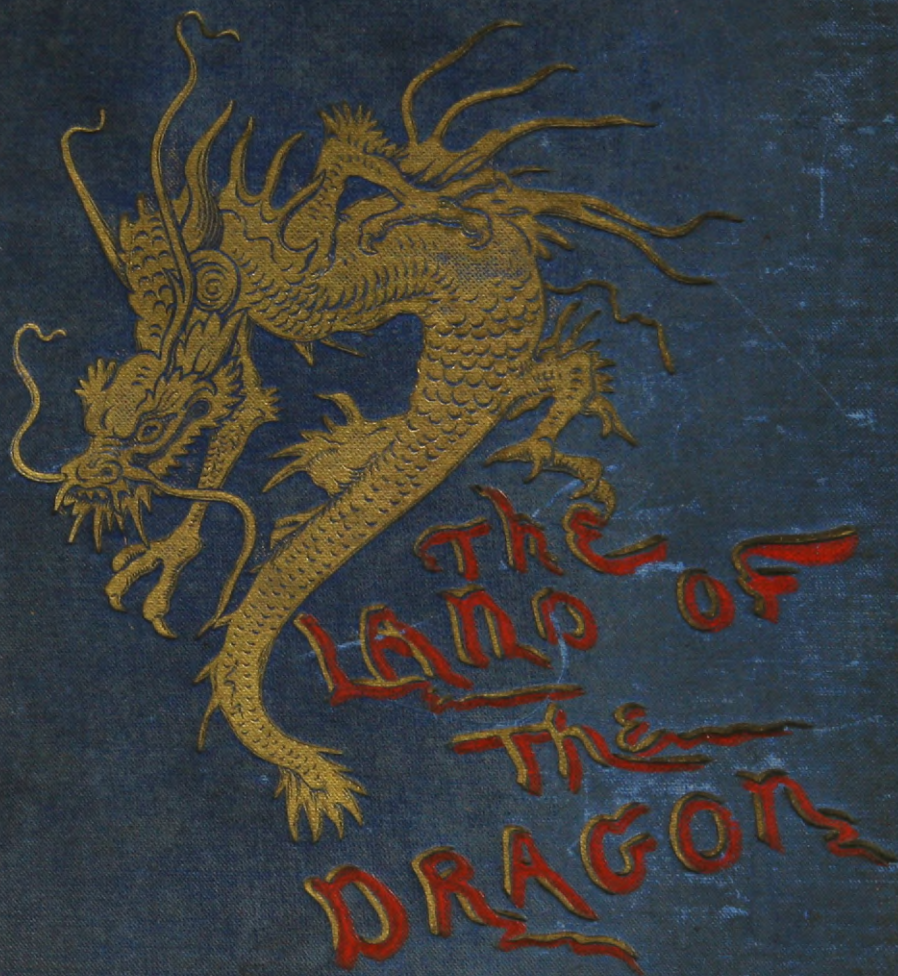


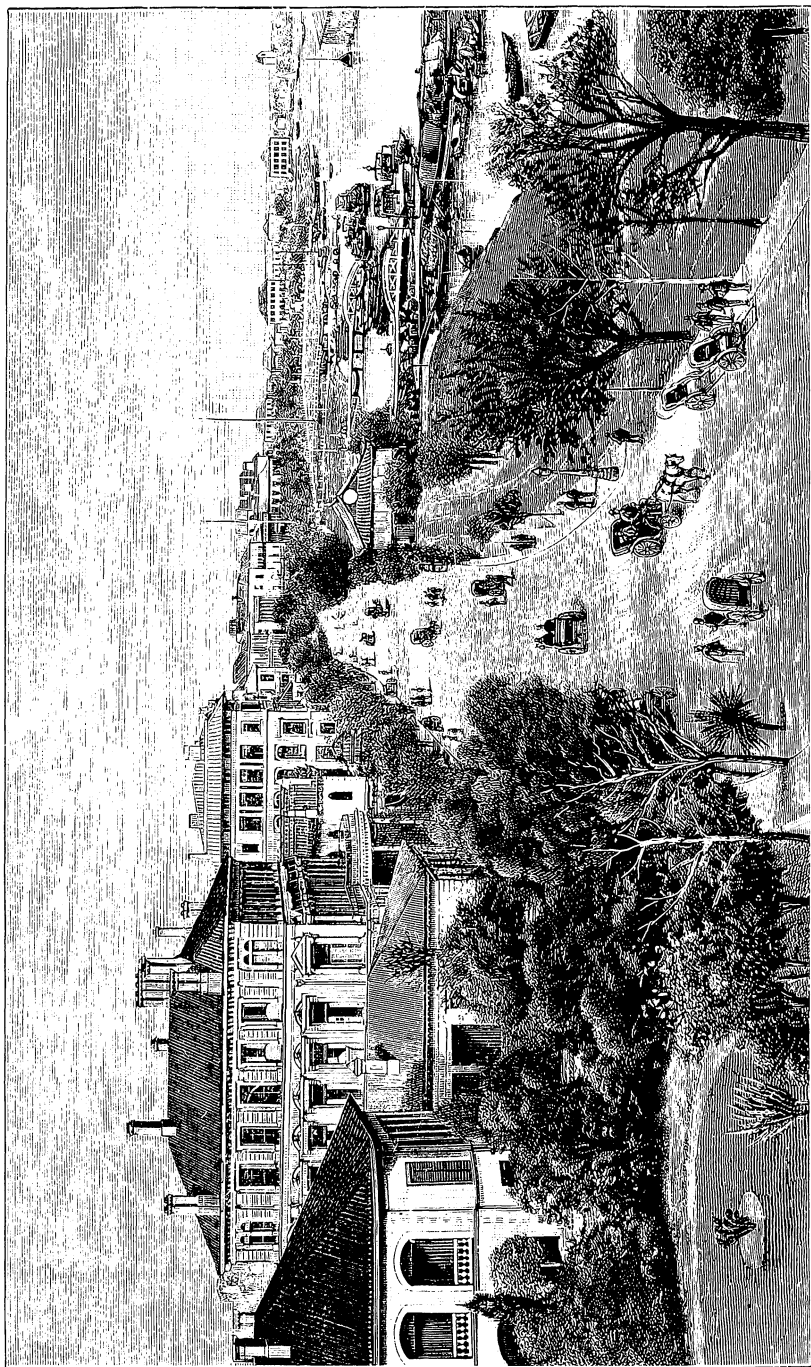
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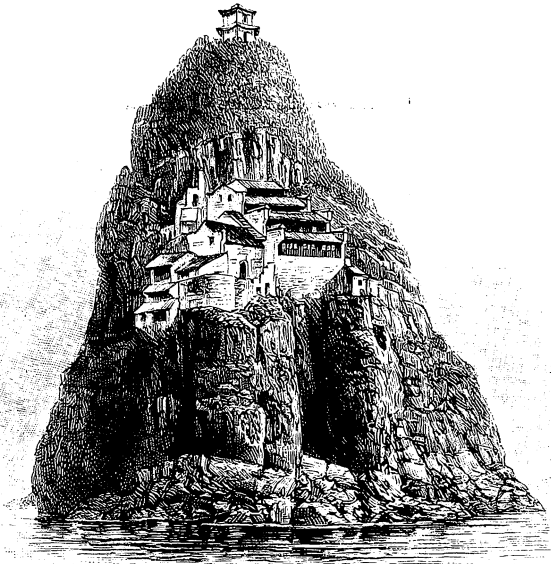


THE BUND, SHANGHAI.



# THE LAND OF THE DRAGON

MY BOATING AND SHOOTING EXCURSIONS TO  
THE GORGES OF THE UPPER YANGTZE.



'THE LITTLE ORPHAN.'

Page 55.

BY

WILLIAM SPENCER PERCIVAL.

H.B.M.'S CIVIL SERVICE, CHINA.

*WITH MAP OF THE AUTHOR'S ROUTE.*

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THE  
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CHAPTER I.

Shanghai—A Dismal Swamp—Early Days—The present Time—The Battle of Muddy Flat—Camping out—The Night Guard—Afternoon Parade—Bad Weather—Return to Shanghai—Chinese Debutants—Clubs and Societies—Our servants—A rascally Mafoo—Summary Punishment—The Chain Gang—The Cathedral—The first Railway in China.

SUMMER in Shanghai is a season that all Europeans would wish to avoid. From May to September, the depressing nature of the climate by day, and the hot, muggy, motionless atmosphere of the night, drive away all hopes of sleep or rest. You lie hour after hour rolling in a perfect bath of perspiration on your bed, impatiently waiting for daylight to appear and bring some little relief from this nightly infliction. And, when at last the smallest glimmer of dawn comes in the East, after a sleepless night, you drop off into a quiet doze,

no sooner are your eyes closed, than a cloud of mosquitoes, and other nearly invisible flying pests that will not and can not be caught, and who appear to have no purpose in their short lives but that of torturing, worrying, and extracting profanity from their weary victims, settle upon your face, and all exposed parts, entirely driving away further hope of sleep. It is not surprising that all who can do so endeavour to escape this discomfort, though few succeed.

Five or six of such successive summers thin the blood, weaken the constitution, and bring on a chronic state of depression and unfitness for any kind of exertion. Thus, we and our troubles would soon be at an end, if no change of air and scene were possible.

I shall be told this is a pessimist view of our torrid season. Of course it is, yet unfortunately it is drawn from personal experience.

New arrivals—and we are all new for three summers—suffer most, both with regard to the attractions we offer to the little aerial fly, and also with regard to the ozoneless constitution of the native air, that brings not the refreshment congenial to our island nurtured lungs. Happily the weather everywhere is changeable; even here the gauges are not at high pressure all the four months at a stretch.



From July to September, is, we consider, our typhoon season; and, disastrous and fearful as it is at sea, to us, landsmen, the black storm-clouds are hailed as messengers of the goddess of health, and the first burst of thunder as the announcement that the sceptre of summer is broken. For a month or six weeks, gales from every quarter sweep round us; it is usually later on in September that the thunder and rain-storms visit us in their strength.

After this, in November especially, clear, cool, glorious weather, with a touch or two of frost, runs on till the end of March.

Such were my feelings when, after a residence of eight years in Shanghai, I applied for and was granted leave of absence for twelve months. I at once took passage to England, the best and most complete of all changes, to say nothing about the pleasure of looking up old friends, of whom you may have heard little or nothing since leaving them years before.

While I was in England, many people sympathised with me in having to live in such a wretched place, as they had heard Shanghai described as nothing but a 'dismal swamp,' and they inquired in the most artless manner possible whether our houses were built or raised up upon piles, or whether the ground was sufficiently dry

to admit of our occupying tents or log huts. Now, for the benefit of all such sympathising friends, let me tell them in a few lines what kind of a place this 'dismal swamp' actually is.

Many and numerous are the buildings in this far eastern port that would be a credit to the West-End of London. Our 'bund,' or river frontage, is the admiration of all visitors, and the extreme cleanliness of the entire settlement the delight of those who live here and enjoy it. Shanghai is entirely self-governed. Each year there is a general meeting of ratepayers, who propose and discuss ways and means of providing funds for the ensuing twelve months' municipal expenses. About ten or a dozen of the merchants and bankers are proposed annually to act as councillors for the ensuing year. They are then balloted for, nine of whom are elected. These nine gentlemen, with the assistance of a secretary and a general staff, manage and finance the funds provided, and look after the safety, comfort, and well-being of the community.

Early in the forties, when Shanghai was first fixed upon as a place of residence for merchant foreigners, it was unquestionably a 'dismal swamp.' No one ever thought of venturing out without first casing his feet in a pair of long sea-boots. The whole settlement, or rather the place where

the settlement was afterwards built (I have been so informed by those who were here at the time), was nothing but a large swamp, a plain of paddy, or rice-fields, teeming with the germs of cholera, ague, dysentery, and all the variety of diseases that undrained land so abundantly produces. A visit to the cemetery will show you line after line of tombstones, inscribed with the ages twenty-five, twenty-three, twenty-seven, twenty-two, twenty-four, and so on, inhabitants in the early days of this once benighted place.

Some years ago an improved system of drainage was proposed by the municipal surveyor, which, though extremely good, was, like all other good things, expensive. Nevertheless, means were provided, and every street in the place was drained on this plan. It has taken a few years to complete, but it is finished, and there is now no better drained city in Europe. The scavengers' carts go through and clean each street three times a day, and the watering-carts seem to be never idle. We have some excellent water-works built three miles lower down the river, which at a very low cost afford every householder an unlimited supply of clear, pure, and good water. There is no limit, the pressure is always on, and a most powerful pressure it is, as one soon discovers should a pipe unfortunately burst. The daily supply is about

two hundred thousand gallons for municipal purposes, and a million for private consumption. Every street is lit with gas, and all the more important ones with electricity. Police, European, Indian, and natives, patrol the settlement day and night, and mounted Sikhs all the outlying roads.

We have a fine public garden laid out along the river bank, in which the municipal band of thirty musicians performs three nights each week during the summer months from nine to half-past eleven p.m., and each afternoon during the winter. On these soft tropical evenings nearly the entire foreign fraternity lie about in groups, on long reclining chairs, or promenade the smooth-made paths, wiling away the time with conversation and cigars.

The constant passing and re-passing of boats in the clear and bright moonlight, reflected brilliantly on the surface of the river, which is more than two thousand feet wide, gives much interest and animation to these most popular gardens, planted as they are with many choice flowers and shrubs, and decorated with fountains and rockwork.

There is a most excellent yacht club, and also a boating club, both well supported. During the spring, summer, and autumn there is a yacht-race every Saturday, and the rowing club gives



us considerable amusement with spring and autumn regattas, two days each season, when all Shanghai makes holiday, and everyone goes to see the Scotch, German and English crews pulling for their laurels.

The cricket club possesses one of the best grounds east of the Suez Canal. The grass is beautifully kept, smooth and level as constant rolling and weeding can make it. There are frequent matches during the season, not only among the members themselves, but also, as we frequently see notified, 'The Navy *v.* The Cricket Club.' 'The Peninsular and Oriental *v.* The Cricket Club,' etc. The members, in a most liberal manner, provide a large and comfortable tent, with a superfluity of refreshments for their visitors.

The Fine Arts Society gives an open exhibition once a month, during the winter, and once a year a general collection of all the works is shown at an evening conversazione. Prizes also are awarded (by ballot) for the best works in landscape, figures, sea-pieces, etc.

The amateur dramatic company favour us with from six to eight performances during the cool weather. The theatre was built by subscription, and cost five thousand pounds. It is most elegantly and tastefully decorated, and will comfortably seat about nine hundred persons.

There are three lawn-tennis clubs, and most of the private houses have beautifully kept lawns attached, with from two to four nets, and three small boys to each net, for running after the balls.

The volunteer fire brigade is an exceedingly popular society, and well supported by all the young and active members of our community. Before the building and completion of the water-works, a fire *was*—a fire! It meant the destruction of anything between twenty and one hundred houses before it was extinguished. One fire a few years ago consumed more than two hundred houses. But now, since the water company have carried their mains and hydrants all over the place, a fire has no chance at all. The supply of water is so abundant, and the pressure so overpowering, that, in a few minutes after the fire-bell has sounded the alarm, a perfect deluge is pouring over the flames.

The race club is another of these very popular institutions. The course, one mile and a quarter round, is a fine grass course, well cared-for and well attended to. The training course is a distinct piece of ground, and the steeple-chase course separate again. There are four continuous days' racing in the spring, and four in the autumn, when Shanghai again makes holiday, and nearly everyone is found on the 'stand.'

The training of the ponies is carried on in the early morning for about six weeks before each season. A small entrance-fee, six dollars for the four days, is charged for admission to the course and stand; but for this the stewards provide a most sumptuous tiffin for all comers, and abundance of all kinds, liquids *ad lib.*, from 'Heidsieck' down to clear filtered water. No professional jockeys are permitted to ride at these races, only gentleman 'jocks,' each in the owner's colours. The time made by the ponies is very good, considering their size, and the weight they have to carry. Their height runs between twelve-and-a-half and thirteen and three-quarter hands. Here is a table of their usual racing time, on good going ground, but of course it differs according to the state of the turf:

2 miles . . . . .	4 min. 27 sec.
$1\frac{3}{4}$ " . . . . .	3 " 52 "
$1\frac{1}{2}$ " . . . . .	3 " 16 "
$1\frac{1}{4}$ " . . . . .	2 " 41 "
1 " . . . . .	2 " 6 "
$\frac{3}{4}$ " . . . . .	1 " 30 $\frac{1}{2}$ "
$\frac{1}{2}$ " . . . . .	58 "

The volunteers, another popular society, consists of cavalry, artillery, and infantry, about three hundred men in all, but would turn out in far greater numbers were occasion for their services to arise. I think there is hardly a

man in the settlement who has not served his three or four years, or more, in the ranks. About four years ago there was every prospect of a local disturbance among the Chinese, and the volunteers were called out. There were then only about three hundred on the roll, but four hundred and fifty put in an appearance at the Main Guard.

For the past few years, during the early spring, the municipal council have addressed the Commissioner of Her Majesty's Forces in Hongkong, requesting him to send a suitable officer to inspect the Shanghai volunteers, a request which is always most politely acceded to. The result of these inspections has been so favourably reported upon by the different inspecting officers, that Her Majesty's Government has liberally presented to the volunteers a serviceable battery of four nine-pounder breech-loading guns—good handy tools that would be most useful in case of a row.

The cavalry are armed with sword and carbine, the infantry with the latest Martini-Henry rifle, with the triangular bayonet. The old sword-bayonet was discarded some years ago, on account of its weight.

The rifle-butts are more than a mile outside the settlement. Nine hundred yards is the longest range that can be made, and, if no matches are on hand, practice goes on merrily every morning,



from six to nine o'clock. The accuracy of the shooting has been very favourably mentioned in all the reports of inspecting officers from Hong-kong. On examination of the scores, which are strictly kept, they have stated that the average shooting exceeds by a long way that of many regiments of the line. Praise not undeserved; for in the various matches with men from Hong-kong, with picked men from the various corvettes and gun-boats that come into the harbour, in nine cases out of ten the volunteers are the winners.

Once, and only once, in the early days of the settlement, when their homes were threatened with pillage and destruction, were they under fire. To use a well-known Napoleonic figure, they 'received their baptism of fire' at the battle of Muddy Flat. Not a particularly romantic name, but good enough for its purpose, as it accurately represented the state of the ground where the action was fought, which was ankle-deep in mud.

It occurred in April, 1854, on the outskirts of the settlement, under the walls of the Chinese city of Shanghai. The Imperialists were engaged with some rebels, who held possession of the native city, and they (the Imperialists), for some purpose best known to themselves, attacked the foreign concession.

They were briefly ordered to retire, and as they refused, but continued to fire on the foreigners, their camp was stormed and captured. A company of about four hundred men, sailors and marines, together with another party of American sailors from some British and American gun-boats then lying in the harbour, were landed, and formed for the attacking party. The volunteers were under the command of Mr. Consul Wade, better known in later years as Sir Thomas Wade, late Her Majesty's Minister at Peking. The assault was made on the Imperial camp by the sailors and marines, and the volunteers covered the flank of the main attack. More than once they were charged by the Imperial troops, but their order was never broken. The action lasted about two and a half hours, when the Imperialists fled in the greatest disorder, leaving their camp, baggage, and a vast quantity of arms and ammunition behind. Several of the volunteers were killed, others wounded, and more died from their wounds afterwards.

In bygone days, and yet not long past, the cavalry was by far the most interesting arm of the Service. Some avoided it, on account of expense ; for, although the council provided uniform, sword, and carbine, the horse, his keep, and equipment was the affair of the trooper. In those days,

there was more 'go' and life in the troop than later times have shown. Wrestling on horseback; tricks and dodges for unseating your opponent; tent-pegging; lemon-slicing; sword *v.* bayonet, and a variety of other games and feats of horsemanship were continually practised. Occasionally three or four hundred men would be landed from the British men-of-war in harbour, bringing with them a couple or more guns, and formed with the volunteers into two forces, the attacking and defending forces, Shanghai being the place threatened. The attacking force being sent some miles into the country before forming for the attack, compelled the defenders to retain their mounted scouts well occupied, in keeping them posted with the position and movements of their opponents. Moonlight parades and bivouacs were not uncommon.

All this was looked forward to with much interest, kept the men well together, and always brought out the entire strength of the force.

In April, 1881, the happy idea occurred to the captain of the Shanghai Light Horse to make them bivouac for a couple of days and nights in the open. The notion was enthusiastically received, all preparations were duly made, and one fine morning they started from head-quarters, all mounted and accoutred in the full complement of

campaigning gear. The troop was accompanied by the Shanghai Volunteer Artillery.

Their route lay down the Wong-poo road to the 'Point,' at which place a halt of ten minutes was called. This Point is the five-mile terminus of a broad and handsome road we have been allowed to make, and runs parallel to the river. Now they had to leave their macadam, and soft riding-path alongside, to turn on to the narrow bank which is the only native footway in China. Single file, of course, and with many a false step, they wound along the irregular embankment, till they reached the Kong-wan creek, where they found the bridge broken and impassable for cavalry. This necessitated a long détour, during which several mishaps occurred. Two ponies, while being led over a high narrow bridge, fell into the creek, and three more, who had refused to venture on this two-plank viaduct, were successfully swum across.

Having all returned to the river side, a pony put its foot into a hole on the fore-shore, and threw his rider, who alighted on the spike of his helmet. At 5.30 p.m. they arrived at the site of the encampment near Woosung. A tent had been erected on the fore-shore, extensive arrangements had been made for the commissariat, and

several house-boats had been sent down for sleeping quarters. Not a little of the interest and amusement was derived from the novelty of being each one his own establishment of servants, and great rivalry existed in coming out of the ordeal with credit.

Some knowing ones had sent their grooms and 'boys' down beforehand, but it was not *their* horses that were best cared for and tended. The ponies were picketed in the open, very much to their dissatisfaction; they did not at all understand why they should be kept out all night, under a black and cloudy sky, instead of being bedded down in their dry and comfortable stables. They showed their aversion by kicking, biting, breaking their tethers, &c. In short, it was only by much activity and watchfulness one could escape their heels and teeth. Two or three times a panic broke out among them, and it was with difficulty they were restrained from stampeding across the country.

As soon as the bugle-call to dinner had been satisfactorily attended to, the night guard was set. This was really the chief experience of soldiering we had met to practice, and, thanks to the usual volunteer weather, it was impressively executed.

The tent was the guard-house, and the guard

had two hours' duty and four hours' relief. About eleven p.m. the night had fairly set in for fog, rain, and squalls. The guard were soon soaked through both ulster and uniform.

The relief, resting on the tables, enjoyed a perpetual shower-bath from the roof of the tent, but the guard performed their duty conscientiously and cheerfully; a thorough soldier spirit being manifested by all. As morning dawned, a long day of the water and wind weather was threatened, but about eight a.m. the sun put his spear through the clouds; they divided, and a fine day ensued.

The morning hours were occupied, like those of the previous evening, in attending to the mounts, in rubbing dry, and polishing accoutrements.

About noon the Chinese came round in ever increasing numbers, and tasked the energies of the sentries in keeping them at a respectful distance. A sentry with drawn sword, marching up and down his short beat, inspired wholesome awe. A cordon was drawn; the Chinese ranged themselves tier above tier on the embankment, native passenger boats landing crowds from the surrounding country.

At the request of the captain, a parade-ground a mile distant, belonging to the Chinese military mandarin of the district, was courteously lent for

the afternoon. Several Shanghai notables came down in yachts, and at noon the bugle summoned the troop and visitors to the mid-day meal. At the close of tiffin, a senior trooper addressed the captain and company in congratulatory terms, to which the gallant captain and host cordially replied, and forthwith the troops were mustered for parade.

The parade-ground is a fine level enclosed piece of land within the embankment, and from the latter some thousands of Chinese had a good view of the manœuvres. The troops, with the exception of those on guard, went through their drill and different exercises with great precision, and very much to the admiration of several mandarins and officers in charge of the Chinese soldiers at Woo-sung, and of the officers of the other branches of our citizen army.

Only the incidents of the second night's bivouac remain to be noticed. If the first night was depressingly wet, the second was excitingly stormy. At sunset a cold north wind had risen, which, with the darkness, increased to a gale. The house-boats were being tossed about on the rising water, yet most of the berth occupiers insisted on reaching them, to the pecuniary advantage of the sampan men. However, there was not much sleep for those afloat. The guard were to be envied, for at

least they were on *terra firma*. All night the noise of the wind, added to that of the various crews, busily baling and vainly fending from collision in the darkness, and the cockle-shell craft tossing up and quivering down, as if with the determination to make this the last time of settling, did not allow of much rest.

At dawn it was found that two of the native boats had gone to pieces, one of the house-boats had broken up and sunk, and two more were driven ashore. All the crews had been taken off by the other boats. Five dollars each trip was the offer to sampans to take off the men, the distance between the shore and the boats being about thirty yards. One sampan made a successful trip, but no money would induce him to venture again. The reveille had been sounded at five o'clock, but it was not till nine that all the men were brought ashore by an eight-oared boat belonging to the harbour-master.

A cup of hot coffee soon put the half-drowned troopers to rights; ponies were attended to, they had given a vast amount of trouble and endless work throughout the night. A collection of the paraphernalia was made, tents struck, and all stowed away on board a cargo-boat, to return by river so soon as the storm should abate.

After a short inspection, the troops were formed



into half-sections, and the return march commenced.

The ground had become very swampy from the two nights rain, the ditches had filled with water, and there was a considerable amount of big-jumping to be done before we again reached the Point, where we got on to the macadam, and an hour afterwards were once again in Shanghai.

We have six private clubs, and every small hotel and grog-shop has its billiard-table and bowling-alley.

Many young and wealthy Chinese, from various parts of the interior, look upon Shanghai as Europeans look upon Paris or London. Most of them come here with plenty of riches, and a large credit, but the majority return—*i.e.*, if they return at all—very much after the fashion of the Prodigal. Many are the various places of entertainment for these celestial debutants, numerous in their way as those of any European capital. Night is turned into day, and day into night. Many dramas, and not a few tragedies are there enacted. Occasionally we, the outside barbarian, hear of the most notorious of these cases, but the greater number are hushed up and kept quietly among the Chinese themselves.

It would stretch this short sketch of our amusements and recreations to far too great a length,

were I to take each one separately, even with so short a notice to each as I have given to those already mentioned. The associations of men of congenial tastes and activities seem unlimited. Besides the clubs and professional institutions, those of amusement and entertainment are well represented in the subjoined list :—

Amateur Dramatic Comp <sup>y</sup> .	Gymnasium.
Asiatic Society.	Ladies Benevolent Society.
Athletic Club.	Lawn-Tennis Club.
Blackbird Club.	Liedertafel Society.
Boating Club.	Philharmonic Society.
Bowling Club.	Photographic Society.
Choral Society.	Polo Club.
Cricket Club.	Racquet Club.
Debating Society.	Racing Club.
Drag Hound Club.	Rowing Club.
Fives Court.	Rifle Club.
Fine Art Society.	Steeple-Chase Club.
Fire Brigade.	Swimming Club.
Fire-Flies Society.	Volunteer Club.
Golf Club.	Yachting Club.

I think my sympathetic friends at home will admit that this is not a bad list for a 'dismal swamp,' and that those who have heard of Shanghai by report only will now believe it is not the dull and listless place they supposed, and that they will try to think, as many others do besides myself, that although the summers, especially the

nights, are a sort of purgatory to Europeans, the autumns and the winters are perfection. The three last months of the year cannot be excelled by weather in any part of the world. It is bright, exhilarating, and cheerful. All out-door amusements are in full swing, and when the weather begins to feel a trifle frosty at night, sufficient to lay some of the long grass, then commences that sport which is, I think, more popular than any of the others, steeple-chasing. There is a run given every Saturday throughout the winter, and as this entails a pleasant drive into the country, and a good walk across the fields to where the tall flags show the last jump, everyone who can ride, drive, or walk out, find his or her way to the finish, generally a broad and deep ditch, where, not unfrequently, many of the tired ponies deposit their riders, to the great amusement of those who feel themselves warm and dry beneath their furs and ulsters.

This is the most truly cosmopolitan place I ever lived in, nearly all the nationalities of the globe come and go, and numerous are the languages spoken here. Of course English predominates, but one ought also to understand French, German, and Italian. Last Christmas I made one at a certain dinner-party that was given by one of our local magnates. Covers were laid for twenty-two,

and during the dinner no fewer than six languages were spoken—English, French, German, Italian, Spanish, and Japanese.

I have often heard people here complain about their ‘boy’s’ or house-servant’s dishonesty and impertinence. There are some who are constantly changing their servants ; they cannot agree, and although a Chinaman is very long-suffering, still there is a limit to even his patience, and if he has quite made up his mind to leave you, he will sacrifice his month’s wages rather than remain a day beyond the time he fixed himself for quitting your service.

I cannot say I have ever had much trouble with servants myself ; indeed, for the past six years I have been far better waited upon and attended to than I could ever hope to be in England, and at a great deal less than half the expense. Setting aside umbrellas,—which, in other places as well as China, appear on occasions to take unto themselves wings, and ought not to be counted among general losses,—the only thing I ever lost was a dining-room timepiece, but that was in the days of my griffinhood. One morning my ‘boy’ informed me, ‘Master, that chow room clock have makee walkee, my tinkee some tief man have go inside look see.’

At another time I had a little difficulty with

my mafoo ; but mafoos, or horse-boys, are notoriously a bad lot, as the Chinese themselves admit. I was running a very light, London-made 'Victoria,' sometimes with one horse, sometimes with a pair. They were a good match, same colour, same size, same paces ; one was disposed to be skittish, while the other was a good steady, quiet horse, without a foolish trick of any kind in him. After a time, this latter animal began to fall off very much in his style, gradually getting thin, and disposed to be lazy. I increased his food to no purpose. I physicked him ; still no use. Changed his physic ; effect still the same. Then I commenced to rake up and study every veterinary book I could find, but, after all my trouble, the horse remained just the same, while the skittish horse became the picture of health and strength. One evening, shortly before ten o'clock, a friend of mine suddenly came in to me, and said,

'Do you know your carriage is out ? I've just seen it in the Peking Road, and five Chinamen in it.'

'Nonsense,' I replied, 'my carriage went to the stable at seven o'clock, and has not been out since.'

'It's your carriage I saw in the Peking Road, not more than ten minutes ago, for I looked on the panel, and saw your crest ; besides that, I

recognised the mafoo, and he knew me. I accused him of bringing your carriage out at night without your knowledge. He said, "It was a licensed carriage, not yours at all."

Then suddenly the fog lifted, and I understood at once the nature of the horse's sickness. Jumping up, I said,

'Come round to the stable—we'll go and see;' and, as I caught up my hat from the hall, I selected a very unpleasant-looking hunting-crop, with a thick and serviceable thong. In three or four minutes we were there, just in time to see the mafoo taking the last of the harness off the poor unfortunate horse. We stopped there till he was rubbed dry, comfortably bedded down, and another feed given to him. Then we took the mafoo out, fixed him up, and—well, never in his life before did that man pass such an unhappy quarter-of-an-hour. At the end of fifteen minutes, he perfectly understood how it felt to be double-thonged.

I was not fearful lest he should run away during the night, he was much too uncomfortable for that. The next day I took him before the Chinese magistrate, and he was sent into the chain-gang for three months.

When the horse was relieved of work by night as well as by day he rapidly improved, wanted

no physic, and before a month had expired was as fresh and as well as ever. Since then I have had fairly good mafoos; but, although this occurred more than six years ago, that double-thonging is still remembered among the horse-boys of Shanghai. I casually heard it referred to by one of them not more than a month ago. It was a most salutary lesson; no such trick has ever been played upon me since, although I know for a certainty that private carriages are occasionally hired out for night-work by mafoos, when they are not wanted by their owners.

The 'Chain-Gang' is another of the institutions of Shanghai, and is composed of, and the ranks kept always full by, the Chinese thieves and bad characters of the settlement, who have been convicted and sentenced to hard labour. There are about fifty in each gang; the men are placed in half-sections—*i.e.*, in pairs, one behind the other. A long and heavy chain is then passed between them, to which each man is fastened by a lighter chain, fitting fairly tightly round his waist, and their work is to draw an enormous horse-roller over the newly-macadamised streets.

Every office and public building is connected by telephone. There are two submarine lines of telegraph cables, communicating to all parts of the earth. The 'Great Northern,' running firstly

to Japan, then through the Carean Straits to Vladivostock, where it crosses Siberia, through Russia, and on to any nation of the world; the 'Eastern Extension,' taking the southerly route by Hongkong, Singapore, Colombo, Aden, through the Red Sea, and so on to headquarters in London.

There is constant mail communication to India and Europe, always once, and frequently twice, a week, by the Peninsular and Oriental Company, the Messageries Maritimes, the Imperial German Mail, and by an eastern route, opened only a short time ago, by the Canadian Pacific Line.

Shanghai Cathedral is the finest ecclesiastical building east of Hindostan. It was erected by English contractors from the special designs of Sir Gilbert Scott. In style, therefore, it is modern Gothic. The designed bell-tower has never been built, but in every other respect the edifice is remarkably complete and harmoniously finished. The great east window, the windows of the chancel and of the transept are of the best kind of modern illuminative fine art. A very large and finely-toned organ was procured for the church a few years ago, but it requires an expert of no mean power to exhibit its volume and beauty.

Since the closing of the railway that was laid between Shanghai and Woosung about eleven or twelve years ago,—when the Chinese, after vainly



endeavouring to extinguish the 'Fire Dragon,' bought up the whole concern at prices highly satisfactory to the shareholders, made the sleepers into firewood, the rails into plates for ironclads, shipped off the engines and rolling stock to Formosa, and finally threw them all into a mud hole,—there has been no attempt by foreigners to form another line.

But since then great changes have taken place in the legislative mind. They planned, laid, and finished a railway for themselves (of course with foreign aid), but it was not forced upon them, they were not talked into it, and so, much as they dislike the actual fact, they look upon it complaisantly, and console themselves with the knowledge that they were not coerced into it. They frankly admit this is the thin end of the wedge, and that, however unwilling they may be to the extension of the system, they regard it as the decree of fate, and feel themselves helpless to stop it.

The people themselves are beginning to see and to acknowledge the advantages of good roads and speedy communication. Railways are popular with the million, but the mandarins fear the increasing self-will of the natives in the interior, if they are brought into too close connection with the coast, and the independent, free-thinking, open-spoken westerns. They already see the effect it

has had upon those who live in the open ports, and are apprehensive of loss of authority, should such radical reform become too general.

But it must be so. The government, to suit their own narrow-minded views, have allowed the splendid stone embankments of many parts of the grand canal and other water-ways to fall in, and partly to obstruct the passages for boats, the only means of transit. I have seen dozen of bridges that have never been repaired since the time of their destruction by the rebel invasion. Roads, they have none, and so the rail becomes the only practicable means of communication with the distant interior.

This, the first Chinese line, was commenced by the government officials at Peking, and was originally intended only as a means of transit for the convenience of the Kaiping colliery, to send their coal down to the nearest canal, a distance of about six miles—that was in water-connection with Taku. After a while the rails were laid a little farther; this being found both convenient and advantageous, they were still further advanced; till now they extend the entire distance to Tientsin and Taku, a length of some ninety miles. The road is finished, with the exception of ballasting; it is well and solidly built, and cost in round figures four thousand pounds a mile. A

considerable portion of the line runs across wet and swampy marshes, extremely good for wild-fowl shooting, but serviceable for little else.

This land was secured at a very low rate. High and compact embankments, with good foundations, run across it, so there is no likelihood of the line ever being submerged.

There are several bridges, crossing streams of considerable dimensions, near to Taku and Tientsin; these are all of iron, resting on stone piers and abutments.

The rails are steel. The engines and rolling-stock are all of British manufacture. The line is open for passengers, at present only between these two cities, and no one growls at the rate the managers have fixed for passengers' fares—one half-penny a mile for second-class tickets, three farthings for first-class. The carriages are certainly not so convenient or comfortable as those on European lines, but they are good enough for a Chinaman, and supply all he either wants or expects. He is by no means so particular or exacting as a westerner.

This is a very good start, and when once they become accustomed to the novelty of the iron road, and the surprise wears off, the natives will take to them as freely and unreservedly as they have done to gun-boats and telegraphs.

They are a peculiar people, difficult to convince, impossible to coerce, and hard to change from their old conservative ways ; but, when once they are seriously convinced that an innovation is practically advantageous, they no longer fear the opposition of spirits of earth and air, nor the displeasure of ancestral ghosts.

## CHAPTER II.

Start for the Gorges—Steamers of the Lower Yangtze—Chinkiang—  
 W. De St. Croix—The Steam Launch—A Narrow Escape—The  
 Customs Cruiser—A fine Game Country—The Village Teepaon—  
 Return to Chinkiang—The Wu-chow-Shan hills—A large Boar  
 —Wuhu — Kukiang — Hankow—River-side Dwellings — The  
*Bothwell Castle*—An Evening Drive—On the Island—The  
 Creo Rebel—The Fight for the Junk—Capture of the Junk—  
 Sailing away.

ABOUT the middle of April, in the year of grace one thousand eight hundred and eighty-seven, I was asked by Sir Roderick Runnime to make one in a party of two, on a proposed journey to the rapids, gorges, and glens of the upper waters of the Yangtze. It was not a scientific excursion, there were no new countries to discover, no new people to trot out before the world, no new trade routes to open up; it was simply an excursion for health and pleasure combined, to wander anywhere and everywhere our fancy should lead or our caprice should guide, to explore some small portion of this wild romantic country, and in short to have a good and pleasant time generally.

It is seldom more than once in a lifetime that

any ordinary mortal who has drifted on to the eastern coast of China has an opportunity of visiting the recesses of the vast Chinese empire; so, without the slightest hesitation, I at once accepted the offer. In three minutes the whole matter was settled, and in less than a week we were off.

Late one Saturday evening, at the time above-mentioned, I followed my baggage up the 'bund,' bound for the steamer that was to take us over the first part of our trip, and which was lying securely moored off the Taku jetty. She was a fine boat, and coolies were busily engaged 'Ah-hoing!' and carrying bales and packages to stow away in her capacious hold. As she was not to start till one of the small hours of the morning, I amused myself with rambling about the decks, and watching from on high the squabbles and comical angry altercations constantly occurring among the men below. Sir Roderick put in an appearance about midnight, and a little before two a.m. the screw commenced to revolve, and we were off.

The steamers that ply on the Lower Yangtze are a large and commodious fleet of boats. The *Nganking*, the name of the boat that was to carry us to Hankow—a vessel registering close on two thousand tons, and larger than some of the ocean-

going steamers—was most comfortably and luxuriously fitted up. The saloon, about fifty feet by thirty, was a compound of white enamel, bird's-eye maple, and gilding, well lighted, well ventilated, and well looked after. A good and a thick carpet was pleasant under the foot; the most comfortable of all lounging-chairs invited you to come and take things easy, sofas and chairs all being covered with green leather; while the most scrupulous cleanliness, evident everywhere, gave an outward and visible sign that our lives were pitched in pleasant places. At one end of the saloon stood a handsome and fine-toned piano, a violin, and some reams of music. The captain, a musical genius himself, and his chief engineer being equally good on the flute, made the time pass gaily. We carried two or three passengers who were proficient pianists, so there was no difficulty experienced in finding performers, and the three instruments discoursed harmoniously Mendelssohn, Beethoven, and Mozart.

The first night out we narrowly escaped running down a lorcha; we just missed her hull, but carried away a huge boom that was standing out over her stern. It was torn away with such an amount of cracking and splintering wood that it sounded as though the whole side of the ship had been crushed in.

The following morning was bright and warm, and the fresh breeze off the broad expanse of the river was thoroughly enjoyable. During the afternoon we passed Silver Island, one of the sacred islands of the Chinese, an extremely pretty rock, well covered with timber, and standing boldly out from the centre of the Yangtze. On its shores a few fishermen's huts are scattered about, and far up on its well-wooded sides is a fine old temple, frequently visited by strangers and residents from Chinkiang.

In a short time we arrived at the city of Chinkiang itself. This is the first of the ports up the river that has been opened to foreign trade, and is the great entrepôt of the trade of the grand canal, the northern section here entering the Yangtze, the southern entrance being some little distance lower down the river. The city was overrun and destroyed by rebels and Imperialists by turns during the war of 1840 and 1860. The country and villages for many miles round are now desolate and in ruins, the place never having recovered its prosperity since it was burned by the Rebels about 1860.

Some eight or nine miles to the south is a range of mountains, the Wu-chow-shan range, extending beyond the Poyang Lake, and far into the Kiangsi province.



Not more than four or five years ago the shooting round Chinkiang was all that could be desired ; game (principally birds) of every description was most abundant. Sportsmen made Chinkiang their head-quarters. Feathers and fur—everything, in fact, between snipe and leopard—could be found within easy distance. Each year, as cultivation advances, population increases, and villages destroyed by the rebels are gradually being rebuilt, so the game is being driven farther and farther into wilder and more remote regions, and on ground where pheasants and other birds were to be found by hundreds at the time of my visit, I now hear very poor accounts from those whom I have lately recommended to try the same district.

At the time of which I write, W. De St. Croix, an old and much esteemed friend, was engaged in the service of the Chinese Imperial Maritime Customs ; but since then, like many other good fellows I have known, he has unfortunately passed over to the majority. He was for a few years stationed at Chinkiang, and had several times pressed me to join him for a month's shooting up the Yangtze. Hitherto I had not been able to make my time fit in with his own. At last fortune favoured us, and on a bright winter afternoon I joined him at Chinkiang. He had secured the

loan of the customs' cruiser, a boat of about twenty-five tons, and manned by ten men, which said boat was to be our home for a month. To save time and a dreary tack up-stream in a most uninteresting part of the river, St. Croix had put into her plenty of comfortable bedding, an abundance of provision, and sent her off two days before my arrival to anchor at a given point, about ten miles above Nanking, there to wait for us, with a private signal burning through the night, so that we should run no risk of passing her in the dark. The following day we left in a steam-launch, made excellent time for fifty miles or so, when we arrived off Nanking. Night had already set in; there were a lot of junks anchored near the old city, necessitating a constant and vigilant watch being kept, and a good deal of porting and starboarding to prevent collisions. The captain and firemen were all Chinese. The engineer piled on the coals, and the little launch worked merrily on. We were remarking what excellent time the small boat was making, when our headlong career was at once brought to a most sudden termination, which sent us sprawling over the deck, and a couple of the men all but overboard.

We were high and dry on a bank. Bamboos were put over the side to find the deepest water, then a kedge anchor, with a line attached, was, in

the small boat, carried out astern. The propeller was reversed, all hands hauling on the rope, for there were no means of attaching it to the engine. No use. Over and over again we tried, till quite exhausted; the screw was stopped and we sat down, the better to take in and consider the nature of our situation, and to anathematise all the banks and shoals of the 'Ocean child.'

