range of lofty hills in view on the north, bordering the Han, and now we were rapidly approaching them. During the day we passed a number of the large water-wheels used for irrigating the fields by raising water from the stream to heights of 20 or 30 feet. There is a very accurate description and representation of these machines by Staunton, in his narrative of Lord Macartney's embassy.

On the 19th we were on the way at an early hour, and at a distance of 15 miles reached the small town of Pih-meen-hea, at the further end of a valley completely enclosed by high hills. Beyond this there was not even a village for 14 miles, till we reached the town of Cha-ke-chin, or, as it is commonly called, Cha-chin, on the Han. This stands on the left of the embouchure of the Yang, which is also called the Cha-ke, that being the name of a tributary flowing in from the south. Cha-chin is a poor little place built on a point of rock, and there we had expected to get a boat to take us on our way, but had the mortification to find they had all been taken away that morning for the Government service. Fortunately, however, a boat came up in the evening with passengers, and we engaged it to take us down to the district city of Shih-tseu the following day. Our road all day had been through mountain-ravines and over hill-tops, embracing some fine scenery. Much of the path was bordered by the date, walnut, Tung-oil,* and a variety of other trees. The rocks are limestone, and near the Han the strata are perpendicular. The cottagers by the wayside were engaged in the silk manufacture.

The current carried us rapidly down the stream, making the passage of 20 miles in three hours, or less. The course nearly all the way was between abrupt hills, with occasional precipices; and in some places the river is confined within a very narrow channel. There are two rapids in the interval caused by reefs. About midday we came in sight of the district city, and soon anchored against the western suburb, which is rather extensive, but poor in appearance. The Chin-choo River rises at the Yun-woo Hill on the north, and joining the Heang-tsze River from the north-west, enters the Han, a little to the west of the suburb. The city is built on a red sandstone rock; and there is a spring of deliciously clear and refreshing water just under the southern wall, from which the city derives its name, "Stone Spring." The place within the walls is small, and has one busy retail street from the east to the west gate. The market is but poorly supplied with vegetables, fruit, and meat. We found a number of boats lying at anchor there, but most of them were retained for the Government service. After some ineffectual negotiation among those that were at liberty, the city magistrate, who was very friendly towards us, gave up one of the boats he had sealed, and arranged for our passage to Hankow, to the mutual gratification of the boatman and ourselves.

It was well on towards midday on the 21st before the skipper got all things ready, and by the time we started the water had begun to rise. The wind

* Blakiston gives the botanical name of this as *Elococca verrucosa*. See 'Five Months on the Yang-tze,' p. 137.

sprang up soon after, and at a distance of 10 miles, while threading our way through a narrow and tortuous pass, just below the village of Leen-hwa-shih, the boat was carried off by the current, the men lost command, and it was borne irresistibly on a granite reef, known by the name of the Foo-paou-shih. The result was a considerable opening in one of the joints at the end, and the water began to flow in rapidly. By dint of caulking, however, this was pretty well stopped. The wind increased, and the water came down with a sudden rush, raising the river in that part some ten feet in three or four hours. Although the rock on which we struck was nearly four feet above the water, yet so rapidly did the water rise, that we might have passed over the same spot two hours later with impunity. Such fluctuations are doubtless caused by the fall of rain swelling the numerous tributaries towards the head-waters. Seven miles lower down, the Che-ho, coming from the Ma-hwang Hill on the north, disembogues into the Han. A little below the village of Yew-fang-kan we passed through a gorge with a heavy surge; and eight or nine miles beyond, after passing a stream on the left, stopped for the night at the village of Mei-hoo on the right. There is a strong rapid opposite this place. A good deal of silk is produced and manufactured in the neighbourhood.