Anti-smokers may say what they like, but, before a word was spoken, out came my pipe. Hundreds of times, in various parts of the world, I have proved to my own complete satisfaction that, if ever you wish to think over a difficulty, or to find your way out of a mess, do not neglect your pipe; that should be your—as it would be my—first consideration. There is more in it than I can explain, but to me it brings the solution of all ordinary troubles clearly and distinctly.

After a long and angry discussion among the crew, which gradually grew so warm that at one time it certainly appeared as though the story of the Kilkenny cats was going to be illustrated, with the difference, Chinamen in place of cats,—the captain abusing the engineer, the engineer abusing every friend he could remember, especially the man at the wheel, who unfortunately happened to be the captain himself, and which did not at all tend to smooth matters,—all talking

together, no one listening, such is the way of the heathen,—when, like a momentary gleam of light, a sudden thought came into my mind. Why it should have flashed up at that moment I have not the most remote idea, for my thoughts were thousands of miles away, but I saw at once the importance of acting upon it. I can only attribute this inspiration either to the protective influence of my guardian angel, or—the infallible virtue of tobacco.

Suddenly turning to my companion, I said,

‘St. Croix, you speak Chinese; ask that crazy engineer if he has lately looked at his steam-gauge.’

Before I had fairly got the sentence out, up he jumped, the same thoughts as my own evidently crossing his mind, and, never stopping to ask the question, hurried off straight to the gauge. The next moment the roar of the steam through the blow-off cock told me something was wrong, so I made direct to the safety-valve, to ease the weight on the lever. It was tightly fixed and would not move in the least. Some lunatic had tied it down with a strong cord. A sharp knife soon released the fastening, when up flew the lever, and the steam roared like a thousand Niagaras through the escape. Why that boiler held together as it did, and how we all escaped being

blown into various parts of the river—for there was more than double the pressure of steam on than the boiler had originally been tested to stand—I cannot explain. If matters had taken their ordinary course, it would have burst into fragments, with eighty to ninety pounds less resistance than it actually had.

With a feeling of thankfulness for a marvellous escape from total annihilation, the rush of steam sounded pleasant and assuring; but to me the event will always present itself as one of those unaccountable hidden mysteries that for some incomprehensible purpose we are forbidden to explain or understand. Never since that time have I trusted myself, and never again will I trust myself to the uncontrolled mercies of a so-called Chinese marine engineer.

Shortly after this we were dragged off the bank by a large junk which was going down river. Steam was again got up, and in the small hours of the morning we gladly paid off the launch and turned in on board the cruiser.

Early the following day we commenced shooting near a small island on the right bank of the river, just outside the site of the Imperial lines round Nanking, where we found ducks, geese, and a variety of wild fowl. The next day we crossed to the opposite bank, and came into wet swampy

ground, with small reedy ponds or lakes, about three or four hundred yards inland from the river, and extending for a couple of miles into the country, on which were flocks of wild swans, some otters, and the usual variety of ducks, etc. Beyond this the ground became dryer and more undulating, with large patches of cane, strong, thick and about ten or eleven feet high. Further still were low rolling hills, covered with scrub and small timber. Here was the home of the wild pig, large and very savage wild cats,—at least, so we called them, but I think a naturalist would have given them another name, for I never heard of any cat showing the ferocity these animals did—deer, eagles, civet-cats, etc., while pheasants abounded everywhere. The country people held these cats in great fear, they were quite afraid to approach them, for they (the cats) did not show the slightest timidity in being approached, and had no hesitation in acting on the offensive; for if slightly wounded by a ball she would scream and fight like a young tiger.

And so on, day after day, as we crossed and re-crossed the river, we found the country full of game. If one place had the advantage over the others, it was round Rocky Point. From here we passed through the May Queen Channel; shot over Wade Island, which was full of deer; again

took to the banks, miles inland, and finally finished about ten miles above the island.

The weather was bitterly cold at night, cold and bright through the day, grand weather for shooting, and just the temperature for keeping game. The boat now, at the end of three weeks, began to look very much like a poulterer's shop. Over eight hundred head of pheasants, two long lines of wild pig and deer, a choice selection of wild cats, civet-cats and otters, about thirty wild swans, bitterns, geese, ducks and other birds. Truly Chinkiang and Shanghai revelled in game for many days after our return.

The river, here more than two hundred and fifty miles from the sea, is a noble stream, about a mile to a mile-and-a-half wide. With a wind blowing against the current there soon rises what a sailor would call very lumpy water, which on two or three occasions made me prefer passing the night in a mud-shelter, miserably cold, ashore, rather than trust myself to the incessant pitching, rolling and groaning of the cruiser.

The incidents connected with this trip were so continuous that I should fill a volume were I to begin their description. It was a series of constant pleasures and excitements, with but few annoyances. Our daily difficulties with the natives, their objection to our passing through a few mud

huts, called by them a village, or even our crossing a creek, till a dollar or two judiciously and privately passed over to the head man of the village caused him suddenly to discover that we were most respected and important strangers, travelling under the special protection of the Emperor,—the Son of Heaven, and the Brother of the Moon (which was quite true, as our passports showed this to be the case). And, further, he would urgently advise, or rather order, the country-people to be civil and obliging, and to assist us in every possible manner, or the supreme displeasure would be heavily visited upon them in the form of fines, and possibly in the loss of a few heads. A speech of this kind was generally quite sufficient to secure our freedom from molestation for the remainder of the day.

At another time our yacht became the object of an evident piratical attack from a large number of junks and boats which completely surrounded her, and it soon became clear that, if we were to save our boat, there was no time to be lost.

Then a good notion entered into our skipper's otherwise heavy brain. He hoisted to the mast-head a very brilliant yellow dragon flag, fresh from the Imperial stores. The sight of this flag was enough for our visitors ; it created more consternation among them than any other means we



could have adopted; they quietly sneaked off, vanishing in twos and threes, and, although we remained another ten days near the same place, they never disturbed us, nor did we ever see them again.

At the end of the twenty-fifth day we returned again to Chinkiang, passed the boat over to the custom-house officers, and the following morning left, on ponies, for the Wu-chow-shang Hills, about ten miles off, where we had arranged to finish our trip with four or five days among the boars and deer, with a possible chance of a leopard. The provisions were to be brought on by coolies during the day.

The first day was a blank, not a thing did we see, although we tramped many a weary mile in search of pig. Thoroughly tired out, at night we took up our quarters in an old ruined temple, which had been very extensive and in perfect condition before it had been visited by the rebels a few years previously. There were three Buddhist priests living here, all silent and taciturn as Trappist monks. We tried to get information from them as to the whereabouts of game, but not a sign would they make, nor a word would they speak.

‘ Good, excellent, a most brilliant idea, tobacco again,’ I said to my companion, who looked at me

in an enquiring way, as though I were rapidly graduating for Colney Hatch. 'Suppose we try the effect of a good brew of Glenlivet!' Hot water there was in any quantity, lemon, sugar, and the main ingredient itself had been sent up to us, and a good basinful, hot, spiced and sugared was soon made, which our holy men eyed with much suspicion, cautiously sniffed it, and then unhesitatingly tasted.

This was the turning-point of all our difficulties. The trouble after that was, not to make them speak, but to keep them quiet. They would talk; it was useless trying to stop them now. They would go with us themselves to where game abounded. They knew the place exactly, every path, every clearance, every gully. There was also another temple there, where we could stay, they would take us to it, and the priests were all charming delightful men. And so on, till finally we dozed off and turned in, in a dark and evil-smelling corner, upon a shake-down of neither very clean nor very inviting looking straw. Anyhow we slept the sleep of the just, in spite of all the evils that a swarm of fleas could inflict upon us. As soon as daylight broke, the priests did so far carry out their promises of the previous evening by telling us where to find pig, a distance of about eight miles from where we then were, but

they could not possibly accompany us, it was against the rules of their order.

Their information was accurate in every respect. There were the clearances, the paths, the gulleys, the temple, and the priests, just as they had been described, and the hills abounded with pig. St. Croix and I divided, but agreed not to get out of hail.

I had four beaters with me, thrashing the tangled scrub, while I kept to a small track, about eighteen inches wide, which was much easier walking. This was on our second day out, and it was near the summit of one of these hills that I bagged the largest pig I ever saw, who was within an ace of reversing the order of things, for he nearly bagged me instead.

The habitat of these animals is on ground exceedingly difficult to travel over, thick tangled scrub, about three to four feet high, varied with holes and hidden dry ditches, which in the wet season are rapid water-courses. Large and small boulders, visible and invisible, are constantly cropping up, while the tops of the hills are barren rocks, with caves and holes into which all animals retire during the wet season. The pigs commit a great amount of destruction among the crops lower down in the valleys, and the country people are only too glad to get rid of them at any cost, and willingly

turn out as beaters for Europeans bent upon their slaughter.

Suddenly one of the beaters called out, 'Yah-chue!' and a huge pig crashed through the scrub and trotted along the narrow path before me. I had a heavy twelve-gauge double rifle weighing close on to twelve pounds, and throwing two ounce flat headed conical balls, propelled by six-and-half drams of the best rifle powder. Some twenty yards in front of me was the monster, the largest I had ever seen; a splendid driving shot, and I knew there was quite sufficient power in the gun to rake him from stern to stem.

It was too easy a shot, and I suppose I was careless over it, for a worse shot I never made. The ball struck him five inches higher than I had intended, ran along his spine, tearing the skin along his back, and cutting away the half of one of his ears, inflicting a mere scratch that did not in the least disable him. With something between a yell, a grunt, and a roar, and with a look of most vicious wickedness in his eyes, he, quick as thought, left about wheeled, and charged straight, at a gallop. In a moment we were at close quarters. I knew, if I could not stop him, he would make things extremely unpleasant, and I had no desire to take a prominent part in the proceedings, which in such case would be held

before Her Britannic Majesty's Consul, acting as coroner on the morrow.

The direct line for his brain was too risky ; his head being at such an angle that the ball was certain to glance from his forehead, and it completely covered his chest. There was no alternative but to wait, and watch for a more favourable opportunity before disposing of my last chance. All this long description passed in less time than it has taken to write two words. There was no time to take out the empty cartridge, and insert a live one, and I knew perfectly well that my keeping a whole skin depended upon the one remaining shot. As the boar passed, he made a most vigorous dig with his tusks, but the instant before he made this thrust I had sprung on one side, off the track, into the scrub, and, as he passed, he just grazed me near the thigh. His impetus carried him two or three yards further, before he quite realized he had missed ; then he came round again for another charge, but, as he exposed his broadside, I planted the second ball, at not more than six feet distance, well behind his shoulder. He stopped instantly, favoured me with another of his wicked glances ; then, slowly his head dropped, and he fell over on his side, and died.

A loud whistle soon brought St. Croix to me ; we galloped him, slung him over a bamboo, and

sent him with four coolies down to Chinkiang, where we afterwards heard that he turned the scales at five-hundred-and-ten pounds. His tusks, which were in perfect condition, were six-and-a-half inches long.

If my first shot had been a bad one, the second certainly made up for it, for the ball entered at his left side, passed through almost the very centre of his heart, smashing his right shoulder before burying itself in the side of the hill.

I have heard of much larger boars than this one, which roam about the hills in the Yuetchow district, in the Chekiang Province. They are reported to be very savage, doing great devastation in the rice-fields, and sometimes eating children. The country people are very much afraid of them, as the boars attack them, and have no fear. They are black and white in colour, are said to have teeth like saws, and to weigh from eight to nine hundred pounds each. This is commonly reported to be true, but I should like to see them before I place implicit reliance in the story of their teeth like saws and their eight and nine hundred pounds weight.

For the next two or three days we had some excellent sport, then picking up our ponies at the first temple we stayed at, we quietly rode back again to Chinkiang. Within twenty-four hours

I found myself on board the *Pekin*, bound for Shanghai.

My friend soon after this was transferred to Foochow, and we made all arrangements for a month among the tigers, which are plentiful in the hills a few miles to the west of Foochow. Before this could come off, alas, the wretched climate and a burning fever carried him off, and, several days before I even heard he was ill, he was laid quietly to rest in the picturesque foreign cemetery at Foochow.

I could not avoid relating this story, for although it has nothing to do with the present trip, still it all occurred on the shores of the Yangtze. As soon as the steamer arrived within sight of Chinkiang and the far distant Wu-chow-shang Hills, the circumstances of that particular time came so vividly before me that I realized it all as clearly as though it had happened only the previous day.

The following extract from the *Shanghai Mercury* conveys a most accurate account of Chinkiang and its surroundings, as it is at the present time :

Few ports in China would seem to be better situated for trade than Chinkiang, and few perhaps have been more disappointing. The first glimpse of the port is eminently reassuring, as the fine bund, at the time of year bosomed in trees, the conspicuous houses topped

by the British Consulate, and the goodly array of hulks connected by handy bridges with the shore make a picture surpassed in our picturesqueness by none. The hum of traffic and the cry of the coolies permeates the air; the familiar aspect of the Sikh policeman appears at the corners of the British concession; the concession roads are wide and well kept, and, what is unfortunately unusual in China, the enterprise of the foreign residents has succeeded in acquiring a system of good riding roads penetrating the country in all directions as far as from four to six miles from the central point.

Chinkiang too is situated at the junction of North and South China. Canals connect with the great cities of Soochow and Hankow; from the opposite banks starts the canal with whose name we are familiar from childhood, the Imperial Canal of China which bears on its waters the rice tribute of the southern provinces to the very gates of the capital, while at the highest floods in the Yangtze internal navigation permits native craft to ascend without difficulties almost to the walls of Nanking. Past it in a broad stream flows the magnificent Yangtze, here upwards of a mile wide, flowing in a broad but even current to the sea, and opening up a road to the extreme west of the Empire. In fact, no site in China seems to offer greater facilities for the establishment of a vast emporium, yet with all its advantages Chinkiang as it at present exists is little better than a Peddlington.

At the first opening of the port it was assumed that, with the suppression of the Taiping rebellion, its unrivalled position would make it the centre of a large and increasing trade. The Inspector-General nursed it, and proclaimed it the natural rival of Shanghai, British con-



suls prophesied a direct trade on its own account with Europe, even the native authorities for a time seemed to have come out of their shell and lent it aid and counsel. One Taotai, to his honour, be it said, laying aside the prejudices of his class, re-introduced the art of silk cultivation, and the mulberry-trees planted by his assistance have originated almost the only industry which remains in the neighbourhood.

In spite, however, of all this flourish, Chinkiang remains a comparatively poor port, and a source of bitter disappointment to most of those who watched over its early days. It has failed to establish any independent trade of its own, and has sunk down to the level of a mere accessory to the much more important emporium of Shanghai. It is true that of late years the body of trade has extended, and that the value of property has considerably increased. The British bund, well-kept and policed, is in strange contrast with the earlier days of the port, when a solitary footpath fringed with rank grass sufficed for the entire traffic, and the Concession roads seem as thronged with traffic as were the streets of Shanghai itself before the establishment of the wharves freed the roads of the settlements from the crowd of burden-bearing men. Still the British concession is but a small spot, a few hundred yards square, and on it is concentrated the entire trade of the place, native as well as foreign.

Here even more conspicuously than elsewhere the causes of the utter backwardness of the port are to be traced to the extreme centralisation and utter selfishness of the governmental system of China. The adjacent country, rich though it is, is sacrificed to the foolish system of agriculture which represses the growth of

cattle and teaches that rice, and rice alone, is worth the expenditure of the efforts of the people. The rolling plains which might support myriads of cattle are consigned to the growth of a rank herbage, useless for every purpose except a bare supply of fuel for an impoverished population, while the trees, which might under a proper system of forestry bring in enormous wealth, have been ruthlessly destroyed, and every particle of wood required has to be imported from distant regions not yet rendered barren, however, by the uncontrolled folly of the Chinese woodsman.

Nor is the system of canals in any better condition. For the greater portion of the year water communication even with the southern portion of the province is rendered impossible by the neglect of the commonest measures of conservation, while northward the Imperial Canal is a monument of what apathy and the want of the most rudimentary knowledge of the first principles of hydraulic engineering can effect. The so-called canal, which under skilled supervision might be made an averter of famine, and a vast benefit at all times to the districts through which it passes, has become a veritable curse, it has disturbed the proper drainage of the country, introduced elements of untold danger, and practically is made no further use of than once a year to expedite to Chihli one of the worst abuses of one of the worst governments under the sun—the rice tribute. Once the rice fleet, at an expenditure of money altogether out of proportion to the value of the article sent forward, has passed, the canal returns to the condition of a stagnant ditch, utterly unfit to carry even the local trade of the towns on its banks, which, except for the so-called roads,—mere cart-tracks in the sandy plains,

unsuited for the purposes of traffic,—are shut out from all communication with the outside world.

Within the last twelve months, the water in the Yellow River has disclosed a new source of danger to the Empire before which the damage already caused in Honan and Anhwui would fall into insignificance. The river now falls into the Hungtze, and by the ill-judged series of works forming the Imperial Canal the waters of the lake have been transferred from their ancient channel of discharge into the Kaoyu. The additional body of water now presses on the long embankment reaching from Yangchow to Hwaiian-fu, and already two or three times has threatened to breach it. The consequences of such an accident will not fail to be the swamping of the rich and populous plain of Kiangpeh.

Such are some of the causes which interfere with the prosperity of Chinkiang, and with it of a large section of the Empire. They are the results of a long series of bad management, and must take years to remove. Still, were any disposition shown to amend, there might be hope, but the most superficial glance at Chinkiang is sufficient to show that no such disposition exists, and that the little which has been done has been done solely by foreigners, and in the face of difficulties thrown in the way by those most to be benefited—the native authorities. It is the old story repeated, the best plans and the best intentions rendered of no avail by the unworthy jealousies of a government which has long ceased to be useful, and is rapidly becoming a curse to the country which has the misfortune to be under its control.

The following day we arrived at Wuhu, the

second of the open ports, celebrated, as far as I know, for nothing but its excessive dulness. After remaining here for a couple of hours, we were again under weigh, the boat heading for Kukiang.

This port is a considerable improvement upon Wuhu, and has a good open bund, planted very prettily with various kinds of trees. A week or two before our arrival, a violent storm had torn away most of the branches, and broken down the trunks of many trees, giving the place a desolate and woe-begone appearance.

Kukiang is again becoming a large and populous city. Here was another example of the constant vandalistic propensities of the rebel army. In 1858 or '59 they held the city. It was then surrounded by the Imperial troops, stormed and captured about 1860.

Shortly before the rebels evacuated the place they entirely destroyed it, and, when the Imperialists entered, they found only the remains of fire, slaughter, and total destruction. Not a single building remained, nothing but ruins, dead bodies and bleaching bones, that told their own horrible story. The destruction had been most complete.

Some years later, when foreigners began to build houses and settle down on the outside of the ruined city, some of the boldest of the natives

returned, looking up to the foreigners as their protectors. The more timid still held aloof, dwelling in holes and caves in the neighbouring mountains, but, so soon as they found the advance party were not ill-treated or disturbed in their holdings, they flocked in in considerable numbers.

Since that time the city has continued increasing, till it has now nearly, if not quite, regained its former state of prosperity.

This is the chief centre of the green tea district. The city is built on the banks of the river, and surrounded by a fortified wall about six miles in circumference.

After a stay of three hours, we were off again to Hankow; then passing another island, the Little Orphan, a most picturesque rock about three hundred feet high, rising right from the bed of the river. The eastern side is quite bare, with an enormous cave-like hole extending far into the rock, over the arch of which appeared to be built a village, but which turned out to be a collection of very good-looking houses for the priests; glorious in summer, but worse than an Arctic residence in winter. The remainder of the rock is covered with a variety of stunted timber, evergreens, and bamboos; there is a joss-house on the summit, and a few small wretched dwellings are below. We approached Hu-Kow, a building on the right bank of the

stream, something between a temple and a fortification combined. Here a broad stream branches off from the river, and leads directly to the Poyang Lake.

The Great Orphan, another fine rock, stands well out against the clear blue sky, close to the Hu-Kow Temple, and near the entrance to the lake. It was between these two rocks that a very lamentable collision occurred a few years ago; many people were drowned, and very lengthy litigation was the result.

On the fourth day after leaving Shanghai, we reached Hankow, and, fortune being good to us, we arrived there just in time for the races. It seems curious to talk about races in the interior of China, a sport the Chinese never heard of till it was introduced to them, like many other things, by the hateful 'foreign devil'; but here were races sure enough, by well-trained, well-fed, and well-groomed ponies, conducted and managed by a body of European residents, with the same rules and laws that govern the race-courses in the old country.

No matter what part of the world Britishers and Europeans generally find themselves landed in, there are four amusements never wanting, a race-club, a cricket-club, a lawn-tennis club, and

—what seems to be as necessary as a dinner-table  
—a billiard-table.

On the outskirts of Hankow, nearly all the so-called Chinese houses—or, more correctly speaking, all the most miserable shanties, letting in both wind and rain—on the bank of the river, are raised well up on piles, thirty to forty feet above high-water mark; narrow wooden pathways, running between the rows of houses, and small bridges connecting these pathways where the houses are not continuous. In these wretched dwellings live some hundreds of families, to all appearance without a care, and in the greatest state of contentment. Their business, whatever it may be, is mostly connected with boats and junks, for each house possesses either a sampan or a small, home-made, flat-bottomed boat, mostly rotten and leaky, which is continually bringing its occupants to grief, and when not in use is moored to the lower end of the piles. The owners ascend and descend by means of some iron spikes, driven in alternately on either side of one of the piles.

There is in times of flood the greatest distress among the riverside population. When the water rises twenty-five, thirty, or more feet above its ordinary level, many of these piles are swept

away, down come the houses, bringing their occupants with them, who are carried away in the current. Whatever becomes of the remains of these unfortunates, no one seems to know or to care; not one in twenty is recovered or ever seen again. Of course there is great lamentation among the survivors for the next week; crackers are let off by the thousand, small floating fires are set adrift on the stream to pacify the river god, gongs are beaten, and altogether the priests have a busy time.

So little value do the Chinese set upon human life in disasters of this description, which are of yearly occurrence in one part of the Empire or another, that the whole thing is soon forgotten, a fresh crowd occupies the places of the former crowd, piles are re-driven, shanties re-built, and so the new lot live their careless, contented lives till, history repeating itself, these people follow the lead of their predecessors.

In the early summer of 1887, the *Bothwell Castle*, a large ocean-going steamer of three thousand tons, was lying at anchor opposite Hankow, waiting for a cargo of tea. She had already been there two or three weeks, and was likely to remain two or three more; the weather being very bad, she made her holding secure with two anchors and a great length of cable. Before receiving her



full cargo, one of these sudden floods occurred, and a week or two later I received from Captain Tod the following account of the disaster. He said :

‘There had been a good deal of rain for the previous week, and we had heard that the melting snow from the eastern slopes of the mountains of Thibet was coming down the river. The river Han, which has its source in the mountains to the north of Szechuen, and runs for about eight or nine hundred miles through the provinces of Shensi and Hupeh, was also very much swollen and increasing in bulk, from the heavy rains that had lately fallen to the north-west of Hankow.

‘One morning, shortly after breakfast, we heard a rumbling noise far away up the stream, and not long after an immense rush of water, like a large wave, came rolling down the river, carrying with it numbers of junks, boats, houses, trees, cattle, and I should be afraid to say how many human beings, all mixed up in the most inextricable confusion. We heard that the river Han had somewhere received an enormous and sudden flood of water, which, added to its already swollen state, had for many miles flooded the country, and was washing all before it into the Yangtze. Across our anchor-chains eight or ten junks had drifted, and were washed and piled up one over the other.

It was impossible to reach them to set them adrift, and I was very much afraid the extra strain on the cables would be too much for them. Fortunately they held, thanks to the best of iron, without a flaw in any of the links.

‘Numbers of junks came sweeping down with the flood, all unmanageable, many coming broadside on across our bows, which went through them like a knife, the two parts of the junk floating past on either side of our ship. It was quite impossible to launch a boat, she would have been rolled over and swamped the moment she touched the water. With great difficulty and with much risk, we managed to save the lives of three or four dozen people; but, strange to say, some of them were very much displeased at being fished up out of the water. The Chinese said it was ‘joss pidgeon,’ their fate, and, as the river joss had taken away their all, he had much better take themselves also. Three or four afterwards tried to jump overboard. We put them ashore as soon as we could, and so relieved ourselves of any further responsibility.

‘Our most successful haul consisted of a wooden house, nearly complete, that appeared to have been carried bodily away without breaking up. We succeeded in getting a grapnel fixed in among the timber, and so floated the house round to the

stern of the steamer, where it was much protected from the current. From the house we rescued the entire family, father, mother, three children, and a couple of cats. They all recovered. Two days after, when the water went down a little, we towed the house ashore. Among others that we picked up was a woman with a small baby clinging to her. They were both apparently dead when brought on board, but were recovered by the doctor. Houses floated past with people clinging to them, some hanging on to branches of trees, while scores of corpses and the bodies of cattle seemed all over the river. Everything not drowned, everything living, both human and animal, were yelling, roaring, and screeching. All this, combined with the grating and crashing of houses, the sullen rush of water, the howling of the wind, and the swish, swish of the blinding rain, made such a pandemonium that I hope never to see again.'

If a Chinaman, or a European, on a calm and quiet day accidentally falls into deep and perfectly still water, cannot swim, and is in danger of drowning, and if a Chinaman happens to be near him in a boat, and could, without the slightest risk, and with the most infinitesimal amount of trouble to himself, save the unfortunate drowning man, he will never even attempt to do so, but will

immediately paddle his boat away as quickly as he possibly can. This I have known several times to occur in the Shanghai river. Not very long ago the Spanish Consul fell into the water when stepping from his boat to the pontoon. The boatman could have saved him by simply leaning over the side of the boat and stretching out his hand. But no; instead of doing this very simple and natural thing, he paddled his boat a short distance higher up the river, and went ashore to the consul's house, more than a mile away, to tell his wife that her husband was drowned. The poor man's body was found three days afterwards within a dozen yards of the place where he fell in. Such is the value a Celestial sets upon human life.

But supposing a European accidentally kills a Chinaman, then we get quite another view of the matter. The Celestials in such a case appear to find it difficult to set a high enough estimate on the life of the most miserable coolie. The Taotai is appealed to; consuls, judges, and lawyers are solicited for their assistance; the whole machinery of the criminal law is brought into active operation; the unfortunate man is arrested, indicted, tried, sentenced, and finally locked up for so many years that a very big slice is cut out of his three-score years and ten.

Here are a couple of good examples of the insatiable voracity of the Chinese, if they only get the slightest pretext for fleecing a European.

Some years ago, I was driving a skittish horse through the Hongkew quarter of Shanghai, when the natives, seeing its restless disposition, would insist upon running across the road, just under his nose—a common trick of theirs, as they consider the nearer they can escape being run down by a horse the better luck will follow them for the remainder of the day. The boatmen and junkmen have much the same idea, and frequently run their boats across the bows of a passing steamer, occasionally getting sunk. When this does happen,—which the Celestials generally manage shall happen with an old and rotten junk,—off rush the owners to one of the members of the legal profession; the value of the lost junk is doubled, her cargo trebled, several lives are stated to have been lost—generally quite fictitiously—but a high value is placed on each man's life, and a very high sum-total is demanded from the unfortunate steamer. The matter ends in a long, costly, and vexatious law-suit, the steamer in some way or other being always found to be in fault, and in five cases out of six, ultimately appealing to the judicial committee of the Privy Council for redress at a great expense.

But to return to my story. One of these speculative fools, trying to run his chance too close, was knocked down by the horse, and, before I could pull up, one of the wheels of the carriage had passed over him. I thought he was badly hurt, so I got down to see what damage had been done.

Before I reached him, he jumped up of his own accord, and instantly demanded one hundred dollars compensation for my running over him. He appeared more than usually active, and I asked him where he was hurt. Before he could quite fix upon the best place for damage, a crowd had gathered round him, upbraiding him for being such a fool as to ask only one hundred dollars. Why had he not asked for five hundred?—then they, as the accident had happened near their homes, could also share in the plunder.

While the argument was continuing, the crowd kept increasing, till two or three hundred people surrounded him, as he kept backing further and further away, the amount to be claimed gradually rising higher and higher, till finally they decided that I was to be 'run in' for the good round sum of two thousand dollars.

They argued the point so energetically, the would-be injured man always leading, that I seemed for the moment quite to have escaped their thoughts; so, taking advantage of this

oversight, and watching my opportunity, I again mounted the carriage, drove off, turned the first corner, and escaped, not one of them having seen me vanish. I should have liked to have seen their blank look of astonishment when I was found wanting. None of them knew me personally, so I was clear of what would have proved a very troublesome affair; and, although I afterwards frequently heard of inquiries being made, none of them ever suspected that I was the victim they wanted.

The other attempted 'squeeze,' as a Chinaman would call it, occurred on the coast. An old friend of mine, the captain of one of the large mail-boats running between Europe and the east, had just arrived in Shanghai. As soon as his ship was made fast to her moorings, he came to me and said,

'Here I am, and here the old ship remains for the next twenty-one days. This day three weeks I sail again. It's glorious weather—can't you manage to have a fortnight up-country?'

Yes, I thought I could. So I applied for leave, which was not refused, got a comfortable house-boat, a good crew of eight men, provisioned her, and on the evening of the next day we were off. This was at the latter end of November, the most beautiful weather in the whole of the year.

A delightful time we had, shooting here, there and everywhere ; there are no game-laws and no licences required, no preserving, the entire country for hundreds upon hundreds of miles is open before you. We lived upon game, and brought plenty back with us afterwards. Finally we came to a regular block at the end of a creek, and could not get the boat a yard further, but we found that, by walking a couple of miles, and then over some low hills, we came on to the coast. There were a few cottages, I suppose a fishing-village, at the place we reached, and some good-sized junks lying at anchor. Some three miles out at sea was a small uninhabited island, a mere rock, with a little vegetation on it.

We both had a wish to see what this place was like, and entered into negotiations with some junkmen for the sail there and back, waiting a couple of hours at the rock. Two dollars there and two back for each of us was the price. Eight dollars total. A frightful 'squeeze,' but they would listen to nothing less, so we agreed. Four dollars were to be paid on reaching the island, and the balance (four dollars) on our return to the mainland. The junk was a good-sized boat, with the ordinary Chinese rig. There were five boatmen, big sturdy fellows, who, all the way to the island, were continually talking in a quiet undertone



and occasionally casting sly and furtive glances at us. My companion said to me,

‘Those fellows are up to some devilment, they mean to play us a trick, so keep your weather-eye open and stand by for squalls.’

‘Yes,’ I replied, ‘I’ve been watching them ever since we came on board; they are certainly hatching something, but I can’t make out what it is.’

‘There are two of them,’ he replied, ‘that are concocting the whole thing, the others hang fire, but will ultimately be talked over, and then will follow the lead of the two principals.’

‘It’s no use bothering about it now,’ I answered, ‘we shall find out before long what they mean, and, if they intend mischief, I think we are more than a match for the five.’

‘I don’t expect there will be any difficulty if they are going to sail on that tack,’ he answered.

And then we reached the island, paid our four dollars, as agreed upon, and went ashore.

The place was well worth a visit. Although small,—not more than two or three hundred acres in extent,—it was very rugged on the sea-face, and the rocks were cut into most curious and fantastic figures by the storms of many centuries. Of course there was the inevitable joss-house—it would be very difficult to go anywhere without

finding one—very much out of repair, and containing the usual character of gods generally met with on the coast—the gods of thunder, storm, wind, etc. The island was quite deserted, there was no sign that anyone had been near the place for days, possibly weeks. We also found some very curious caves that had been worn into the rock from the everlasting beating of the waves. A couple of hours quickly passed, and then we went back to the boat.

The men seemed in no hurry to return. We told them we were ready to go, and then waited a little; still they remained lying on the deck, and showed no inclination whatever to move. We went to the headman, picked him up, stood him on his feet, and ordered him to ‘shove off.’ Up jumped the remainder of the crew.

‘Look out,’ I said, ‘now for the secret of the plot.’

By means of a mixture of Hindostani, Malay, and Pidgin-English Chinese, we understood each other perfectly. A curious language truly, but none could have suited us better. The two leaders must have lived some years in the Straits of Malacca, or thereabouts, for they were very fluent in Malay. From their looks anyone would unhesitatingly say they had passed their time there in piracy, for it is only within the last few

years these sea-rovers have, to a large extent, been driven from those sunny seas. Then the leader spoke out and disclosed the pretty little plot.

He said it was their intention not to return to the mainland till each of us had paid twenty dollars in place of the two agreed for.

I was not at all astonished at this demand, for I had fully expected something of the kind, and was only surprised that they were to be satisfied with so little.

The mail-boat skipper's face became the very essence of indignation and contempt. He looked as though he were ready to fight the whole gang single-handed.

'Mutiny and piracy,' he cried. 'I'll be d—— if I'll pay another cent; we'll make them put us ashore for nothing.'

For more than half-an-hour we tried to bring them to reason, but in vain. At length the leader replied to this effect:

'We'll give you a very little time more to think about it, and if you don't pay up, or give very good security for payment, we'll put you both on the island, and return without you; we are five to two, therefore we can, and we will do it.'

'Now,' said I, 'we've got to fight, we must pitch the five of them overboard, take charge of the

junk and sail her ourselves. The water is not more than five feet deep, and they'll easily reach the island.'

As we advanced, each of the men drew from under his coat an ugly looking piece of wood about eighteen inches long.

There is no occasion for me to enter into details of the scrimmage; those pieces of wood fell heavily, and so likewise did our fists. It was a tougher job than we had looked for, but finally the last man went over the side.

As soon as the deck was clear, I hoisted the sail, my companion cast off the mooring-line, and took the helm. We saw all five men on the island entreating us to return and take them off, but they appealed in vain. We had captured the junk in a fair fight, brought about by their own thieving propensities. They had attacked us with murderous weapons, when they knew we had only our fists to depend upon, and for what?—simply because we refused to obey their decree of 'stand and deliver.' They had done their best to break our heads, or throw us overboard, and we did not intend to give them another opportunity of fooling us. So away we sailed; between us, we trimmed the sail, managed the helm, and worked things in so satisfactory a manner that the old boat seemed to dance over the ground-swell which was rolling in on the beach.

Nearing the shore we saw a good landing-place, far away from where we had started. We ran the old tub ashore in a small bay, under the lee of a projecting cliff, about three miles below the village where we had engaged her.

We saw the men making signals from the island, and we also saw they were answered by the people on the land. No doubt a boat would soon be sent to them, so when we were fast ashore we threw out an anchor, and made tracks over the hills for our own boat as quickly as possible, and so got about four hours' start; for, as soon as the five men had told their own side of the story in the village, gongs would be beaten to assemble the crowds, and the whole country-side would be down upon us, and our chance of escape hopeless. We reached our boat, and luckily finding the crew there, explained very shortly that the villagers were coming to murder us all, that they must get up sail, work like horses, and put at least fifty miles between us and the village by daylight the next morning. And work they did, as hard as ever they worked before; every advantage was taken of bends in the creek to hoist the sail whenever it would draw; the yulow was never idle, and the boat made excellent time. Two or three times we heard sounds of pursuit, but there were so many branch creeks, and our boat sailed so well that we

soon left beating of gongs all behind, and at daylight a good deal more than fifty miles were between us and the coast. We never again heard anything more either of the junk or of her rascally piratical crew.

## CHAPTER III.

The British Consulate, Hankow—The Fire at the Consulate—Chinese Fortifications—Leave Hankow—Yo-Chow—Sha-Sze—An Unpleasant Visit—Approach to Ichang—Engaging a Crew—Getting the Crew on Board—Leave Ichang—Captain Yankowsky—Treasure Cave—Entrance to Ichang Gorge—Trackers—First Sight of the Gorge—The Pillar of Heaven—Sleeping Quarters—The Crew at Dinner—The River Illuminated.

SIR RODERICK put up at the British Consulate; there was not a spare room for me, and, as such a convenience as an hotel is not to be found outside of Shanghai, a good samaritan, H. F. R——, took compassion on me, when I met him on the race-course, invited me to make his house my house, and for the remainder of the time we stayed in Hankow generously provided for all my wants.

The second day of our visit Her Britannic Majesty's Consul gave a dinner-party to as many of his friends as he could muster on so short a notice.

Among his guests were the Russian and American Consuls, several merchants and their wives,

and others. Altogether we sat down twenty to a remarkably good dinner, with pleasant and cheerful companions.

Shortly after we had finished consuming all the good things that had been provided for our entertainment, and the ladies had withdrawn, one of the house coolies, in a half-frantic state, rushed into the room, with the information that the house was on fire.

It was true enough, for as soon as he opened the door, the smoke poured in; the staircase was in flames, caused by the bursting of a very large kerosine oil lamp hung at the junction of the dividing staircase, and intended to light two sets of stairs. The blazing oil was running in a broad stream of fire down the stairs, looking very effective and extremely pretty, a cascade of fire, if such a thing could be. But there was not much time to admire the effect, it had to be put out somehow, so our select little dinner-party was at once transformed into a volunteer fire brigade. Water, which was supplied in large quantities, appeared only to make matters rather worse; therefore rugs, mats, carpets, anything and everything that would smother the flames, was brought into requisition.

I saw two of our volunteers with a very fine Mirzapore carpet smothering some blazing



wells of oil ; another with a large tiger skin, the only wrap he could find, doing the same thing ; others, again, were busy with whatever first came to hand.

In about half-an-hour all danger was over, but it was a near thing ; and, when we again assembled in the dining-room, our general appearance was very ludicrous. A few burns, a few bruises was all the damage sustained by the brigade, but each one looked as though he had been most carefully got up for an Ethiopian serenade performance. White neck-ties had gone into mourning ; immaculate black coats had a most disreputable appearance ; and one gentleman, who was rather conceited regarding his long and glossy beard, was woefully lamenting a considerable portion of one side of it which he had left behind in the fire. The consul proposed or rather drank our healths, thanking us for our services, at the same time telling us that we did not appear half grateful enough, or sufficiently well pleased, for the little dramatic episode he had got up for our entertainment.

Hankow is the great tea-market for the Middle Kingdom, and a place of considerable importance to foreign merchants generally. The trade with Shanghai in silk, tea, straw-braid, and hides, is large ; were it not for this, and also for the trade

at the other river ports, viz., Chinkiang, Wuhu, Kukiang, there would be no employment for the fine fleet of steamers.

Before arriving at Kukiang, I should mention that, from Shanghai to that city, the banks of the river had been most uninteresting, all flats and plains, very little being cultivated. A few forts were built here and there on sites well selected, all with advantageous and commanding positions.

After passing Kukiang the country becomes hilly, in parts mountainous, and continues so until within a short distance of Hankow, when it again becomes flat and dreary.

On the gently sloping hills the tea-plant is cultivated, on ledges rising like terraces up the sides of the hills. Leopards, boars, and a large species of deer are said to inhabit the wilder and more rocky slopes. Pheasants are abundant everywhere. Wild fowl swarm all over the river during the winter months. Beyond Kukiang there are several fortified cities and towns. A good number of forts and batteries are built on the banks, and some monster guns protrude from their ports. The forts are low, sneaking looking buildings, raised a few feet above flood water-mark, so that the guns would have an almost level range. Some of the forts are good, others bad, but all so built that a landing-party would have no diffi-

culty in taking them from the rear. These thoroughly illustrate Chinese ideas regarding fortifications ; the front strong and almost impregnable, the rear, open and undefended.

At Hankow we made arrangements for getting on by a small Chinese steamer to Ichang, four hundred miles further up the river. We went on board our Chinese boat at midnight. It was raining hard, and dark as the bottom of a coal-pit. We did not know our road, so the consul sent one of his coolies with us, carrying a large lantern, as a guide. It was just as well he did so, for we should never have found our way, difficult enough in bright daylight, but impossible for us in the dark. More especially so, as we had to thread some of the narrow streets of the Chinese city. At last we arrived at the boat, wet and uncomfortable, but we soon found peace between the blankets.

The following morning we were a good many miles up the river, the sun shining and every prospect of a beautiful day. Nor were we disappointed as the morning advanced ; and I may here state that, during the whole of our trip, we did not have another drop of rain.

The next day, we passed the city of Yo-chu, situated at the entrance of the Tung Ting Lake. Beyond Hankow the banks again become flat and uninter-

esting, until within about thirty miles of Ichang, when again we got into a mountainous country, the rocks a mixture of conglomerate and limestone, with sides almost vertical from the river, with no cultivation, and only a few bushes and scrub scattered about. But this is advancing at too rapid a pace.

Some eighty to ninety miles above Hankow, the river commences to throw up numerous banks and shoals, so that we had now to anchor every night, soon after dark, and move forward again at daybreak. Close to Yo-chu, on the opposite bank of the stream leading to the lake, stands a fortified monastery, called Yo-chow, a place of considerable strength, situated on a bold promontory of rock, commanding the river and the entrance to the lake. In former days this was evidently a place of some importance. No junks could possibly pass this part of the Yangtze without permission from Yo-chow ; but, from what little I could learn about the place, it stands now only as an ornament and a memorial of one of the former strongholds of the river.

Having passed Yo-chow, we were now floating on the waters of the Upper Yangtze. This lake (Tung Ting), an enormous sheet of water, and very deep, is one of the main feeders of the lower river, and from Yo-chow, where it joins the

river the waters of the Upper and the Lower Yangtze are divided. But strange to say, although the lake is not more than fifteen to twenty miles from Yo-chow, and connected by a broad and deep stream, not more than three or four foreigners have been on it; consequently, less is known about its shores than the shores of most of the lakes in the interior of Africa. How far it extends is mostly guess-work, and all the information we have concerning it comes from some of the travelling Jesuits, a little later than the time of Marco Polo.

Next day we arrived at the city of Sha-sze, a large, straggling, fortified, and important place. All the Szechuen cargo is trans-shipped here for distribution by canal to the district round the Tung Ting Lake; by inland navigation to other provinces; and by river to Shanghai.

The Szechuen boatmen will not engage themselves to go beyond this point. Here they stop, have a good time so long as their money lasts, and, when that is done, they look out for another boat to work up stream again to Chung-King or Su-chui.

There were three or four hundred junks lying here, most of them putting out or taking in cargo. This is not an open port, and, as we had a few Chinese passengers to land, we anchored in the

middle of the stream till a boat came from the shore to fetch them.

In this place the natives have a very strong dislike to foreigners, and the very few who have ever landed here have experienced a very rough and unhappy time, which lasted until they found themselves safely on board their steamer again.