On the 22nd we were detained till the afternoon, while a carpenter was repairing the damage of the previous day. Soon after moving, we passed several strong rapids, and the water had become excessively muddy. A number of fortresses appeared on the hill-tops in the neighbourhood. Many reefs run out from the left bank. About 30 miles on the way brought us to a sharp bend in the river, called Tung-lo-wan, with a succession of strong rapids. Just beyond that we stopped for the day at the town of Han-wang-ching, although it was yet early; our skipper fearing to risk the next rapid, called Kwan-tsze-tan, till the water went down somewhat. A boat which passed us in the morning on the way down was anchored at the same place, having run against a rock, broken the rudder, and sprung a large leak. Having several hours to spare, I visited a fortress, the T'een-paou-chaie, on the top of a hill there, something over 400 feet high. It was built a few years back by the inhabitants, as a refuge against the rebels. The place is admirably adapted for defence, the ascent being steep on all sides; and, with a well-trained force to defend it, no enemy could ever approach. There were six two-story houses in tolerably good condition, in which a great number of natives could be stowed, but not a person was in occupation. Another fortress stood on the top of a high hill on the opposite side of the river. Tea and silk are produced in the neighbourhood, and form articles of commerce.

As the water had subsided a great deal during the night, we started soon after sunrise on the 23rd. Within a mile of our anchorage, two small hill islands stood in the river, forming three narrow channels, of which we floated down the left-hand one. A little way beyond we passed a number of coal-pits on the left bank. Some five miles lower, the Seaou-sung River from the north enters the Han, forming the boundary between the districts of Han-yin and Tsze-yang. There is a good deal of firewood in this part of the country, which the natives make up into faggots and pile up along the banks for sale. Our skipper filled every available corner with a cargo of it as a commercial speculation, some of the men also investing their money in a similar enterprise. Thirty-four miles beyond the last-named stream, the Choo-ho, a current of bright green water, enters the Han on the right, contrasting strongly in colour with the very muddy water of the latter as it becomes absorbed in it. This river rises, under the name of the Pih-keang, on the north of Hwang-tun Hill, in the east of the district of Tae-ping in Sze-chuen province, and enters Shen-se on the east of Maou-pa Pass; it then joins the Choo-ho, another branch flowing in from the south of the district of Tsze-yang; and after receiving several tributaries in its north-easterly course, it discharges its waters under the latter

name, but is sometimes called also the Jin-ho. Ten miles up this river is a quarry, famous for the production of ink-pallets. Nearly opposite, but a little lower, stands the city of Tsze-yang, a small place built on the summit of a low hill, with a scattered suburb spreading down nearly to the water's edge. Slates are produced in abundance in this neighbourhood, and most of the houses are roofed with them; not cut to any regular shape, but heaped on just as chance seems to have decided the form. There we took a pilot on board, to guide us through a rapid about a mile below the city. The waves were like a little sea, and far exceeded anything of the kind we had previously come to on the Han. Ten miles below the city is a temple perched high up on the face of the cliff, named the *Me-ke-seen-tung* (Fairy Grotto of the Rice-stream); the tradition connected with which is, that in former times a small aperture in the rock was wont to pour out daily a quantity of rice, just sufficient for the number of people depending on it; it might be one, or it might be a hundred, the supply was always equal to the demand. A crevice was pointed out to us at the back of the principal idol, as the mouth of the mysterious spout, but on examining it, we found there was actually no opening deeper than two or three inches. A similar legend attaches to several spots in China. Nearly opposite, on the right bank, is the long village of *Joo-ho*, named after a river that rises in the vicinity of the *Chwang-ho* Pass to the south-west, and enters the Han there. We again got a pilot of the place to take us through the *Joo-wau-tan*, a rapid equal to the one near the city; and also the *Loo-tsze-tan*, another great rapid, a mile or so lower down. Just below the villege of *Ta-taou-ho*, coal was being wrought in the face of the cliff; and a mile or two farther on we passed the *Sin-tan*, a rapid scarcely inferior to any we had yet encountered. Five or six miles beyond, there were numerous coal-pits on the right bank. Ten miles farther we stopped for the night, against the village of *Lew-shwuy-teen* on the left.