The captain of our boat told me that many times he had carried to Hankow and back the military mandarin of Sha-sze, and that he (the mandarin) had often invited him to come ashore and see the town; adding that any time he felt so disposed he was to send him word, and he would dispatch a guard to bring him safely to the yamen. Shortly after this a distinguished sinologue was voyaging up the river with this captain, and, being a zealous missionary, wished to go ashore at Sha-sze. Accordingly, word was sent to the mandarin, asking permission to land, and that a guard should be sent to accompany them. The mandarin sent them a hundred soldiers under the command of an officer, and the two foreigners landed. No sooner were they ashore than the mob began to hustle them, which gradually increased to much rougher treatment. They bolted into a native house and barricaded doors and windows with anything they could find. The soldiers were quite powerless. The crowd of

several thousand roughs completely overwhelmed them. The mob, failing to make an entrance into the house, commenced to pull it down. At this juncture the skipper executed a scientific retreat from the rear, made a run for the river, jumped into the first boat he saw, cut her moorings, and was soon again on board his steamer.

Dr. W. was finally got out, disguised, and, placed among the soldiers, taken to the mandarin's yamen, where he was kept till the excitement had quieted down, and then smuggled again on board. Neither of them has ever expressed the least desire to visit Sha-sze again.

There are four or five missionaries living here, but even they avoid going out of their houses. They generally take their exercise on a bamboo platform, raised over the top of their house. We saw them so engaged during the short time we were here, landing the few Chinese passengers.

Next day, shortly after passing Chi-Kiang, when near a village called Yang-chi, on the right bank, we came to some large limestone quarries in full work, and apparently turning out a vast quantity of material, if one could judge from the enormous masses of rock piled up, some ready for burning, some already burnt, and several very large junks loading with the stone.

A few miles beyond the quarries, still on the

same bank, are two exceedingly pretty natural arches, among the rocks which are very distinctly seen from the river. These have been formed by mountain torrents washing through the softer parts of the rocks during many thousands of rainy seasons. The arches are not close together, but separated by a distance of about a couple of miles.

Now we come to the first gorge, only a small one, and about twelve miles from Ichang. The 'Tiger Teeth' gorge, so called from a number of pointed rocks said to resemble a row of tiger's teeth, but where the resemblance comes in is visible only to Chinese eyes. The people all over the country are very fond of these fanciful titles, and frequently give high-sounding names to very common objects.

Here the rocks become high and precipitous, rising straight from the water's edge. The southern and western bank inland is mountainous, chiefly a conglomerate formation.

From here the Ichang pagoda, about two miles below the town, becomes clearly visible. It took us a little under five days to reach Ichang from Hankow, and no steamers—at least, none that are at present built—can ascend further up the river.

As soon as the anchor was dropped off Ichang, we went ashore to arrange for boats and coolies to ascend the gorges, which commence about five



or six miles above Ichang. The natives of this place, unlike those of Sha-sze, show a very friendly feeling towards foreigners, so long as their customs and prejudices are not interfered with; so, without any doubt or hesitation, we steered our way into the midst of the boating community, and made our wants known.

The steamer in which we had just arrived was to remain here some time before making the return trip, and the captain, always glad to visit his favourite haunts, willingly consented for the time to become our guide, interpreter, and friend; and as such he now went with us ashore, to fix up matters with the boat-coolies. Then came a change in the scene, and one somewhat difficult of description. Hundreds of coolies, natives of every grade and occupation, men, women, and children dressed and undressed, in all stages of rags, unhealthiness, and dirt, the great unwashed, talking, shouting, gesticulating, and bargaining all at the same time. And with the air reeking with the one perfume so celebrated throughout all China, strongly flavoured with garlic, opium, and other nauseous compounds, it was enough to give any ordinary mortal symptoms of that peculiar and unpleasant sensation which a landsman experiences so frequently, slowly but surely creeping over him in a strong gale of wind at sea.

This continued for a long, long time, but at last we managed to secure three boats and about fifty coolies, of all sizes and complexions, but all good sturdy fellows, not one of whom looked likely to fail us at a pinch. They were to be quite ready to start at daylight the following morning. A cook and personal attendants we had brought from Shanghai. So, having arranged all things, as we thought, in a highly satisfactory manner, we retired again to our steamer, and were up and dressed the next morning by daylight. After waiting some time, and there being no sign of a boat or shadow of a man making his appearance, once again we went ashore to discover the cause of all this dilatoriness; for by this time we ought to have been out of sight of Ichang.

The previous afternoon we had foolishly advanced the men money to buy rice for the voyage, which they declared was absolutely necessary before they could start, and now behold the result! Half of them were drunk, the other half stupid with opium.

It was no use lamenting or moralising over the uncertain and incomprehensible nature of the heathen; they had to be got on board somehow, before matters got worse.

First of all, we got several bags of rice, and put these on board at once, for all the money we

had advanced for this purpose yesterday was turned into samshu and opium. Then out of the crowd of amused onlookers we selected four of the most villainous and powerful looking ruffians we could see, hiring them, there and then, to have our crews on board in three hours ; no pay if they were not all there by that time, double pay if they were there in two hours. Then we retired and awaited results. In less than two hours our villains of the drama came and reported, ' All piece man have got, all man blong all plopper, so, look see sampan.'

We went on board the boats, and there certainly was our helpless crew ; counting them over, we found the number correct, but I am quite sure there were a good many substitutes among them. Anyhow, the number was correct, and we could not say which were substitutes, and which were not, so we paid up, and exit ruffians. Into the ways and means adopted for getting these men into the boats, we thought it better not to inquire too closely. Afterwards we heard of a few of their tricks which, in the wilds of China, might pass unnoticed, but would most assuredly have brought them under the ban of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, were such practices carried on at home. Fortunately a fair wind was blowing up the river, so, placing the

large junk in front, the other two towing astern, we got up the sail, and had soon left Ichang behind us.

The river here, over a thousand miles from the sea, is three-quarters of a mile wide, with a depth of thirty to sixty feet, the water as deep a dozen yards from the shore as it is in the centre of the river. We got about two miles away from Ichang, on the opposite shore, thus running no risk of losing any of our men again, and we came to an anchor, firstly for breakfast, which was badly wanted, and secondly, to give our men a chance of sleeping off the opium and samshu, for it would have been dangerous to go on with them in their present state, although, when sober, they were a good hard-working lot.

I said we had three junks. The largest was one of the Szechuen trading junks, about seventy to eighty feet long, with a good deck-house in the centre. This Sir Roderick and I took for our own accommodation, rigged up a couple of sleeping compartments and a dining-room, divided off with a number of British, French, Chinese, and American flags lent to us by the consul at Hankow. The second boat was to carry our 'boys,' cook, provisions, and a few coolies, and was to perform all the functions of a kitchen. The third boat was the additional coolies' boat. The loudah of this boat

was to be held responsible for all absentees. After tiffin, about three p.m., the crew began to pick up a little, so we got under weigh, and by five p.m. had entered the first gorge (Ichang Gorge). I had better here describe our guide, for it was owing to his knowledge of the mountains that we were enabled to see so much in so short a time.

He was a Russian by birth, Yankowsky by name; a man with the most unfailing amiability of temper, and with a constant desire to make all things work smoothly, as pleasant a travelling companion as anyone could wish for.

Notwithstanding his good nature, he could be a useful man in a row, but in this respect his services were not required. For twenty years, off and on, he has lived in this part of the country, sometimes in Government employ, sometimes in the employ of the China Merchants Company. He is well acquainted with the gorges and glens for miles round Ichang, having rambled through them scores of times. For years he has studied the navigation of the river up to Chunking, sixteen hundred miles from the sea; and is more capable than any other man to navigate the first steamer that runs to Chunking. He is a good botanist and a geologist, has added many new and rare ferns to the gardens at Kew, and some choice fossils to the British Museum.

About fourteen or fifteen years ago, he brought up from Shanghai a large number of young and healthy fruit-trees, which he planted in favourable positions in many secluded glens. Previously to this, there was no fruit in this part of the country. The young trees, judiciously planted, soon began to thrive, grew rapidly and prospered. The fruit ripened, and fell. The seeds were carried by the birds to many distant gullies and other inaccessible places, and then fresh trees and shrubs appeared also. Now, from a few trees planted by our guide, some years ago, for miles inland, on both banks up and down the river, fruits of various kinds are abundant. Cherries were the only fruit that was ripe when we were there, but in five minutes we gathered more than enough to last for the remainder of the day. We also saw pears, apples, figs, oranges, prunelloes, &c.

Within a short distance of the gorge, on the right bank of the stream, and about two hundred feet up the side of the rock, is the entrance to a cave, but as this entrance is not more than four feet wide, and very high up, it looks a mere crack, and if not pointed out anyone would pass it by unnoticed. It is difficult of approach. This is the noted Treasure Cave, so called from its being chosen by the inhabitants of this part of the country as the safest place in which

to deposit their valuables when the country was over-run, many years ago, by a horde of men, whom the natives called the 'red-haired western barbarians.' They have a superstition that whoever enters this cave never comes out of it alive, consequently none of them ever venture into it. Still, for all that, our guide and another 'foreign devil' had thoroughly explored it. He told me a long story about some men being lost in this cave, either in some of the pitfalls, or some of the numerous galleries that branch off from it.

It is a curious thing that many of the mountains in these parts are perforated by tunnels and galleries striking out in all directions. But it is quite true (so we were told) that, from the time these men disappeared in the cave, they have never been seen or heard of; and this, together with one or two other trifles, has given the natives ground for their superstition.

Here is an account of our guide's venture into this dreadful cave, accompanied by the engineer of his boat, who volunteered to go with him. It is almost word for word as he told it to me.

'We came to the cave well supplied with lanterns, ropes, picks, and all necessary appliances to make a thorough exploration. A priest, who lived in a temple close by, expostulated with us on our folly, as he called it, but it was no use;

we left him talking, till we passed through the entrance, and then we neither heard nor saw him any more.

‘After searching many of the galleries, in some of which there were deep well-like looking holes, necessitating very cautious progress, otherwise a fall into one of them would have been unavoidable; by a narrow foot-path being left between the hole and the side of the rock we passed on, and came to the end of one of the larger tunnels. Here we found some remains of clothing, a number of old deer-horns, and most certain and undoubted signs that the cave had once been tenanted by a band of forgers. Several other trifling things turned up. At the end of another gallery we found a very broad and deep shaft. Splicing two ropes together, one not being sufficient to reach the bottom, we fixed a lantern to the end, and lowered it down, for the twofold purpose of finding the depth and testing for foul air. The light burnt brightly at the bottom, and the engineer consented to descend.

‘Sliding his foot through a loop made in the rope, slowly and gently he was let down by his companion. He reached the bottom safely, released himself, and commenced an examination of the floor of the shaft.

‘For ten minutes or so all was quiet, when the



captain, thinking it quite time the engineer made some signal of all being right with him, called down the shaft. No answer. He called again more loudly, and listened attentively. Nothing but dead silence. Then he became alarmed, ran down to the boat, a couple of miles away, for some rope and assistance, to search for the remains of the engineer, who he concluded had either succumbed to foul air or had a mishap of some kind at the bottom.

‘After leaving the cave, it took him fully four hours to return, on account of having to go back to his steamer for more rope, there being none in the boat. On arriving at the cave mouth, there sat the missing man, quietly smoking his pipe, and wondering what had become of the skipper. This was his explanation.

‘At the bottom of the shaft was a long narrow tunnel, which the engineer followed, being sometimes obliged to creep on hands and knees to pass the lowness of the roof, sometimes upright, with the roof many feet above his head, till finally he saw a very slight glimmer of what he supposed to be daylight. He was not mistaken, for in a short time he arrived at a small outlet more than a quarter-of-a-mile distant from the entrance.

‘Not caring to creep and crawl back again the same way, he came out at the newly-found en-

trance, and scrambled back again to the place where they had first entered, only to find his companion missing. After a vain search and much shouting, he sat down, lit his pipe, and began to moralize on the uncertainty of all human affairs, cave-exploring in particular, thinking there was more truth in the Chinese superstition than foreigners were disposed to believe, and wondering whether there would be a very lengthy and troublesome inquiry over the missing skipper. What blame would be attributed to him, or, worse still, would he be accused of having pushed him down one of the many holes they had found? Marvelling when and where the remains of his companion would ultimately be discovered, the two men, each supposing the other to be smashed at the bottom of a shaft, suddenly stood staring at each other face to face.'

Now we resume our journey.

Before we arrived at the cave, having reached Mussulman Point—a very large and lofty rock standing well out into the stream and forming the entrance to the gorge—a good opportunity presented itself for 'tracking,' an expedient which, whenever possible, is eagerly seized upon by the boatmen, this being far more easy for the men and quicker for the boat than the endless,

monotonous toil of rowing against a strong current where very little headway can be made.

The boats hug the rocks as closely as possible, and, whenever a long projecting point stands out into the river, the tracking-line—a long line made of plaited bamboo, attached to the bow of the boat—is slacked out, to give her more play, and a very powerful ‘bow-sweep’—a long huge oar projecting over the bows, and worked generally by ten or a dozen men—comes into play. Thus it would appear that the boat is steered from the bows, which is perfectly correct, for in swiftly running currents, such as are here met with, she would be driven on to the rocks, or carried away into the current long before she would answer to any action of the rudder. The ‘bow-sweep’ throws the boat’s head out into the stream, the trackers haul with all their force on the rope, and, as soon as the promontory is passed, the gong sounds, the trackers at once slack their end of the rope, which is at the same time taken in on the boat; the bow-sweep throws her back again out of the current, and once more the boat hugs the bank. The sides of the rock have innumerable holes that have been made by the iron points of the bamboos used by the boatmen for keeping the sides from scraping the rock, and which same kind of propulsion appears to have

been in vogue for a far longer time than they have any record or any idea of.

The appearance is very curious, many of these holes being as much as a couple of feet deep, and would have been much more had the men not found a difficulty in withdrawing their bamboos from a hole deeper than this ; and this is not in a soft sandstone rock, but in hard conglomerate, a small piece of which is with difficulty chipped off with a heavy hammer. From the immense number and depth of these holes, it must have taken hundreds upon hundreds of years to produce them. A slight touch with an iron pointed rod and then on ; and this, at uncertain intervals, gives one some slight idea of the length of time these primitive habits must have been handed down from father to son, from generation to generation.

Far away, higher up on the side of the cliff, are, partly natural, partly made, very narrow footpaths, enlarged where necessary, and cut out of the precipitous sides of the rock, sometimes a couple of feet wide, sometimes a trifle more—a mere shelf on the vertical face of rock. Along these narrow paths the trackers scramble ; how they keep their foothold is a marvel to everyone excepting themselves. It would be dangerous enough, and would require a remarkably cool

head, to creep along these ledges entirely unencumbered; but when one considers that these men are fastened to a long and heavy rope, with a lumbering junk fixed at the other end, dragging her against a swift and powerful current, subject to sudden jerks, or possibly to a dead stop altogether, it makes one marvel a little how they can go on jumping and shouting, and playing all kinds of antics, two or three hundred feet above your head, apparently sticking to the side of the rock—for from below not a sign of the ledge is visible—without a catastrophe of any kind whatever. Away they go, sometimes low down, almost level with the river, at other times far up the sides, where they look no larger than mice. Here and there roughly-hewn steps let them down to a lower level, or take them up to a higher one.

Occasionally the leading men come to a steep, sloping rock, down which they slide on their backs. When they reach the bottom of the descent, the end of the rope is thrown to them, and off they go again, shouting and yelling in a most frantic manner, leaving the others to follow as best they can. Sometimes creeping, sometimes running round points of projecting rocks, over sloping, slippery paths, up and down, always keeping a strain on the rope, the only wonder is

that they are not all drowned in the wild swirling waste of waters below.

One or two of them always remain behind the trackers to clear the line from the sharp corners of projecting rocks, and ease it gently round nasty bends.

And so these Szechuen boatmen pass their lives, always running the finest possible chance of its being brought to a violent and sudden termination; working hard, through rain and storm, fair weather and foul, from daylight to dark, all for the good round sum of two hundred cash, equivalent to tenpence sterling per day.

The river from Ichang had been running due south, or nearly so, consequently we had been steering north, but at the point we now were—Mussulman Point—it suddenly changed its course to the west. As soon as the corner was passed, the river narrowed from over half a mile to about two hundred yards, and the gorge instantly burst upon us in all its wild and savage grandeur.

What a grand, what a glorious sight! It was worth the expedition, and well repaid us for our twelve hundred miles of travel. The rocks rose precipitously from the edge of the river to a height varying between five hundred and two thousand feet. They are of a limestone nature, the summits of many having curious castellated forma-

tions, with turrets and battlements; while others have their highest points formed very much after the fashion of cathedral spires. The latter are the highest peaks of all, and reach an altitude of three thousand feet. It was a wonderfully beautiful sight, and for several minutes we sat admiring, without speaking a word.

The water had a dark, uncanny, creepy look, in consequence of light being shut out by the high and overhanging rocks, the base being thrown into a deep and gloomy shadow. Bamboos, small stunted pines, and various kinds of shrubs, crop out here and there on points, ledges, crevices, or wherever they can find a place to strike their roots. This brightens up the entire scene, gives a look of freshness to the gorge, and takes away from the barrenness of the rugged mountain sides. The tops of still loftier mountains away in the far distance, with their pinnacles, some showing through, some above, and some entirely hidden by the clouds, formed a beautiful and fitting background to a most perfect picture of wild savage scenery.

There was a strong current, and the boats had some difficulty in making headway. Still the wind, what little there was of it, was fair, and a few puffs occasionally gave us a chance of hoisting our square cotton sail; so, with wind and oars

combined, we continued slowly to advance against the swiftly-running current. In these gorges, hemmed in as they are by high rocks on either side, the wind is always fair or foul.

At half-past six we made fast to some rocks for the night—anchor we could not on account of the rocky bottom,—under the shelter of some large boulders that broke the strength of the water, near to a cluster of huts (called a village) which bears the name of Nan-tow. Close by was an exceedingly curious rock, named by the Chinese the ‘Needle of Heaven,’ eighteen hundred feet high; affording an excellent opportunity to any member of the Alpine Club wishing for distinction, as its summit has never yet been reached. The base is small, rising from the edge of the water up and up till its peak looks misty in the clouds.

When the boats were fast and properly secured, we went ashore for a ramble, there being a couple of hours’ daylight still before us. We were followed by a number of natives who were living in the huts, and who looked upon us with as much curiosity as we should upon some newly discovered zoological monster. They were very civil, but particularly curious, wishing to examine our hair, boots, clothes, &c., nothing escaped them, while a sudden burst of laughter every now and then told us they had found something un-



usually amusing. At dusk, we went again on board, and found dinner ready for us,—and we were no less ready for dinner.

During our meal, the crew prepared their sleeping quarters for the night, which was on the fore deck, divided from our own quarters by the front of the deck-house.

A number of bamboo poles were let into sockets made for the purpose, in the sides of the boat; to these other cross pieces were fastened, then longitudinal pieces, until in a marvellously short time the whole erection resembled the frame-work of a house. The roof was then covered in with coarse bamboo mats, and the same description of mats closed in the sides. It is perfectly wonderful to what a vast number of uses the bamboo can be put. It is used as food, *i.e.*, the young shoots are eaten, and uncommonly good they are. Their clothes are made of it, also hats, umbrellas, mats, houses, ornaments, boats, and a great variety of other useful articles. Green mats were then laid on the deck, and on these the crew and trackers lay down, just as they were, and slept soundly till daybreak.

On these boating excursions, it is always desirable to turn out two or three times during the night and take a look round, if only to satisfy yourself that the moorings have not slipped, and

that no strangers are prowling about. A little care and watchfulness of this kind has a most excellent effect when it becomes known, as it very soon does, that you are on the alert. But here, with the men lying close outside our doorway, it was difficult to get out without stumbling over one of them, and coming down full length over three or four more. At such times our ignorance of Chinese was decidedly more an advantage than a defect. They took it all in good part, and, after having had their say, rolled over to sleep again.

While working, the crew feed every three hours on a mixture of boiled rice, cabbage, and oil, and on special occasions a little fish. Their method of feeding is peculiar, and amusing to an onlooker.

Firstly, each man takes a basin and chopsticks, and helps himself from the bulk, which is in a large iron pot over the fire. Woe betide the cook, if any man takes more than his share. Then they squat down on their haunches in various parts of the deck, with the bowl balanced on the points of all the fingers of the left hand, and placed underneath the chin ; at the same time the mouth is opened to its full extent. Then commences a most intricate process of shovelling with the chopsticks as quickly as possible. When the mouth

is quite full, the chopsticks are used to crowd the food already in the mouth into the cheeks, so as to make room for more, and the shovelling begins again. Any lumpy pieces are neatly picked up between the sticks and crammed into the cheeks at once, just as a monkey would crowd in nuts. When the mastication goes on I really cannot say. I can only suppose it takes place later, for, until their cheeks are well swelled out their mouth is never once closed. When all is finished, dinner is over, and each man passes his bowl back to the care of the cook. Why Nature should have provided the Chinese with such extremely powerful, sound, and even teeth to masticate nothing harder than rice and cabbage, is another of those mysteries I have not yet solved.

My horse-boys, if they want to take up another hole or two in the girths, and they cannot do it with their hands, invariably take the end of the leather between their teeth, and up it goes at once. Perhaps Nature provided them for this purpose.

About half-past ten, as we were retiring for the night, the river became illuminated with many hundreds of lanterns, made of different coloured papers, fixed on a square piece of thin wood, and floating in clusters down the stream, while every now and again came a raft, on which was stuck an enormous torch, blazing furiously, illuminating

the sides of the rocks in a most effective and weird manner. Some of the rafts held fireworks, with slow matches attached, which went off at various intervals and in various places. The general effect was very pretty, as the bright coloured lights floated away with the current, and, as we were able to see a good deal more than a mile down the river, we could follow them till they were hidden by a bend in the stream. More than an hour elapsed before they had all passed. Not the least curious was it to see a large fish occasionally spring at one of the lights and take it under water.

We were vain enough to believe that this celebration had been got up by the country people in our honour, but we were the following morning undeceived by our loudah who told us that it was the finishing up of some grand funeral higher up the river.

## CHAPTER IV.

The First Rapid—Towing through the Rapid—The Water Rising—The Lukan Gorge—Our Farthest Point—Szechuen Boatmen—The Ichang Rapid—Shooting the Rapid—A close Shave—Approaching the Whirlpool—In the Whirlpool—Made Fast for the Night—The Entrance to Paradise—Gold and Silver Pheasants—Living Jewels—Value of a Compass—Yangtze Fishing—Shippai Shan Glen—The Hermit—His Cave and Food—An Unexpected Meeting—‘Yoicks!’

THE next morning we were up and dressed by five o'clock. The boats had already started on their upward course, and, after a few hours yulowing and sailing, we came to the first rapid. Here the mountains open out from the sides of the river, leaving some fine grassy slopes which run down to the water's edge. In many places these slopes have been taken advantage of by the mountaineers, and are cultivated with various kinds of grain and vegetables. This is the first of some eight or ten rapids between Ichang and Chunking. At the lower end of each rapid there is a village, as it is called, which consists only of some forty or fifty stone and mud huts. The people in these places

earn their livelihood chiefly by assisting to haul boats through the rapids, which vary in length at different times, according to the quantity of water in the river, from a quarter of a mile to a mile-and-a-half. Running at a speed of from seven to nine miles an hour, it can easily be supposed that no boats could ascend these places without much additional help being given to the ordinary crews. So these villagers became a necessity, and grew into existence many centuries ago.

Our loudah went ashore, carrying with him one or two strings of cash, and, for a mere trifle, hired some sixty or seventy men to help on the tow-rope, and bring us beyond the head of the rapid. The boats had to ascend separately, so this rapid business became rather a long job. The trackers were put ashore, four or five of the most experienced men being left on board to manage the bow-sweep, the loudah always being one of these men, and he, as soon as the men were ready at the end of the tow-line, began flag-signalling from the boat, one man among the trackers having nothing to do but to watch the signals, and communicate the sign to the men hauling. The tow-lines are more than a thousand feet long, so a system of signals becomes necessary. These signs must be perfectly understood, for a mistake would be instantly fatal to the boat ; just as much

so as if the engineer of a steamer, in a narrow passage, were to put the engines a-head, when the order was to go a-stern.

Now the trackers start, the line gradually tightens, and the boat forges a-head. The water of the rapid boils and rushes and swirls round the bow, as though it were resisting the intrusion, trying to rush inboard and swamp the whole concern, which it very soon would do if it could force its way over the deck. Slowly the men advance, and steadily they stick to their work. Notice of danger a-head, of sunken or projecting rocks, or clear and open water being communicated to them by the loudah by means of his flags, or by a terrific hammering on a tin pot or a gong that hangs in the bow.

With about eighty to ninety men on the tow rope, we got through the rush of water in about three hours, but my companion and myself went ashore before entering the rapid, and walked, or rather scrambled over the rocks that form what is most inappropriately called the trackers' path, expecting every moment to see the line break, and leave the boat at the mercy of the rapid, for the strain was very great. This was one of the plaited bamboo lines, and the loudah informed me it was more than twelve hundred feet long. These ropes are more durable, and in every way

better suited to their purpose than a hempen rope. They are very strong, slide and slip, on account of their smooth polished surface, over the sharp and rough corners of rocks, where a hempen rope would stick and cut. Their great objection is that they will not coil in a small circle on board the boat, but must have a diameter reaching from one side of the boat to the other.

After coming again into fairly quiet water, our additional hands were discharged, and we entered a reach of about seven or eight miles, at the end of which the mountains closed in again, and we approached the second rapid.

In walking up the rapids, we had a much better view of the water and the behaviour of the boat than we should have got by remaining on board.

From our eminence eighty or a hundred feet above the river we saw very distinctly the curious swirls and whirlpools which are formed by the sunken rocks, all of which we should have missed, or seen only indistinctly by remaining on board, and we should have lost altogether the view of the fierce current as it is thrown from one side to the other, by bends and projections in the banks.

It was our intention to return again in the boat, and so see the river from both points of view; moreover, the rapidity and excitement of coming down would be far more enjoyable than a slow



dragging up. We purposed getting up the river as far as possible in the time at our disposal, leaving plenty of leisure for our return and stoppages at various glens and other places of interest on our way back.

Overnight there had been a rise of nine feet in height of water. The snow on the eastern slopes of the mountains of Thibet melting, frequently causes a sudden rise and fall of the Yangtze which is very common about this time of the year. In July the river reaches its highest level, and will then be from fifty to seventy feet above its present depth. The second rapids are very much the same as the previous one; they are not so dangerous on account of the absence of rocks in the centre. The rate at which the water was running at the time we passed was nine miles an hour, or a little under. Although there are no rocks in mid-stream, they are amply compensated for by the pointed, weird-looking rocks that line the shore—points that would crash through the side of any boat carried against them.

It required four men at the long sweep to bring the boat in or out, as was required. These sweeps are forty to fifty feet long, without which no boat could possibly ascend the river. Before commencing to run this second rush, the same preliminaries as at the first one had to be gone

through. The loudah went ashore to beat up men ; when a sufficient number had been secured, they hitched their breast ropes on to the tracking line, waited for the signal from the loudah, and then with yells, shouts, grimaces, and antics of all kinds, they put their united weight on to the line and the boat ascended on its upward voyage.

The Lukan is the next gorge. It is not so long as the Ichang, but more wild, more narrow, and more gloomy. The rocks on either hand overhang the river ; many massive projections, a thousand feet above your head, and weighing many hundreds of tons, look as though they were on the point of slipping off their ledges, and coming with crushing force on to the boat. The report of a gun in this gorge has, on two or three occasions, brought down some huge pieces of rock. Altogether its general appearance is somewhat dark and depressing ; still there is a savage grandeur about it which is very impressive, and creates a feeling of wonder how these rocks—which, in a previous period of the world's history, were once united, as is clearly seen from their form and stratification—should become so perfectly divided, for two or more hundreds of miles, as to leave a passage for a broad, deep, and swiftly flowing river.

This gorge is merely a split between two walls

of perpendicular road, between two and three thousand feet high, and the water is exceedingly deep.

Passing still onward, and leaving another rapid and another gorge behind us, we came to the Mitan gorge, but, as there is much similarity between them, a description of each would only be repetition. Here our ascent ended; willingly would we have gone on, even to Chunking, but our time was limited, and, if we wished to see some of the temples and glens on our homeward trip, the boat's head must be turned round in the morning. So we made fast, although barely noon, and the remainder of the day was spent in rambling over the hills, and up some lonely and desolate glens, at our farthest point from Shanghai, close on to one thousand two hundred and fifty miles.

The boundary line between the province of Hoopoh and Szechuen is a deep narrow cleft in the mountains, about half-way through the Wu-shan gorge. It is a lonely desolate place; a few cottages being planted on the smallest possible ledges, on the sharp rocky sides of the mountain. The dark, deep, quiet running water below, and a continual gloom that requires a long after-spell of sunshine to drive away, is not conducive to hilarity. The natives of this gorge are so imbued with the gloom of the place that they

never laugh, and rarely smile; they never talk excepting when necessary, then all they have to say is said in as few words as possible, and silence is again the rule. It gives one 'the horrors' to remain there for more than a day, and, when once again clear of it, you experience a feeling of thankfulness, as though you had just escaped from premature burial.

Here is the length of the first four gorges:

Ichang . . . . .	about	12½	miles.
Lukan . . . . .	„	3	„
Mitan . . . . .	„	3½	„
Wu-shan . . . . .	„	22	„

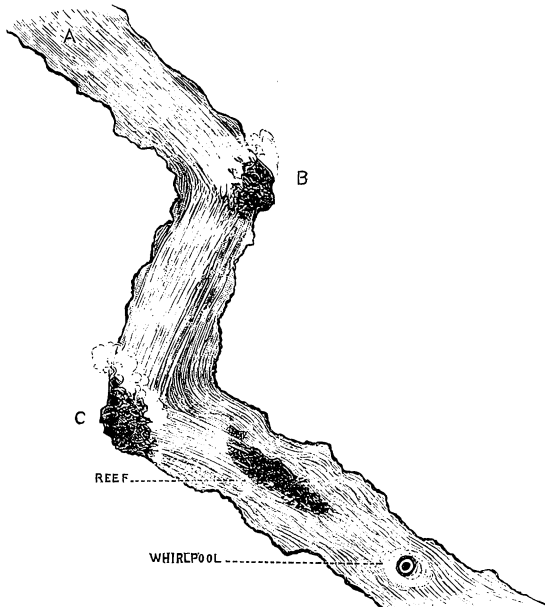
We had now been five days out from Ichang, and the next morning the boats were turned round. Down we came, flying through the first rapid, and all went well, but if anything had gone wrong, a false turn of the helm, an eddy catching either the bow or the stern, and so twisting the boat broadside on to the stream, I do not see what was to prevent her being rolled over and over in the current. Such an accident not unfrequently happens. But these Szechuen boatmen look upon everything as 'joss pidgin,' that means: it is their fate. If they come through all right, they say the same thing. They are utterly careless about it, believing that, if their time has come, nothing

they can do will alter the decree of fate. With foreigners on board they are more careful, not knowing what the result to themselves would be should one or two be drowned. They are so used to the river, having lived upon it since they were children, that they do not see, or, if they do, do not appear to care about the risks they run. They blunder into danger, just as they blunder out of it, with the utmost coolness and contempt, but they cannot do a single thing requiring some extra exertion without an extraordinary amount of shouting and yelling.

The loudah, during our run through every rapid, stationed himself in the bow, continually hammering on a gong, which is supposed to have the effect of driving away all evil spirits that would, if not so prevented, wreck or capsize the boat. So we descended, tarrying six or eight hours, first at one glen, then at another, all of them full of the most exquisite ferns and orchids. Miles upon miles of lovely maiden-hair fern were hanging in clusters from the rocks, rising from the base nearly to the summit. We collected numbers of rare and beautiful ferns and plants, which we finally landed safely in Shanghai. They were in a very shaky state when they arrived, but now, after the lapse of a year, with constant care and attention, they are as handsome as ever,

and look more healthy than they did in their own mountain home.

And so the days passed till we arrived at the upper end of the Ichang rapid. This is one of the most dangerous, on account of a long reef of rocks in the centre of the river, and between whose massive boulders and pointed rocks rest the remains of many a former junk. This is where the difficulty occurs in clearing this rapid. The banks, consisting entirely of boulders and broken rock, take a peculiar twist just at the head of the swiftly running water,



which, when the river is flooded, converts this part of the stream into a roaring torrent. The water increases its speed at A. There is a strong incline down to B. At B, the water strikes the rock with much force, throwing up clouds of spray, and rebounds off in the direction of C. At C, the same thing occurs again, and the current rebounds straight on to the reef. The difficulty is to keep the boat out of the current, which runs about eight to nine miles an hour, depth of water being twelve fathoms (seventy-two feet). If you go *with* the rush of water, to certain grief you will come on the rocks. With the rush you are compelled to go from A to C. After passing C, then every man, woman, and child on board must work with might and main, yulowing, rowing, yelling, doing anything and everything to force the boat along, to get past the reef before being washed on to it. You must travel faster, considerably faster than the current, or it cannot be passed. Herein lies the danger. If a boat is short-handed, which many are,—there are economical Chinamen as well as Europeans,—she goes straight on to the reef, and the moment she touches the pointed and jagged rocks at a ten or twelve miles' speed, she flies at once into a thousand pieces, crew, cargo, and wreck all mixed up together in the raging water.

After this digression, we will return again to our own boat.

We went merrily down the stream from A, every man at his post, watching for the least sign from the loudah who stood in the bow. Every life on board hung upon this one man's coolness and judgment. Just before reaching B, a gentle wave of the flag was understood by the helmsman; the boat responded quickly to a slight movement of the tiller as she rounded the corner and, increasing her speed, rushed frantically towards C. We ran into the edge of the boiling surging water before our loudah made the slightest move. I thought, for a certainty, he had overshot his mark, and that our last second had come. Every man on board stood like a statue, ready with his oar in his hand; they were so motionless and quiet they seemed hardly to breathe.

As I was thinking, 'Now, what's the best thing to do when I'm being rolled about in this boiling surf?' I was startled by a heavy stroke on the gong, followed by a succession of other beats. That was the sign; all hands yelled, those who could not yell shrieked, the skipper hammered away at the gong; the yelling, shrieking, and gonging continuing without a moment's rest. Of all the unearthly rows I ever heard, none exceeded that. Each man seemed thoroughly to understand his



work, and to know what to do, and it is well they did, for no order could have been given and heard; nothing but the voice of a howitzer could have prevailed through that din. Each man worked with a will; we were decidedly going full steam ahead. The flags waved continuously, but each wave had its meaning, and was responded to either by the men or the helmsman. The rowers plied their oars with full force, and we were traveling at a much greater speed than the current.

To the inexperienced eye of a novice matters began to look remarkably unsatisfactory and ugly. We were approaching those wicked-looking, pointed rocks at a much greater speed than seemed at all consistent with safety; but I had full confidence in the loudah's judgment.

Should we touch, or should we not? One thing seemed just as probable as the other. I already began to conceive the water to be disagreeably cold, and after-prospects were not pleasant to contemplate. I do not think that at that moment any insurance company would have taken us up at one fraction less than cent. per cent.

The nearer we approached the rocks the more violent became the loudah's exertions to make a hole through his gong, and the more the crew tried to shout; but this was a failure, they could not do it. Every atom of strength left in the

men was thrown into the oars ; all now depended upon nothing slipping, nothing breaking.

With fourteen or fifteen feet to spare, we passed the last point ; the crew thereupon collapsed, and there was a dead silence. Joss paper was burnt, and the god of the river was declared to be a very good fellow, a very model of a joss. For a few minutes we lay in comparatively quiet water to give the crew a well-earned rest, for their exertions were not yet over. About two hundred yards below the reef were two whirls, and into the largest of these we drifted. If we had kept closer into the right bank we should have escaped this, but we were a little undermanned, and the crew were tired. However, I was very glad not to have escaped it, for here was an entirely new experience. Anyhow, the loudah had brought us safely through the boiling, scething water at the last bend ; and had shaved the reef, with nothing to spare, so now I felt we were in safe hands. It is easy to trust and feel confident in a man's judgment, when you know what kind of stuff he is made of ; but to trust your life in the hands of an unknown stranger is quite another matter. But I tried to feel comfortable, and whistled to myself,

‘ For I'm not mar-ried to a mer-ma-id,  
At the bottom of the deep Yangtze.’

During my past life, the flower of which has,

unfortunately, now become a matter of private history, I have had a few close shaves, and seen a few near things. I have escaped without damage from three of the most violent storms on the North Atlantic; from a collision off the south coast of Ireland; from a steamer on the Thames when her boiler exploded; from a ship on fire off Sandy Hook; from a leaky ship in a Bay of Biscay gale; from the midst of icebergs and dense fogs off Cape Horn; from a hurricane off the coast of Brazil; from waterspouts and cyclones of the Indian Ocean; from a ship struck by lightning in the Formosa Channel; and from the charge of a herd of wild buffaloes in Central Australia.

Having gone through all these excitements, and a few more also, without harm, now, by way of a change, we are going to try a whirlpool. The sensation is very much like that which a man feels when spinning round in a waltz for the first time. When we approached the outer edge of the circle, the funnel-shaped cone in the centre, about five feet in depth, was distinctly seen; occasionally, pieces of floating wood would be caught up in the circling water, be spun round and round till they reached the centre, when, after a couple of turns they would disappear with the strong downward suction.

The state of the pool at this time was not

strong enough to do anything more than play with a junk the size of the one we were in ; but, had we been in a small rowing-boat, it would have been quite impossible ever to have escaped from the whirl of waters ; we should have been drawn to the centre, and there either sucked under or capsized. Round we went, and after having reached the vortex, which was now quite underneath the keel of the boat, the motion became extremely unpleasant ; we were simply turning round and round as though fixed on a pivot, and at anything but a slow speed. On looking over the side there was the horrible cone straight underneath us, like the mouth of some huge sea monster, ready to swallow everything that approached. The most powerful swimmer would not have had the remotest chance of escape ; down he would have been drawn like a fly, and ground up among the sunken rocks below.

It was not pleasant to reflect that only a few inches of thin wood intervened between the entire crew and this devouring chasm. A plank starting, or the strong downward pull drawing one from the bottom of the boat, down she would have gone with all hands on board. We remained sufficiently long to become thoroughly giddy, then ordered the loudah to take us out of this disagreeable sickening 'roundabout.'

Bang, bang, went the gong. 'Yulow!' roared the skipper. 'Yah, yah, yah!' shouted the crew. Twenty men and twenty oars went heartily to work, round and round we spun, and gradually approached the outer edge. Had there been a few more feet depth of water in the river, *i.e.*, had there been more of a flood, then we could never have approached the whirl at all. Its force would have been stronger, and we should have been drawn down; but the loudah told us afterwards that from the quantity of water in the river he knew exactly what the force of the whirl would be. Had he not been sure about it, he would never have taken us into such a dangerous position; he could easily have avoided it, but he wanted us to see it, as he said it would give us a good idea of what the river god could do when he caused the water to swing round in its full fury. We were perfectly satisfied with regard to what he could do, and had not the least desire to witness, excepting from the bank, any further or greater exhibition of strength.

When we were a trifle more than half way between the centre and the outer circle, the gong increased the vigour of its beats. Four men and the loudah put the big sweep out over the bows, dipping the end in the water, but only a small piece of it, however; had too much gone in it

would have thrown them all overboard ; and had too little gone in it would have no effect on the junk ; it wanted measuring to a nicety, but our loudah appeared to be thoroughly well up in every particular, never at a loss, never confused, knew in all situations, in all positions of delicacy and risk, exactly what to do, and how to do it. He was equally successful in this manœuvre.

The boat's head was brought round, only a trifle, but just enough ; the rowers put on their full force, and in a couple of minutes we were out of the whirl, and in the quiet waters of the river. Soon we were fast alongside the bank, waiting for the other boats. They both got through all right, avoiding the whirlpool without any difficulty. They were both smaller boats than the one we were in, and, had they got into the malström, would have run a fairly good chance of being lost. The men were regaled with an extra feed of rice, to which, on this occasion, was added a good sized fish, and they made their plans for an afternoon's enjoyment. Clearly, no more work was to be got out of them that day ; indeed, we did not want any more, and, although it was still early, we gave instructions for the boats to be laid up for the night.

We passed the remainder of the day exploring one of the glens that opened out upon the river.

After ascending, through all its windings and inclinations for two or three miles, the glen sometimes widening into a large amphitheatre, at other times drawing into a narrow opening, we came to one of the most enchanting valleys I had ever seen—a perfect paradise, covered with ferns, flowers, and orchids. It was a lovely afternoon, a clear mottled sky overhead, and between that and the horizon a bank of most gracefully formed and majestic cumuli, that cast warmly-tinted shadows down the valley, producing a most harmonious mixture of light and shade; in short, nothing was wanting, nothing could have been added to increase the loveliness of the scene.

Like most of the glens in this district, it was not more than a couple of hundred yards wide. The roads rose up on either side to a height of over a thousand feet, with ledges here and there, invisible from below, but which were actually about one hundred feet wide, covered with different kinds of timber and flowering plants of the most delicate and brilliant colours. A clear stream of the purest water ran down the hollow of the glen, broken in various places by a succession of falls, the highest not more than fifty feet, about which skimmed some lovely birds, such as I had never seen before. From the thickest parts, in the undergrowth of this wilder-

ness of beauty, where the ferns and flowering plants were most abundant, we turned out some magnificent Gold and Silver pheasants, and also that still more beautiful bird the Reeve-pheasant. I had often seen these birds in captivity, and thought, as everyone else does, that in grace and elegance of form and colour it would be difficult to find another bird to surpass them. But those unfortunates in confinement cannot in any way compare with the wild bird of the glens. There you see them in all their brightness of plumage and comeliness of form and movement, in all the pride of freedom, with grace of action in every turn of the head, and in all the fearless confidence of a happy, wild existence.

It is only in this state, in their own native homes among the valleys of the Upper Yangtze, with liberty surrounding them on all sides, that they can be seen as nature made them; and their entire absence of fear at our approach shows how little they have been disturbed by the natives, and how seldom their homes are invaded by men of any race.

Lying on bare pieces of rock between the beds of ferns, and on small ledges and crevices in the rocks, were numbers of lizards, varying from six to sixteen inches in length. When they ran about in the bright sunlight their bodies looked a living



mass of rubies, emeralds, and diamonds. I tried to catch some by driving them one at a time into a corner, then, when all together, making a sudden pounce on them with my cap, I was confident of securing two or three, if not more. But before my cap could reach them,—and it was by no means a slow movement I made,—the whole lot were seven or eight yards away. How they escaped, whether they moved with the aid of wings or feet, or both combined I am unable to say; their motions were much too quick to be seen. I made several attempts to capture them, but always with the same result. If the little animals had been propelled by electricity they would not have moved more quickly. I think some of them must have been chameleons, for they were continually changing their colour and even their shape.

Underneath the falls, on the stream, were some bonny clear pools, twelve or fifteen feet deep, but so translucent that we could see clearly the stones below, wherever the surface was still and quiet. As the afternoon was bright and warm we selected one of the small lakes that had not too rough a bottom—some had rocks coming up within four or five feet of the surface,—and for a considerable time we rolled and tumbled about in the water, like a couple of fish endeavouring to escape from

a well-fixed hook. Thus refreshed, we rambled still further into the mountains ; then, crossing a dip in the wall of rock, we came to another glen which, from its bearings, we concluded would bring us down to the river, not very far away from the boats, and our conclusions ultimately turned out to be correct.