A mile or two after leaving our anchorage next morning, we found them working coal in the cliff. About eight miles lower we passed the *Lan-ho*, a stream which rises at the *Hwa-lung Hill*, on the south-eastern boundary of the district, and receives two or three small affluents before it disappears in the Han. Somewhat lower the *Heang-ho*, a river rising in the south-west of *Ping-le* district, enters on the right. The Han retains much the same character, a tortuous channel of six or eight hundred yards wide between high hills for about 30 miles farther, when the prospect begins to open out, and a succession of low hills gradually decline to a plain of some tens of miles' extent. The *Yue-ho*, another considerable stream, which rises from two sources in the north-west of the district of *Han-yin*, passes the district city, and receiving a number of tributaries, large and small, enters the Han after a south-easterly course of nearly 150 miles. A few miles further east we reached the prefectural city of *Hing-gau*, the appearance of which does not strike one as first-class. As with many other Chinese cities, the business is mainly confined to a large suburb skirting the river. A good deal of silk manufacture is apparently carried on, and there is a considerable assemblage of boats. From that point there is a highway by land to *Se-gau*, the capital of *Shen-se*. We were detained half a day on account of some informality on the part of the skipper in arranging with the customs. Some miles beyond the city we passed the mouth of the *Hwang-yang-ho*, a river rising from two sources on the south-east boundary of the district of *Ping-le*, which passes the district city on the west, and the prefectural city on the east, in its northward course. The hills on each side resume their abrupt and lofty character, and the channel becomes more contracted. After passing two notable rapids the night closed upon us, and we continued our journey for several miles by moonlight, anchoring for the night at the village of *Leu-ho-poo*. The *Leu-ho*, a river rising among the

hills south of the Tseih-le Pass on the border of Hoo-pih province, after receiving four tributaries in its northward course, enters the Han on the west of the village.

Early on the 25th we reached another rapid, where it was necessary to get a native to guide us through; and, 10 miles from our anchorage, arrived at the district city of Seun-yang. This is built on the top of a low mound, and appears to be but sparsely inhabited. On the east side of the city is the Seun-ho, which rises on the south-west of the Tae-yih Hill, in the north-east of the district of Hoo, and, flowing in a south-easterly direction, receives several affluents before uniting with the Chin-gau River. The latter, bringing down the accumulated contents of the various streams in that district, increases very materially the volume of the Seun-ho, which flows into the Han, after a course of 170 miles. The only other affluent of the Han in Shen-se, comparable with this in magnitude, is the Hih-lung-keang in the prefecture of Han-chung. Twenty miles lower down, the town of Shuh-ho-kwan on the left, stands on both sides of the Kow-yuen-shwuy, which flows in from the north. There is a road from this place direct to Se-gau. Seven miles more brought us to the mouth of the Ta-tsung-ke on the left, a small stream in a ravine, dividing the provinces of Shen-se and Hoo-pih on the north side of the Han. A considerable distance beyond, is the Lang-shwuy-ho on the right bank, flowing in from the south-west. A good way further on, the town of Kea-ho-kwan stands on the east side of the Kea-ho, a river also called the Keih-shwuy-ho, rising in the north-west of the district of Yuen-se, which receives two tributaries, and, after a flow of 80 miles, discharges on the left bank, east of the Kin-lan Hill. On the summit of this hill is a temple of great celebrity, dedicated to Heuen-teen-shang-te. Seven miles beyond, we passed the Pih-ho on the right, a river flowing in from the south-west, also called the Ta-pih-shwuy-ho. To the east of this stands the district city of Pih-ho, curiously built over the summit of several hills, in a very irregular form. The buildings inside the wall being few and scattered, a good deal of the ground is cultivated. The principal part of the business, which does not seem great, is conducted in a long suburb running parallel with the river. On the east of the city, the Seaou-pih-shih-shwuy, a small river which rises to the south-west, flows down a rocky ravine, and forms the boundary between Shen-she and Hoo-pih, on the south side of the Han. The length of the Han, from the source to this point, is about 440 miles. Just beyond this we anchored for the night.