I may here mention that we never took these walks without a pocket-compass, and always found it invaluable ; over and over again we should have been lost without it, with it we never for a moment hesitated which direction to take. Indeed, I generally made a slight map of the country as we went along, with a few notes of any particular land-marks, bends in the stream, peculiar trees, etc., so that I always knew exactly where we were, and, if we returned the same road, it became simply a walk home, without any necessity to look either to the right or left. This was often useful as darkness began to draw on, and many times saved us from camping out all night under a rock, without a thing to eat till we found the boats in the morning.

A compass is a most useful and valuable companion, but no mistakes must be made, or your lines will become most hopelessly deranged. This glen which we penetrated, and descended to reach the boats, is called 'Loong Tung Chee,' or the

Dragon's-mouth Cave. It takes this name from a large cavern out of which flows a considerable stream of water. We entered the dragon's mouth and went on till we were obliged to crawl on hands and knees, but this was soon stopped, for the cavern narrowed so much that the water occupied the entire passage. The stream is the overflow of some large underground lake, there being no stream or lake whatever on the surface of this particular mountain.

The cave is about eight hundred feet below the topmost summit, and the water, at the point where it fills the passage, is nearly nine feet wide, and between three and four feet deep.

Returning again to the boats, we saw a native fishing with a large square dip-net. These nets vary in size. I saw some near to Ichang that were sixty feet square; these were permanent, on a large flat-bottomed boat, and were much too heavy to move excepting by their own particular tackle. These large nets are mostly used with the assistance of a tame and well-trained otter, and at this method of fishing the natives are very expert. By a simple system of bamboos, ropes and blocks, the net is lowered into the water, and when, according to the judgment of the fisherman, it is sufficiently deep, a muzzled otter is put overboard into the river. The otter runs about

the bottom, swims around, and drives all the fish he can find into the net. After a lapse of time the net is hoisted, and the otter comes up with it. It is very amusing to watch these men ; they take considerable quantities of fish, and a good otter fetches a high price.

They are called tame ; and so they are to their masters who feed them, care for them, and handle them with the greatest confidence ; but, if a foreigner ventures within reach of them, let him look out for his legs, or he will soon experience the peculiar sensation which follows when they make their teeth meet through his calf.

The net the man was using near to our boat was a small one, a hand-net, twelve feet square, but of exactly the same form as the large ones. It is attached to the end of a long bamboo and lowered into the river, and when the owner thinks it time, and that there ought to be something for supper inside, he raises it, and anything captured is removed with a small landing-net, and the large net is then lowered again for another haul. When fish are plentiful, large numbers are taken in this way, but our friend was not in luck ; still he secured one fairly good fish. It was something like a perch, and weighed over five pounds.

Some of the inhabitants of the waters in the gorges are curious in form. They are not un-

common and are occasionally taken with the dip-net, but the larger ones are found in the deep water of the river. They are about four feet in length, and have an extremely large and round mouth; the upper jaw extends into a long gristly protuberance, about eighteen inches long, and with this singular proboscis they stir up the contents of holes in the rocks which are too small for them to enter, at the same time extending their enormous mouth to its widest capacity. Should there be any fish in these holes, when the trunk enters and stirs them up so unceremoniously, out they go with a rush, and of course straight into the open mouth ready to receive them.\*

The following morning we were up and dressed by daybreak, and after a good breakfast started for the 'Shippai shan' glen. (I think this was the name, but my Chinese is open to correction.)

In general appearance it was much like our paradise of yesterday, all ferns and flowering plants. On the ledges of the rocks there were numbers of trees which are claimed by the priests as their own property. They are cut down by some of the most active and daring of the mountaineers. It requires a sure foot, a cool head, and much strength and agility to reach them, for they grow on the most inaccessible places; and these

\*There is a sketch of these fish in Blakiston's 'Upper Yangtze.'

men are engaged and paid by the priests. The wood is pleasant and sweet-scented, very much like sandal wood, both in colour and appearance. This, after being cut, is exposed to the sunshine daily for some months. When all sap and moisture have left it, it is then taken to some small huts built on the side of the stream, running down the valley. In these huts are some antiquated stampers, worked by the most primitive water-wheel that can be imagined, where the wood is hammered and pounded until it becomes a very fine powder. It is then taken by the priests, and used in their temples as incense.

We went into one or two of these pounding mills, and carried away some of the sacred dust on our clothes, which became unusually odorous for several days. There were a couple of very fine eagles up the valley; they did not appear at all alarmed till we approached within fifty yards, when they opened their widely-spreading wings, and away.

About a couple of miles farther on, we visited a hermit,

‘The world forgetting, by the world forgot.’

There was also another recluse nearly eight miles from here, but it was much too far to go, and we had quite enough of the first one.

This fanatic was a most repulsive-looking object.

To all appearances he must have been at least a hundred years old. He certainly was clothed—after a fashion—in something, whether it was cotton, skins, or a very coarse kind of cloth, made by the Chinese, I cannot say. He was far too objectionable to examine very closely, and, although living near a pure clear stream, he presented the appearance of never having washed himself in his life. I suppose this was a part of his persuasion, as it is difficult to imagine a state of greater discomfort.

He told us, through our interpreter, that for more years than he could remember he had not been out of the valley; that occasionally, and at long intervals, the mountaineers brought him some rice and beans; but for his food he depended upon his crop of cabbages, which he planted regularly, and had some method of drying them in the sun, and preserving them afterwards.

This, together with wild honey and fruit which he found on the mountains, constituted his entire food. His cave, which was of considerable dimensions, was filled with his store of cabbages, a quantity of rubbish, and dirt; his bed being some dried grass on a low-lying ledge of rock. Table and chair he had none; his seat was a log from a tree, well polished from long and continued wear. One or two old iron pots, some chop-sticks, two

or three bowls, some old books, and an old chest, completed his furniture and possessions.

His joss—if not made by himself, it was at least carved and ornamented by him—was a most elaborate piece of work stuck up on a niche, to whom he ‘kow-towed’ and burnt incense every morning and evening, and it had, he informed us, never, since he was a boy, failed to provide him with everything necessary. What made the old fellow take up with such a hideous piece of carving, I do not know; its eyes stood right out of its head, it had the smallest possible nose, and a mouth somehow screwed round at the corners that reminded one of Mephistopheles in a remarkably good temper. Why he first came to live in the cave he would not tell us; he only said, ‘I shall never leave it.’ He appeared quite contented and sincere in his convictions, whatever they were, but he must have been the most perfect antipodes to godliness if, as we are informed, cleanliness comes next to it.

Returning again to the boats, we crossed the river, from half to three-quarters of a mile wide, and very deep. We got into a wild, rocky, and very broken-up district, with ferns and low scrubby growth scattered about, and intersected with many water-courses which in the rainy season are swiftly-running streams. I had with me a



small, light pick-axe, the iron pointed at one end, and hammer-headed at the other, which I used for digging up ferns and breaking fossils. Sir Roderick had only an ordinary walking-stick.

As we were rambling quietly along one of these dry ravines, a magnificent leopard suddenly sprang out of a bush about twenty yards before us. We had no idea there were any leopards in the neighbourhood, and were not a little surprised when the ferocious and bellicose-looking native so suddenly put in an appearance. For about a minute, which appeared nearly an hour, we stood perfectly still, looking fixedly at him, and he did precisely the same thing to us. He was a beauty, in most perfect condition, and had not yet lost his winter coat; it was smooth and glossy, and shone as though it had been polished. His teeth white as ivory, and mathematically even, he stood like a statue, and not for the smallest interval of time did he remove his eyes from us.

With a rifle I could have lodged a ball anywhere to within a quarter of an inch; there could not have been an easier shot. Every moment I expected to see him charge down upon us, and I wondered what effect my small, light pick would have when I planted the hammer end in the centre of his forehead—that is to say, provided I was not first knocked over and done for.

He appeared to get angry with us for our continued gaze at him and commenced to lash his sides with his beautiful tail, giving not so much a roar as an angry growl; his eyes glistened and seemed to start from his head; two more growls, and then a slight movement.

‘Now,’ thought I, ‘he’s coming; one of us has to die, and it’s not going to be me, if I can avoid it.’

At that moment my companion opened his mouth, and with the full power of his lungs gave a ‘Yoicks!’ that echoed from rock to rock, up and down the glen. I did not think such a cry could have come from any man’s throat, nor do I think he could produce another like it, so piercing, so powerful, so full of resonance, unless another leopard should suddenly appear before him.

The effect it had upon our visitor was astounding, it appeared to take all the life and fire out of him; he seemed completely cowed. His tail dropped at once, and with another parting growl he turned to retreat. He retired for a dozen yards or so, then turned for another look at us, as though upon second thoughts he rather repented having given in so soon. But another ‘Yoicks!’ settled him; he waited for no more, started off at a trot, and was gone. The beauti-

ful spotted cat was out of sight in the cover, and we never saw or heard him again.

This was an escape assuredly, for had that brute charged down upon us, which he was on the point of doing, he would have knocked us both over together, and then have taken us quietly in detail. We congratulated each other that we were so well out of it, and our spotted interviewer troubled us no more. He evidently had a great respect for 'Yoicks!'

I made some enquiries afterwards whether leopards were frequently met with in this neighbourhood, and found that they are occasionally seen, but are by no means common. Further up the river they are frequently encountered, and get more plentiful as you approach the western parts of Szechuen. Tigers are also to be got in this district, but I could not hear of any having been seen so low down the river as the entrance to the gorges.

## CHAPTER V.

Washing for Gold—Cave Temples—The Priest and the Bottle—The Wild Goat Glen—The Temple Cave—The Temple Bell—Diplomacy—The Deities of the Temple—Illumination of the Cave—Our Departure—Return to Ichang—The Ichang Consulate—Advantages and Disadvantages of Living at Ichang—Pyramid Hill—The Domes—The Dragon King's Cavern—The Subterranean Lake—The Missionary—The Missionary in Trouble—Successful Fishing.

WHILE speaking of the glens further up the river, I omitted to say that in several places I found decided indications of gold.

In one gully the bed of the stream had numerous small quartz stones scattered about, some of them honey-combed, which reminded me strongly of the quartz-bearing reefs of Australia. Whether it was fancy or not I do not know, but I thought that the mountains had a similar formation to some that I remember having seen about Mount Alexander and Mount Blackwood.

Then once again, as in former years, I got an attack of gold fever, but this time only in a mild form. We were between two and three miles

from the boats, and I had nothing in which I could wash even a handful of sand, but what I had seen was quite enough to raise up visions of gold, so an attempt at washing must be made, even though it proved a failure, which I quite expected would be the case. I had a long weary tramp to the boat, and on overhauling the cooking department I found the very thing I wanted. A tin milk-dish, about twenty inches in diameter, sloping sides and five inches deep. Nothing could be better; it was a perfect prospecting pan such as I had used hundreds of times before.

The tramp back again seemed endless, but, when I had arrived at the place where I intended my first attempt should be made, something in its appearance displeased me and I looked for more promising ground.

I tried several places, with the result that I got a few grains of gold, but I am quite sure larger quantities might be found in that valley by anyone making a practical survey. What little I did get was pure and good, and quite sufficient to prove that gold exists higher up the valley. Some miles further up the river, near the Szechuen boundary, the Chinese, for many years past, have made a poor living in washing for gold. But their methods are so primitive and their appli-

ances so poor, that they never attempt anything beyond surface washing.

According to the laws of China, no European or, indeed, any foreigner is allowed to mine or dig, or seek underground for any mineral; if he does so, he must be in the employ of the Imperial Government. This appears to me scarcely a *quid pro quo*. They have no hesitation in endeavouring to force the Australians and Californians to admit Chinese on terms of perfect equality, but as for their admitting Europeans or Americans on the same terms to China, such an act of impolicy could not be for a moment entertained.

Many of these mountains being very much honeycombed, it can easily be supposed that, among superstitious people, some of these excavations would be turned to a religious purpose. So, in fact, it is; and among the wonderful sights of the glens and gorges, there are few that excel the cave temples. We visited two of them, but as we went to another later on, considerably larger than those we had hitherto seen, and as there is a good deal of similarity about them, a slight sketch of the latter will suffice. A rather amusing circumstance happened at one of these places a couple of days ago.

This particular temple was some miles inland from the river, and as we could not go and

return under several hours, we took a coolie with us, carrying our tiffin in a basket. On arriving at this cave, and arranging all temporal matters entirely to the satisfaction of the priests, we refreshed ourselves outwardly on the banks of a clear stream, and then inwardly from the coolie's basket. This being finished, to the great amusement of the holy men together with a few outsiders, the high priest was most graciously presented with a couple of empty bottles. He took up one, asked the interpreter what it was, what was the use of it, was it a one-eyed joss? When he was shown its use, how it would hold water, and that when the cork was out the contents could go down his throat or on to the ground, &c., his astonishment was curious to see. Here was magic, here was diablerie! Finally, he nursed it, stroked it, tried it as a telescope, and then put it on a corner of an altar.

With a piece of charcoal on a piece of red paper he made a sketch of my companion who had presented the bottles, stuck the sketch on a shingle and put it on the other end of the altar; burnt some joss paper and incense, knocked his forehead on the ground, 'chin-chined' profusely, and Sir Roderick was canonized.

In the gravest manner he gave me to understand that for the future I was to treat my friend

with the utmost deference and respect, and not to forget that he was now created a Chinese joss on a Chinese altar.

Overnight the river rose seven feet, but it was only a spate, as they say in Scotland—common enough in the spring months. The floods do not reach their greatest height till the beginning of July, when the water rises some fifty feet above its normal level. Just imagine the overwhelming rush, the overpowering pressure with an additional depth of fifty feet! The whole river at that time, from Pingshan to below Hankow, a distance considerably over a thousand miles, becomes one continuous rapid, making navigation perilous, and in many places impossible, overflowing its banks, washing away houses, and for many miles along its shores flooding the country, carrying away embankments, trees, crops, and cutting new channels for itself where none had existed before.

The following morning at daybreak we were again on the move to visit our last glen and temple.

It may appear strange that we were always up so early in the morning, but the distances we had to go, and the places we had to visit were so far apart that we could never have done it had we risen at an ordinary hour for eight o'clock breakfast, and so on. Besides, we were all in the best



condition for walking, and a walk from sunrise to sunset did not fatigue us at all. Our interpreter and guide, who had in the most praiseworthy manner done all he possibly could for our amusement and comfort, told us that that evening we should be bound for Ichang, and that, although this was our last glen, it was also one of the most interesting. 'San yue tung,' or the Wild-goat Glen was its name, so called from a race of wild goats that live on the ledges running along the precipitous sides of the rocks through the entire length of the valley, which extends and winds for many miles away into the mass of surrounding mountains. The glen is not more than a couple of hundred yards from side to side, covered with plants and a great variety of scrubby bushes. The ledges are not more than forty to fifty yards wide, but, in looking up at them from below, they cannot be seen, nothing but a thin green line of vegetation is visible. On these ledges live the wild goats; they are not to be reached either from above or below. Several of the mountaineers, under the influence of a bribe, have tried to get at them with ropes, by being lowered from above. Some have lost their lives in attempting it, others have failed, but none have ever succeeded, and so the wild-goats live on in peace, happiness, and security. Some half-decayed and spoiled skins

have been brought into Ichang at various times by the country people, but I was told that no perfect skin or animal had ever come down, although it was not at all unusual, from the tops of the rocks above, to see them feeding on their ledges in the early morning.

From the description I received of them they are a species of chamois, and never leave their strongholds; although no one has ever been known to have ascended or descended to their ledges, it can scarcely be looked upon as an impossible feat.

A couple of miles further on, on one side of the glen, the ledges ceased, and the rock became a clear vertical precipice. About six hundred feet above us there was a large cave on the smooth face of the cliff, and three or four persons, who looked the size of ants, were moving about.

How on earth did they ever get up there? was the first thought that came into one's mind. Balloons seemed the only practical medium, and, if they could be got there, why could they not be got to the goats, which appeared more accessible. We turned to our guide for explanation. He said that he had come purposely along this ravine to enable us to see the cave from below; after we had seen it from the several lower points of view which he would take us to, and noted its very singular situation, he would then conduct us to the

cave itself, which actually was a Buddhist temple. From each station the cave assumed a different form, but the approach to it seemed more impracticable than ever. Half-an-hour's walking brought us to an opening, a mere crack in the rock, or, more correctly speaking, the limestone cliff, which we entered, single file, for there was no room to spare, and after zig-zaging about to all points of the compass, continually rising, we reached a comparatively level piece of ground a long distance from the glen; now we commenced to work back, winding about, till at length we found ourselves on the edge of the cliff, level with the cave, but still some distance from it.

From this point a narrow pathway had been cut in the straight side of the rock. It must have been a work of much labour and great risk. Most of the path was from five to six feet wide; but advantage had been taken of small recesses in the rock to make passing places, should two persons meet, going in opposite directions. The merest apology for a stone parapet—a wall only a foot high, yet it is surprising what a feeling of security even this trifle gave—was built on the outside edge. These few stones, twelve inches high, were all that stood between us and a sheer descent of six hundred feet.

Slowly, surely, and with considerable delicacy

we at last reached the cave. Never did mountaineers walk more carefully, or hug the side of the rock more closely. Several times I looked over into the depths below, but not for more than a quarter of a minute. A longer look, and I should have become giddy, and fallen. Well, we reached the cave, and, as the rock sloped inwards, there was a good large platform about a hundred feet long, by more than thirty deep, before coming to the opening. This platform had a wall five feet high and three thick between it and destruction, so the priests who lived in the temple could take some exercise without being in danger of falling over.

At the entrance to the cavern there was a large stone slab, covered with Chinese characters, which being translated informed you that the slab was erected, and a large acknowledgment made to the temple, by (here came in the name, which I have forgotten) a mandarin who, being closely pursued by rebels, was led by a benign Deity to this cave, of which he had no previous knowledge. Then, having run down the narrow ledge, totally unconscious of any place to which it would take him, he found himself in safety in the temple, where his pursuers lost all trace of him. There is a deal more related as to the time he stopped to chin-chin joss, and do other things, which are of no particular interest.

By the side of this stone stands a large and very old bell, between seven and eight feet high ; and how this bell, which must be a great weight, was ever placed in this cave is a very difficult problem to solve. We tried to learn this from the priests, but they did not, or would not, know anything about it. It is supported on a timber framework, the lower edge being two feet from the ground. There was a wooden maul lying beside it which I picked up and struck the bell three or four heavy blows. What a magnificent tone, full, rich, clear, and sonorous. The upper arch of the cavern appeared to act as a sounding board, for it threw the vibrating sound away out into the glen, which it travelled up and down, repeated from one side to the other, from rock to rock, backwards and forwards, sometimes dying away till nearly inaudible, then, bursting once again into full melodious echoes, vibrated, till finally it was lost in the far away distance. We had three or four more performances of a similar kind, to which the priests raised no objection.

The interpreter and the almighty dollar combined soon established a friendly feeling between us.

‘ Would we like to see the temple? Would their most exalted excellencies like to take some joss-sticks, and make any particular request, from

any particular joss? They would wait upon us, accompany us, attend upon us, serve us in any way we desired; they were our servants.'

'Well,' I thought, 'this is not bad for an opening speech, I'm afraid they'll be too attentive, the fee must have overpowered them.' Anyhow, we replied to them in a similar high-flown tone.

'Yes. If the most holy fathers would conduct us through the temple, permit us to see their most honoured josses, and enlighten our benighted, un-instructed minds by pointing out to us the good from the bad, the just from the unjust, we should be delighted to place our offerings and oblations at their disposal.'

Thus, oh, bribery and corruption! in five minutes we were the best of friends, better than we should have been had we known each other for five years. One of the priests then lit a joss-stick, and, going into the temple, fixed it up before what he called his number one joss, whom he described as a kind-hearted, benevolent old fellow. Then we were conducted round the temple, and the more important deities described. They were far too numerous to take each one individually. These images were, most of them, beautifully carved, and most elaborately got up with paint and gilding. The temple was perfectly dry, not a sign of dampness being visible anywhere.

The images had a great variety of expression ; some were perfectly hideous and repulsive, these were the wicked josses, while the others had pleasant and mild countenances ; but, from what little we could gather from the information given to us, we came away quite under the impression that the bad ones received the most attention, so that they should not interfere with the people, and that it was not necessary to chin-chin the good ones so much, for they always let the people alone. The priests seemed highly delighted at the interest we took in their pet gods, and when we gave them a few cents for the benefit of any particular deity, who looked as if a little more paint would do him no harm, they promised he should be touched up at once. This was evidently a red-letter day in their calendar ; they thought they had come in for a good thing, nor do I suppose they were in the end disappointed.

The cave was about sixty or seventy feet high, and from one hundred to one hundred and twenty wide. How far it penetrated into the rock I do not know, for many smaller caves opened out from the back of the main one. We were informed there was another cave above this, the floor of the upper one forming the roof of the lower one.

Then we were invited to mount a most rickety vertical ladder which would take us to the temple

on high, but, after examining its state, we decided that to mount that ladder without having a surgeon handy would be too great a temptation of Providence, so the invitation was declined with thanks.

The interior of the temple was both curious and picturesque, and its extraordinary situation most remarkable. Situated about midway in a vertical rock, upwards of a thousand feet high, with no possible approach from the outside, and the only entrance being by a winding tortuous path up the back of the mountain, terminating in a narrow ledge hewn out of the cliff, in a vast wilderness of mountains which few foreigners have ever seen. In the interior there hung from the roof some huge stalactites, many feet in length, while numerous others, both large and small, ran up the sides of the cavern, like pillars, from the floor to the roof. Round the sides were many recesses in the walls, whether natural or artificially made I am unable to say. Into these recesses, all at different degrees of elevation, were placed many josses, both of good and bad qualities, each occupying his own particular compartment.

During our examination of all these particulars the priest, with two or three assistants, had been busy planting some torches in various places, which they now lit, and the effect was truly start-



ling. Every joss in the place appeared to be grinning and staring at us ; illumined as they were by the bright light of the burning torches they stood out clearly and distinctly from the dark walls of the cavern, and we were entirely surrounded by them without hope of escape. I began to wonder in my own mind which ugly old Moloch would be the first to walk down from his shelf and claim me as his own particular property.

The horribly deformed wicked josses with the lobster eyes looked more malicious than ever in the strong red light of the burning rosin and pine. I could imagine we had crossed the Styx, and that very shortly the priest would assume the form as well as the authority of old Pluto himself. Had it not been that the temperature of the cave was extremely pleasant and cool, I might have persuaded myself that we had invaded the abode of the fallen angels, and were at last permanent dwellers amongst them.

There must have been a hundred josses altogether, all more or less painted and gilded, two or three of the more important ones clothed in rich and gaudy silks.

There is a very large temple of this description near Ichang, named Lung-wan-tung, where the images are said to be much finer and more numerous.

After a short rest and some tobacco freely distributed, the use of which the priests fully understood, we stood up for a parting salute to our entertainers.

This performance having being gone through satisfactorily, with a profusion of salaams, chin-chining, and other courtesies, we launched once again on our aerial journey, took our winding track at the back of the cliff, and so reached the glen.

We saw the priests watching our return, and as it was getting late we hurried on, but darkness had set in before we reached the boats at the entrance of San-yue-tung. With a considerable amount of regret we took our last look at the glens of the Upper Yangtze, and I pondered in my own mind as to whether I should see them again. I hope I may, for we had enjoyed a most delightful excursion, and one that I should be only too rejoiced to repeat.

After the boats had left the shore, and we were gently floating down the stream, with the moon shining in all her brightness straight over the stern of the junk, I stood and gazed.

There, in all its massive proportions and perfect outline, backed by the darker tints of the peaks and slopes of more distant mountains fading away till they appeared only as clouds,—there,

raising itself up from the bed of the stream, and reflecting from its white and polished sides the silvery beams of the moon, towered one of the most remarkable and symmetrical and also the very last of the curious castellated rocks.

Wherever we went on our excursions a distance from the boats, we each took our mountain-chair, with three bearers a-piece. These men were paid two hundred cash each per day, and, as they had very little to do except carrying empty chairs, their task was an easy one. We always preferred walking to the swinging, unpleasant motion of a chair, so our men never troubled themselves about us, except when we had ferns or other objects for them to carry.

At other times they used to wander off on their own account, but we always required them to be within hail, which meant anything within a mile, for sound travels far and wide among those rocks and glens.

Baber tells us that a chair should invariably accompany anyone travelling through China, more for the sake of appearance than use. The honour and glory of a chair is more effective than a passport. It is a token of respectability, proclaims at once your position, ensures a certain amount of respect being shown to you by the countrymen, satisfies the natives you are not a travelling

coolie, and, besides all, is ever useful for conveying your impedimenta and whatever you may wish not to carry on your back or lumber your pockets with, in making excursions from the boats. We only used them once, and then only for a short time, on one extremely hot afternoon.

Continually we were bumping against boulders and projecting rocks, till finally one of Sir Roderick's coolies in crossing a stream slipped off one of the stepping-stones, depositing both chair and occupant broadside on in the water.

After this little *contretemps* we took again to the safer, easier, and more natural mode of progression, the chairs following nearly a mile in the rear.

We regained our boat, and as the castellated rocks faded in the distance we were again in the current; propelled by eight pairs of oars we made rapid headway, and in about five hours, in the early morning, long before daylight, were landed again in Ichang.

And here, with a truly grateful feeling to our worthy interpreter and guide, who had helped us through many troubles, had always borne our little crotchets with the utmost good-humour, had guided us to many scenes and interesting places which we never should have discovered unaided and alone, we bade him adieu. Again he took

command of his steamer, and, as she was in the course of four or five days to leave for Hankow, we once more took passage with him, and, under his skilful and careful seamanship, arrived in due time at the above-named port.

Ichang being the extreme open port on the river at which foreigners are permitted to trade, we have as a matter of course a Consulate here. It is called a Consulate, but a more dilapidated, tumble-down old place was never before known as a government building. It is so old, and in such a shocking state of repair, that it is unsafe for its tenants. There is not an atom of paint on any part of the interior. The doors of the rooms are unplanned deal, nailed together in the roughest manner, very much like extremely bad amateur work, with openings between each board that will admit the point of a finger. Some of them will open, but will not shut; others when shut are difficult to open. The outside rails to verandahs are so loose that the consul cautioned me not to lean against them, lest I should suddenly find myself precipitated into the road below. The windows in rooms on the ground-floor, particularly the office, which is the best room in the house, are small openings, about two feet square, and let in close under the ceiling with small panes of glass in a badly-fitting frame. To mount the

staircase requires as much agility and carefulness as is necessary in mounting an unsteady ladder; the hand-rail I was requested not to depend upon, as it was very loose, and might give way. The *tout-ensemble* is the very essence of discomfort, which is not at all improved by the periodical inroad of whole battalions of rats, who quarter themselves on our unfortunate consul, and make very short work of his store of provisions.

The only good thing about the place, and worthy of acknowledgment as British property, is the flag-staff. This is really good; it is a very fine one, well-made, nicely finished, well-painted, with cross-trees, halliards and guys, both hempen and iron, well-planted and well-supported; while, above all, a new and a large Union Jack 'floated aloft in the breeze.' It stands high, is the only flag I saw in Ichang, is seen for miles both up and down the river, and makes a good beacon for all the floating population.

With the exception of having abundant time and opportunity for visiting the many gorges and glens in his vicinity, the position of Her Britannic Majesty's consul at Ichang is not to be envied.

He is lodged in something between a barn, a stable, and a Chinese inn.

Unless he grows and feeds his own fowls, he has to educate his palate to the flavour of unsa-

voury rice, cabbage, fish, and garlic. The fish is a delicacy only to be had at very uncertain times, when the men bring them down from the gorges. He has to rely entirely upon his own resources for any pleasure or relaxation from the frozen-out workman's plaint: 'We have no work to do.' He has to wait the bi-monthly arrival of the Hankow boat for the smallest whiff of fresh provisions, or news of any kind from the outer world. Unless he has cheerfulness, energy, health, and strength, a fancy for wandering, a taste for all that is beautiful and wild in Nature, and a love for romantic, savage scenery, he will soon grow tired and weary of such a monotonous outpost as Ichang, and, after a time, will begin to look upon it as the very abomination of desolation.

But for a man not overburdened with too great a weight of years, one full of life and health, fond of his boat, his gun, and his dog; for one who does not object, but rather enjoys roughing it for a time; who has a liking and a preference for getting into difficulties, solely for the pleasure and excitement of getting out of them again; who is not easily wearied by mountain-climbing; who can with the same freedom and ease of lungs breathe the sharp pure air of the mountain-tops, or the close, confined, and sultry atmosphere of the valleys; who can enjoy a free and extramural

life, and look upon many minor discomforts as trifles beneath his notice; for such a man—(yes, I admit I have sketched the qualifications of a strong and healthy man; they are often, almost daily, met with; I know many such, but they are not to be found among the town-bred city youths who spend the whole of the day in an unwholesome, badly-ventilated office, and the greater part of the night in improvidence and dissipation)—but for such a man as I have sketched a sojourn of three or four years at Ichang will be an endless source of pleasure, and will at all future times be looked upon and remembered with the most lively satisfaction.

There is a very remarkable hill on the opposite side of the river to Ichang, 'Pyramid Hill.' It is precisely the same form, and is also said to be the same height and area as the great Egyptian pyramid. The peculiar form and situation of this hill was formerly supposed by the learned in such matters to interfere with the Chinese 'Fung Shui,' which would affect to a very important extent the trade, health, and general prosperity of Ichang. So the powers of the period selected a hill on the Ichang side, opposite to the pyramid, on which they built a monastery; and it is the special affair of the priests attached to this place—which must have cost a lot of money, for it is a



large and important building—to disturb and throw off from the people, the city, and the neighbourhood of Ichang the bad effects and the evil influence said to belong to this ‘Debello House,’ and which foreigners in their ignorance have christened Pyramid Hill.

Ichang is one of the ports that was opened to foreigners in 1877, and is a walled city of some importance, with a population of about fifty thousand.

While the flood-water is in the river, the largest vessels can make fast close under the city walls. At other times there is but little water in the river, and steamers are obliged to anchor in mid-stream.

Tung-oil is produced in considerable quantities, and the cultivation of the poppy spreads far and wide. Native-grown opium is largely used, and a good quantity is still left for export. The Indian drug is not imported at all. Tung-oil is a wood oil extracted from a well-known tree that grows in this district, and is in use all over China as a furniture-polish, but is used mostly by boatmen as a preservative against decay and rot in their boats.

A range of mountains, some dozen miles from here, has seven distinct rounded summits, and, varying in height from two thousand to two

thousand six hundred feet from their base, with a distance of from two to three miles between them, form an almost equilateral triangle. They are surrounded by many other points and ranges, but clear, massive, and distinct, these seven stand out from all the neighbouring peaks. They are the well-known 'Domes,' lying south by west from Ichang, in a wild and savage region. Huge masses of conglomerate rock, fallen from somewhere, are scattered over the valleys and glens, almost blocking them up in places. It is among the natural fortifications of this intricate fastness that are to be found, not only the 'Domes,' but also the far-famed Dragon King's Cavern. They are easy of access, and well worth a tramp of three or four days, which is about the time it would take to visit them comfortably, without making the trip into a hurried scramble. Of course a much longer time might be spent, but with less only a portion of their wild beauty could be seen, and very little remembered. The romantic and legendary scenery would form the foundation of many a ballad and story, were they more accessible and situated in any other country but in matter-of-fact, unimaginative Western China.

To make this trip it is desirable, in the first place, to lay in a sufficient supply of provisions to last through the journey; but this is rather diffi-

cult, unless one of the Hankow steamers has lately come in. Engage coolies in Ichang to do the carrying. It is true, you can always get something better than nothing at the monastery and temples; but, although I have spent many long years in China, my European palate has not grown accustomed—and I fear never will—to Chinese flavouring, and the most powerful and pungent garlic.

From Ichang, the river has to be crossed to a small village lower down the stream, the name of which I forget—I think it is called Ana Mia—and here, making fast the boat to await your return, the rough, uphill tramp begins.

Before reaching the 'Domes,' numerous streams have to be crossed, necessitating frequent wading through between three and four feet of cold clear water. No bridges, not even a plank. Occasionally, if the water is low, and you are lucky, you may find a few stepping-stones, but they are mostly treacherous and slippery; better to avoid them, or you may, as I have done, find yourself floundering about in the stream. Dry water-courses have to be followed up,—most abominable walking—and on the mountain paths, most of which are not more than two or three feet wide, a constant look-out has to be kept, for precipices abound everywhere, not the steep, sloping sides

that you could with a little difficulty manage to slide down, but a good, solid, straight drop of three or four hundred feet, with not even a stick to fetch up against before reaching the bottom.

A short distance from here is an extremely fine waterfall which in one unbroken bound takes a leap of about eight hundred feet. The 'Domes' are clearly seen from Ichang; the highest point much resembles the top of St. Paul's in London, minus the cross and ball; hence its name. It is distant from Ichang about seven miles. In the cavern of the Dragon King there is a vast subterranean lake, the water of which is extremely bright and clear, of unknown depth, extending far away into the heart of the mountain. Nearly every cave is made into a joss-house, each with its own appropriate painted and gilded gods. The caves are connected by long and dark galleries, which in their turn are again connected by many flights of rough and uneven steps, cut far away into the mountain, all worn by centuries of pilgrimage. Niches cut here, there, and everywhere, each possessing its own particular deity, as ugly as black faces, long hair, red and white eyes can make them, all staring at you round corners, suddenly meeting you face to face, and turning up at all times in the most unexpected and undesirable places. This would be all very well in the

broad light of day, but in a darkness barely made visible by the light of one solitary miserable candle, which possesses the peculiar faculty of suddenly shooting up a long flame of fire, and then going out altogether, it certainly makes one feel a 'leettle' creepy, as you are aware that you are standing shoulder to shoulder in the dark, buried in the bowels of the earth, with one of these red-eyed, black little devils.

But the lake itself is the feature of the district, its subdued light at the entrance gradually darkening, and ending in the most pitchy blackness, as you try to make your gaze pierce the far-away depths of the cavern. Its death-like stillness, and the uncanny, soft, and attractive appearance of the water, combined with its unknown size and unfathomed depth, make it one of the terrors of the superstitious Chinese. Of course the resident priests tell you that no one ever comes out again who is foolhardy enough to venture in, but this is the same old story you hear from them everywhere regarding caves and unknown holes, of whose further recesses little or nothing is known, and, as the Buddhist priests hold considerable influence over the people, of course no one ever does go in, each one believing implicitly the priest's assertion, and so the mystery and superstition are preserved.

Still, for all that, I think it would be a most interesting excursion, with a boat and torches, to search for the distant underground home of the far-famed Dragon King. In times of great drought the priests burn incense, fire off endless crackers, and do other things to the honour and glory of the king, whom no one ever pretends to have seen, but who is said to come out of his shell and appear in violent storms and thunder, and is supposed to hold exclusive power over wind, and rain, and storms.

It is a most interesting region, full of natural beauties and curious superstitions. Legends innumerable are related by the priests, if you can only work them up into a talkative humour and draw them out. For anyone visiting Ichang, to see the diversity of water and mountains, it would be better to take this district first before ascending the wilder and more dangerous gorges.

While up the river I met a gentleman who was a missionary. He was an Englishman ; but belonged to an American-Scotch mission. This may appear to the uninitiated a little mixed, but it is substantially correct.

Among the various means adopted by the missionary body for Christianizing the heathen, this gentleman chose the most curious and original method I ever heard of. Before he was appointed

to the — mission he was stationed at one of the fortified towns some miles lower down the river. Here he resided in one of the strongholds of Buddha himself, among a people who were entirely ignorant of the first principles of Christianity. I cannot say he hit upon a very wise plan in his style of religious instruction.

This place, as I have said, was a fortified town, and a very stringent rule of the city—which was occupied by a detachment of troops—was, that the gates should, every night, be closed at ten o'clock. Our worthy Free-Lance of the Cross was very fond of rambling round the country in the cool of the evening, and on many occasions returned long after the gates had been closed. When he found that no entrance was to be obtained on those occasions, he made a great noise outside, kicked, lost his temper, and finally made use of some very nasty words which did not exactly come within the scope of his teaching. This sort of thing occurred several times, and on two or three occasions he passed the night in unpleasant quarters.

Then he adopted a very unwise plan. He laid a one-sided account of the affair before the military mandarin, and commenced to preach *at* the people in no very measured terms. As his practice was, he continued to 'stump the town,' and

soon began to experience a thorn in the flesh during his daily ministrations. He made no attempt to smooth down the growing dislike of the people towards him. The end of it was he was hustled and pelted; made a bolt for it, and reached home in a thoroughly exhausted condition.

After this he ventured no more among the people, but caused a bamboo scaffolding to be erected in front of his house, about sixteen or eighteen feet high, from which elevated position he continued his preaching. From this comparative place of safety he held forth vehemently against the ungodliness of the people, which soon brought matters to a climax.

Two or three children happening to die, our reverend missionary was accused of having killed them in some occult manner, for the purpose of stealing their eyes to convert into photographic chemicals. Many of the Chinese believe that photographic chemicals are made out of deceased children's eyes; if they were not, they say, how could a little water and white powder see to make such correct pictures, especially when they are shut up in the dark in a little black box.

The natives also complained that the bamboo structure interfered with their 'fung shui,' so down it must come. And one dark night down it came. Our friend rushed out to save his property,



but was immediately seized by the excited people. Others captured his wife and children; and his furniture and effects, together with the remains of the bamboo, were carried off by numbers of willing hands, only too glad to have found an opportunity of getting rid of him and his belongings. They and all their household gods were quietly deposited on the banks of the broad and rapid Yangtze, with the intimation that, if he ever attempted to show himself in the town again, it would be a dangerous and unwise thing, for he would be summarily and severely dealt with.

So, for the next week or ten days, the outcasts held a family picnic, leading a Bohemian kind of life, with crowds of Chinese coming again and again to rejoice over their discomforts and misfortunes. The natives kept this unfortunate family in a state of continual terror, not knowing whether at any moment they and their belongings might not be found floating on the river below.

Finally by a bribe to some passing boatmen they got a letter conveyed to the consul at Hankow. The vice-consul was despatched to inquire into the matter. A *modus vivendi* of some kind—I do not remember what—was patched up, and his Reverence, with his furniture very much out of repair after a ten days' exposure to sun, wind, and rain, was translated to ——, where I met him.

Here he conducted himself more peaceably, but whether his damaged reputation had preceded him, or whether the people took a natural dislike to him, I cannot say; anyhow, he soon became unpopular, and confined himself a good deal to the house. Then it was that another original and novel idea for the propagation of the gospel developed itself.

I have already said he belonged to an American Scotch mission, so he considered himself entitled to dress his two children—about eight and nine years of age—in full Highland costume. How he ever fabricated two complete Highland dresses away in the far interior of China, I am at a loss to imagine; but he did so.

One morning, to the amazement and surprise of the natives of ——, who wondered what new josses were being exhibited so suddenly and unexpectedly, the two children appeared at one of the upper windows of his house in brilliant tartan, each armed with a bamboo fishing-rod and line, a bent pin doing duty for a hook on which was fixed a religious tract, which was slowly lowered among the gaping crowd below.

The Chinese, curious to see what this wonderfully dressed joss had sent them, unhooked the tract, and, being of too independent a nature to accept it for nothing, passed the bent pin through

the hole in the centre of a few cash, which was immediately drawn up, and another hook baited with a tract descended. This was a more profitable employment than preaching, and continued for some time. The north country costume seemed to draw congregations, and nothing more offensive was said. When I left — I was told that the business was fairly prosperous, but nothing compared to its early days. Long before this I expect it is completely played out, and some other original idea for gathering in the cash has been invented.

## CHAPTER VI.

Mr. Archibald Little—The Stern-wheeler *Kuling*—Her Trial Trip—  
 The *Kuling* at Ichang—Chinese Excuses—The *Kuling* Returns  
 to Shanghai—Five Months After—Chinese Objection to Steam-  
 boats—The Magistrate's Proclamation—Return to Shanghai  
 —Six Months After—The Whirlpool Again—Novel Machinery  
 —Hints for Travellers—Sha-Sze—Unpleasant Possibilities.

A COUPLE of years or more before my visit to the gorges, Mr. Archibald Little, a merchant of Shanghai, had, in one of the ordinary boats of the country, sailed through upwards of four hundred miles of a continued succession of gorges, and reached as far as Chunking.

This journey was made with the intention of studying and learning all that could be learnt from the natives of the nature and particulars of the rapids, swirls, currents, depth, and other intricacies of the navigation of the upper waters of the river. So well did he complete his work that, as soon as he returned to Shanghai, he left for England, with the intention of getting a company together to build a couple of steamers after his own designs, which he had carefully planned from

the knowledge he had gained during his six months' voyage in a small and confined boat.

The steamers were intended to trade between Ichang and Chunking, about four hundred and twenty miles apart—which they had a perfect right to do, according to the terms of the Chefoo Convention of 1876—and to open up to foreign trade the vast and fertile province of Szechuen.

Mr. Little's mission to London was eminently successful. He soon formed his company, and a steamer of five hundred tons burden was put on the stocks at Glasgow from the designs of Mr. J. McGregor, the chairman of the company, which carried out the requirements furnished by Mr. Little. The building of the boat was most energetically carried on, she was completed during the summer of 1887, and shipped in sections to Shanghai, where she was put together by one of our local ship-builders. At the latter end of 1887 she was launched, and floated for the first time on Chinese waters, and was christened the *Kuling*. The greatest interest was taken in her by the merchants, officials, and residents generally.

At the end of January, 1888, she made her trial trip, with a large party of visitors on board who were taken off to the *Kuling* in steam launches, for she was lying in mid-stream, there being much too high a wind to bring her alongside the jetty.

She is a vessel of about five hundred tons burden, one hundred and seventy-five feet long, twenty-eight broad, eight deep, and is especially adapted for navigating rocky and dangerous channels, rapids, and such like risky places where a quick helm and plenty of steam-power is required. The boilers and engines are amidship, so the boat is never out of trim. She has patent steam steering-gear, is perfectly flat-bottomed, draws only two feet four inches of water empty, and a mere trifle over four feet with a full cargo. She is driven by two sets of compound engines, with a stroke of five feet, and worked with a pressure of one hundred and sixty pounds of steam in the boilers. She has two stern wheels, connected with the engine by two piston rods fifty-seven feet long carried under the main deck, and a balanced rudder astern of the wheels. She has accommodation for both Chinese and European passengers, and in every respect is well-fitted for the work she is intended for.

She started on her trial in the face of half a gale of wind, with a slow speed of nineteen revolutions, gradually increasing up to thirty-four; everything worked with remarkable smoothness and the smallest possible amount of vibration. Taking into consideration that she was drawing not much more than thirty inches of water, she

was wonderfully steady in the strong wind then blowing, the water continually breaking over her bows and flooding the fore-deck. It was bitterly cold, but Mr. Little's thoughtfulness had provided against this. In the saloon we found a good fire and an abundant supply of refreshments, &c., &c., all of which were highly appreciated by his visitors, who did ample justice to the well-spread board. The log was hove three or four times during the trip and gave an average of twelve knots, which was considered very satisfactory. The forced draught caused some difficulty to the native firemen, none of whom had seen such an addition before, and it gave them considerable trouble to keep the fires at the right heat.

The trial was in every respect most successful, and in the course of a week or two she left for her first voyage to Ichang and Chunking, carrying with her the hearty congratulations and good wishes of the entire community.

Her steering and steaming powers were tested in every possible way on her voyage of twelve hundred miles, before reaching Ichang, where she arrived about the end of February. Mr. Little was ready and willing to make the attempt of forcing the rapids, but the British consul, backed by the Chinese authorities, refused to allow the steamer to proceed, as no permit had been received

either from the Tsung-li-Yamên, or the British Minister at Peking. The remainder of the story is so characteristic of Chinese procrastination and delay, such an excellent specimen of a general official muddle, and has been so graphically described in the *North China Daily News*, that I cannot do better than reproduce the notice :

The *Kuling*, the pioneer steamer of the Upper Yangtse Steam Navigation Company, arrived at Ichang on the 23rd of February, and what occurred there after her arrival is a remarkable illustration of Chinese character.

On the day after Mr. Little's arrival, the chief civil authority at Ichang, and the Brigadier General in charge of the Upper River, sent to request him to call on them, and then informed him, to his surprise, for—having received no news, he had no expectation of being able to go on,—that they had made every preparation for his immediate departure with his steamer to Chungking ! They assured him that the physical difficulties of the passage were insuperable ; but, as they found that he was determined to make the attempt, they had issued the necessary proclamations to the people, and had prepared a gunboat to escort him. This was followed by a communication from the British consul, Mr. Gregory, enclosing a telegram from Sir John Walsham, ordering Mr. Little on no account to proceed beyond Ichang. And so the enterprise is necessarily deferred until the required 'permit' is obtained by the British Minister from the Tsung-li-Yamên ; for Mr. Little is the agent of a body of shareholders at home, and he is not justified,



as their manager, in taking the responsibility of disobeying the Minister's injunction.

Nothing could be more typically Chinese than this incident. When the question was first mooted at Peking, the authorities there were as complaisant as possible. They asked for a trifling delay while they communicated with their subordinates at Ichang, who were ordered to report at once on the feasibility of the scheme. The Ichang authorities took their cue at once. They reported to Peking that the difficulties were so vast that they could never be overcome. No steamer could possibly surmount the rapids, which hundreds of lumbering junks negotiate successfully every year. The sides of the gorges swarmed with fierce and uncontrollable monkeys who would be enraged by the noise and smoke of the steamer, and would disable the vessel and kill the crew with volleys of stones. The junkmen and trackers would rise as one man to annihilate the new invention which was certain, if successful, to deprive them of their livelihood. The steamer would come into collision with the ascending and descending junks, which would be unable to get out of her way, and would be sunk in all directions. If the steamer were lost and the foreigners on board her drowned, they would be held responsible, although they were powerless to protect her.

It did not matter a bit that these and other arguments were mutually destructive; they were good enough to send to Peking; they were good enough for the British consul. The Ichang authorities, who put them forward, did not believe in them themselves the least; for they not only wrote officially to the Taotai of

Shanghai to beg him to persuade Mr. Hughes to put a veto on the *Kuling's* leaving this port, but they sent a deputy specially to Shanghai to interview Mr. Little, and pump him as to whether he really meant to come up the river; while their proclamation owns in so many words that their great object was delay.

Finding that Mr. Little was inexorable, they made the best of it, accepting the *fait accompli*, as Chinese always do; and they betook themselves to making the necessary preparations to further, as far as was in their power, Mr. Little's enterprise; and these preparations were completed when he arrived at Ichang.

It was pretty well known, among those who had inner sources of information, that the opposition of the Chinese to the attempt to reach Chungking by steamer was entirely superficial. They did not really object the least to the trial being made, possibly because they really doubted its success; but they were determined to avoid any responsibility in the matter.

And so, after her ineffectual attempt to obtain leave to pass beyond Ichang, the *Kuling* was to be laid up in Shanghai pending receipt from Peking of the promised 'hoochow,' or permit from the Tsung-li-Yamên.

A telegram was subsequently received by Mr. Little from the minister, stating that the difficulties with the Szechuen authorities were serious and not yet overcome.

Sir John Walsham appeared to be exerting himself to the utmost to induce the Yamen to hasten their arrangements for the issue of a proclamation

there similar to the frank notice published in Hupeh.

Meanwhile, advantage was taken of the delay to make some improvements to the machinery of the *Kuling*, which, it was believed, would enable her to steam fourteen knots an hour continuously.

Mr. Little hoped to receive the requisite authority to start not later than May, 1888, so as to make the pioneer voyage before the setting in of the June freshets, when the navigation would be attended with greater risk. He was too sanguine. Those who ought to know said he would be lucky if he got his permit by May, 1889. The Tsung-li-Yamên moves only with the greatest caution and after mature deliberation. We all know the Chinese are a difficult people to hurry.

About five months after the publication of the foregoing notice, news came down from Chunking that very much surprised the good people of Shanghai, stating that the district magistrate of Chunking had received a letter from the Governor of Chengtu, informing him that permission had been granted by the Tsung-li-Yamên for the steamer *Kuling* to proceed to Chunking.

How this news could have arrived at Chunking without passing through Shanghai is altogether inconceivable. Either the whole report was a fab-

rication, or there was something more behind the scenes that had yet to be brought to light. No one knew better than the district magistrate that at this time of the year it would be utterly impossible for any steamer to pass the gorges. The river for very many miles above Chunking, and for many miles below Ichang, a distance of six or seven hundred miles, is one continuous rapid, running like a huge mill-stream, boiling over submerged rocks and creating whirls that would be instantly destructive to the largest Szechuen junk that had the misfortune to come within their influence. The water at this time was about forty or more feet above its ordinary winter and spring level, and, with little variation, would continue so for the next four months.

If a steamer, with the water in its swollen summer condition, attempted to ascend the river above Ichang, and for the shortest possible space of time lost her steerage way and came broadside on to the stream, one of two things must inevitably happen. She would either be instantly rolled over and over (the very flat bottom of the *Kuling* gives her no hold on the water) or else she would be caught by the current and swept down the river to her most certain and complete destruction. The magistrate of Chunking knew this perfectly well, and yet he appeared to believe,

or tried to make others believe, that Mr. Little was foolhardy enough to run his steamer, on her first voyage, through unknown dangers at the very worst time of the year, in the midst of difficulties and impediments which were quite sufficiently risky in the lowest and most quiet water.

All the natives of the two provinces of Szechuen and Hupeh appeared to dislike the advent of steam navigation. They thought, and very naturally so too, that if one steamer is successful it will only be a very short time before there is a regular line of steamers running between Ichang and Chungking. The mandarins objected because they feared the result of any closer intimacy with the outside barbarian. The governing authorities objected because they feared a row. The merchants objected because they feared that foreign traders would soon learn the price of Szechuen produce, and so cut down their profits. The boat-owners objected because they feared that steamers would take away their occupation; and the trackers and coolies objected because they feared that, if the boat traffic disappeared, their means of livelihood would disappear also. In the face of so much opposition and so many difficulties, I fear Mr. Little had rather a rough and an anxious time.

The Ichang correspondent who sent down the report makes a very sensible suggestion, which

has been generally endorsed by the people of Shanghai. He says: 'By all means let no missionaries be taken on board, as they have an inborn tendency to stir up riots, and Chungking cannot afford another riot following so closely upon the last.'

The following is a copy of the proclamation:

TRANSLATION OF PROCLAMATION.

The magistrate of the district *Pa* would have all the people clearly understand that in the 14th year of Kuang Hsü, 6th month, and 12th day, the Taotai and Prefect of Chungking received letters from the Military Commandant and the Governor-General at Chengtu containing instructions from the Tsung-li-Yamên stating that a steamer was to run from Ichang to Chungking, that the British Minister considered that under the treaty this could not be prevented, and that it was desired that a proclamation be issued in all respects similar to the one issued at Ichang. Therefore do we with dispatch issue this proclamation that all the people of the district with soldiers and boatmen may understand that the coming of a steamer to Chungking is permitted by the Chefoo Treaty, and may not be prevented. Last year when the Szechuen boatmen heard that a steamer was coming to Chungking they indulged in much extravagant talk, desiring to assemble and prevent it. This was owing to their stupidity and ignorance, thinking the coming of the steamer would hinder their gaining a livelihood, not being aware that the coming and going of the steamer with the loading and unloading of cargo would furnish employment to

a large number of men. As, for instance, Ichang, since its opening to foreign trade, has given evidence of increased prosperity. The number of those who make their living by carrying cargo is also not small. This is evident proof.

That Mr. Little's company in making this journey will encounter danger and difficulty is very clear. This they do, not with an eye to their own interests merely, but also desiring that the Chinese boatmen and trackers should gain a livelihood. From this it may be seen that they are in the highest degree reasonable.

Moreover, among the exports of Szechuen salt ranks as the chief, and the boats which employ the largest number of men are salt junks. But steamers will not be permitted to load with salt, so the people's means of livelihood will be in no wise interfered with. As to the steamers coming into collision with native boats, every means will be taken to avoid it, but, if it should occur in one case out of a myriad, the matter will be carefully looked into and adjusted with justice; if the fault is with the steamer, compensation will be made for the damaged boat and cargo. The provisions of the treaty will be followed, so there need be no anxiety about the matter. To sum up the whole matter, the running of the steamer by Mr. Little's company is in entire accordance with the provisions of the treaty, and the fulfilment of the treaty having the consent and permission of the Emperor, there should be reverent obedience. By no means lend a willing ear to the vagabonds of the place who set afloat baseless rumours, gathering together, causing obstructions, and raising disturbances, themselves becoming involved in the meshes of the law.

I, the Magistrate, reiterate my warning, with no other

thought than for the lives of yourselves and families. Carefully consider this.

Above all, looking to the literati of this place to give instruction that every family may know, and the minds of all men be at rest, avoiding sedition, do I urgently issue this proclamation.

Kwang-Hsü, 14th year, 6th month, 15th day. (21st July.)

The resources of the Chinese Foreign Office for successful procrastination are altogether inexhaustible, and far beyond any resources that Her Majesty's minister, however gifted, may possess to oppose them.

When Mr. Little left Peking in October, 1888, he was assured by the minister that the permit for the *Kuling* to ascend the river to Chunking was all ready, and that, if he went to Ichang, he would in all probability find it waiting for him there, as there was only one trifling point unsettled, and that would not involve any material delay.

On the strength of this announcement Mr. Little left for Ichang, and the *Kuling* was all ready to start. On his arrival at Hankow he was informed by the British consul that a despatch had come from the Taotai, to the effect that the viceroy of Hukuang had received instructions to send an official to confer with the consul at Ichang, and to frame a set of rules for



the regulation of the steamer's progress. When completed, they were to be submitted to and approved by both the Hukuang viceroy and the viceroy of Szechuen. When approved, they were then to be published for general information, and if in the meantime no further obstacles should arise, then a pass would be issued to the *Kuling*.

But, after all the experience hitherto gained, was it at all likely that everything would run smoothly now? In any case, it meant the delay of another year, for the favourable season of 1888—9 was now irretrievably lost.

But those who professed to know something of what was going on behind the scenes, assured me that there were many people who, fondly hoping to see the opening of the rapids of the Upper Yangtze to steam navigation, would have passed into the land of shadows before this became *un fait accompli*.

What a brilliant opportunity had now been opened for indefinite delay, without attributing the cause to any one person in particular!

1. The conference between the Chinese official and the consul regarding the framing of the rules, and all the ceremonies consequent thereon.

2. The drawing out of the rules after many long and weary interviews.

3. Their approval and sanction by the Szechuen viceroy.

4. Their approval and sanction by the Hukuang viceroy.

5. Their publication for general information.

6. The uncertain time required after publication to prove to the satisfaction of all parties that no further obstacles can possibly arise.

7. The reconsideration of all these matters by the Tsung-li-Yamên, and the very indefinite time required by this august body for framing the wording of the pass.

Although we are twelve hundred miles from the sea, porpoises are playing about in the river, but they have never been known to go any further, never to round Mussulman Point, or to enter the first gorge. The swirls and back-waters and rapids they do not like ; so, after playing about here for a couple of days, they invariably turn their heads to the sea. In the course of a few days we embarked with our quondam interpreter and guide. Two days after leaving, we stuck on a bank for about ten hours, got off, and away again.

At Hankow we met with our former steamer, the *Nganking*, and secured the same cabins we had occupied on our upward trip, which were the most comfortable in the vessel. Three-and-a-half days

with the steamer brought us down to the mouth of the river, where we encountered a heavy gale of wind.

At the Langshan Crossing, which is close to the river's entrance into the sea—here about fifteen miles in width, and so called on account of all the river steamers being compelled to cross in order to avoid some dangerous banks,—there was very rough water, and a strong easterly gale blowing the swell up the river; we noticed, about a couple of miles off, a capsized junk floating bottom upwards. We turned round to pick up three half-drowned men who were sticking to the bottom of their boat like barnacles to a rock. They could not have been in that position very long, for they were not much exhausted; but they, seeing another native boat making for them, refused to come on board our steamer, although the captain very kindly offered to tow their capsized craft into shallow water. Still they refused, so we left them to the devices of their own countrymen. Half-an-hour afterwards we were in the *Wangpoo*, and in a couple of hours reached Shanghai, ready for all the discomforts, depression, and attendant sickness of a Shanghai summer; hale and vigorous from our interesting and long-to-be-remembered trip on the upper waters of the 'Child of the Ocean.'\*

\*The English translation of Yangtze Kiang.

It is now upwards of six months since our return to Shanghai. The extreme heat of the summer, with all its discomforts and annoyances, has passed away; the evenings are drawing in just sufficiently short and cool to admit of my making one or two observations without the constant annoyance of a punkah accompaniment.

The large collection of ferns I brought back with me, and of whose continuance in life I expressed some doubt, have done extremely well, have quite recovered from the rough treatment they received on their voyage and several transshipments, and have thrown out a great number of new and healthy fronds that look extremely promising for the future.

An acquaintance of mine, who has made the journey up the river to Szechuen, told me very clearly that he had grave doubts regarding my story of the whirlpool at the foot of the Ichang rapids, and added that he thought he had seen most things on the river, but he certainly had not met with the whirlpool.

My facetious friend was also very inquisitive regarding the 'brand' we took with us, says he would much like to get a few cases for his own private consumption, for it must have been unusually fine to have put us into a whirlpool anywhere near the Ichang Gorge.

Well, there always were and always will be people who go about the world in a half-sleepy, dreamy state. I think my somnambulistic friend's customary 'brand' quite sufficiently good for his health and safety, without inquiring for anything of a more potent nature.

I can only repeat that the whirl *is* there, about two to three hundred yards below the point of the reef. It varies very much in its strength and rapidity of motion.

When the river is at its lowest, as during the winter and early spring, the circular movement is very slight, and much contracted. It might at these times easily be passed unnoticed by those a little distance away from it.

When the water is about half-flood at the end of May and beginning of June it becomes dangerous, and has taken down many a good junk and crew which at this time of the year has had the misfortune to be drawn into its outer circle.

In the *North China Daily News* of July 6th, 1887, the Ichang correspondent, writing to that paper under date of June 27th, states at the end of his letter:

'The river is now thirty-nine feet above the low water-mark of winter; it is still rising, and the rain still descending. The other day a large boat

with machinery for the Szechuen Viceroy was wrecked in a whirlpool in the Ichang Gorge.'

Another correspondent, writing from Ichang under date of June 20th to the same paper, and whose letter was published on July 7th (the following day), after describing a short trip to the first gorge, states :

'Just the little time we have been away we saw one junk wrecked, and two drifting downstream, unmanageable, their tow-lines having broken, and all their men being ashore. The farthest point we got was only fifteen miles from Ichang. We did not go further, because our captain said it was just then too dangerous to take our boat past the *three* terrible whirlpools of Nantow.'

The river at this time (June 20th) was in its most dangerous state—about half-flood, forty feet above its winter level. Careless and indifferent to danger as these Szechuen boatmen all are, here was one of them, a loudah, who must have been on the river for years, and therefore knew the position and peculiarities of nearly every point and rock through the gorges which was dangerous to navigation, distinctly refusing even to make the attempt to pass the whirl. His reason, 'Too dangerous,' being an almost unheard-of objection from a Szechuen river-man.

I think, therefore, that my unbelieving friend, when he read these letters, must have thought there was something peculiarly defective in his eyesight during his river excursion, and that the superior 'brand' was to be found only on board his own boat. Anyhow, this is quite sufficient to prove that a whirl does exist at the foot of the Ichang Rapid, and that in certain states of the river it is dangerous to boats of sixty to eighty tons, carrying crews of about the same number of men.

The most dangerous rapid on the river is 'Ching Tan,' two and a half or three days from Ichang, between the Lukan and the Mitau Gorge. Here the water boils and bubbles round the boat most violently, the tow-rope requires to be of additional strength, and more men are needed both on the line and also on board the boat. Rocks are scattered about all over the river, necessitating the very nicest in-and-out navigation to avoid them, and, owing to a steep incline of the river-bed, the current is unusually strong.

I may here mention that I heard of vast quantities of cases of machinery being continually sent up from Shanghai and other ports to Ichang by the river steamers, and I could not possibly understand why so much machinery was required in the western parts of China where the people have no idea of steam-power, and view all such

uncanny things as the pernicious, malevolent inventions of the hated foreign devil, and which should only be looked at from a distance, and even then with the greatest suspicion.

I made some inquiries at Ichang regarding the nature of this said machinery and its destination. I then found that 'machinery' was simply another name for Gatling guns, rifles, and ammunition generally, and that very large quantities of arms arrived at Ichang, were there transhipped into Szechuen junks, sent on to Chunking, Suchan, and other parts on the river. From these places about four-fifths are then sent still further up the river, some overland into Yunan, on to the borders of Burmah.

I think it not at all unlikely that at some future time the authorities in Burmah will have cause to wonder how such vast quantities of rifles and cartridges ever found their way into the Yuman fortresses. The steamer we travelled in from Hankow to Ichang had on board two Gatling guns, and about one hundred and fifty cases of arms and ammunition. This is some of the 'machinery' which the Ichang correspondent reported to the *Daily News* as having been wrecked in the whirlpool in the Nantan rapid.

Here are a few memos that may be useful for future guidance.



Dollars and small silver coins are not used either in Ichang or farther up the river. The natives will not accept them in payment of wages, or in exchange for goods. Cash is the only medium of exchange, and sycee, which they take by weight.

At Ichang we paid for our boat, *i.e.*, the large one occupied by Sir Roderick and myself, seven thousand cash per day. This included all; boat, loudah, and men. The crew consisted of sixteen good men. The loudah provided them with food. For the small boat, containing chair-coolies, chairs, &c., twelve hundred cash per day, including all. This boat was almost the size of a small cargo-boat of Shanghai.

For the consular boat, lent to us by Her Britannic Majesty's consul, Mr. Gregory, we had to provide crew only, at a total cost of fifteen hundred cash per day. I forget how many men she had, but I think five, and a loudah. The wages of good boatmen at Ichang are from two hundred to two hundred and forty cash per day. The latter sum ought to bring out the best men in the place. On shooting trips, for beaters and ordinary coolies, inclusive of food and rice, one hundred and fifty to two hundred cash is sufficient.

In engaging a boat, you should agree with the

loudah for the best men only. Then there is just a chance that you may get them, but the probability is you will not. If second-class men, or men who are not regular boatmen, or sick or weak men are provided, wages should be cut down one half, and the men put ashore on the first opportunity. This is a very important stipulation, and one that must be seen to by yourself before starting, or it is more than likely that in a day or two, or at the first spell of downright hard work, you will discover, when too late, that half your crew are cripples.

Some travellers strongly advise having a written agreement with the loudah, detailing all particulars, and certain 'cuts' or fines to be levied if the agreement is not strictly carried out.

I do not see the use of such an agreement myself. If the traveller cannot make the loudah carry out his agreement by his own determination, backed up by moral or physical force, whichever may at the moment be most required, he will not be able to do so with all the contracts that could be written, signed, sealed, and delivered.

Besides, who, among the wilderness of gorges, is to settle the terms of the agreement in case a dispute should arise? If the traveller and the loudah both held out that they were right, and

neither was willing to retract, the dispute would advance fast and furious, and in all probability would be finally settled by the ordeal of fisticuffs, a proceeding always to be avoided until every other argument has failed; but, when absolutely driven to it, never consent to a compromise, or your men will taunt you with having shown the white feather.

For the nine chair-coolies, we paid two hundred cash per man per day, and provided our own chairs. Coolies and boatmen always ask for some of their wages in advance to purchase rice and other things, but the loudah must be held responsible that the cash is so spent, or, when the time comes for sailing, you probably will—as we did, through neglecting this precaution—find your entire crew in a state of helpless intoxication.

Take with you about one thousand to fifteen hundred cash per day for the length of time the trip is to last, to pay for hauling through rapids, fresh provisions, 'tips,' and other small things. This is enough, provided the trip does not last over eight or nine days; but if it extends to weeks, or two or three months, take sycee in addition, which at every town is convertible into cash.

Do not go ashore at Cha-Sze, unless you wish for a daily visit from your doctor for the follow-

ing three months. The natives of this city have great bitterness of feeling against all foreigners, and no 'outside barbarian' has ever been rash enough to land there a second time. You are sure to be very roughly handled, and amongst a mob of thousands will be perfectly helpless. The people are not at all particular regarding the size of the stones or pieces of brick they wish to bring to your notice, something a little larger than a cricket-ball appears to be the favourite dimensions; and the bamboos they use wherewith to give you a friendly (?) tap over the head and shoulders on every favourable occasion are not the lightest of their kind.

Such has been the experience of those who, in spite of all warning and advice, have been indiscreet enough to venture into this fool's paradise, trusting to their own imperturbability, and an idea that a more or less questionable knowledge of Chinese would carry them through all difficulties, establish at once a bond of harmony, and lead to a more peaceful disposition towards the 'foreign devil.'

How people can be found who possess this faith and are willing to venture on such a hopeless task, appears to me one of those anomalies for which it is despairing to look for an explanation; and that, notwithstanding all former premonition

and experience, there should still remain some who are vain and ostentatious enough to imagine that they can overcome the hatred which has existed from generation to generation among these people against all who are not of their nation, or followers of their faith, is another of those perplexing problems, a solution of which is only to be found in the pretentious and overweening assurance of visionary fanatics.

Better, far better, take a common-sense view of the matter and leave these bellicose people to themselves, and be contented with viewing them and their excessively dirty and evil-smelling town from the deck of your steamer in the middle of the river, where you are at least safe and free from insult and assault; for, should you do such an unwise thing as to land among them, it would be most desirable that you should beforehand take an early opportunity to make a final settlement of your temporal affairs, for it is quite within the bounds of probability that you would soon become qualified for an early introduction to the coroner, and twelve good and true men.

## CHAPTER VII.

Country Roads—Leave for the Tai-Hu Lake—Creek Boating—Stormy Weather—Toongdoong-Sin Island—The Religious Performance—Imprisoned—Escape from the Joss-house—A Deputation of Natives—Our Troubles at Toongdoong-Sin explained—Prospecting for Winter Shooting—A Brilliant Sunset—A Photographer's Difficulties—No Escape from the Natives—The Boat springs a Leak—Make a Dry Dock—Homeward Bound—Outside Soochow—The Monastery Hill—Home at Last.

READING through the foregoing jottings, it occurs to me that, to anyone who has not lived in China, it may appear strange that you can go nowhere or do anything without a boat.

To a very great extent this is true. Round Shanghai foreigners have, with much difficulty, obtained from the Chinese authorities permission to make a very few miles of roads outside the boundary of the foreign concession. Five miles east, and five miles west is the limit. You must go and return by the same road. Day after day the same weary drive is all the carriage exercise to be had, which in a very short time becomes monotonous in the extreme.

Two or three years ago the municipal council endeavoured to buy from some of the natives a narrow strip of their land, at an absurdly high value, so as to make a new road, and vary a little the sameness of the present drive. But the Taotai stepped in and, under threats of some most awful punishment if his orders were disregarded, prohibited the Chinese from selling their land to foreigners for making new roads. His argument was that we had roads enough, and even more than we ought to have; that, whatever price we offered, the Chinese soil should not be further invaded; and that, so long as he could prevent it, we should not get any more ground. So the scheme fell through, for if any of the natives had sold their land after receiving such orders from the Taotai, they would have had a very bad time for several years to come.

Round Peking there are a few miserable excavations that are called roads, many inches deep in dust in summer, and with a depth of twelve to twenty-four inches of mud in winter. In all the country round Shanghai there is not even so good a highway as this.

The roads between the towns and villages all over this part of the Empire are simply raised earth-banks, with a small rut on either side out of which the bank has been dug; they are raised a few inches

above the level of the fields they cross, and during rainy weather are continually under water. They vary from three feet wide in their broadest parts to one foot or even less in the narrowest. For miles and miles through the country, from town to town, from village to village, these miserable paths run on, allowing just sufficient space for a string of men to follow one another in single file.

Everything in the way of produce is carried slung from the shoulders of the men, each man's load being equally balanced at the end of a long bamboo, which he will carry many miles in the course of a day. On this narrow highway the chair of the mandarin is safely conveyed by his sure-footed bearers; the gilded litter of the bridal procession and the still more imposing funeral train trail their long lengths between the neatly defined crops without break or damage, each to its intended terminus. So it has been for centuries past, and so, in all probability, it will continue for centuries to come.

If a foreigner living in Shanghai wishes for change of air and to go to the seaside, he must make a sea-voyage of over six hundred miles to a very small town named Chefoo, at the entrance of the Gulf of Pechili. This is the nearest change he can get from the broiling heat of a Shanghai summer.



If this does not please him, he must make a still longer trip to Japan, to Nagasaki, Kobi, or Yokohama, the latter about a thousand miles away.

Failing this, he is driven back upon his house-boat, and takes himself off to the rivers and creeks, of which there are hundreds running through the country in all directions, and which are used by the natives in place of roads. This alternative is frequently taken by foreigners. You carry your house with you; can stop where you like, and ramble where you will. You carry with you your own cook and boy, and the boat being well provisioned before leaving, you are altogether independent of the country people. It is a wonderfully free and easy life, one that day by day changes like a kaleidoscope; you are continually meeting with a variety of incident that makes living in a house-boat quite the reverse of monotonous. This wild Bohemian independence is most enjoyable, is full of incident; fresh scenes and fresh experiences follow one another in rapid succession; your own resources are being continually drawn upon to bring you out of a difficulty; you soon discover how to depend solely upon your own exertions, and you undoubtedly learn how to handle a boat under every contingency, and never feel at a loss what to do, whether she is lying over on her side, hove to, or drifting on to a lee shore.

My own experience of boat life has been fairly extensive, and although on several occasions boats have served me very unkind tricks, and have been within a hair's breadth of bringing my temporary sojourn here to a sudden termination, I still think a sailing boat, with fine weather and a good breeze, one of the most healthful and enjoyable recreations possible.

Here is an account of one of my own adventures, but hardly a fair sample, for most of the time we had a succession of gales of wind accompanied by severe storms of thunder, lightning, and rain, and at the same time we unfortunately fell into the hands of the Philistines.

For several weeks I had been very much out of sorts, there was nothing particular the matter, but neither I nor anyone else could explain why some days I got much better, then suddenly fell off again bad as ever. The doctor did not like my behaviour at all, so one morning he said: 'Now out of this you must go; take a trip for a fortnight or three weeks in a house-boat. If you find it does not suit you, you can come back again; but, on the other hand, if it does suit, then stay away till you are quite well.'

I had not been out of Shanghai for some time and the idea pleased me much. My wife and daughter were to accompany me to look after the

invalid, so we began at once preparing for our departure. At length all was ready ; but we had entirely overlooked one thing,—none of us had for a moment thought of an itinerary. Some friends recommended one place, some another. The places named had all been too much visited by Europeans. I preferred a locality foreigners had only seen at long and uncertain intervals.

Finally we fixed on a trip to the islands of the Taihu lake. Taihu, or the large lake about ninety to one hundred miles west of Shanghai, is a vast sheet of water upwards of seventy miles long and sixty wide, with a group of most picturesque mountainous islands lying nearly in the centre. I tried to gain some information about them, but could learn nothing. No one I knew had visited them. A Chinaman who heard of my projected trip strongly urged me not to go. He assured me the inhabitants of the islands were wild men, half savages, who spoke a language no Chinese could understand. My wife and daughter (who for the future I shall call M—— and L——) rather liked the novel idea, so we decided for the islands.

The lake itself is very variable in depth, in some places large flats occur, several miles in area, with not more than six or seven feet of water on them ; then the bottom suddenly deepens to one

hundred and fifty feet and more, so it is not difficult to imagine that during a high wind and lumpy water navigation becomes rather hazardous.

At length we were quite ready to start, and on a beautiful morning in the spring of the year (I think the 26th or 27th of April), we shipped on board the *Retriever*, and with a fair wind headed up the Soochow Creek. It took some time to pole our way out of the boats and junks that were straggling all over the stream; but when we had left the last bridge well astern there was a clear road before us. The yulow was brought inboard, the huge batswing sail hoisted, and away we sped, bound for the islands of the west.

Wang-doo, the first place of any importance we came to, was passed during the night, and Kwing-da, a fortified city, at about eight p.m. the following morning. We made Eding at eleven, and arrived off the fortifications of Soochow at one p.m. Soochow is a most important rebel fortification, being only second to Nanking, their capital. It was besieged and taken by the Imperialists under Colonel Gordon, in 1863. The walls are several miles in circumference and about forty feet high, surrounded by a broad and deep moat, all in an excellent state of repair.

We were uncertain whether to take the nor-

thern or southerly route round Soochow, but finally decided upon going south ; so, striking off into a small creek which ran out of the south-west corner of the moat, we came in about three hours to the horrible village of Mohdoh, the most abominable, evil-smelling place I ever met with. It is built after the usual manner of riverine villages, the mud huts, very small and excessively dirty, lining each bank of the creek, with a manure heap in front of each hut coming quite down to the water, waiting for the boats to carry it off into the country. The creek itself is not more than twelve to fourteen feet wide. I very soon saw there was every chance of a block, and would have turned back had it been possible to do so. But we were hemmed in both in front and rear, and our best chance was to go ahead. I therefore told the boatmen to pole away and not waste their breath in shouting, for the amount of bawling and talking all over the place was perfectly deafening. All this time the people were heaping upon us unmeasured abuse, and threats of the most dire vengeance, which did us no harm so long as they confined themselves to words.

Wherever we saw a chance of making an opening we jammed in the nose of our boat, and then forced her through. 'Go on, go on ; stop for nothing,' was my constant order to the men. The

abominable stench from the heaps of filth on the banks, the close confined atmosphere of such a dense crowd of unwashed humanity, the uncertainty of our ever getting the boat through, and the broiling heat of the sun, began to make us all feel sick and ill. Our loudah assured me that, if we forced our way through as we were doing, the people would board us, and break up everything in the boat. On the other hand, I assured him that, if we did not get out of this very quickly, we should all of us be down with fever before night. Go on he must, and stop for nothing. I would myself guarantee that no one boarded the boat.

Taking a thick and unpleasant-looking stick I stood in the bows, and when anyone tried to board us the stick soon dissuaded him from continuing the attempt.

It was awfully hot. M—— and L—— were shut up in the cabin. The men worked well when they saw I could be trusted to keep the boat clear, but, although the distance through the village was not more than a mile and a half, I began to get doubtful about our pulling through.

After more than two hours' continuous work the passage became a little more clear, and half-an-hour afterwards we were again in the open fields. Our lungs once more breathed the pure

air of the country, but for the remainder of the day we all suffered with sickness and head-ache.

About seven p.m. we just caught a glimpse of the lake which was now not more than a mile from us. The loudah strongly urged anchoring for the night within a good shelter about a hundred yards from the margin. The wind was rising, with every appearance of a gale, and, as the loudah did not know the navigation of the lake, we moored close under the bank, had a quiet dinner, and a good night's rest.

*Monday, May 1st.* —A beautiful morning, with a mild and soft air. We took breakfast a little before six, and then put off for the islands, which were quite invisible, so we steered by compass. The lake is like an inland sea; there are many positions from which land is invisible; and from others the tops of the mountains show faintly above the horizon. We had a head-wind, and in the course of an hour managed to get the boat firmly aground on one of the flats I have mentioned in less than three feet of water. All the poling we could do was useless, we could not move her; so the whole crew dropped over the side, which lightened her considerably, and, by their all lifting together, she gradually floated off into deep water, when I let go the anchor, and took the small boat to fetch the crew from the bank.

The small boat was one that I had brought up on the deck of the house-boat, and would, I thought, be good for small creeks and other places where the larger boat could not go. She was a nice handy little thing, very stiff, about fourteen feet long, with a small lug-sail which could be raised or lowered with the greatest ease.

The weather by this time, about ten a.m., began to look doubtful and overcast, the clouds gathering thickly in the north, and the barometer falling, all boding bad weather, and as we could not reach the islands till nearly evening, with the wind then blowing, we put the boat back, and brought up again at our last night's resting-place, there to wait for a fair wind.

It was fortunate we did so, instead of trying to push on. In less than an hour, after we were all snug, the storm came, accompanied by the most awful lightning and thunder. The wind roared through the trees, and I doubt if the boat could have lived through it had she been on the lake. As it was, she was perfectly sheltered and did not feel it at all. It passed over in about three hours, but, as the wind continued strong, we decided to remain where we were for the night. At sunset it cleared up. L—— and I had the small boat out for a couple of hours' recreation before dark.

*Tuesday, 2nd.*—The morning looked doubtful,



but soon after six we tried the lake again. A light breeze springing up from the east favoured us, and the boat sailed well over the easy swell left from yesterday's storm. The wind increased as the time wore on, and before noon we were close on to the island of Toongdoongsin, when suddenly the weather became overcast again; a drizzling rain came on, enveloping us in an impenetrable mist and making the islands invisible. As there was every chance of running ashore, had we gone on, we took down the sail, let go the anchor, and waited for the weather to clear, which it did in an hour or two. We then tried to work into a small creek, but failed for want of water; put out again, and worked round to the south-west end of the island, and there we found some good moorings in ten feet of water.

Our loudah went ashore with the hopes of hunting up a few fresh eggs, but returned shortly with the information that there was a very large 'joss pidgin,' and a theatrical performance going on about a mile inland. If we would like to see it, he would be our guide, and we might get the eggs on our return. M—— and L—— were much pleased with the idea of seeing the Chinese actually at home, away from the restraint of the barbarous European; so off we started, the boatman in front being our guide.

We soon wound into a lovely valley between gently-sloping hills, covered with azaleas all bursting into bloom ; then we reached a table-land with a thick plantation of mulberry-trees most carefully looked after, every dead or decaying leaf being removed, and every attention paid to the trees, so that they shall produce large and healthy leaves. Above this, again, some four hundred feet above the lake, was another table-land, very much larger and spreading out into some wide valleys running towards the interior of the island, in which were several temples of a considerable size. A large theatrical stage, twenty or thirty feet high, was erected under the side of a hill, and the performance was in full swing when we appeared on the outside edge of the crowd. There was a terrible crush, and there could not have been less than five or six thousand people on the ground.

At first the people seemed rather amused at our appearance, and examined both M—— and L——'s dresses, hair, boots, &c., with a little too much curiosity. Then they looked displeased, and as we gradually worked our way towards the stage they became very angry ; the performers ceased their acting and pointed and shouted at us, and, what was quite unnecessary, called the attention of the people to our presence. We were

evidently the chief attraction of the whole show ; and their looks and gestures not being assuring, I began to wish we were well out of it. We admired the richly-embroidered dressing of the stage and passed a little pantomimic compliment to the actors, who in return shook their fists, and looked as if they would willingly eat us there and then, clothes and all, just as we stood ; we all the time gradually pushing our way through the crowd, endeavouring to find an opening in the dense mass which had now surrounded us.

The whole thing was to me incomprehensible, for I had seen many of their performances before, and on two or three occasions had been behind the scenes, and this was the first time the slightest objection had been raised. There was evidently something very wrong, for the people began to jostle and push us about, all shouting and making a great row. I asked the loudah what they were saying. He replied,

‘ I don’t know—I can’t understand a word.’

‘ Well,’ I thought, ‘ what the Chinaman in Shanghai told me about these islanders evidently appears to be true. They are savages who speak an unknown tongue.’

Matters gradually got worse, until at last several of them began to strike us. This was too much ; for the last twenty minutes we had tried to get

quietly away, and would still have done so had they given us the slightest chance ; but they crowded more than ever and again struck at us, when five or six of the most prominent leaders in the most clumsy manner ran up against my fists, and were promptly deposited on their backs.

This was such an unexpected performance that it caused a sudden lull in the rapidly-gathering storm ; so, taking advantage of it, I said to M—— and L——,

‘The natives are getting very angry ; we must clear out of this and reach the boat as soon as possible. You and L—— keep close to me ; I’ll make a road, and the loudah must bring up the rear.’

No sooner said than done ; but though we struggled and fought it seemed useless ; an opening was no sooner made than it was closed up again by others. They were too numerous ; retreat seemed impossible.

The hot sun and the suffocating crush were beginning to tell on M—— and L—— ; they both said they thought they should faint. If they did, what on earth was to be done I had no idea, for the natives were working themselves up into a state of frenzy. One man, more angry than the others, came through the crowd with a long knife tied to the end of a bamboo and com-

menced to make thrusts at the loudah. I suppose they held him responsible for bringing us there.

The loudah got behind me and dodged from side to side, as the man continued to attack him. I expected every moment to get the knife into me, for, each time he made a poke, it passed within an inch or two of my ribs, first on one side then on the other. Watching an opportunity I seized the bamboo, and broke off the knife. Then a general howl of indignation arose, and we were all carried rather than pushed into a covered passage leading to one of the temples. We soon came to the place where the josses were, but through this we were hurried into another cave-like recess, down another passage, round a corner, thence to another passage, all in semi-darkness, and were finally deposited in a small room; the door was at once closed and barricaded.

So far good, we were for the time out of the crush, in a comparatively pure atmosphere, and, happily, all together.

After a short rest, which was very much needed, we set about examining our prison and discovered a small window, about four feet from the ground, partly filled and tied up with bamboo, and through the interstices we could see the clear open country beyond. Luckily, I had still the knife which was broken off the pole,

and with it we soon removed the fastenings which blocked up the window, and there before us was an opening to the shore, quite in an opposite direction to the mob of howling fanatics.

Passing M—— and L—— through this opening, we quickly followed, and, under cover of every tree, shrub or mound available, made tracks as quickly as possible for the boat. It was hot and fatiguing work, but it was impossible to foresee the result if we should be discovered before we reached the boat.

As may be supposed, we lost no time; but when within two or three hundred yards of the boat we were seen, and several hundreds of the mob gave chase. We had a splendid start, and it was hardly possible they could catch us. The loudah shouted to the men in the boat to cast off the moorings, and they, seeing something was very wrong, had everything ready to shove off the moment we were on board.

We got on board, with no time to spare, and instantly the men poled out into deep water. The sail was hoisted, and with a parting cheer to our pursuers we were again free.

We sailed away as though making for the mainland, near Mohdoh, but when well out of sight we changed our course from west to south-east, and made for another island a good many

miles to the south of the one we had left. The wind rose, and got so strong that we split the sail and strained the mast. On this lake the winds rise at a few minutes' notice, blow with all the force of a gale for half-an-hour, and then as suddenly drop. We grounded twice before reaching the island, but the boat behaved very well. Ran into a small creek, and made all snug for the night by half-past seven.

*Wednesday, 3rd.*—The morning broke cloudy and threatening, so we decided to remain where we were for a few hours. Meantime L—— and I took the small boat and went off exploring. We found some fine sheets of water a mile or two inland, with quantities of reeds and water-plants growing on the margin. They—*i.e.*, these pieces of water—would be grand places for wild-fowl shooting in winter. We put up several ducks and broods of young ones from the banks. There was plenty of broken ground and scrub that would make excellent cover; some of the pools were very large, others small, but all separated one from the other by low-lying hills. Then we tried a creek and came unexpectedly to a village, the natives flocking out of their houses as soon as they saw us. Our presence seemed to please them no more than we had pleased their compatriots yesterday. They yelled and shouted something altogether

unintelligible, and it was quite as well it was so, for I am sure it was nothing very complimentary.

We put the boat about and pulled back again, running the gauntlet of a bridge without receiving the expected shower of stones. I desired L—— to keep the boat in the middle of the stream while I 'put my back' into the oars. The natives soon got tired of following over rough ground, while the boat made good headway over the smooth water. An hour-and-a-half afterwards we again found our 'home,' and did ample justice to the excellent tiffin awaiting us. This accomplished, M——, L——, and myself took the small boat to another island on the lake, completely covered with azaleas, citron-trees, and pomegranates. Here we spent the remainder of the day sketching and rambling among these most delicious groves. No natives appeared, consequently we were at peace.

*Thursday, 4th.*—The mists hung heavily over the mountain-tops, but about seven o'clock they commenced to disperse, and all things presaged a fine day. Turned out before six, to try for a dish of fish for breakfast. We could see shoals of them, varying from a quarter of a pound to two pounds, swimming about in the beautifully clear water. Fortune did not favour us, we got nothing, excepting a few stones from some young



urchins on the bank. Shortly after, finishing the matutinal pipe, and discussing as to where we should spend the day, a deputation of natives—about twenty—came to us bringing presents of fried melon-seeds, one or two other kinds of seed which they look upon as delicacies, fish, silkworms, eggs, etc. ; and, after much talk from one of them who spoke a dialect our loudah understood, they begged our acceptance of the presents they had brought, and invited us into the village to partake of some tea and chowchow which they had prepared. We accepted the fish and silkworms ; the seeds, etc., were declined with thanks. A great deal of smiling, friendly gestures, and a long pantomimic performance followed.

Then we presented the women of the deputation with some pieces of ribbon of various colours, pieces of lace, and coloured handkerchiefs. They were highly delighted with them, and showed their pleasure in their own peculiar ways.