At 12 miles on the way next morning we passed the San-chung-ho on the right, a river flowing in from the south-east, with a village of the same name at the mouth. Some 30 miles eastward is the Hwang-leen-shwuy on the left, which rises from two sources near the northern boundary of the district. The streams unite on the south of the city of Yuen-se, from which the river flows south into the Han, making a course of nearly 60 miles in its greatest length. At no great distance beyond this, the Keuh-yuen-ho, or Keuh-ho, which also rises in the north of the district, not far from the Táou-ho, enters the Han on the left. The country bordering on the river now gets more open, the hills much lower and all cultivated, when we reach the mouth of the Tow-ho, a large river flowing in from the south. The source of this is near the point of junction of the three provinces of Tze-chuen, Shen-se, and Hoo-pih. After flowing west for 100 miles, it receives a large affluent from the north-west, which passes the district city of Chüh-ke; the united stream, after receiving another principal tributary from the south, passes the district city of Chüh-shan on the east, and flows north into the Han, making in its greatest length a course of nearly 250 miles. The hills, which are of sandstone and conglomerate in nearly horizontal strata, continued to decrease in height till we reached

the prefectural city of Yuen-yang, where we anchored for the day, against the south-western suburb. A small stream from the south-west enters there on the right. A hill on the right bank, directly facing the city, is called the *T'ëen-ma-shan*, or "Hill of Pegasus," the tradition concerning which is, that in ancient times, when it split open, the cliff exhibited the three characters

天馬王, *T'ëen-ma-wang*, "The King of the Celestial Horse." Adjoining this, on a smaller hill, is a tall slender pagoda without galleries, named the *Këih-sing-tā*, "Polar-star Pagoda." There is a popular tradition concerning that also, that it was built by a former prefect, who suspected the fidelity of some of his wives, and that when the structure was raised in view of the official residence, such was the effect of the *fung-shwuy* or "geomantic" influence, the grievance ceased. It was built in the year A.D. 1755. Just facing the pagoda, the *Wan-chang-kǒ*, or Sanctum dedicated to Wan-chang, forms a conspicuous object inside the south-east corner of the city. There is a Keang-se guild in the city, and also a joint guild of the Shan-se and Shen-se traders, called the Shan-shen-meau.

From this point to Hankow, the descent of the river occupied us nine days more, and we arrived in the afternoon of September 4th.

4. *Report on a Journey to the Upper Waters of the Niger from Sierra Leone.* By W. WINWOOD READE, Esq.

(Communicated by the COLONIAL OFFICE.)

"SIR,

"Sierra Leone, 21st December, 1869.

"Although I have already made a report to your Excellency upon the details and results of my first journey into the interior from this Colony, it will be convenient for me to speak of it again as briefly as possible, since it is difficult to separate the two journeys. In fact, I consider that from January 20th to November 5th, I have been engaged in one and the same expedition. The whole of that period of time, with the exception of a fortnight in June, was passed by me in the interior. Under the government of Sir Charles Macarthy, Major Laing travelled to Falaba, about 200 miles north-east of Sierra Leone. He was not allowed to pass that town, and, after remaining some time there, returned to the Colony. Nothing resulted from that journey, and since then half a century passed, and not a single traveller attempted to open up the country directly interior of this settlement. In my journey to Falaba, commenced in January, 1869, I took a route different from that of Laing. He went from Mahello, I from Port Loko, and my route led me through the country of the Limboos, a people much dreaded by Native travellers, and through whom I had great trouble in passing. On my arrival at Falaba, I found that I was within three days' journey of the Niger; but the King, following the example of his father, would not permit 'his white man' to pass. I was detained at Falaba three months.

"But though my journey had failed in a geographical sense, I saw that it could be turned to account for the benefit of the Colony. My journey through the Fimmanee country had proved to me that the stipend-system was an admirable instrument for the governing of Africa outside the British jurisdiction, and I was convinced that it might be advantageously extended. Accordingly I brought down with me Deputies from the Kings of Falaba and Limbo. The Falaba envoys, delighted with the presents which they received from your Excellency, and even more delighted with the honours which had