When it came to our returning with them to the village, I had my doubts as to the wisdom of such a proceeding. Visions of traps, ambuscades, and all kinds of unpleasant positions in which we might find ourselves constantly presented themselves to my mind. We had not received very friendly treatment from these people hitherto, and I could not understand why they should so suddenly wish

to become friends. I spoke to the loudah about it; he said he thought it was all right, that they intended to act fairly by us, and that if we went to the village he would have the boat ready to sail at a moment's notice, if necessary. None of us had the least desire to show the white feather, or let the natives suppose that for a single moment we were afraid of them; so we accepted their invitation, determining to keep our eyes open, and not to be taken by surprise.

We had a lovely walk through the mulberry groves which were in the most perfect state of cultivation, and the people explained, as well as they could, how the trees were planted and tended year by year; that silk, being the staple, indeed the only produce of the islands, their entire existence depended upon this one industry alone. We walked on till we arrived at the village, which was situated in a lovely valley, and was actually clean—at least, for a Chinese collection of huts. There was no work going on in the silk factories, so they could not show us the process. We partook very sparingly of the tea, etc., and then prepared to depart. They accompanied us back to the river, where we had a number of swimming matches among the small boys for empty bottles, which they treasured exceedingly. And so the day ended without the slightest hitch of any kind.

But I failed to divine the meaning of it all. Why they should almost murder us one day, and treat us like friends the next, was to me wholly incomprehensible.

Before they left, the loudah inquired from the one whose dialect he understood why the people had been so angry at the joss pidgin two days before. When the matter was explained to them, they were astonished that two foreign women should have gone to that religious ceremony, and come away again uninjured. No Chinese woman would have been tolerated there for a moment. It was a ceremony for men only; they did not mind my attending, but the presence of two women would upset the whole object and result of the meeting, and in consequence they would have to commence all over again. The mystery was solved.

Towards sunset there was every appearance of wind and rain, so we drew the boat further inland and made her secure for the night.

About eight p.m. the storm broke. The continual flashes of lightning were perfectly blinding, the thunder following the flash without any intermission, and the roll so loud, so deep and vibrating that the entire island trembled. The wind and rain were equally severe, and we heard the lake outside lashing itself into fury, but we were exceedingly snug in our well-selected shelter, and

passed the night in comfort. We appear to have got into the land of storms, for they follow one another with little intermission.

*Friday, 5th.*—The storm died off about midnight, but this morning the wind was, if anything, a trifle stronger. We moved the boat more to the centre of the island, to an exceedingly pretty situation under the base of a hill; there was a village in the far distance, on the opposite side of the creek, but as this was five or six hundred feet wide we feared no trouble.

There were some very fine mandarin groves on the bank. I obtained two or three photographs here, but they were not particularly successful. There was a fine range of hills to the west, and a solitary mountain, with some extremely curious caves, to the north-east.

The water about our anchorage was very clear, and we were quite sheltered by mulberry-groves. It was lovely water for rowing, and, the day being boisterous, we put out the small boat, and explored the numerous creeks that ran off in all directions from the main stream.

As to the places that I had seen on these islands—*i.e.*, the various pools and lakes—I made a mental resolution that I would visit them again in winter, when the ground would be clear and the lakes covered with wild fowl, and made notes

of the whereabouts of all these waters, with their bearings from certain conspicuous points, and, when I subsequently visited them with gun and dog, the particular localities were easily found. As I had anticipated, swans, geese, ducks, and a variety of winter birds were all over the place. The main stream completely divided the island into two parts, running from south to north-east.

There is a map of these places published in Shanghai, but it is very incorrect, and would lead anyone astray who trusted to it entirely.

*Saturday, 6th.*—The morning was again gloomy, but cleared before noon. What should we have done without the small boat? It was a continual source of amusement. The light became bright and clear, so we took the camera to the other side of the stream, whence several interesting views could be obtained. I had some trouble with the natives who crowded round, but they were peaceable and well-behaved.

I obtained a very fair negative of a large boat with fishing cormorants. These birds have a ring passed over their heads, and when low down on their throat it tightens, thus preventing their swallowing anything. They are then tumbled into the water, where they dive about, and when a fish is caught they come to the surface,

are hoisted, by means of a bamboo, into the boat, taken by the legs, turned upside down, their throat pressed, and out comes the fish, and they are again thrown into the stream to hunt for more.

In the evening the sunset was truly grand. On the horizon the cumulus clouds were all tinted with the most gorgeous colours, reflecting their glow on to the cirrus clouds which extended to the zenith. This was a decided promise of settled fine weather after our last week of storm. As the various tints of the clouds melted away, other colours even more brilliant than the previous ones took their place, till at last the whole of the heavens, from zenith to horizon, became of a rich golden and crimson hue, which faded away only as the darkness of the night set in; and the most perfect peace reigned over the entire island.

*Sunday, 7th.*—Anyone would suppose from our experience during the last week that we should have taken to-day for a day of rest. And so we did during the forenoon; but, after twelve o'clock had passed, the old restless desire of wanting to be doing something came over me, so I started off with my camera to the top of a hill; but the natives followed me everywhere, none of them being more inquisitive than a dozen young mothers, whose ages, I should certainly

say, did not in any case exceed fourteen, and each carried a baby, fully half the size of herself. This was the first camera they had ever seen, and their curiosity was unbounded. They could not be kept away from the lens, looking down it, then wanting to see inside the box, and upsetting the whole affair. It was perfectly useless trying to get a picture at all, so I shouldered my camera, returning to the boat, with a quarter-of-a-mile of tail behind me, and left for another anchorage about seven miles further to the north.

*Monday, 8th*—I always had a liking for wet photographic plates in preference to dry plates for landscape photography. In fact, at this period, dry plates had not been brought to the perfection to which they are now, and what few I had tried gave, after an enormously long exposure, very feeble and uncertain results. The inconvenience of carrying about your nitrate bath, collodion developers, &c., and a lumbering dark tent, to say nothing about the search for water on high or mountainous ground, argued volumes in favour of the dry plates. The results I obtained with the wet were so very far more satisfactory that I willingly underwent the trouble of carting about the tent and all accessories. But I certainly should not do so at the present time, when I see what dry plates are capable of producing.

This morning I took L — and two of the boat coolies, with tent and camera, in the small boat, and started for an elevated deserted point of land, looking far away across the island, with some hills and the broad expanse of the lake in the distance. Here I certainly expected to be quiet, but no sooner were the tent pitched and the camera fixed, than we were discovered by the natives, who immediately began to collect in large numbers; where they came from I cannot imagine, for there was not a cottage or dwelling of any kind in sight, and the place we were on was a barren piece of rock. However, I succeeded in getting a couple of photographs, then packed up the tent and camera, and sat down for a rest and a pipe before turning down the hill.

By this time three or four hundred people had gathered round us. There had been an immense deal of talking going on among them all the time, a great deal of arguing and gesticulating; and, as I afterwards learned, they were holding a palaver regarding myself and my doings. They had never seen or even heard of a camera before, and the upshot of their argument was that I was a magician, that by means of the mysterious box with one eye I had been engaged in casting a blight over their silkworms and crops, so as to raise the price of silk in Shanghai to the advantage of the



foreign merchant, and that the only way to prevent the spell from taking effect was to consign both myself and my apparatus to the bottom of one of the deepest holes in the lake. They told us to clear out, which we refused to do; and then commenced a series of petty assaults with pieces of mud and small stones, which resulted in some of them, caught *in flagrante delicto*, feeling the impact of an uncommonly stiff piece of bamboo.

I ordered the men to pick up the tent and camera and get down to the small boat, for it was quite clear we should soon be at open war. As soon as we began to move down-hill a rush was made; the men dropped the tent and camera, and, with some formidable sticks they had found somewhere, we made a charge and drove back the enemy. Tent and camera were again shouldered, and we retreated fighting. They did not appear to think of surrounding us, which they might easily have done, and we should have had difficulty in our strategic move. As it was, we had none, and soon reached the large boat. The news had somehow travelled over all that part of the island, and crowds of angry people came to the moorings. It was clear we could not with any safety stop there through the night; and it being now close on to five p.m., it seemed rather late to look for another island, but there was no help for it, we had

to go, and the sooner we were off the better.

When we again got on to the lake the wind began, or rather had already begun, to rise, and to all appearances it meant blowing as night came on.

When darkness set in, we were miles away from our island, and a heavy swell spread over the lake. We were certainly in an unpleasant dilemma; stay out on the lake all night we must, for there would be too much danger in approaching the rocky parts of the island in the dark. Unfortunately, while the boat was pitching a good deal she got over one of the shallow flat places I have before mentioned, and commenced to bump against the bottom. Soon she sprang a leak, the water came rushing up through the floor of the cabin, and three men were kept continually baling.

At ten p.m. the wind was evidently rising, and if it came on to blow any harder we could not live through the night in a leaky boat. After a short consultation, it was decided to take all risks and run for the nearest land; it was certain destruction to stay out on the lake, while, on the other hand, we might, with great care and a good look-out, avoid all half-concealed rocks and shoals, and run into some quiet bay for the night.

As we neared a small island we could see no landing-place, or even an approach to the land,

nothing but rocky points everywhere. Out of this we must get as quickly as possible ; for if we only touched one of those points and made another hole in her, we should sink there and then. With great care we backed out with safety, and, finding ourselves again on the broad expanse of the lake, ran for the southern point of the island, but here the approach was rather worse than better. Had to put out again to another projecting piece of land, difficult to make out in the dark, but in about an hour we found a beautifully sheltered small bay, with smooth water, where we lay for the remainder of the night.

The cabin was in an awful state. Tins of preserved meat, broken crockery, a couple of filters, bottles, camp-stools, clothing, and sundry pieces of furniture and stores, were all mixed up together in a confused heap ; the boat had been so lively that all things not screwed down had been thrown from their places, and we might consider ourselves lucky if the half of them would be of any use in the future. We were all too tired to do anything more that night, so after seeing everything secure, and arranging for the men to take alternate duty at baling throughout the night, we lay down wherever a dry spot could be found, and in a few minutes forgot all our troubles in sleep.

*Tuesday, 9th.*—By continual baling we kept the boat fairly free from water, but, before going out on the lake again, it was quite evident we should have to repair her bottom. Throughout the night she kept up a very disagreeable half-rolling, half-pitching motion; towards nine a.m. the water suddenly calmed, and we tried to haul her up on the beach. Finding this quite impossible, we decided to dry-dock her; so, selecting a smooth, shingly, sandy beach, we got to work, some with one thing, some with another, to scoop out a dry dock large enough to take her in. The ground was easily worked, and in a few hours our dock was complete; then, gradually opening the bank we had left as a flood-gate, the water poured gently in. The boat floated in beautifully, when we filled in the bank again and baled out the dock. There was plenty of room in the dock to work, so we canted her over and got well at her damaged bottom. A couple of planks were so badly broken that they could not be repaired and would have to be removed. To do this we had to take some of the inside fittings of the boat to mend the outside. Then we found there were no tools on board. These we had to make out of knives, pieces of old iron, &c.; but finally we got enough to go on with, and two of the men were

sent off to another island to purchase some nails, a saw, and an axe.

In three days she was all right ; when we again let in the water, and she floated out on the lake, leaking a very little, which was stopped by some additional caulking inside with some old worn-out clothes.

I was quite tired of the constant labour—of one continual state of warfare, first with the natives, then with the wind and rain and storms. No one could tell whether the leak would not break out again, for at the best it was only a patch, and not a proper repair ; therefore we agreed to make for the northern end of the lake and work our way home by the grand canal, north of Soochow.

We kept under sail all through the night, and the following day entered a stream at the north-east end that led direct to the canal.

Although the lake had treated us roughly, we were all sorry to leave it. I had been sent there as an invalid to recover a little health, and, when I came to review the treatment, I thought it had been rather a severe one for a sick man. But it had agreed with me, for I was perfectly well and strong.

The stream we were now in was a very wide, deep piece of water, fully two hundred yards

from bank to bank. About three miles from its junction with the lake the banks extended, and it formed an exceedingly fine lake of clear translucent water, in which were great quantities of fish of the most cannibalistic disposition, for the larger ones were eating all smaller than themselves as fast as they could catch them.

We anchored for the night close to the bridge and village of Wangfoh. We could easily have reached the canal before sunset, but I wished to remain here, so as to get four or five photographs of the pagoda, bridge, and other places by the more favourable light of the morning.

*Wednesday, 10th.*—Secured all the photographs I wanted, and left Wangfoh at ten a.m. with a head wind. The men, when practicable, went ashore to track, 'yulowing' the whole time.

The day whiled away very monotonously, and we entered the canal at 3.30. After passing one of the usual odoriferous villages the canal widens considerably, and is a magnificent highway for boat traffic.

It is melancholy to see, even up to this day, such numerous traces of the destroying propensities of the rebel army. The canal on both sides has been banked with fine large blocks of worked granite, most of them being twenty feet or more in length; but hundreds upon hundreds of them

have been torn from their beds, broken, and thrown into the water; some have been sent down the river to Shanghai, and sold to the municipal council for road-making; others have been recovered for building purposes; others destroyed and left on the land, for no earthly purpose but from a sheer love of destruction.

There are also several temples, pagodas, and monuments on the line of the canal—at least, all that remains of them,—for the temples have been burnt, and the pagodas, &c., battered by artillery, all having been the work of the insurgents.

At eight p.m. we arrived at Soochow, the passage so completely blocked with all kinds of boats that it was impossible to get through, more especially so in the dark. The amount of abuse we received from these people, simply because we wanted to go on and they did not, was something horrible. If Moh-doh was bad, as we went to the lake, our exit from it by the northern and western circuit was far worse. I have heard new-comers to Shanghai say, ‘Don’t you find the Chinese a most interesting people? I think they are so simple, so ingenuous.’

Well, after living among them for sixteen years, I have found them to be anything but interesting; and as for ingenuousness, I do not believe such a virtue is to be found through-

out the entire nation. Deceit and cunning are sown broadcast over the land, and upon principle they never by any chance speak the truth.

We came to an anchor on the north side of the city wall, in an open piece of water we found after some search, where we were away from all the abominations of this truly loathsome place. How we missed the grand scenery, the fresh air, and the dancing waters of Taihu! What a contrast was that to the fetid smells of Soochow, and the filthy, pea-soupy water of its creek!

*Thursday, 11th.*—Got under weigh soon after daylight, tracking all day against a head-wind, arriving at Dzanchung at eight p.m.

*Friday, 12th.*—Off again at five a.m. Passed Tsing-poo at three a.m., and reached the Monastery hill ('Fungwang-San,' Phœnix Hill) at half-past seven. Heard some distant thunder, with several flashes of very bright lightning. Heavy atmosphere, and every appearance of a storm. The crew, for some reason of their own, wished to stop between four and five miles from Fungwang-San, saying there was no water, etc., but they had to go on, for there was abundance of water everywhere. I secured one or two very successful photos. We were all glad to get on terra-firma again, for this was the evening of the third day



that we had not been off the boat. We enjoyed a long walk in the evening.

*Saturday, 13th.*—Rain, rain, rain all last night, and a wretched morning; the roof of the house got strained on the lake and is now leaking in a dozen places, everything being damp and wet; the tea spoiled, and everyone in a bad temper. Anything would be better than the boat, so we all started off fern-hunting, for which this hill is justly celebrated. We found as many ferns as we could carry, and some very choice ones among the number. The afternoon turned out fine, and I had no trouble in taking some more photographs. The people here are much more orderly and peaceable than the half-savage races of the Tai-hu islands. The Jesuit missionaries have built a very pretty chapel at the top of this hill, and half-way up they have a monastery from which the hill takes its name; but I fancy their rules are not very severe, for the monks may be seen continually passing up and down the creek, to and from Shanghai. It is also used as a sanatorium for the Jesuits of Shanghai and Sicawey.

*Sunday, 14th.*—L——, who had been along the bank of the stream looking for some water-plants (*Vallisneria spiralis*), came and told me she had found a lovely spot for a photograph, but we should be obliged to take the small boat, as it

must be a river scene. Off we went, L——, M——, and Co., and soon came to the place. It certainly was a very pretty spot, a perfect cave over the water, formed by willows, ash, and a variety of overhanging plants and flowers. L—— tried to take hold of one of the branches to steady the boat, but unfortunately she fell over the side into about twenty feet of water, giving the boat so sudden a jerk that M—— fell over backwards, and lay at the bottom of the boat which drifted down the stream. It was all so sudden, and to me appeared so comical, that for a short time I did nothing. My Ariel, who was at this time about fourteen years old, I soon fished out, none the worse for her ducking; we then caught the runaway boat, and finally succeeded with the photo.

*Monday, 15th.*—Left Foongwang-San soon after daylight, and headed again for Shanghai, which we hoped to reach in the evening. We were truly sorry to bid adieu to our wild nomadic life, for it had been extremely enjoyable, with just sufficient excitement to prevent any feeling of weariness or sameness, for while on the lake we could never tell what a day would bring forth, or what troubles we should run into before sunset.

But provisions were getting low, every bottle in the boat was either empty or broken, tea nearly all

spoiled ; and, worse than all, yesterday afternoon the last of the cigars faded away in light blue smoke, and the tobacco gave out on Friday.

In about six hours we passed through the village of Szching, on the Sicawey Creek, and stopped for a few photos of some picturesque old houses built on piles on the east side of the stream. Soon after this we entered one of the reaches of the Wang-poo, a short distance above the Kiangnan Arsenal, ran down the river with a fair wind and tide, and by sunset had left the boat, and were once more safely anchored in the 'old house at home.'

## CHAPTER VIII.

Waifs and Strays—In the Days of the Rebellion—The Rebel Camp—Prepared for Boarders—Escape from the Rebels—A very natural Result—The Story of a Deserter—A find on the Tai-Hu Lake—A Wild Goose Chase—Hospitality—Comfortable Quarters—A Surprise—The Mate of the Baltimore Barque—Disappointment.

WITHIN a distance of more than one hundred miles round Shanghai, it was not an unusual thing a few years ago, when out in the more remote districts on a shooting excursion, to come across an American or a European in Chinese attire, marrying, and speaking the language of the Chinese, to the almost utter forgetfulness of his own mother tongue. I have met with one or two of these men myself. They are mostly, if not all of them, waifs and strays who served, some in the rebel, some in the Imperial Army, during the fifteen years of the rebellion. Those that I have seen are comfortably settled, with Chinese wives and families, living in Chinese communities exactly as though they were natives of the land.

Indeed, I have often fancied that the marked character of the Caucasian features have partly changed into the almond, cat-like eyes and the stumpy nose of the Chinese.

These men were adventurers, like the free lances of the middle ages. If they were well paid, they would hesitate at nothing; they were as willing to lead a forlorn hope as to burn a city, if it would only swell their treasury, which they all carefully looked after at the storming and sacking of the various towns in which they took part. There are still some of them left in Shanghai, who in this way made enough money to keep them for the remainder of their lives, but it was spent with the recklessness with which it was gained, and their cash account is light enough now.

I have heard many accounts from these men of their adventures during the war, and of the unscrupulous dealings of the Chinese, but I do not think they would be entertaining enough to repeat. However, I will mention one which is a fair example of the others. My informant, B——n by name, is still alive and well in Shanghai. He told me:

‘I was engaged by a Chinese mandarin, who was in a rather high position in the Imperial Army and was drawing his pay regularly from the Government, whom he professed truly and

faithfully to serve. He had a large store of rifles and ammunition of different kinds, of which I was put in charge, with instructions to keep them clean and serviceable. Little by little the store was being continually added to; when one day, after I had been about six weeks with him, he came to me and told me to have all the arms ready to ship that night, he was going to run them into the rebel camp; in fact, he had sold them to the rebels, and the next day they were to be delivered.

‘This was certainly an “eye-opener.” This immaculate Chinaman, this confidential Government official, this faithful servant of the Imperialists, trusted with the care of the field armoury, was about to sell, for his own private advantage, the arms placed in his care to the very men they were intended to destroy. He saw my look of astonishment and doubt, when, drawing a revolver from under his coat, he said,

“You must do exactly as I tell you, or you don’t leave this place alive.”

‘Well, you see, I was receiving very large pay, the work was light, I had no wish to lose my appointment, and I knew he meant what he had told me, for in those days a man’s life was worth no more than the life of a rat; so I said,

“All right, I’ll go. For better or worse I’ll

run my chance, and stand by, true to the end.”

“ Good,” he replied, “ we shall be back in a week, and, if we are successful, you shall have three hundred dollars over and above your pay.”

‘ That night the arms were all loaded into a large cargo-boat, and in the small hours of the morning, when the night was perfectly black, we quietly floated up stream with the tide, and at daybreak were miles beyond the last outpost of the Imperialists. The next day we arrived at the insurgent camp. They evidently expected us, for a body of men was watching for us some miles away from the main army.

‘ After our arrival in camp the arms were inspected, landed, and approved; the money to be paid the following morning.

‘ What price the mandarin received I don’t know; it must have been something very large, for the next day some heavy bags of sycee and dollars were brought to us; the remainder was to be sent in the afternoon. Late in the evening it arrived; so late that we had to delay our return till daylight. After all the money was on board, the mandarin said to me,

“ It’s just as I expected. They want to keep us here all night, they’re at their old tricks again; but I’ll be even with them this time.”

‘ Then he explained that it was a common trick

of the rebels to buy a cargo of arms, and pay the money as agreed upon; but, if they could keep the boat through the night, they sent a boarding-party some time during the night to shoot down the entire crew, and return the bags of coin again into the rebel treasury.

‘When the camp was quiet, the mandarin called his men—we were only ten—together, and explained to them our situation. We were all of one mind and were determined to resist such treachery, besides that, we had to look after our own lives. Each man was then given four revolvers and a sword; we were all secreted in the stern of the boat, and were not to fire before we got the word of command. Then, independent firing; each of us was to empty his four revolvers, and, if any boarders remained after that, we were to cut them down with our swords.

‘In a couple or three hours they came, about thirty of them, in command of an officer. Our boat was so placed that they must board over the bows, and come the whole length of the boat aft to where we were. We hoped in this way to get the whole party on the boat together, so that every shot should tell among the crowd. When they were altogether on board, looking for us (there was only one way into the hold, and the



entrance was from the after part), the mandarin gave the order to fire.

‘The boarders were then met with such a withering shower of bullets that more than half of them fell on the deck, the remainder—at least, those who could not get over the bows—jumped overboard. The surprise was complete; they must have imagined we had at least fifty men on board from the rapidity of the firing.

‘We never waited to see if the men who were lying on the deck were dead, or only wounded, but pitched the lot over the side.

‘Then we headed up stream, for we knew we should be pursued down stream at daybreak. It was very dark, but we ran all risks, we doubled and turned up one creek and down another, but always increasing our distance from the camp.

‘Three weeks later we arrived again in Shanghai. My employer was as good as his word, and I received three hundred dollars over and above my pay. What excuse he made to his government for the loss of the arms I never heard, but I’m quite sure he had a very plausible one cooked, done to a turn, and ready to serve at a moment’s notice.

‘Soon after this he entered into partnership with another scoundrel, a greater rascal than himself, and I was dismissed.

‘I was not sorry, for I knew the plot must burst, sooner or later, and that the heads of all concerned, be they British, Chinese, or any other nationality, would soon part company with their shoulders. Anyhow, I was satisfied, for after three months’ service, I was more than a thousand dollars to the good, and I cast about for fresh employment.’

‘Did the Mandarins succeed in partnership?’

‘Well, no, they did not, they tried the next time to run a far larger cargo, but they tried too much. They were captured by the Imperialists on board the boat with their stolen arms, were heavily chained and sent to the capital, where, after undergoing a series of most refined tortures, they were ultimately beheaded on the common execution-ground at Peking.’

The reprisals that were being continually carried on by both parties; the crafty and deceitful nature of the Chinese leaders; the wholesale rigour of the executions; the cool and deliberate manner in which heads were constantly being sliced off, creates a feeling of surprise that anyone was left to fight.

When Soochow was besieged by Colonel Gordon it was so closely invested, so completely surrounded, every way of escape so closely blocked, that the ‘Wangs,’ or rebel princes, who were in

command of the city, offered to surrender to Gordon on the condition that he should spare their lives. This was agreed to, and Soochow with ten or a dozen Wangs, and forty thousand men, laid down their arms.

A Chinese general named Li was present at this surrender, and as soon as he found an excuse, which he did in the course of a very few hours, taking advantage of Gordon's absence, he had the whole of the Wangs most barbarously beheaded.

When Gordon discovered this act of treachery he became so incensed that, revolver in hand, for two days he sought Li throughout the entire camp, but Li, well knowing what the result would be if Gordon found him, made his way, disguised, into Soochow, and so escaped. This was the only time Gordon was ever known to have had a fire-arm in his hand, throughout the whole of his Chinese campaign.

Here is an account of rebel revenge.

An American, a deserter, who had joined the rebel forces, became so disgusted with them, on account of their barbarities, that he was, after a short time, compelled to desert from them also. After wandering for some months about the country in a state of semi-starvation, he was finally taken by the Imperialists, and sent as a

prisoner to the British Consul at Canton. Here he gave a very detailed account of his wanderings, and the horrible atrocities the rebels practised upon their opponents.

Among other matters, he states that after leaving the rebel camp, he was unfortunately met by some men who had been out foraging. They bound him hand and foot, led him out to execution, and his life was spared only by the intercession of a very old man. He finally escaped one dark night by floating down the river on a plank, and then taking to the mountains. Here it was that starvation daily stared him in the face. He lived upon roots, berries, insects, anything he could catch or find, till he was found himself by the government troops.

He was with the rebels at the siege of Chênping, where, he states, the slaughter was dreadful, and after fighting the entire day, sixteen hundred Imperial soldiers surrendered conditionally on their lives being spared. Of course the promise was given, but the same night the Taipings beheaded the whole lot. He concludes his account by saying, 'I saw the creek run with blood for four hours.'

A propos of one of these waifs. The following interesting incident a short time ago was

communicated to the *North China News*. I have been unable to ascertain for a certainty the name of the author, although in my own mind I have but little doubt to whom the experience may be ascribed. The story interested me extremely, and, but that there were probably reasons why this lost wanderer had chosen to remain *perdu*, I should have endeavoured to unearth him again, and bring him on a visit to Shanghai. Thus, without assuming any responsibility, I insert the anecdote from the columns of our chief paper; certain that in the more remote districts of the Tai-Hu lake such a find as the location of this ex-soldier of fortune, would be far from improbable. I have already stated that I have met with four or five of these men in Shanghai, but have never been fortunate enough to come across one of them, at home, in the country. It is well known that, after the rebellion, many of these 'free lances' did make their way to the more inland districts, but what they occupied themselves with when they got there, or what became of them afterwards, I can find no evidence whatever. One would naturally suppose that they would settle down, and, according to Chinese custom, marry a woman of the country of their adoption.

## A WILD-GOOSE CHASE.

At the apex of one of those shallow bays on the northern side of the Ta-hu, sufficiently raised above the marsh level to be free from its malarial exhalations, sweetly nestled in copses of feathery bamboo and with two old *Salisburias* standing like giant sentinels over the front approach, is a building of modest dimensions, which was originally a Taoist temple. It is surrounded by well-tended gardens, in which fruits, flowers, and kitchen stuff are cultivated, and with such variations from ordinary Chinese methods as to suggest to a close observer the presence of an original mind. Although it was winter, evidences of the carefulness of a gardener possessing resources far in advance of his neighbours were plainly to be seen, and as we came upon the place from behind, where we were able to examine the amenities of the house and grounds from the slope of the hill above, we were so much interested in the discovery as to be seized with a desire to make the acquaintance of the inmates. And we were the more ready to gratify our curiosity from the fact that we had had a long and fatiguing walk, carrying our guns, but seeing no game.

It was wearing late in the afternoon, a difference of opinion had arisen between us and our coolies as to the direction of our boat, and in short, not to put too fine a point upon it, we had lost our way. This unfortunately was no new experience, for it had happened almost every day since we parted from the old P.V.'s steam launch at the Red Joss-house, and one night we were threatened with most disagreeable consequences there from being refused accommodation at the only house

in which we could see a light, and suffering from wet and cold were forced to renew our seemingly aimless wandering,—by the light of a greasy moon.

Nothing could exceed the depression of spirits which we suffered, the facetious man of the party being as usual the most depressed; but by-and-by my dog, a liver-coloured retriever, in ordinary times most undemonstrative, showed unusual vivacity, running ahead of the party and stopping now and again to wait for us, uttering that peculiar sound between a bark, a grunt, and a sniff, a sort of canine stage whisper or inarticulate snivel, which everybody recognises, but of which the actual significance has never, so far as I know, been explained. I think I shall be able to interpret the expression henceforth. The proceedings of Rover—the dog's name—by drawing our attention away from ourselves restored our spirits unconsciously, and when in less than half-an-hour we descried the welcome red lantern suspended at the mast-head of our boat, we would have voted wax candles to any shrine in Italy. Rover's bone was a particularly succulent one that night.

Most shooting-parties are subject to this annoyance of getting lost, and I have noticed that it generally arises from one wrong-headed man, who is always right and who manages to make his will prevail over those who have doubts. One really learns a great deal of human nature on these pleasant excursions, and one or two shooting-trips have shown me how it is that the world is on the whole so atrociously ill-governed. The wrong-headed men always have their way. 'Most ignorant of what they're most assured,' no doubts deflect their purpose, and mankind is wont to accept

men's estimate of themselves. Hence we follow like sheep, we who have our doubts, the clergy on the one side telling us doubts are damnable, and the politician on the other withering us with contempt if we venture a hint of the fallibility of our leader. But this is not the place to ventilate opinions which I hope at no distant date to submit to the sober judgment of the Shanghai Literary and Debating Society.

To return, however, to my narrative. We entered the little front garden by a neatly hung door in the quickset fence, which also struck us as something out of the common, and were met by a dog which did not bark and a little girl who neither ran away nor put up her sleeve to her mouth. On the contrary, on being told we wished to communicate with the head of the family, she ran in-doors and shortly reappeared behind an elderly man whom we guessed to be her father, or it might be her grandfather. The old gentleman was warmly but plainly dressed; he evidently intended to be civil, but he was unable to conceal a certain indescribable embarrassment in addressing us. Whether this proceeded from our somewhat imposing numbers—we were three sportsmen, five coolies, and three dogs—or the lateness of the hour, for it was already darkening, the days being very short at the time of year, we could not say; but it wore off as we got into talk. (I must pay the tribute to our wrong-headed man, who if he should see this will know I am quite sincere in calling him so, that his excellent knowledge of the local dialects was of the greatest assistance to us, and I have no doubt more than once saved us from a scrape.)

The Chinaman wore a moustachio, grizzled, and a beard of unusual volume, with more stubble on his



cheeks than is common in the delta of the Yangtze. The speech of the man struck us as having something peculiar about it, but it defied analysis at the moment, though later on we recognised that he spoke the local dialect correctly, only with the measured distinctness of an inland missionary, and that the *timbre* of his voice was different from that of the natives of Kiangsu.

After reconnoitring us to a sufficient extent, our host—for such I may now call him—invited us into the house, placing seats for us in a neatly furnished parlour. This you may think an incongruity, but it is a perfectly accurate description of the room into which we were shown, which had not only glass windows but had blinds to them, a Chinese carpet on the floor, and, what surprised us still more, a rude kind of fire-place with an arrangement which reminded me of the ‘dogs’ which may still be seen in old baronial residences in some parts of England. To this open hearth the girl who had acted as our herald promptly brought some large billets of wood, laid them across the dogs, and, with some oiled shavings, lit the fire. Simultaneously our host himself brought in a large tea-pot in a wicker cosy with some sponge cake, which he set before us and pressed us to eat. Then he brought out of a cupboard a small jar containing a pale-coloured spirit which he served out to each of us in little cups, and which we found very palatable, quite different from the ordinary samshu.

But our anxiety to find our boat before nightfall entirely overcame our desire to cultivate our host’s acquaintance, and we were by no means gratified by his opinion that the boat could not have reached the rendezvous we had appointed for her, owing to the water having fallen so much lately. It would be fool-

hardy, he declared, to attempt to find her under such circumstances without a couple of hours' daylight before us. Our faces must have looked blank as this conviction came home with us, for our host promptly intervened with a most hospitable invitation to pass the night in his poor hovel, as he called it. Our pleasure may be imagined ; and the bustle of coolies unlimbering, fixing up dogs, fetching water, removing boots, etc., seemed also to give the old man pleasure, for he watched the unwonted proceedings with a quiet smile.

After giving some directions in the next room our kind entertainer returned to us seeming much inclined for conversation. In fact, he became quite inquisitive about all manner of things : the war, the progress of Shanghai, the electric light or darkness, and so forth ; and his interrogatories were directed better to the point than is usual with Chinese, especially country people. A north-west wind began to pipe up, and we appreciated the advantage of close-fitting windows. The well-dried wood on the hearth was burning up cheerily with a blue flame, crackling and sending out sparks like our old-fashioned Yule log, and it was only at the mention of this word that we remembered that it was Christmas Eve, when we all grew happy and sentimental ; not the least so our Chinese host, who not only was convivially disposed but seemed to be attending closely to what we were saying amongst ourselves, in our own language. Soon preparations for a meal were perceptible, and a square table was covered with small dishes by the bonny little maiden, who tripped in and out on her hospitable errand, taking long glances at the strangers which usually crossed the reciprocal fire from their eyes.

By-and-by the noise of steps was heard without,

whereat the house dog frisked about and rushed to the door to greet the son of the house, a sprightly young fellow for a Chinaman, of seventeen according to the Gregorian Calendar, but eighteen by Chinese reckoning. He carried a gun, an old double-barrelled muzzle-loading, percussion-cap weapon bearing the name of Lancaster of Bond Street. He had been over the hills shooting, and brought back a heron and a wild goose. The lad was probably tired, but his father set him to wait on us the moment he entered the house, so he helped his sister to serve the supper, which now made a most creditable appearance on the table. The young man was good-looking with rather regular features, and was disposed to make himself agreeable, but the father would not hear of his sitting with us at table, and indeed was with difficulty induced to honour us with his own company. The warm liquor did more than mollify him, however, and when we had unscrewed the tops of our pocket pistols and given him to taste of the blood of John Barleycorn, his face glowed and his eyes glistened, as if to say, 'This indeed is nectar.'

The evening was passing quite merrily and we kept on congratulating ourselves on having dropped into such a snug corner, contrasting our imaginary experiences, benighted in the open, by way of emphasising present enjoyment. Our host from being conversational was becoming garrulous, when, whispering some orders to his daughter—who had kept up periodical visits to see how we were getting on—he sent her out of the room.

After an interval of about five minutes, the girl reappeared with a very prettily dressed woman, who was evidently her mother, whereupon our host rising up and

stretching out one hand towards the lady and the other towards us, said, in clear English,

‘Gentlemen, allow me to present to you my wife!’

If that man had sent a pistol bullet through each of our heads he could not have made our lower jaws drop as they did on hearing this address. No such surprise in the linguistic way has been perpetrated on humanity since Captain Burton, still in his Arab disguise, on his return from Mecca on board a P. & O. steamer at Aden stirred the soul of his Arab guide by retorting in truly idiomatic English the salutation of the gold-laced whipper-snapper who would have ‘no damned niggers in his saloon.’ Our presence of mind vanished so completely that even our common courtesy failed us, and we sat staring at our host instead of rising and making our obeisance to our hostess.

We were clearly in for some fresh surprises, and we began hastily to put together the various observations we had been making on the man and his habitation, trying thereby if we could make out what manner of man he might be. He of course now told us all—or at least a good deal—about himself, and the night seemed likely to be too short for the history.

‘I have not spoken a foreign tongue,’ he said, ‘except occasionally to myself and in my prayers for over two and twenty years, nor seen the face of a white man. When I first saw you I felt as if I could not find words, but your talk among yourselves has gradually brought the sound a little familiar-like.’

He then began to talk of foreign countries, about which he had become very rusty; many of the most important events he had never heard of at all. Among these, strange to say, was the Franco-German War and

the Viceroyalty of Lord Ripon in India, both of them pregnant with the gravest consequences, as we all know. He had, however, heard of the Woosung Railway, but had a quite distorted version of its removal. The rumours of foreign war had been reaching him during the last twelve months, more distinctly within the last three; but he was not quite, though almost, sure that France was the enemy, and he could form no idea at all of what the war was about.

It was rather interesting to get hold of a mind that had lain fallow for twenty years and to watch the gradual redawning of intelligence, the slow thawing of the brain wherein the treasures of memory lay buried like the beauties of a landscape under deep snow; but to bring this man 'up to date,' as book-keepers say, would evidently require many nights and days, and it was the man himself and not the history of the world that really interested us at that moment. It was long before he could be drawn on to anything approaching the biographical, and we thought that here at least was a man singularly free from egotism. Perhaps we did him as much more, as we shortly after did him less, than justice, for he had a good deal to conceal which we did not know at first, and a good deal less reason for concealing it than we afterwards imagined.

It is easy to form a judgment, but not easy to form a right judgment of men. In this case neither the first nor the second thought was right, but, as we are at present disposed to believe, the third. But why should not even that be only an opinion held provisionally until a fourth comes to correct it, and then a fifth to correct that? Mr. Gladstone thinks twice or thrice before he comes to important decisions, and it is a safe rule to follow.

But, as I was remarking, the thawing process went on as the log fire burned up, and the glorious inspiration of usquebaugh spurned the restraints of prudence. This man, who was of course no Chinaman at all, became suddenly excited as we brought the history of the world down to the present time, and gave him an outline of the Egyptian campaign and of the superhuman exploits of General Gordon.

At the mention of that name, the poor old fellow could not restrain his tears, and seeing then it was useless to wear the cloak any longer he told us he knew Gordon, and was in fact a waif from the 'Ever-Victorious' itself. He had fought through the campaigns of 1863-4 up to the capture of Soochow, and he even claimed to have been the recipient of honours for personal bravery. I am bound in honesty to say, however, that I have searched in vain for his name in the books. But that is no uncommon case, for there are claimants to the honour of that war hanging about every grog-shop on the coast, who by their own account did almost the whole business themselves, but who have equally suffered from the ignorance or neglect of the chronicler.

After the capture of Soochow, our host—seeing the army was likely to be disbanded, and taking with him such portable property as he had gathered together by the process familiar to soldiers of fortune, and a pretty captive girl whom he had rescued from the rude attentions of the soldiery—sought out a place where he might plant the sole of his foot in peace. The country had been virtually depopulated, and there was scarcely inducement left for common robbers to keep the field, and it was not long before the soldier lighted on the

vacant premises where he has ever since lived, cultivating his fields and at peace with all men. The An-hui captive he made his wife by the rite which ruled the etiquette of Eden, and to them sons and daughters have been raised up as they were to the patriarchs of old. Their life is indeed patriarchal, and oddly enough the man possesses but one book, and that is the Bible, the reading of which has served to keep alive in him the memory of his own language ; but it has imparted a quaint puritanical form to his speech. We are told to beware of the man of one book ; but, when that is the Hebrew Scriptures, let all bishops and curates beware of theological discussion with such a man.

Of course every stage in this man's revelation of himself stimulated our curiosity to learn more. Why did he think of settling down to a death-in-life on the borders of the Great Lake, instead of returning to his native land, or at least seeking the society of his own race? Some compromising transaction on the Creek between Quinsan and Shanghai before he joined 'the Force,' as he still calls it, caused him to avoid going to Shanghai, and he thought to conceal his identity and his whereabouts for a time until certain matters had been forgotten.

After living the life a certain time the force of habit held him, growing stronger as he gradually became to all intents and purposes Chinese. He had ground enough to live upon, and the labour of his fields was a pleasure ; even his early difficulties in procuring implements and assistance furnished him with just the excitement enough he wanted to keep him alive. He often thought of his family in a village in Rhode Island, but like many other exiles he put off writing until that also

became a confirmed habit ; besides, he could not in the earlier years have written without risking discovery. And now ?

‘ Well,’ he says, ‘ now I know my poor old father and mother are both dead and gone. They were between sixty and seventy when I came to China second mate of the barque —— of Baltimore. And there was nobody else I ever cared for.’

I did not argue this point, but, having got a clue, I mean to follow it up when I return to the States, which I hope to do in three or four months’ time, and ascertain for sure whether these old folks are alive or no.

Our colloquies lasted far into the night or more correctly into the morning, and we retired to rest with reluctance on the mats which were laid out for us on the floor of the room where we had passed the evening. In the morning early our host came to wish us a merry Christmas, saying he could not sleep a wink, as his brain was in a perfect whirl. He had successfully avoided foreigners all these years ; his house was out of the track of sportsmen, and he hoped to go on escaping observation. Yet he was glad he had met us ; it was like a new birth to him, only he was afraid it would unsettle him. He praised his wife and his children, of whom he has four in all, and was troubled in his mind as to what would be best for them. They were content before. Would they continue so ? Ought they ? and ought he ? Anxious questions, which we were not prepared to solve for our worthy friend right away ; but anyhow we were not inclined to hurry from the place ; the more especially as we fancied we could make something out of the young fellow, his son, in the way of sport.

He was nothing loth, and, there being no agricultural



work to be done, we arranged to have a day with the wild geese, of which he said there were vast numbers in some field not far off. He was so poorly furnished with ammunition that it was not to be wondered at if he had failed to make a bag himself. After a very good breakfast of ham and eggs and tea, we started out at ten o'clock on Christmas Day in quest of the savage but wily goose.

You have probably noticed, sir, that whenever you make unusual preparations for sport you are disappointed. The keeper has got some pet covey in reserve which is to console you for the blankness of the day, but when he calls, they do not answer. You are promised a specially good day with the Tent Club, and buy a five hundred rupee horse and a new spear, and dream all night of the swish of the grass jungles and the snorting of the old tusker among your horse's legs (where you ought never to have allowed him to be); but when the hunters set themselves in array, and the beaters scour the covers, all the crafty pigs have gone to market and none of them have stayed at home. For this reason I would never carry a game bag, for the trouble of carrying the game without the bag is nothing to the mortification of carrying the bag without the game. Without discouraging my comrades or our eager Eurasian shikari, therefore, I formed but moderate expectations of our day's sport, and I at least was not disappointed. But the story of our adventures that day would be too long to include here, and with your permission I will reserve it for another occasion.

P.S.—I may mention here that I am under engagement to pay another visit to the locality, and shall probably

leave this in a week's time. Should any of your readers be sufficiently interested in the above-mentioned family to entrust me with any trifles in the way of literature or comestibles, or, still better, to co-operate with me in a little plan I have in mind for the education of the younger children, I shall be glad to hear from them, care of *North China Daily News*.

## CHAPTER IX.

Reflections—Origin of Empires—Pre-Noachic—Characteristic Types—Early Education—Buddhist Temples—Priests—Confucianism—Soldier Caste—Manchu Sovereignty—China as she sees Herself—War and Civil War—A Coolie cargo—The Floods of 1887—Misappropriation of Funds—Punishment of Officials—A Modern Haroun-al-Rashid—His Almoners—Their Deserts.

THE question is, after sixteen years' residence in Shanghai, what report can we give of the country and of the people among whom we have sojourned? The answer, whether spoken or written, may be summed up as follows :

'The country is well enough if one could get at it; but as there are no roads, no horses, no hotels, one is arrested at the very threshold; and as to the people, they are cheating, lying, dirty, and ugly,—and they do not understand us, whatever trouble we take to improve their intelligence. Why do not our men-of-war that are cruising hither and thither uselessly in the China Sea again carry their guns to the gates of the great cities, and from the mouth of the cannon insist on the country being opened up to foreigners and free

trade everywhere, and roads and railways being made without delay? Then, indeed, the congested state of our manufactures would be relieved, and China's millions become clothed from western looms.'

This is our common talk, and nobody seems conscious of the inhumanity of the question, the onesidedness of the argument, and the presumption of the conclusion. We are a restless and unthinking race, active and energetic, like young people waltzing in a small room; we are content to enunciate one idea at all seasons, and we rotate in our narrow sphere with our narrow thoughts, till—we drop into silence. Such is our life and conversation. Surely we are scarcely fit to discuss the semi-civilized Chinese. For myself, I cannot claim the dignity of this compound participle. I do not feel that I am anything but a travelled barbarian.

But away with modesty, and back to our question: what do we think of China? For awhile let us sink the shop, banish journals, ledgers, share-lists, office, and shipping—even our well-cared-for homes, and all therein. China, *what* do we think of it?

Think of China! Such a *pièce de résistance* may well make one recoil.

I have in my mind the map of the eastern

hemisphere, and see that from the Caspian to the Pacific, from the confines of the habitable north to those of the torrid south, this broad zone of continent, during more centuries than history counts, has been, what it is still, one Empire,—one exclusive, inviolate, self-contained, self-sufficient world!

From the date of all the ancient and extinct empires that we know of, the Egyptian, Indian, Assyrian, &c., we have ground to infer that they originated in conquest. The fact is impressively recorded in every memento of their existence as discovered in art and architecture. The Hebrew writings, the most ancient of authentic written record, tell the same tale. And so all down the stream of Time. The great empires, Babylonian, Persian, Greek, Roman, mediæval and modern, under their many names, owed their predominance first to force alone. Force, euphoniously styled military predominance, is now as much as ever contested amongst the nations of the earth. We talk of arbitration and of the European family of nations. It is, however, in spite of their uniformity of civilization, of identity of religion, and even of reciprocal good fellowship, a family that is perpetually squaring at each other, and referring to the ordeal of mortal combat every misunderstanding or diplomatic dispute.

Thus throughout all time the God of Battles has been the ideal of the strong and the hope of the weak. The successful warrior became leader of willing hosts, their chief, and ultimately their king. The military caste absorbed the wealth and honours of the land, and the science and practice of arms have ever been the educational pride of illustrious youth. The arts of peace, agriculture, manufactures, trade and travel, learning and law, were, four centuries ago, amongst ourselves subordinate pursuits, fit only for weaklings and priests, serfs and peasants.

I am obliged to make these trite remarks to myself, for, without this reflection, it is not possible to estimate, even faintly, the distinction between China and the rest of the world. Her historical annals are unbroken for more than four thousand years. Moreover, such as the people and the government are now, they appear to have been when these annals began. Before the Pyramids had been raised by subject labour, before Abraham had migrated from Chaldea, an ancient and great empire had its seat on the fertile plains of four divergent rivers, the ocean and chains of awe-inspiring mountains girding round the peaceful land.

It had no traditions of a wild blood-stained conquest. The Emperor was wise and virtuous to

such a pre-eminent degree that the people willingly submitted to him as to a divine teacher, and sought to resemble him in reverence towards the doctrines of the sages, in purity of heart, and in beneficence, each within his special sphere. No soldiers were required in this well-governed state, or only a few, to keep in abeyance, or to punish, refractory outsiders, the aboriginal barbarians of the islands and of the mountains.

What mushrooms our nationalities are to a Chinaman! How proudly he must contrast with them his own which has no record of a beginning—which was ancient forty centuries ago, and, at that period, was so rooted and established in its principles of conduct, social, political, and religious, that by adherence to these earliest teachings his country has flourished ever since. A people that places agriculture as the most honoured industry of the state—who have had their sages, astronomers, poets, fine arts, and literature from time immemorial, while all earth's peoples beyond her boundary were either wild in the primæval forest, or else hunters and hunted—may justly be proud.

Plato's Republic and More's Utopia were not dreams impracticable; though two thousand years lie between these western sages, yet, had they known China, they would each have seen his ideal realized in a flourishing empire.

It is not conceivable that the Chinese, from an early state of pre-civilisation, jumped at once to a superhuman insight of legislative policy. They must, like others, have fought and failed, tried and toiled. Eons of ages may have been needed before they hit upon a system which bids fair to outlast all others. This thought makes demands on our chronological ideas, which, however, have been very elastic of late. Archbishop Usher, with his pointer at four thousand and four B.C., is no longer the accepted index to Anno Mundi. The geologists generally, and excavators at the delta of the Nile especially, take leave to extend backwards the age of man indefinitely.

I can well imagine our sallow-skinned friends descended from a pre-diluvial stock, who, at the time of the great deluge, dwelt on the plains of Thibet, and that, for their virtues and industry, they survived the convulsion, shut in between the Himalaya, the Thian Shan, and the Koko-nor Mountains. The great continent of the Pacific may have broken up at this time; a few points in the ocean, as groups of islets, tell where this garden of the world extended. When the convulsions of earth and water subsided, and the sun and the dews had done their beautifying and regenerative work, the mountain lakes burst their rocky barriers, and a great draining ensued towards the



ocean. Then the people of Thibet, having multiplied exceedingly, sought for further camping-ground, and, following the largest streams, came upon a land which they took for the new-made world,—abundantly watered, beautiful exceedingly, and waiting for their possession. The Chinese have no record of conquest; they are peace-loving, not warlike; and to this day they scarcely ever taste flesh meat, but subsist almost entirely on the fruits of the earth.

I present this theory to the Anthropological Society; if they demur that the table-land alluded to is too cold, I can only add that it is not without inhabitants now. All is not barren, even in the deserts. In many thousand years this part of the earth's crust may have risen in some degree, and this presumption assists us in perceiving how the Yangtze Kiang burst its lake bounds, and has ever since rushed tumultuously through hundreds of miles of rocky chasms, till it winds its broad and fertilizing waters among seven great provinces ere it finds the sea.

Are we to take the Chinaman as the primitive type of man? As *the* type, no; as *a* type, yes; and barring the prejudice we naturally entertain in favour of our own race, the Chinese compare well with some others. At first sight all Chinamen seem alike—different from any races ever seen

—and admittedly objectionable and ugly. We think that if this is the most ancient surviving type of men what a pity it has survived. Is there a chance of its wearing out? Scarcely. There are five hundred millions! In the present population two distinct races appear: the old Chinese, and the Mongol, or Tartar.

The characteristics of the latter, a square figure and face, prominent forehead and cheek-bones, eyes small and slightly oblique, are common over the greater part of northern Asia, and in a modified degree are often observable in the north of Europe.

It is to be regretted that a stamp so favourable to the varieties of ugliness should have impressed itself abundantly on contrasting races:

The Chinese, *pur sang*, is a smooth soft-skinned presentment of humanity, fairly tall, with small bones, in youth lithe as an eel; in mature age he carries embonpoint with marvellous dignity. The dress, as worn by the class above cooliedom, is becoming to old and young; it is easy, flowing, and to a steady-going Chinaman may be comfortable enough. But to me it would be the very perfection of discomfort, as a complete hindrance to all active locomotion.

I do not know whether education is compulsory, but I know it is universal. All our servants

read and write with facility. If I am up early,—say six a.m.,—I see groups of little fellows with slates and satchels bounding merrily to school. They are full of play and laughing chatter, yet hurrying to be first. Chinese pedagogues seem to make learning attractive to the youngsters. There is evidently parental pride in the way they are turned out to get education. These children belong to the coolie class, a wide appellation, as it includes all the hard-working poor. The children are clean and tidily dressed, with bright eyes and an equally bright queue freshly combed and plaited, and tied with bright red or green silk cords. A mysterious little packet dangles from the satchel, which I guess contains the frugal breakfast or tiffin, to be kept intact till the proper hour arrives.

Mothers are the same everywhere !

The youngsters cannot be many years at school, for at a still tender age they are put in apprenticeship to their vocation in life. In the workshops of carpenters and blacksmiths one sees the embryo artizan working with a diligence and concentration which nothing can interfere with. A procession passes by with clamour of gongs, pipes, and cymbals ; you and your party block up the door and almost all the light ; but the clever swarthy-faced urchin scarce vouchsafes a passing

glance at you, he feels himself and his present work to be the most important items in the world.

There is a word recently become current in religio-polemical writings which so exactly describes the range of mind here that I am glad to adopt it. I mean 'environment.' The Chinese, or their translators, use 'relationships,' which applies only to the separate parts of a whole. The first thing a Chinaman is taught is the responsibility he is under to his environment. He is an item in a little sphere ; has father, mother, brother, cousin, master, servant, as the case may be ; towards each of them he owes obligations accurately defined, although resembling each other. They are, in different degrees, love, obedience, reverence, service, forbearance, kindness, forgiveness ; and are insisted upon to an extent which we westerns would blame.

He learns that his ancestors were virtuous and obedient, and that he must keep their memory in grateful remembrance by having their tablets enshrined in an honoured place in his home, and placing before them such offerings of food and wine as may please their spirits, who wander in the air, and exercise a beneficent influence over the affairs of those descendants who are faithful to the rites of the ancestral worship.

The head of the family has unlimited authority

in the home, and he, on his part, must encourage harmony, as far as possible, by kindness, by example, and by persuasion, and use severity only as a last resource. Above him is the head man of the village, who is arbiter among the households. If the village be unruly, the head man is held blameworthy, not the villagers. And so with cities; the magistrates are responsible for the order of the citizens, the Taotai for his district, and the viceroy for his province, the environment ever becoming larger, sphere within sphere. And one does not interfere with the prerogative of the other; home rule is exercised by each within its own circle, which circle is a fraction, in harmony with the sphere above.

Over all is the Emperor, subject to the written and unwritten laws of procedure, equally with, nay, far more so than the meanest of his subjects.

Probably, the long and exact training necessary for the 'Dragon Throne' is the reason for electing a very young child, when a succession direct fails.

The annals of the reigns of the emperors are said to be preserved in unbroken sequence, and, together with the commentaries upon the sages, to be contained in the library of the university of Peking, and in the colleges attached to the great Lamasaries of Thibet. It is most noteworthy

that the source of everything good or meritorious is placed in the twilight of antiquity. Nothing tells of discoveries, growth, and improvement, but, on the contrary, the farther back the nearer to perfection. Metaphysics, the science of good government, the harmonizing of environment, the doctrine of the mean or equilibrium, are the abstruse subjects in which the sages delight; but jurisprudence, medicine, rites, rhetoric, &c., have each its department, with established, unalterable tenets, rules, and models.

This wonderful writing—which like the Nile is mystery as to its source, and in the conservation of its volume without any accessions—is, among all ranks and dialects of the Empire, the same to-day as it was written and spoken in the days of Noah.

The preparation for their degrees is so severe on young students that every year a number of the candidates succumb from the overstrain and excitement of the period that the examinations last. Failure is dreaded more than death; but an unhappy bird may try next year to get refeathered, after having been plucked, if he have the means. There is no office of distinction, civil or military, to be gained, except through the examination hall, and to attain to the dignity of the mandarin is the first dream of every ambitious youth.

The people, apart from the literati, are zealous Buddhists. The temples of this faith cover the land. The double and triple roofs, and wing-tilted eaves, are the most picturesque features of Chinese buildings. They stand surrounded by lofty trees, or on an eminence, commanding a wide panorama, which, like the more ancient pagodas, they conspicuously adorn. We know little or nothing of the worship. The idols are supposed to be representative of the spirit ministers of the elements, also of the passions, also of Hades, and of the holy Buddha. The figures are for the most part either monstrous, or sleepily benevolent, and always obese. One exception, however, is in the image of the female deity, a slender young maiden very fair, and crowned with a circle of stars.

This beautiful ideal the Jesuit fathers wisely transfer to their own ritual, as the Virgin Mary, Queen of Heaven. All the temple images are heavily gilt, and crimson and other strong colours are used profusely in the decorations.

Before the Buddha red wax tapers are burning; there is commonly a row of them. Each devotee, chiefly women, brings one, and whilst it is burning, she kneels and silently prays.

There is no pretence in her prayer. She feels nothing, sees nothing but the thought she takes to Buddha, and in the way she grasps the rosary,

and the earnestness of her moving and voiceless lips, we know that her soul is being poured out in her request. We think of Hannah in the Hebrew temple—perhaps this is another Hannah, or a mother praying for her sick child. May her prayer be answered!

Priests are without even the queue, and so white is their round pate that the shaving must be a diurnal affair. Their dress is that of the Chinese previous to the Manchu change. When in procession, the long white robe and the carelessly draped mantle, pink and yellow, are an effective garb. The priests go about the town promiscuously, the lower grades carry a small drum and a wallet: the former is to remind people of their duty, and the latter to collect the same.

The pagodas are not used now in any worship; they adorn the slope of nearly every glen and mountain in the land, but their original intention is as unascertained as that of the round towers of Ireland.

There is no state religion, other than I have tried to indicate. The Emperor himself is styled the 'Son of Heaven,' the 'Lone One.' He has ceremonies and duties to perform in the so-called Temple of Heaven in Peking.

This temple is certainly not one made with hands after the fashion of the west. It is a



spacious enclosure, open to the blue firmament and the stars. There are various stations of masonry that denote the different ceremonials of the year. The chief of these is a set of circles reached by a broad terrace of steps, and one is reminded that Stonehenge and other dolmen remains are also circular.

The learned rest on the doctrines, and prostrate themselves before the tablet of Confucius in his memorial hall, not as to a divinity, but in the oriental meaning of personal admiration and reverence. They regard him as an incarnation of wisdom, having reduced to form and practice the generally vague aspirations of the ancients. The semi-modern expounder lived five hundred and fifty years B.C.

Next to him Mencius is held in honour; then comes Tao, more spiritual than the other two, and the founder of a sect who have temples but no images or pictures: a place of prayer to which one necessarily looks upward. The Taoist temple which I visited was on a mountain at the top of a steep ascent. The steps of this temple are its chief feature; they occupy the entire slope to the bottom of the hill. From the foot the temple looks small, and the stone ascent one regular gradation of steps. On ascending them you find after the first fifty or so a flat terrace, which is restful,

and makes the climb more easy. Such a platform occurs after a similar number of steps all the way to the top, say ten times; yet from below one cannot see a single break in the regularity of the edges. At the top I found a handsomely sculptured tank, full of the purest water, and before me, in the temple, only tablets of writing, upon which a concealed opening in the roof threw a mystic light. Behind and around the temple a species of fir-tree towered one hundred feet above. Their giant trunks were straight and round as pillars of marble, up to the spring of the outspreading branches. There were no worshippers when I visited the place, but a number, perhaps fifty, of native people were beneath the great trees. I thought it might be a pilgrimage.

In considering the present régime of China, it cannot but be admitted that its elaborate constitution of philosophy and punctilio—for the rites and ceremonies have the penal rigour of immutable law—has been attended hitherto with unparalleled success. The millions generally are content, in comparison with the ever recurring revolutions and the short historical epochs of all other nations. The country is cultivated like a garden, and its produce is as inexhaustible as is the fecundity of the people. Since the invasion of the Tartars which placed the present dynasty in

power, the harmony ideal has been 'out of tune.' The Chinese submitted tamely to the family usurpation on condition that the government should ever be on the old lines, and the *statu quo ante bellum* restored.

The Tartars having their army within the great wall, and at all times able to increase its numbers from without, strengthened their position further by causing—in the thirteenth century—the ancient capital to be transferred from Nanking to the northern border, and turned Peking into the residence of the Imperial court and the permanent encampment of the army. The latter is Manchu exclusively,\* and from Peking, as the military head-quarters, the viceroy of each of the provinces is selected. Their soldiers are Manchus, in short this is the soldier caste, and, although the officers are now subject to examinations equally with the civilian students, there is much more peculation and misgovernment amongst the officials than in the time of the Mings. At least such is the lament. The Mings, the bright, the beloved, are fondly remembered, and should another disruption similar to the last occur, and succeed, they would certainly be restored to the throne.

\* A new army of purely Chinese descent has been organized by Li Hung Chang, in Chili. They are armed with weapons of foreign manufacture, and drilled by European officers.

Meantime, the Tartar, who inflicted the queue on the whole male population, and did *not* check the mutilation of the feet of the female, has himself become as Chinese in sentiment and patriotism as the oldest of the old race. But vigorous success is often followed by inertia, and the neglect in high station of the duties and example of surveillance and responsibility is the cause of the degeneracy of the present, in comparison with the majesty, the magnificence of a by-gone time.

China, the lotus-borne goddess of the east, is at length rising from her apathy. The barbarians at her gates are no longer to be ignored with contempt. They talk, and talk, and want answers, which she evades wearily, hoping to tire them out. But they will not be balked. They reiterate that they will be friends or enemies; it is for her to choose; but they will not retire and will never more leave her alone.

As she rises, the fringe of her robe is caught, and some glittering fragments are gathered by the invaders; her foot was seized by another foe, she withdrew it from its slipper, and Tonquin was lost! A little has been sacrificed, but it is nothing compared with what is still intact and unscathed. To prevent further molestation she must grant intercourse with these irrepressible barbarians, and

make use of it to acquire the secrets of their mechanical skill. But on what terms? Receive their embassies, and not as tribute bearers? Treat with their small insignificant kings on terms of equality! Shades of Confucius and the mighty Yu! it is hard to bear, and perchance degrading. We must descend and treat; yet, while we may, let us preserve the sacred person from the bold intrusive gaze of the foreigner. Perhaps he may learn from us sufficient reverence and courtesy to make the nine times prostrations before the lord of the 'Dragon Throne' of the one and only celestial and perpetual empire.

This I imagine to be the Chinese view of the question.

From the period of the treaties of Peking, Tientsin, and Chefoo, China has been an eminent patroness of western shipping and of all the formidable material of war. Gun-boats, ironclads, and the latest arms of precision; cannon from the works of Krupp and Armstrong, together with the newest and most destructive projectiles, are sought for and accepted on the highest terms of payment.

At first, and for long, these costly acquisitions were laughed at by the resident foreigners. We said, 'All right, when the next row takes place these boats and guns will be conveniently at hand

for us to take as we please. The Chinese cannot manage steam engines, nor use the gun-boats and cannon, except to their own hurt.' This was true when the first armament came out, but it is not so now. The best talent procurable in Europe and America in military and mechanical engineering has been engaged, with all the required plant and men, on these new arsenals and forts, and these already turn out moderate work, although not yet fit to compare with that imported. Thus, from the lowest grade of knowledge, the Chinese are acquiring a high standard of mechanical skill; and, ultimately, in all these departments, the present foreign officials will be ousted, by the advancement to their posts of the skilled native artizans.

China does not mean to be longer than is needful at the mercy or caprice of the foreigner. Her soldiers are not wanting in intrepidity and dash when they become inured to a warlike life, and are led by a chief who has gained their esteem in the camp and their confidence in the field; but such leaders are exceptional. The Chinese soldier is troublesome and difficult to control; irruptions of insubordination are frequent both in the field and on the march; and he has no feeling but that of contempt and cruelty for a conquered foe.

Amongst warlike nations there are bounds even

to the madness of the conflict. A brave defence wins acknowledgment and commendation from the victor. A code of honour is supposed to be in every brave man's breast, which makes him spare the defenceless, and cease the pursuit when the enemy is beaten and yields.

But where war is unknown, except as insurrection, it would seem to mean unrestrained butchery and extermination. In lands nearer home this wild madness has raged. It was thus in the time of the French Revolution. It was thus that the Sepoy rebellion began. They were both insurrections begun in treachery, and presented an example of the aggravation and degeneracy of war.

Our intercourse with China having forced her to adopt our panoply of defence or defiance, shall we be able also to impress upon her our sentiment of martial honour and of dishonour? That it is cowardly to cause wanton destruction, or to continue a fight when you have gained your advantage; that a promise to a foe is as sacred as an oath; that the defenceless are to be protected on either side? I expect China would say she understands our practice better than our precept; that she has not been able to distinguish any particular wisdom in our dealings with her; that she never sought our alliance, and yet we extorted payment for the cost of attacking her, and for the

trouble we were put to in despoiling her treasuries. These are things she does not forget and will not forgive. When she has learnt the value of her own resources, possibly she may at some future time adopt our code; but at present, whatever she seeks to learn, she has no ambition, no intention to learn truth and justice from the teaching of the western invaders.

For years past these westerns have endeavoured to instil into the Chinese some idea of sincerity and frankness, but the result has proved an utter failure. They cheat and deceive one another quite as much as they endeavour to dupe the foreigner. They are constantly on the watch, for petty thefts are continually going on among them, and their thorough disregard for truth makes one doubt every word they speak. This, I am sorry to say, has been my experience after living sixteen years in their midst.

The working class have much more reliance on the good faith of the foreigner than in that of their fellow-countrymen. Some years ago I made the voyage home to England in one of the regular passenger steamers. She was engaged to call at Swatow, on her way down to Hongkong, to take up eight hundred Chinese coolies who were going on to Singapore (twelve days' steaming), and from thence to be distributed among the tin mines of



Malacca, or the tobacco and coffee plantations of Sumatra and Java.

Shortly before reaching Singapore, they were all ordered up from the 'tween-deck, where they had been lodged, to the main deck, so that their tickets might be examined, and stowaways discovered.

Several of the crew were sent down to turn them up, but the coolies positively refused to leave the lower deck. They scrimmaged and struggled, and, as fast as they were turned out, like eels they slipped down again.

The compradore, or head-man who was in charge of them, then explained to the captain that those who had dollars in their boxes were afraid to leave the hold, as they were quite certain that some of the others of their companions would steal them, should they get down again into the hold a few minutes before the rightful owners returned; but if the captain would only send a couple of the crew down to take charge of their boxes while they were on deck they would quickly go up, and remain there so long as the sailors remained below.

This appeared a simple way out of the difficulty, so the captain sent down the boatswain and a quartermaster. When the men were in charge, the coolies, without a moment's hesitation, came up. As soon as the captain assured them that the

two men would not leave the hold until the owners of the boxes had returned, they no longer showed the slightest anxiety or suspicion, but remained on deck as long as they were required, and were in no hurry to go down again. They were perfectly satisfied of the honour and integrity of the foreigner. From the first they sat on their boxes nearly the whole of the day, and slept upon them at night. Whenever they did leave them for a little fresh air, they invariably placed a friend on guard till their return.

They were a quarrelsome lot, much given to stealing each other's drinking water, and causing continual riots, which one day ended in a general fight, and they could only be separated by the hose being turned on them. A great many severe wounds were given and received from knives, broken water-jars, or any other weapon that first came to hand. These kept the doctor and his assistant very busy for a couple of days. The men appeared perfectly nerveless, and, without flinching or making any movement whatever, they quietly submitted to such treatment as few Europeans would think of undergoing without the beneficent use of chloroform.

In matters of business friendship or charity, or wherever money is about to change hands, cunning and falseness are ever uppermost in their

minds, their first thought being the main chance, self advantage.

On such occasions as that of administering alms to a famine-stricken province—where dogs and rats are looked upon as luxuries; where old thatch from the roofs of mud hovels has been chopped up and boiled down for food; where rivers have burst their banks, swept away towns and villages by the score, flooding several thousand square miles of country, drowning nearly a third of the population of the inundated districts and leaving the remainder stranded on half-submerged rising ground, or floating helplessly about in empty boats with nothing to eat, and almost as little to wear—whether it is food or money which has been collected by those more fortunately situated and sent to these wretched people, a considerable portion is stolen, both before and after it reaches its destination. To such an extent has this been previously carried on, that the foreigners in China who are accustomed to, and quite understand all this knavery, in subscribing to any distant charity, object to their contributions passing through the hands of the Chinese, but give them over to the foreign missionaries for disbursement, knowing that they will be fairly and justly dispensed, and so escape the wholesale plunder of Chinese employés.

Shortly after the late inundation in the province of Houan, in 1887, caused by the giving way of the embankments of the Yellow River west of the city of Kaifong, and submerging between seven thousand five hundred and twelve thousand square miles of country in the north-east end of the province, the Imperial Government contributed nine million taels, equivalent to more than two million sterling, for the work of reparation. The work was entrusted to a number of mandarins, many of them of high rank. These made levies upon the surrounding districts for materials to fill in the several breaches, which were altogether about eight miles long.

Their demands were so exorbitant that in numerous cases they could not be supplied, and one mandarin who had been applied to, out of pure despair committed suicide. All the material from the surrounding country, consisting of millet stalks and cane, was collected on the bank of the river, and work was commenced. After continuing the repairs for a few months the new embankment proved a failure, and a very heavy loss fell upon the government and the people.

The treasury paid in coin the wages of ten thousand men for eight months. They were paid by contract, and, at the highest estimate, would earn about three hundred cash a day. But even

if twenty-five thousand men were employed—and this I believe to be the correct number—for eight months, and they all earned the highest rate, (three hundred cash a day,) which none but the best men could do, this would only account for one million one hundred thousand taels. The Peking government paid to the mandarins nine million taels for reparation, and this would leave seven million nine hundred thousand for material and carriage. Now what has become of the money? There is not a dollar left, and the new banks consisted solely of maize cane, millet stalks and mud, the cost of which is certainly not very considerable.

The coin was not applied for the purpose intended by the government, nor was it used for relieving the distress of the people. The opportunity for loot was too good to be neglected, such a chance could not be passed over. Those who could made the most of the good things sent to them by the beneficent spirits of their ancestors, and lost no time in gathering in the harvest. Under such management who could expect anything but failure? Fail it did, most signally.

Those mandarins who were in charge of the work were stripped of their rank and banished to the military post roads in disgrace, there to atone for their guilt. Others were reduced to third-class

rank ; and more still further degraded and ordered to remain at their posts, with the assurance that if they failed to exert themselves, and did not secure the safety of the new work, they would be ordered to Peking and severely dealt with. We all know what a threat of this description means when it comes direct from the 'Dragon Throne.' Others again there were who managed to evade the difficulty on very easy terms, and retired into dolce far niente with a remarkably pretty bank account in their pockets. Many mandarins who would have preferred death to dishonour were sentenced to be cauged, and condemned day by day to wander in disgrace and despair with the heavy square wooden collar round their necks, subject to the jeers and jests of peasants and labourers tramping to and fro along the crumbling banks of earthwork on which only a few days before they had built up their hopes of fortune and happiness.

The *Peking Gazette*, the official organ of the Chinese government, informs us that the newly-appointed director of the embankments, Lin-Lun-hsiang, declaims in the strongest terms upon the waste and misappropriation of money on the works of the Yellow River. He remarks that Honan has an unenviable and disgraceful notoriety for the dishonesty of its officials, and things have not

improved in this respect during the presidency of the late governor, Ni-wen-wei.

Notwithstanding the strict orders he received from the throne commanding him to procure material with all possible speed, the governor, without informing himself of the character of his subordinates, placed the whole matter in their hands; they sublet everything to the district officers, by whom it was in turn again sublet to the worst class of underlings; with the result, that the people were forced to part with their materials without any payment whatever, and were most shamefully maltreated if they complained. So that, rather than let these ruffians take their millet stalks, they burnt them in very large quantities, and the work at the river was stopped for want of material.

One of the officers, General Ts'ui-Ting-Kuei, took a contract for excavating a channel. He certainly cut the channel, but it was so narrow, so shallow, and so carelessly done that the whole passage silted up about twelve hours after the water had been let into it. Upon the authority of the *Gazette*, Mr. Ts'ui-Ting-Kuei made a profit out of his contract of one million two hundred thousand taels. The director also informs us that only a small portion of the nine million taels allotted by the government ever found its way to

the works. What became of the remainder, or how it dwindled away on the road, he does not say. He concludes his report by stating that Li-Hung-tsaο, one of the former directors who had been degraded, was perfectly clean-handed throughout, but, as for the rest, they one and all took what they could get, and all made large profits out of the transaction.

Those who were exiled were sent off to Ili, the extreme north-west corner of the Empire. Those who escaped with their plunder made tracks for Yunan and Burmah.

Such plunder being possible, even amongst high mandarins, the practice naturally goes through all grades of society, but it causes surprise to hear that it reaches even the interior of the prisons. The old and hardened criminals maltreat and annoy new-comers, till they write to their friends to send money to buy up the good will of the long incarcerated ruffians.

One late district magistrate, the venerable Chên, who had presided in the mixed court for more than twenty years, was pensioned off in the summer of 1884. Another was appointed, but he did not remain long. His successor was a man of active disposition, who preferred to see into most things for himself, without relying too much upon the reports of his underlings. In the summer of



1888, he one evening, unknown to any of his household, disguised himself and, dressed as a coolie, wandered out in the dusk to look round the district over which he presided.

In his perambulations he saw a very old woman sitting under an archway, and, by the light of one miserable candle, slowly and wearily mending or trying to mend some badly torn and dirty clothes. He watched her for some time, and finally got into conversation with her on the subject of her hard lot in life.

His quickness of perception soon showed him she was no impostor, and, before he left, he told her that in his younger days he had been a very poor man himself, but by industry and carefulness he had saved a few dollars, which he was always glad to share with those who were in want, and that he would send her some money to-morrow. The next day he gave one of his servants fifty dollars, described the woman, where she sat, &c., and instructed him to give her the money, but not to tell her who sent it. To insure the money being correctly delivered, he sent two other servants to accompany the one who carried the coin, so that there could be no mistake. They returned, and reported the most profuse and grateful thanks of the woman for the bountiful and benevolent present.

A few nights afterwards the magistrate again assumed his coolie disguise and wandered forth, unknown and alone. He found the poor woman at her post working as before.

‘I see,’ he said, ‘you are industrious, but I thought the money I sent you would provide you with a more comfortable and less exposed place to work in.’

‘It did provide me with many comforts,’ she answered, ‘but one can’t do very much on two dollars.’

‘No, that is true, two dollars will not do a great deal. And that was all you got?—did not my man give you more?’

‘He did not, but said his master was very poor, and that was all he could afford.’

‘Well, I *can* afford a little more, and I’ll see you get it to-morrow.’

Our magistrate went home gloomy and thoughtful, he had been cheated by a trusted servant, and could not lightly pass over such an offence.

There was trouble in the yamen the following morning. The three servants were brought before him, and questioned. They concluded their master must be the d—— himself; how otherwise could he possibly have found them out? They commenced their explanation by declaring that they had paid the woman every cent; but by

certain ways and means, well-known to all Chinese officials, each man was made to confess how much his share of the plunder had been. They were then placed in custody of half-a-dozen soldiers, sent to the woman, and in the presence of all passers-by were forced down on their knees, and made to express their sorrow, solicit her pardon for the theft, and return to her all the money they had stolen. So the fifty dollars found their way to her for whom they were intended.

On the return of these unfaithful stewards to the yamen, bamboo exercise was most freely and liberally dealt out to them, making them sadder but wiser men for many a long day afterwards.

## CHAPTER X.

The Lotus and the Poppy—Opium—Lekin Stations—Consumption and Revenue—Smuggling in 1790—Opium and Beer—Welsh Nectar—The great Opium Divan.

It would be a most interesting pursuit to trace to its commencement the practice of opium-smoking in China and India. Whence its origin, and how long has the practice existed? We do know how and when tobacco was introduced into England and the countries of Europe. But Turkey? When the Turks over-ran and possessed themselves of Syria, Egypt, North Africa and, with the Arabs, penetrated into Spain and Hungary, and at last, in 1453, sat down in Constantinople, was the pipe unknown amongst them? Are they indebted to our enterprise for the introduction of the soothing weed which we still take in the unsophisticated state of the rolled leaf, whilst they have developed the sublime medium of the hookah and the hubble-bubble?

Amongst the utensils unearthed at Mycenæ and

Naucratis, is there no smoking-tube? Is nothing of the kind in the sarcophagi of the Pharaohs? It is impossible to believe that there never was smoking till the other day, when our Elizabethan sea-captains brought the curious plants from the New World.

And again, in America how long had the practice reigned? Are there no traces of pipes among the sculptured ruins of the Astecs? Did neither Cortez nor Pizzaro bring any gold or jewelled examples into Spain? There must be some record of their antiquity in a direction east or west. One cannot sit content with the belief that the manhood of the whole world has been conquered by a habit invented and propagated by the Red Indian of the American forests!

Permanency is the special characteristic of the Asiatic. It is in Asia, if anywhere, that antiquity lingers, and where we look for the prototypes of modern life. As the pipe exists in active service from the Levant to Japan, from the Pacific Islands to the Arctic Circle, we may believe that smoking, even on the old continent, has been more or less prevalent throughout all the ages. In the western continent—where tobacco was first discovered and cultivated, whensoever that may have been—there was the cradle of the pipe's second avatar.

The lotus of Greek and Egyptian lore was, doubtless, the poppy, and the juice was not eaten, but delicately inhaled. Cleopatra, the beauteous serpent of Old Nile, touched with her lips the diamond-gemmed opium-pipe, as she alternately flouted and lured Mark Antony. The Lotophagi of Homer were confirmed smokers, hence the Greeks' happy dreaminess and forgetfulness of duty. The languid-eyed, luxurious natives of Lotusland must have had servants and slaves to whom the mystic drug was forbidden. I wonder what Lekin they instituted? also by what evidence these aristocrats knew Ulysses to be one of their order, and at once admitted him to their hospitality? His credentials would hardly have been successful in *China*. The word brings me back to statistics and local facts. The mirage vision of lotus and poppy vanishes, and I have only before me the tables of the Inspector-General of the Chinese Imperial Customs.

The chief opium district is the large and fertile province of Szechuen. It is estimated that this one province raises annually one hundred and fifty thousand piculs,\* the greater part of which is consumed in Szechuen. The rest is carried on the shoulders of men over the mountains by passes and *détours* not generally known; some is

\* The picul = 133½ pounds avoirdupois.

carried down the Yangtze, smuggled in other merchandise ; and some is openly carried to the customs' stations for assessment, and to receive the government stamp.

The poppy is cultivated for opium in all the eighteen provinces, the islands of Formosa and Hainan being the only large areas where it is not reared. That of Manchuria is preferred to any other by the northern cities, and that of Hunan has also a high reputation. The plant requires very careful cultivation—much manuring, watering, and weeding. It is sown and gathered within three months ; the soil is left in good heart for a cereal crop, which is followed by a leguminous one, and so the rotation is kept up. The two food-crops are sufficient for the maintenance of the cultivators, so the opium is their money-crop, and they improve upon it every year. The price varies with the locality and the numbers of the customs' stations on the route.

It is quite impossible to arrive at the quantity of native opium brought down from the interior, or the duty paid upon it.

A merchant or dealer coming from the west, either by river or with carriers overland, arrives at one of the barrier stations where a mandarin is in charge. The dealer and the mandarin retire into the great man's sanctum, where they smoke

and feast and have a good time for some hours ; then to business. The dealer informs the government official that he has, say, one hundred piculs of opium to pass. 'I'll give you half,' (or perhaps a third) 'of the duty to free the lot.' A bargain is finally struck, and if one hundred piculs have been passed by the mandarin, about six or eight piculs are entered in his book, and full duty on this quantity is credited and finally paid to the exchequer. The balance being the 'squeeze' of the mandarin. Thus they grow rich and plump. Can anyone wonder that they loudly raise their voice against the 'iniquitous' system of railways ?

The summary of the customs' tables gives us, as the production of the nine principal provinces, an annual total production of *native grown opium* of one hundred and sixty-nine thousand five hundred piculs. The remaining nine provinces also produce opium, but not in such quantities. Placing it at the lowest limit of three thousand five hundred piculs as an average, we have for the eighteen provinces an annual production of two hundred and one thousand piculs, in addition to eight thousand from Manchuria, or close on to twenty-eight million pounds per annum, besides an unknown quantity from Mongolia and the west.

To give an unbiassed and faithful report upon



the consumption of opium in China, is about as difficult as to give the consumption of alcoholic beverages in Britain at the commencement of the present century. One could get at our custom-house returns, at the stocks in bond, the great sales, the malt and hop duties, etc., but the addition of all these would not show even approximately the national consumption. What of the silent and secret traffic which necessitated the maintenance of a coastguard service all round our island shores? What of the fleet of yawls, luggers and fishing-smacks that cruised between France, Holland and the British Isles, courting disaster from foul weather and darkness and dangerous coasts, and whose crews looked more like pirates than simple fishermen? They could tell many a tale of liquid stowage which has steered clear of the revenue staff. The little bothies in the wild Highlands managed somehow not only to get their illicit mountain-dew to market, but also into such good repute that it was considered finer in quality than any bearing the customs' brand; so that altogether it would not be far out of the truth if one just placed the amount of smuggled drinks in Britain a century ago as nearly equal to that on which duty had been paid. It is exactly the same this day in China. The 'medicine earth' is currency everywhere, and, the further it is

carried, the more it increases in value. The students going north for the triennial examinations, the boatmen and the passengers on the native boats and on steamers, nearly all carry it on their persons and in their baggage ; for, though the risk of discovery is considerable, the profit in evading the duty is so great that the danger is no deterrent. This refers to both native and foreign opium.

It might mitigate the rancour of some unlearned tongues if the anti-opium society would send out three independent men, or even one delegate in whom they had confidence, to travel through the provinces of China and learn the place opium occupies as an article of consumption. He would find that in a single province, Szechuen, seventy per cent. of the men, and a large proportion of the women, inhale the drug they cultivate so extensively. He would find also that all over the Empire men in easy circumstances take their whiffs of opium, much as the same class in Europe take their wine, and that it does them no more injury than the refreshing glass and soothing cigar at home. In the cities he may discover dens and evil places of many kinds, if his taste lies that way ; but in cities at home there are also objectionable places, free from the use or abuse of opium. Victims of this vice are occasionally met with

in the instance of a poor working-man who, instead of sustaining himself on his wholesome rice, etc., spends his earnings on this, to him, very expensive luxury. He has acquired the 'yen,' or craving that will not be denied. He perishes from starvation, the drug does not nourish him, and the exhaustion from lack of food probably intensifies the craving for the indulgence. There are weak brethren everywhere; but are we all to abjure the means of recreative pleasures because weaklings cannot control their appetite, or have an impaired digestion? Are there not an anti-tobacco society and a total abstinence society? and yet the trade in cigars and pipes flourishes, and the revenue on wines and spirits does not fail. In the same category is the anti-opium society. America has even her anti-tea-and-coffee missions. Where shall we stop, and whither are we being driven? Are we to go back to the days of mead and beer? Well, there were giants in those days, and England had her heroes then as now. We are not better or wiser than our fathers were, but we live longer and enjoy life more, and that this is the result of a more diversified and less heavy regimen may be safely assumed.

In the pre-Elizabethan eras, and long afterwards, what a dull monotony of beer there was!

From breakfast to supper, and for both sexes,

always the tankard of ale. That there was a diversity of strength is obvious; it would not be the same brew for master and man, for the silver flagon and the servant's horn. That the unvarying drink conduced to excessive indulgence is very much too plain in all the annals of the times. Even now the last vestiges of loyalty to King Cwrrw may be found among the sons of the ancient Britons.

More than twenty years ago I leased an old manor among the mountains of Merionethshire that promised well for shooting and fishing. It was about the most retired spot in the Principality, and attractive to me on that account. We were soon on good terms with the neighbouring farmers who thought us worth a visit, and on whom we depended for provisions. Of course we did not understand a word of each other's tongue, but our linguistic servants acted for us.

One day, hearing an altercation between cook and a man with poultry in which the dogs were giving a good deal of tongue, I broke in, and the immediate silence was perplexing.

The tattered Celt (it was his clothes that irritated the dogs) smiled blandly, deposited his basket, and, lowly saluting, left.

Cook would not tell me the cause of quarrel, but the day after my wife elicited from her that

Evans had said her master, being a Saxon, was not a gentleman.

‘What do you mean?’

‘Oh, indeed, ma’am, indeed he said he was very kind, and he said it was beautiful to see him on the mountains with his gun, and indeed the dogs get tired sooner than himself—still, it was a pity he was not a gentleman.’

‘What *do* you mean, what did Evans mean?’

‘Well, ma’am, he says only one cask of Cwrrw has been sent here from Dolgelly since you came—and no real gentleman in Cwmry is sober after two o’clock.’ (The dinner-hour of one p.m. was still that of the old Welsh gentry.)

Old Evans was not far wrong as to fact within a ten mile radius. The five or six squires there included were the last scions of ancient houses who were nothing if not hospitable, and hospitality meant carousal. They are all gone in their prime, and the picturesque manorial mansions have new masters who do not speak the Cymraig.

Wine, spirits, ale, tobacco, opium are good or evil as they are employed. They are gifts for restoration, and we too often make them curses to our destruction. Let him who is thus madly disposed touch not, taste not, trade not; but I do not see that these positively good things are to be eliminated from the list of wholesome dietary

for persons of temperate habits, and of healthy, active intellect.

A short time ago I remember reading in one of the illustrated papers—I think it was the *Illustrated London News*—an account of a visit made by one of its correspondents to an opium-den in the east-end of London, and the account he gave of the harrowing scenes, the emaciated skeletons, and the idiotic features of its *habitués* stirred my curiosity to find out if such ghastly scenes were actually to be found in all such, so-called, dens of depravity.

I could not see what was taking place in the east of London, but in the land of opium opportunities for looking up such places were close at hand.

One evening at the commencement of November, 1888, as darkness was closing over Shanghai, I went out for a visit of inspection to the largest opium-smoking establishment in China. This capacious shop is not easily found without a clear description of its whereabouts, being hidden away behind the houses on the north side of the Rue du Consulat in the French concession. It is about half-way between the Szechuen Road bridge and the French municipal hall. The entrance is through an alley way, which does not vary in appearance from many others in the same locality.

There are some Chinese characters over the entrance, the meaning of which I did not understand, but a number (94) underneath the characters was my cue.

After going through this narrow passage you enter a large courtyard, where hucksters' stalls are scattered about all over the place, containing a variety of wares: knives of all descriptions, from the long ten-inch 'bowie,' down to the smallest penknife; chinese dresses, to suit all classes; sweets and preserved provisions from Crosse and Blackwell; cooked rice, books, dozens of other things, and opium pipes by the hundred. Talking, bargaining, and shouting, as is the constant practice of the people, was incessant. There were a few idlers standing outside the entrance of this Chinaman's paradise, who, I suppose, were waiting for some one more charitably disposed than I was to provide them with the means of entering; but I did not see one with that dazed expression or vacant stare which has been so often described as belonging to the frequenters of these places. Inside and out it was most brilliantly illuminated; it was as bright as noonday. There was no mistake about the fumes of the opium; it floated about the place like a November fog in London.

It took me a very short time to find out that I

was not a welcome visitor ; angry looks and sullen frowns spoke more plainly than words. But I took no notice of them, walked on, opened all the doors of the private rooms, taking a good look at the occupant, the room and its furniture ; then strolled slowly through the more public rooms, upstairs and down. Throughout the entire building each couch was fitted up for two smokers, who reclined facing each other, with a small table on which rested a lamp and each man's allowance of opium. I stood opposite several of them for some minutes, looking well into all their faces, and was much surprised at their patience in manipulating the drug before they worked it into proper smoking condition.

It was presently rumoured, I know not how, that I was one of the detective police searching for some one. Nothing could have answered my purpose better, for each smoker, feeling himself guiltless of any offence that could concern me, was only too anxious to show his face, and satisfy both of us that he was not the man I wanted. But they were not all so open ; there were a dozen or more who looked frightened and anxious as I came near them, and the change in their countenance from alarm to relief when I passed on told too plain a tale. So I obtained a full and a long view of the faces of between two



and three hundred men, each engaged with his opium-pipe.

The place is patronized by all classes of Chinese, from the buttoned mandarin down to the common street coolie. Each department is well separated from its neighbour, so that the different classes of smokers cannot get mixed one with the other. As in all other parts of the world, class is a question of dollars.

The first class is fitted up in a most luxurious manner; the woodwork of the couches is inlaid with mother-of-pearl, jade, and ivory. The couches and pillows are richly covered, some with embroidered satin and others with crimson velvet, the rest of the furniture correspondingly rich. They are arranged, as elsewhere, for two smokers, and between them is a handsome carved black-wood table, with a highly polished marble-top, on which the attendant places the pipes, the small cups of opium, the manipulating needles, and a cup of very strong tea with which each customer is supplied.

The building is in the form of a quadrangle, open in the centre for light and air. This centre court is a garden, containing a variety of rare plants and shrubs, interspersed with a quantity of miniature rockwork.

The ceiling throughout the interior is beauti-

fully carved, and in places richly gilt, with many grotesque designs, thoroughly Chinese, and at regular intervals along the walls are let in large slabs of curious variegated marble. The whole is an excellent example of sensual oriental luxury, and at a single glance you see it has been got up in a most expensive manner. I was told that it cost a million and a quarter taels in building, and that the receipts are over five hundred taels a day.

Near to the entrance is a counter on which stand the small cups filled with the prepared drug. The pipes are also kept here, and one or both are passed to the attendants as applied for, a strict check being kept on everything as it crosses the counter.

As you walk round the quadrangle, in the less expensive quarters, the couches are on either side with a passage between them; these are covered with cloth in place of velvet, while the coolies' department has only the ordinary bamboo mats. There are many other corridors leading off from the square which have been added since the original building was completed; they are all fitted up in a similar manner.

I lingered about the place for more than two hours, occasionally sitting and talking to one of the smokers, when I found one who understood

'pidgin' English, but I was always watching for the vacant, silly gaze of which I had heard so much.

Mandarins, compradores, house-boys, coolies, with a few Buddhist or Taotist priests—easily recognised by their tailless shaven heads and shabby grey dress—were all represented. There were a few women, and a fair sprinkling of amahs in foreign employ, among whom I recognised two whom I knew were then in the service of families of my acquaintance, and who would not have believed me, but would have told me I was greatly mistaken if I had even hinted that I thought their amahs occasionally visited the Rue du Consulat.

The pipes used vary considerably; those for the first-class are handsomely inlaid and ornamented with jade and jewels; some being worth more than one hundred dollars. Their value decreases as you descend in rank, the coolie pipes being worth only fifty cents. A strict watch is kept by the attendants to see that no one appropriates his pipe and quietly walks off with it under his coat. There is a check upon each pipe as issued, and the servants have to pay for those they are careless enough to lose or allow the visitors to carry away—a case that very seldom happens.

The establishment in its principal phase seemed on a parallel with a very luxurious coffee-house

in Paris, London, or Vienna, whither one goes for a lounge, a cigar and coffee, and then departs. It was exactly so here ; there was no crowding, no loud talking ; the guests lingered over their tea and lamp from three-quarters of a hour to an hour, then went away as unhurriedly and as self-possessed as they had entered. The couches were never long vacant ; the attendants instantly rearranged the table, &c., for the new-comer, and so it went on.

I admit I felt uncomfortable, and not a little disillusioned. Like a stranger in a west-end club staring at members in the smoking-room, whom he had been led to expect to find inebriated and rolling about the floor, but who, on the contrary, gaze calmly and curiously at the audacious intruder, I felt baffled and confounded, for, like many of my fellow-countrymen, I had pictured to myself this greatest opium resort in the whole Chinese empire as a perfect den,—an epitome of vice and misery, and fully expected the reality to exceed my mental creation ; and now, after as thorough an investigation as two hours admitted of, I had to confess that this establishment, instead of proving the haunt of unspeakable misery and iniquity, presented in elegance, order, sobriety, decorum, and courtesy

to the guests a not unfavourable comparison with the majority of cigar divans and coffee-houses in many of the large cities of Europe.

## CHAPTER XI.

## THE NEW WORLD.

The New World—Roman Catholic Missions—Examination for First and Second Degrees—The Hanlin—Military Training—The Power of the Literati—Western Development—Missionaries—Salvation Army—Soliciting Persecution—How China may be Approached—Contrasting Histories—The Deliverer—The Rise of the Great Rebellion—Hung-Sew-tsuen—Chung Wang—The End of the Rebellion—Secret Societies—China worth Seeing.

WHAT advantages, if any, does China obtain by the relaxing of her exclusiveness ?

Judged from our standpoint, it must be assumed at once that they are manifold.

First and foremost is the expansion of her ideas concerning the world. That which the discovery of America was to Europe will the widening of her narrow horizon become to China. Think for a moment what the voyage of Columbus into the great unknown revealed to the peoples of Europe so recently—not yet four centuries ago : it proved that the earth is a sphere ; that on its other side the sun, moon, and stars give their light in the

same proportion as where we dwell; that rain, wind, dews, and clouds belong also to the further hemisphere, where rivers and mountains, forests and lakes, greater than they had ever seen are to be found! And the inhabitants—what of them? The Spaniards discovered people simple enough to worship them, coming, as it seemed, on winged canoes over the big water from the sunrise. We have read our Prescott, and know what the invaders proved to the natives of New Spain; and Sebastian Cabot, Jean Cartier, and others tell us of a different race—men of the forests and prairies, who had neither city nor wealth of any kind; nomad hunters and warriors, living like Bedouin Arabs, and equally independent and proud. They hated the intruding white man for invading their hunting-grounds, yet, where alliance or friendship was once formed, they could be faithful to death.

What a field of adventure it was for the daring sons of Britain, France, and Spain, and what a glorious arena for the enterprise of the world!

So, when the enlargement of China's myopic vision takes place—when she perceives beyond her boundaries a civilization independent of Chinese initiation, and developed more broadly and practically than any that she can parallel—then I foresee that her literati will bend their powers of application to the acquisition of western

thought, and, without losing their reverence for a remote past, acquire from the life and passion of the present a spark of that light which illumines us and will irradiate the future.

We are gliding into the vexed waters of religion. The different churches of Christianity, Roman Catholic, English and American Protestant, in all the varieties of their ministration have here sought, and sparingly obtained, toleration for the dissemination of the doctrines of our Faith. The Jesuit fathers about four hundred years ago were the first missionaries,—men of knowledge of the world, men of science—and accredited to the Court. They were well received and entertained permanently at the capital on account of their astronomical science. And so brilliant was their success as missionaries that the chief number of Catholic Christians now in China are the descendants of the converts of these first pioneers. But with the lives of these missionaries the prestige of their vocation disappeared. A succession of these Roman Catholic fathers has been maintained in several cities of the Empire ; but down to our own time—more especially in our time—contumely and persecution have frequently been dealt both to teachers and neophytes.

The Protestant missions are protected by treaty, but are not on that account more esteemed by the



people. Indeed, there has ever been a suspicion that the missions have a political origin, to spy out and convey information whereby an enemy may profit.

That foreign persons who have no apparent resources of livelihood should seek to live in their midst perplexes the financial mind; and as for the teaching, it is and it must be out of their sphere. What is understood and valued by the only class attending the missions is the works of charity and healing which they conduct among the poor. These 'good works' and the example of simple family life must have a soothing influence on the jealous irritation which our presence amongst the natives invariably excites. But still this influence is so little that it is difficult to call it progress at all. This statement refers to the ordinary missions spread broadcast everywhere. Of course, here and there is a spot where a more than ordinary apostolic soul effects a foothold, and hopes that a breach in the defences is begun. But that Chinese wall of defence, how impregnable it is!

The common cry is, 'The literati prevent the people coming to us. They are enemies to all progress; they are scornful, atheistic, and the source of all our difficulties. If they could be silenced,' etc., etc.

Now who are the literati? The educated of the nation! all the men of intellect and talent in the Empire! These are the stones and bricks of which this formidable bulwark is built, and how they are compounded, annealed, fired, and many times sorted and tested, let us see from the clear and vigorous description of the Chinese student's career, given by Dr. A. Williamson.

The origin of the competitive examination system is coeval with that of the nation, and with the dogma that only the wise and the able should rule. The first effect is the establishment of schools in every village, town, and city, there being two, ten, or fifty, in proportion to the population.

The next effect is the drafting off of the brighter boys to the list of candidates for degrees. The third effect is the sifting of these candidates, and the test is threefold, being not merely scholarship, but excellence in letters, combined with good moral character and good blood. Stress is placed on the latter, every aspirant being required to show a pedigree unsoiled through three generations, viz., great-grandfather, grandfather, and father.

Further, the candidate must give securities, and all students, of all degrees, are regularly exhorted to virtue.

If everything regarding the genealogical tree and their personal reputation is satisfactory, they

begin their students' course by going up twice every three years to the chief city of their country (*hien*), to be exercised in their studies by literary men appointed by the government; also twice in three years to the chief city of their department (*foo*) for a similar purpose.

These examinations are merely initiatory, and confer no degree, only local reputation. The real trial of strength begins with the *yuen* examination, which also occurs twice every three years, when the official examiner for the entire province visits their *foo*. The number which assembles at these *yuen* examinations differs largely in different provinces, ranging from three thousand up to twelve thousand. The proportion of places or degrees obtainable likewise varies.

To take the province of Shantung as typical of all, about seven thousand candidates assemble at the *foo*, but there are only one hundred and seventy-two places, so that only one in forty-three can win the first degree, which is termed 'budding talent,' and is equal to our B.A. Those who gain this degree again assemble once every three years at the capital of the province, to compete for the second degree, equal to our M.A.

Hence the chances are still fewer. About eight to ten thousand present themselves, but only sixty-

four can leap the 'Dragon Gate,' as it is called, and enter the arena for future competition. This is very keen sifting, and it continues for nine days, three sittings of three days, night and day, during which time no student is allowed to emerge from his cell. These examinations are held simultaneously at the capital of each province; and the proud victors proceed to Peking in the following spring, to contend for the third degree, equivalent to our LL.D. In this third intellectual tournament the competitor enters the list with similarly picked men from all the provinces of China.

The number varies from eight to ten thousand, and there are generally about three hundred and sixty places. The sittings are the same in number and duration, but the strain is much heavier.

The prize men in this contest again assemble for a final bout, and are this time examined by the Emperor himself, who eliminates eighteen or so, and from these selects a tripos, viz., first, second, and third wranglers. They are feasted by the Emperor, and their names are carried by expresses throughout the whole country, and for the time being they are the heroes of the Empire.

And they deserve to be so, for observe, they are not the wranglers of one university, but of the whole nation, and not a small nation, but one equal to Europe; nor are they annuals, but the choicest

outcome of three years' cultivation ; they stand as if they were victors in a contest in which all the high degree men and prize men in every nation in Europe assembled triennially to compete for supremacy. Surely those who finally carry off the laurels in such a contest must be of the very highest intellectual power and of the rarest attainments. Our statesmen and high officials have found them to be so.

These eighteen men are appointed to the Hanlin, or imperial academy, to superintend all the state papers, and to be ready for all state emergencies where composition is required. Offices are assigned to the remaining victors by lot, and therefore impartially, and they either assume office at once or proceed as expectant officials to the different provincial capitals to await commissions.

But there is a still higher position, viz., the Censorate, or all-investigating court. This body consists of about forty members, who are selected partly from the Hanlin, and partly from other sources. All governors of provinces and certain other high dignitaries are ex-officio members. They have the privilege of investigating every act of every official, high and low, and of expressing their opinions thereon, both as to ability and integrity ; they may also comment on the procedure of the Emperor himself. Their

influence, therefore, is most powerful and far-reaching. They often exercise their privilege with great candour, ability, discrimination, and boldness, and not unfrequently have suffered for their fidelity.

The student is generally the most esteemed man in the family; the degree men lead the village; the higher men sway the district and often influence the province. They have their local associations, their clubs, their garden-parties, and their wine feasts. They meet at stated times to discuss literary matters; exercise themselves in impromptu verses, or discuss local affairs. Thus they form and nourish an *esprit de corps* which is of the most potential character.

The government not infrequently, at critical periods, send down questions for their consideration, and their views are carefully weighed. There are always several hundred of these men with highest degrees at the capital of each province, either in office or waiting appointments, who are in constant attendance, and often in consultation with the governor, ready to receive his commissions and carry out his plans.

When anyone of them is charged with flagrant misconduct, and it can be brought home to him, his degree, no matter of what rank, and all the privileges belonging to it, are summarily taken

away. After the degradation, the punishment that would be awarded to an ordinary offender is meted out.

*The Military system.*—Lads who prefer the profession of arms go up to the district city, and are there examined and enrolled as the others. They also proceed to the departmental city for the first degree; thence to the capital of the province for the second degree, and afterwards to the capital for the third degree. Certain literary qualifications are necessary, but in their case very moderate literary attainments suffice. Their success depends on horsemanship, feats of strength, such as lifting a stone-loaded beam, wielding the monster battle-axe, and in dexterity and precision with the bow and arrow.

Their achievements are sometimes marvellous in performing prodigies of strength, and hitting the bull's-eye from horseback; thus giving promise of the attainment to which they may reach with the rifle and bayonet. The victors in these tournaments generally obtain staff appointments, or are marked off for members of the body-guard of the Emperor.

The nature and range of subjects are by no means contemptible. The first examination is confined to the classics, caligraphy, and composition, and the candidates are required to write two

prose essays and one poem on themes which are written out on long rolls, and carried round the cells in the examination hall after the students have been shut in. This examination lasts a day and a night.

At the second examination the range of subjects is much wider, and the tests more severe. It embraces questions on their literature, exegesis, history, agriculture, military affairs, and finance ; and there are about a score of questions on each subject, often most searching, and which could not be answered without pretty extensive knowledge of their literature in all its branches. The third examination is on the same lines as the second, but the questions are much farther reaching, and the judgment is often specially called into play.

The subjects on which they are examined are thus all confined to China, and the literature of China. But we must remember that China embraces in her acknowledged history a period of over four thousand years—more than Greece, Rome, and all our modern states added together ; and that she has always had a larger mass of human beings under her dominion than any other nation, and, until recent times, could show a literature which, for extent, matched, if it did not surpass, the whole of the literature of



Europe put together! Surely with such a history there is ample scope for any amount of research.

I may further remark that the distinguished career of Chinese students, not specially picked men, at our own universities, competing side-by-side with the flower of British and American youth, demonstrates the calibre of the Chinese brain. One is tempted to ask, if ordinary Chinese students so keenly test the metal of our countrymen, where would they be if the Hanlin scholars entered the lists?

*The power and position of the literati.*—The brightest lads in their respective villages, when they proceed to their district city, meet the clever lads of the corresponding villages and towns within the boundary of the district *hien*. They form friendships which often last through life. By-and-by these young men go up to the examination in the chief city of their department, *foo*, comprising eight or ten districts, *hien*. Here the acquaintanceship is extended. The successful competitors afterwards assemble at the capital of the province, where they meet the picked men from all parts of their own province and form new alliances. Those who win the degree enter what they call the *brotherhood*, by which every scholar who wins the *Kin-jeu* becomes a brother to all the

rest in all the provinces, and they pledge themselves to mutual fealty. Those who carry off the honours at this examination meet again triennially at Peking, and go in for the third degree. Here they not only renew old friendships, but meet with the keenest intellects and the finest scholars within the whole Empire, sifted district by district and province by province. This gives a clever man an opportunity of personally knowing the best men within the wide extent of China.

They come from every nook and corner of the Empire, they are intensely patriotic, young, ardent, full of the achievements of their heroes, and of the history and deeds of their country. 'There is no land like their own.' They are also intensely Confucian, and no wonder: they have been indoctrinated in his maxims ever since they were able to speak; they have prostrated themselves before his tablet from their infancy; they have been taught that he is the teacher of ten thousand ages and 'is the equal of heaven and earth.' Moreover, his system, and the teaching of their sages, commend themselves to their mature judgment as in consonance with their moral nature, and they therefore think nothing more can be desired. Their support of his system is therefore conscientious, and their opposition to conflicting views whole-hearted.

Every position of influence in the state, from that of the schoolmaster up to that of members of the cabinet and generals in the army, is held by them.

They are opposed to foreigners as foreigners. They breathe the spirit of the Emperor Yung-Ching who, addressing a deputation, declared: 'China will want for nothing when you cease to live in it, and your absence will not cause it any loss.' Many of the literati of the present day go further. They say that western intercourse has positively injured China, and they point to not a few facts in support of their belief.\*

This is the system which renders China impregnable, and maintains amongst her vast population such an equality of education, of patriotism, of pride, and of very natural prejudice. What nation has political experience like the Chinese? and independent resource like hers? and where are there students who have run a curriculum like the members of the Hanlin? It is time we ceased to employ the word 'ignorant' when alluding to this people. Topography was not a strong point with the erudite Greeks, but it is nearly all the knowledge that many a confident English critic possesses in treating of this nation. We have the greatest reason for forbear-

\* 'Journeys in North China and Mongolia,' by the Rev. A. Williamson.

ance. To probe into the thoughts and beliefs of our astute co-residents is fishing in dark waters. No cultivated Chinaman would tolerate our presumption. He is confident that wisdom and goodness can only come from his own countrymen who have studied all that can be known; that none have knowledge except what has been obtained from China. This is to him a proposition as needless of support as saying, 'The sun gives light.'

In the new mathematical cursus which is being added to the examinations an apology is made in the instructions as follows:

'Lest the students should think we ask them to do a derogatory thing in learning from the works of the barbarians, let them know that the western nations admit that their knowledge was originally derived from the East—that is, from China, so that the students are only receiving back again what was first obtained from us. All the European skill is derived from mathematics; in mastering that science you will acquire whatever knowledge they have.'

Nothing can well be more disparaging than this, but, while we smile at it, let us reflect that probably we know just as little of the culture of the Chinese as they do of ours. One lesson is unmistakable. They love study and venerate

learning. It is of no use sending uneducated enthusiasts to these cool ratiocinating intellects, for the average Chinese perceives their mental and social status instantly and turns contemptuously from such self-elected teachers.

With what ardour the Christian world has undertaken the conversion of China! There is not a church, society, or sect of numerical importance which has not its propagandists. There is every quality of mind and heart and soul in some of our great missionaries. When I think of these men, whom from the depths of my conscience I revere, I am inclined to be silent. But these are the few, not the bulk, of the propagators. Think of the constant influx of young people of either sex who are themselves on the threshold of life, with the average education of the class to which they may belong, and with a moral training so slight that the claims of home, parent, and kindred are disregarded in comparison with the excitement of rushing as teachers to a people who desire them not, and whose language they will never be able to speak, except in a halting, disadvantageous way.

Respectable Chinese do not admit missionary visitors. What can they, who are so exclusive regarding their wives and daughters, think of these girl wanderers? And the young men are

nearly as much at fault. They must first sit down to the language and try to familiarise to their ears the most difficult and distinctly antique tongue in the world. This cannot be done well under a lifetime, but in a year or less they preach! They shock and offend their hearers, and are ejected from the place, and the poor enthusiasts pose as victims of persecution. But they have done harm to the people, to themselves, and to their cause. They misrepresent Christianity as something to be accepted at once, without investigation, and they promise an immediate and most profitable return. Alas, for the expectation and the bargaining! With such teaching the poor of China will not gain much, and the educated treat the teachers with disdain.

The following account of missionary proceeding has just appeared, December, 1888, in our missionary paper. The paragraph is very short, so I copy it verbatim.

‘Mr. Charles Studd, a once well-known cricketer in England, and now engaged in mission work in the interior of China, has written an appeal to the Salvation Army in India for a force to assist him. In the course of his letter he says: “Here is our salvation troop in Lun-gan-fu, five against twenty thousand in this town alone, to say nothing of eight large towns within a radius of forty miles.

I beat the big drum, Stanley Smith the gong, a native gentleman the cymbals, and two natives carry banners. Some people have been lecturing us, saying it is beneath our dignity to go out thus, but we sing and play and speak just the same.”’

Is it possible to travesty religion to a greater extent than this? I think that even General Booth with all his salvationists could not make themselves more contemptible in the eyes of the Chinese. The ‘native gentleman’ who beats the cymbals I am sceptical about; he would have been more correctly described as a hired coolie, for no native gentleman would so demean himself. The lowest coolie in the Empire can study and compete at the village and provincial examinations; but three classes are excluded, namely, play-actors, barbers, and executioners. These are looked upon as the pariahs of society, and the Chinese place our musical missionaries among the first of these people.

What respect can the natives show to men whose behaviour is on a par with the singing fakirs or the dancing dervishes of India?

For Englishmen of birth, education, and good social status to sink their intellect and refinement, and assume the habits, the garb, and the surroundings of the meanest of the Chinese race, attracting attention by the childish din of the

mountebank, is a degradation of themselves and their vocation altogether incomprehensible.

Perhaps the vicissitudes of their lives have disturbed their reason, and they are unconscious of the position they have taken up. But, if sane, they are acting a part in defiance of the more exalted duties to which their early circumstances fitted them. If there be merit in their self-degradation, it is a long way behind that of St. Simon Stylites, or that of the poor Chinese priest who recently exhibited himself here in a cage full of nail points, amid which he stood on tiptoe for the benevolent to draw a nail at the price of a dollar, that he might thus be the means of earning a sum for the restoration of his temple.

How, then, is China to be won? How shall we acquire a vantage-point from which to address the Chinese of respectable life and good moral influence? In the most natural manner possible: without parade of poverty, self-abasement, or formula of any kind. Not deprecatingly and not provoking opposition, but by first gaining the respectful regard of one or more educated men. Like attracts like. In the first place, the teacher needs, like St. Paul, to be learned in all the learning of the people he addresses; like him, to have a large loving heart and comprehensive liberality, and to see in the history of China a Father's care



as protective and special as that claimed by the Jews.

I should meet them on the platform of such of the classics as they themselves most revere, and recite the texts they loved. There must be a splendid field of ethical literature from which to draw flowers of rhetoric ; and this knowledge and appreciation on my part would show them how much in common there is in the best sentiments of men, Chinese or barbarian. More emphatically would I dwell on the cultivation of the virtues in which the celestials and all Asiatics are weakest : honour, truth, and kindness to the weak ; quoting from their own classics when I could, and strengthening them by appropriate passages of Scripture, or from works of modern issue.

Secondly, I would speak of the Shinto of their language, the All-Father, who has cared for all from the beginning, yet left them freedom in many ways to work out their own will. How favoured have the Chinese been ! such early civilization and peaceful organization was not given to any other nation. Their earliest rulers were wise beyond those of other peoples ; they made laws, regulations, rites and practices over all the land which tended to weld into one brotherhood every family of the Empire. Freeborn, educated, with honour and rank within the reach of everyone,

no wonder the throne has been so well supported, and the people, one in language and training, are one in love of home, kindred and country.

In contrast, let them learn how other races, scattered or concentrated over the rest of the globe, struggled for separate existence, till the arm of the stronger claimed victory, or achieved the silence of desolation. A period of rapid conquest, and the next of triumphal ease, tyranny and luxury, succeeded by indolence, incapacity, and national decay ; such have been the rise and fall of all the nations of history.

These cycles were not without learning, science, and art. Much of the good in these respects remains to us, while the errors have perished, except as a warning. Of the sages who taught none were greater than Socrates ; he was to Greece what Con-fu-tse was, and is, to the Chinese.

In the height of the power of Rome, when her superb military skill had subjected to her sway the whole of the known world ; when her emperors in their arrogance displaced from the temples the statues of the gods for those of their own persons, demanding homage and sacrifice to themselves ; when the tyranny over the oppressed reached such a climax that gladiatorial conflicts of famished tigers and lions against the flower of manhood were popular amusements ; when young

slaves were cast into the imperial fish-ponds as food for favourite fish, and inhuman pride overflowed in crime every great city of the empire ; then, in a quiet mountain hamlet of Syria, a Child appeared who was to redeem the world. The conditions of His advent had been long foretold and waited for, His compatriots expecting a military leader who would break the yoke of Rome and restore their lost nationality. But He came to a more extensive kingdom, and to make free from a different bondage. His doctrines are so natural yet so pure, His life and death so sublime and sacrificial, that we believe Him sent by the Creator of mankind for the enlightenment and salvation of all the nations of the world.

I venture to suggest to the members of the Missionary Society the presentment of Christianity to the Chinese in some such form as the above, rather than by assailing the indignant listener with a battery of denunciatory declamation and arbitrary dogma.

I believe that much of the misconception and opposition of the Chinese towards missionaries is due to the early championship as Christian converts of the leaders of the Taiping rebellion. Like many another great matter, a little fire sufficed to kindle this. A poor student of Kwang-si, of Hakka, alien race, had made several ineffectual

efforts to attain the second degree. In his residence at the provincial city, during the examinations, he acquired at the house of a missionary, Mr. J. Roberts, some acquaintance with a portion of the Bible. The record of the extermination of the Canaanites, under Joshua, was either the subject under study, or that which had for the restless mind of Hung-sew-tsuen the most powerful fascination. Returning to his native village, and sickening under the mortification of his repeated failures, he became subject, like many imaginative southerners, to trances, dreams, and visions. These, according to the customs of the locality, rendered him a hero among his kindred and friends, and he himself expounded his hallucinations by appropriating the Joshuistic mission. He, Hung-sew-tsuen, had received a decree from heaven to destroy all idols and their temples everywhere.

He began by demolishing the tablet of Confucius in the Hall of Literature, in revenge, probably, for the failure of the degree. The head men of the town and the literati met him, expostulated, and forbore with him; but Hung-sew-tsuen and his adherents were beyond the stage of reason—the madness and riot of wanton demolition had set in.

The most southern provinces, especially the

parts contiguous to the tributary or semi-independent states, have ever been the foci of petty revolts and secret societies, and the hotbed of development for every kind of disaffection. Disbanded 'braves,' who had seen fighting around Canton, hastened to the new ranks, where desultory fighting and indiscriminate plunder were promised. At first the war-cry was, 'Down with the idols and the Manchus—we will restore the Mings!' but soon this was changed to the 'Tien Wang,' or 'The heavenly prince.' From henceforth the rebel leader was known by this title, and he announced that in a vision he had been commanded to assume the dragon throne in the ancient capital of the Mings at Nanking. To this in two years he actually attained.

It was not a war of conquest, to obtain and retain strongholds. This rebellion was a lava flood of extermination; neither sex, childhood, nor age was spared. Every palace and humble household was wrecked; an ever-increasing army of devastation ravaged fourteen provinces, sacking and burning many hundreds of cities, until, weakened by satiety and the desolation they had created, they sank before the reign of retribution and law. During the twelve years that Tien Wang occupied the chief palace of the then many palaces of Nanking he secluded himself absolutely from the

view of his armies, giving audience to none but his brother Wangs. No male person was allowed beyond the outer court of the palace, none but women forming his court and attendants; yet from this harem-palace edicts went forth during all these years which directed the course of the marauding armies, electing chiefs and destroying them, and these edicts were implicitly obeyed. It is marvellous that such a personage should have been, as he generally was, so well and loyally served—in one instance, at least, chivalrously and disinterestedly—by Chung-Wang, the ‘Faithful King,’ who saved the rebel leader’s son at the risk of his own life, and refused to escape certain death when the means were afforded him. There are men so true and genuine in their fealty to a cause they have espoused that they cannot desert it because it is doomed; they choose rather to perish where they gave their first faith.

Even now, after a lapse of twenty-five years, the trail of the destroyer is everywhere distinct. The answer to the inquiry as to the cause of deserted cities, of bridges with the central arch gone, of pagodas and temples shattered, is always ‘the rebels.’

One element of advantage to the modern visitor bent on sport arises from this desolation—the wild pig and the native deer abound on

the once cultivated hills, and pheasants and wild turkeys are abundant where none were known before.

China, in this dire crisis, rose superior to the combined emergencies that threatened to strangle her. Her military chiefs and her statesmen proved themselves equal in political acumen to those by whom she was confronted, and when peace was declared, though she had suffered much, there was loss neither of territory nor prestige. The great rebellion was extinct. Floods and famine, as well as war, had crippled her resources, yet she paid unflinchingly the demanded indemnity of twenty million taels. Gordon's disinterested assistance atoned for the encouragement foreigners had shown to the Taipings, and also contrasted favourably with the subtle, interested conduct of some foreign officials. To everyone, as far as she knew, that had stood by her, China lavished honours and wealth with a truly imperial liberality.

It would be difficult to name any one circumstance which more than another caused the rebellion. The whole body of China was in a ferment. The opium war shook the allegiance of the people when they saw that the despised barbarian defied with impunity the government they believed to be invincible. Frequent calls on the local militia

taught them their power. The secret societies, the 'Water Lily,' the 'White Dove,' and the more formidable 'Triad' Society increased their numbers, and made no secret that their object was to expel the Manchu, to restore the Ming, to banish the 'foreign devils,' and to await the 'Heavenly Prince.' Here was an organisation ready to hand, and Hung-sew-tsuen, whose name was propitious, seized upon the opportunity, and proclaimed himself their expected leader.

Now I draw rein. I feel that I have been scampering across country hither and thither, as fancy or feeling drew me. There has been neither method nor object in my ramble, except to lose sight of beaten paths and make for points which to me stand out in an attractive light. If my reader has accompanied me thus far, he has probably had enough of this erratic wandering, and looks out for a good English road home. In that case, let him put himself under the skilled guidance of Gill, Cooper, or Colquhoun. If, on the other hand, my reader has long ago left me as a Will-o'-the-wisp which exists only on uncertain ground, 'maskee,' I, at all events, have had a glorious dance, and if, at a future time, he cares to follow, I am ready to hie away on a track more circuitous still.



But to be more serious, where all is serious and honest earnestness, I say, read nothing; but come and visit this people, a nation more wonderful than the ancient Egyptians, living, ruling, and peacefully unfolding to our gaze a panorama of lost ages. Come and see how fast the recuperative industry of China is restoring the Flowery Land to the ideal fertility and beauty which her sages have foretold and her poets have sung.

## ADDENDUM.

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*(Reprinted from the 'Shanghai Mercury,' 7th February, 1889.)*

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The following account of the outbreak at Chinkiang is given by Mr. Mansfield, Her Britannic Majesty's Consul at that port:—

‘At two p.m. on the 5th of February, a man said to have been kicked by a Sikh policeman was brought to Her Britannic Majesty's Consulate. He was examined by the foreign doctor, who said there was no trace of violence. The case was dismissed, and as it afterwards appeared the man was left lying on the boundary road of the concession until the afternoon of the 7th, when he was removed to the magistracy. He is at present in perfect health, and the Chinese officials acknowledge that the accusation against the police was unfounded.

‘This matter, however, appears to have been made a pretext, and at about four p.m. a crowd of boys and men began to stone three Sikhs off duty who were in the police compound. Being a Chinese holiday, the roads were full of people who joined in and attacked the police-station and tore it to pieces. While so engaged, five soldiers arrived in response to a demand for protection sent by Her Britannic Majesty's Consul. These men never moved a finger to stop the wrecking, looting, and shouting. They afterwards went away; a Chinese

official then came in a chair to the scene, but he was hustled and his chair overthrown. The station being reduced to a wreck, the crowd now came out of the compound and an attack on Duff's building was begun by small boys throwing stones at them; wood was piled against the verandah, and kerosene from the police-station was poured on it. The whole was set alight, and the three houses were a mass of flames.

‘While this was going on, a further force of some twenty soldiers arrived. They stood at the edge of the road below the British Consulate and looked on, but did nothing to curb the mob, not even going down below at all. When Duff's buildings were burning furiously, the great crowd already collected in the Consulate Road increased, but the cry went around that the soldiers were coming, and, in accordance with Her Britannic Majesty's Consul's last urgent request, three hundred soldiers arrived with fixed bayonets or spears, and were drawn up close to the Consulate gate. An attack on the Consulate began at about seven p.m., under the very noses of these soldiers, who never stirred or attempted to prevent the crowd getting in at the gate. They watched the whole thing until the house and offices and the constable's house were in flames. The mob then moved on, and burned Mr. Hunnex's house next door, then Mr. Bryant's, then the chapel, and last attacked and looted the United States Consulate, but did not burn it for fear of setting fire to the neighbouring Chinese houses. This last was accomplished by about ten or eleven p.m., as far as is known, and it is thought that further destruction was stopped by the arrival of four hundred soldiers from Silver Island.

‘When the British Consulate was attacked, the United

States Consul and his wife were there when the gate was burst in. The whole party, consisting of General Jones, Mrs. Jones and child, Mrs. Mansfield and two children, two amahs, and a gentleman visiting them, went to the back door to try to get out of the premises, but were prevented. They tried to get out of the side-door, but were stoned and driven back by the mob, and had to retreat up the hill, accompanied by the constable and his wife and daughter.

‘In the meantime Mr. Mansfield, who had remained in the Consulate, was driven out by the mob and joined the rest of the party as they returned from their fruitless attempt in climbing to the top of the hill. They managed to tear down part of the wall, and, after a weary walk round of nearly a mile, they arrived on board the *Kiangyu*, which fortunately had arrived before the riot, and was moored to Butterfield and Swire’s hulk; nearly all the residents were on board except some missionaries, who sent messages as to their whereabouts, and, about one o’clock on the 6th, a party was made up to go and bring them off from the Chinese houses where they had taken refuge. This was effected without difficulty.

‘Early on the morning of the 6th inst. they collected again and became threatening. They now occupied the bund opposite the hulk, but the draw-bridge was kept up and they threw stones which barely reached the hulk. They threatened Mr. Bean’s house. Mr. Bean having unfortunately ventured out, was obliged to beat a hasty retreat. The burning of some small house occupied by the customs people outside the settlement drew the mob away from the hulk.

‘Towards two o’clock a large number of troops

arrived and pitched their tents all along the bund. The night of the 6th passed quietly, and on the 7th though a large crowd was still in the concession there was no further rioting. On the morning of the 6th the soldiers made a clean sweep of everything left by the mob in the United States Consulate. On the afternoon of the 7th the *Mutine* arrived and took the place of the *Shanghai*, which had replaced the *Ngankin* which had in turn succeeded the *Kiangyu*, alongside of Butterfield and Swire's hulk.

‘On the morning of the 8th the crowd of soldiers were sent out of the concession and put about the entrances, while the municipal police, aided by a few soldiers, cleared the idlers out of the concession. When the riot happened the Taotai and Prefect were both absent, while the Tartar garrison was almost in a state of mutiny owing to arrears in their wages. Her Britannic Majesty's Consul had therefore no protection to fall back on, but the troops on the Paokai-shan, who were very hostile to foreigners on account of friction with the police caused by soldiers having on frequent occasions ridden at great speed in the streets contrary to the regulations.

‘It is said that the row was arranged by some hawkers who had been prevented from plying their trade in the concession, and that the soldiers were in league with them, and the so-called wounded man intentionally provoked the police into giving him a push, and then threw himself down and pretended to be in a dying state. There is absolute proof that he was an impostor.’

*Editorial Comment.*

The riot at Chinkiang repeats so closely the pro-

gramme of previous outbursts of the same nature that we can follow it step by step. This stereotyped course suggests too frequently that the programme has been cut and dried beforehand, and that the plea put forward also invariably that the riot was accidental, beyond the control of the officials, is quite as well studied and prepared in advance.

The circumstance at Chinkiang which looks most suspicious is that all the superior officials from the Taotai downward were absent taking holiday. It is of course within the bounds of possibility that such an event should happen, but if the duties of office sit so lightly on its administrators, need we wonder that the people at large have as light an opinion of their own responsibilities? The course of the disturbance, the pretended assault, and the shamming dead are familiar to every magistrate who has to deal with Chinese, and of course will deceive no one in China, nor anyone familiar with Chinese ways. Nor can the outrage be attributed to any widespread feeling of antipathy, for it certainly met with no sympathy from outside, and has not disturbed the ordinary relations of the residents.

With all respect to our correspondent, we have reason to know that the story of the writer at the United States Consulate was more or less connected with the affair, and the result is only another instance of the mistake of treating with leniency a dangerous agitator. The police had instructions to prevent Chinese hawkers from setting up stalls in the streets of the concession, and a constable in the execution of his duty had some three months ago ordered a man to keep moving. The man displayed some reluctance, and the writer, who from his connection with the Consulate might have

been supposed to know better, interfered with the constable; as remonstrance was of no avail, and there was a crowd collecting, the constable took him in custody to the police-station. The writer conceived that his grave official position entitled him to check so humble a public servant as the Sikh constable; and on his being released with a caution laid a complaint before Mr. Oxenham, Her Majesty's Consul. Unfortunately the United States Consul was absent, and Mr. Oxenham, in a moment of weakness, instead of sending the man about his business in his capacity of would-be peacemaker, reprimanded the constable, while acknowledging he had done only his duty. He converted the cheeky writer into a demagogue, who undertook to champion the rights of the hawkers generally.

Although this had little to say to the origin of the outrage, which was evidently carefully planned beforehand, it gave the rioters an opportunity of drawing recruits from a class always dangerous, and made it the more easy to get up a pretext for commencing a row. The leaders seem to have set about the work with a good deal of deliberation, and were armed with long knives, evidently prepared for the occasion. The attack on the police-station was well-planned, as it divided the Consulates from the concession, and prevented united defensive action being taken. This accounts for the apparent absence of defensive measures, as the key of the position was occupied before any trouble seemed imminent. It is impossible to believe that the riot was other than the result of a well-laid plot.

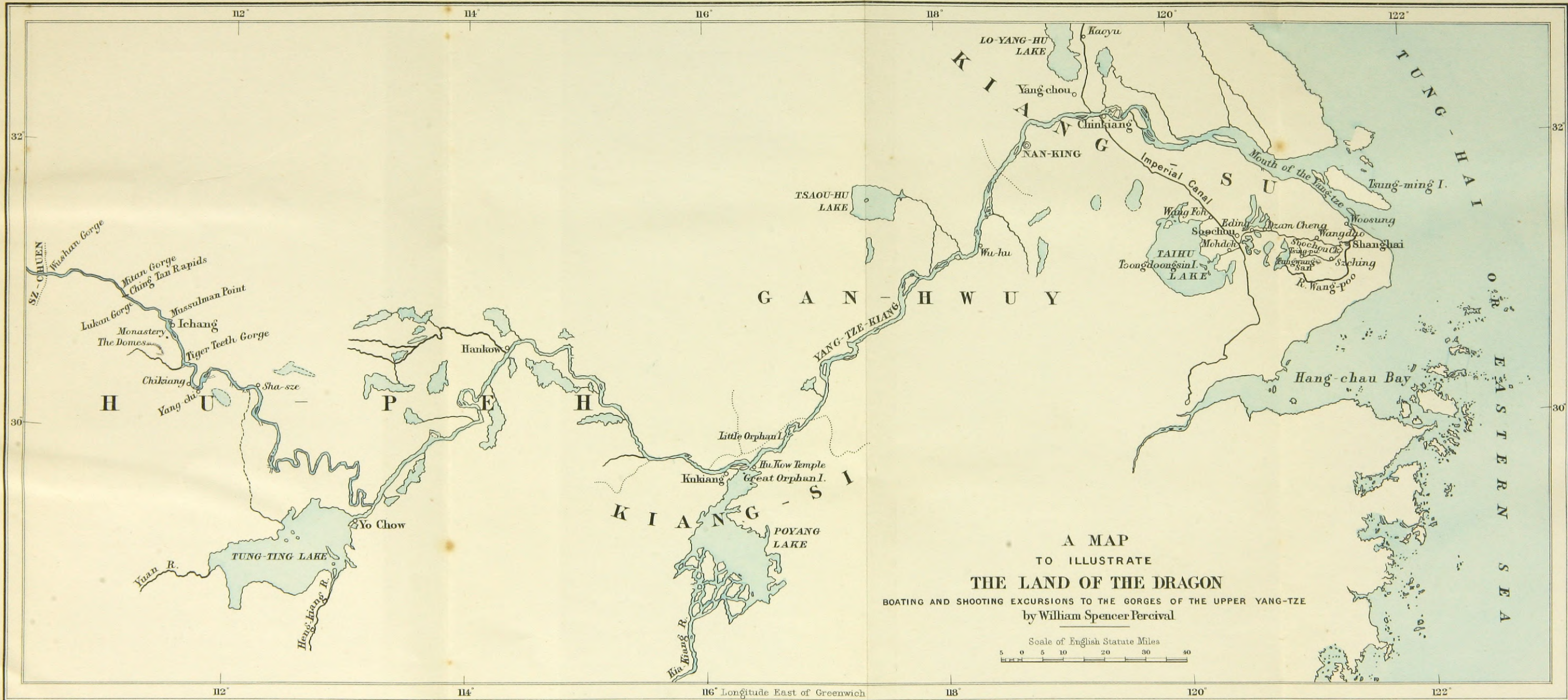
There are unfortunately all over the Empire associations of the dangerous classes who now and then break out into some sudden and apparently capricious out-

break, and as suddenly disappear. So powerful are they in many cases that the officials do not dare to touch the leaders, though those are well-known. In this case, while we would certainly not be justified in assuming the co-operation of the officials, it seems impossible to acquit them of at least connivance.

It was a strange and somewhat inexplicable circumstance that all the officials who had authority to act were conveniently absent. The Chihsien, who happened to be in Chinkiang, was evidently cautioned not to act. In any ordinary riot he would have done better than send six unarmed men to look on. That the officials were in a position to know what was going on, and that from pusillanimity they preferred to absent themselves, there is unfortunately little reason to doubt. The case of the commander at Pagoda Anchorage who bolted on the first round of the French guns and left his men to take care of themselves is not an isolated one in China. The conduct of the late Taotai at Ningpo, who, with explosive materials all round, succeeded during the most intense strain of the Franco-Chinese war in preserving unbroken order in his administration is unfortunately the exception.

THE END.





A MAP  
TO ILLUSTRATE  
**THE LAND OF THE DRAGON**  
BOATING AND SHOOTING EXCURSIONS TO THE GORGES OF THE UPPER YANG-TZE  
by William Spencer Percival

