



*From Peking to Mandalay*

Sir Reginald Fleming Johnston



CROSSING THE YALING RIVER. (See p. 191.)

FROM  
PEKING TO MANDALAY  
A JOURNEY FROM NORTH CHINA TO  
BURMA THROUGH TIBETAN SSUCH'UAN  
AND YUNNAN

BY R. F. JOHNSTON, M.A., F.R.G.S.

MEMBER OF THE ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY  
DISTRICT OFFICER AND MAGISTRATE, WEIHAIWEI

WITH MAP AND ILLUSTRATIONS

LONDON  
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET, W.

1908

JT

**MICROFILMED  
AT HARVARD**

TO  
DAVID PLAYFAIR HEATLEY  
WHOSE PRESENCE IN THE EAST WOULD BRING HAPPINESS  
TO EXILE, AND WHOSE ABSENCE IN THE WEST HAS  
CAUSED HIS BANISHED FRIEND TO TURN  
MANY TIMES WITH LONGING TO  
THE SETTING SUN.



# CONTENTS

CHAP.	PAGE
I. INTRODUCTION . . . . .	1
II. PEKING TO ICHANG . . . . .	10
III. ICHANG TO WAN-HSIEN THROUGH THE YANGTSE GORGES . . . . .	24
IV. WAN-HSIEN TO CH'ENG-TU . . . . .	31
V. CH'ENG-TU TO OMEI-HSIEN . . . . .	43
VI. MOUNT OMEI AND CHINESE BUDDHISM . . . . .	54
VII. MOUNT OMEI . . . . .	82
VIII. OMEI-HSIEN TO TACHIENLU . . . . .	112
IX. TACHIENLU . . . . .	131
X. TACHIENLU TO PA-U-RONG, YALUNG RIVER . . . . .	153
XI. PA-U-RONG TO MULI . . . . .	186
XII. MULI TO YUNG-NING . . . . .	213
XIII. YUNG-NING TO LI-CHIANG . . . . .	234
XIV. LI-CHIANG TO TALI-FU . . . . .	248
XV. ETHNOLOGY OF THE CHINESE FAR WEST . . . . .	265
XVI. TALI-FU TO BHAMO . . . . .	293
XVII. BHAMO TO MANDALAY . . . . .	322
XVIII. CONCLUSION . . . . .	354
APPENDIX A: VOCABULARIES . . . . .	391
APPENDIX B: ITINERARY . . . . .	399
NOTES . . . . .	411
GENERAL INDEX . . . . .	447
INDEX OF NAMES . . . . .	453





## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

CROSSING THE YALUNG RIVER . . . . .	<i>Frontispiece</i>
A FLEET OF JUNKS . . . . .	<i>To face page 10</i>
SOUTH BANK OF YELLOW RIVER, WITH VIEW OF RAILWAY BRIDGE . . . . .	" 14
A CHINESE "BRAVE" . . . . .	" 32
A CHINESE WALLED CITY . . . . .	" 44
CHILDREN OF CHINA . . . . .	" 53
CHINESE BUDDHIST MONKS IN "UNDRESS" . . . . .	" 65
CHINESE PLAN WITH AMITABHA BUDDHA AS CENTRAL FIGURE . . . . .	" 74
"JIM" ON THE SUMMIT OF MOUNT OMEI . . . . .	" 102
CHINESE PLAN OF MOUNT OMEI, SURMOUNTED BY THE SEAL OF THE MONASTERY OF THE GOLDEN SUMMIT . . . . .	" 105
TEA-CARRIERS ON THE ROAD TO TACHIENLU . . . . .	" 118
APPROACH TO TACHIENLU . . . . .	" 118
VIEW FROM THE "SUMMER PALACE" NEAR TACHIENLU . . . . .	" 142
CHINESE HALF-RUPEE AND TIBETAN COINS . . . . .	" 152
REDUCED FACSIMILE OF SILVER PLAQUE WORN BY WOMEN IN THE YALUNG VALLEY . . . . .	" 152
CLAY VOTIVE TABLETS FROM MULI, WITH MINIATURE BUDDHAS . . . . .	" 152
EAR-RING WORN BY MO-SO WOMEN OF YUNG-NING . . . . .	" 152
"THE GATE OF TIBET" . . . . .	" 154
OCTAGONAL TOWER AT RI WA . . . . .	" 170
HOUSE OF T'U PAI HU . . . . .	" 172
THE AUTHOR'S CARAVAN . . . . .	" 172
A RUSTIC BRIDGE . . . . .	" 174
TIBETANS OF WESTERN SSUCH'UAN . . . . .	" 177
MOUNTAIN SCENERY NEAR SIN GO LA . . . . .	" 177
A HALT ON THE ROAD TO MULI . . . . .	" 188

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

MOUNTAIN AND VALLEY ON THE ROAD TO MULI . . . . .	<i>To face page</i>	202
THE AUTHOR'S CAMP, 2ND MAY . . . . .	„	208
RUSTIC BRIDGE CROSSING LITANG RIVER ON THE ROAD TO MULI . . . . .	„	210
LAMASERY OF MULI . . . . .	„	220
THE AUTHOR'S MULETEERS, NEAR YUNG-NING . . . . .	„	226
YUNG-NING . . . . .	„	229
THE YANGTSE RIVER, NEAR YUNG-NING, ABOVE THE FERRY . . . . .	„	236
THE YANGTSE RIVER AT THE FERRY . . . . .	„	238
TALI-FU . . . . .	„	260
VIEW AT PAGAN, IRRAWADDY RIVER, BURMA . . . . .	„	332
MONASTERY AT PAGAN, IRRAWADDY RIVER, BURMA . . . . .	„	349
RUINS AT ANURADHAPURA, CEYLON . . . . .	„	354
A VILLAGE FAIR IN CHINA, WITH OPEN-AIR THEATRE . . . . .	„	356
A TEMPLE-THEATRE IN NORTH CHINA . . . . .	„	371
THE GRAVE OF "JIM," WEIHAIWEI . . . . .	„	376
MAP—AUTHOR'S ITINERARY FROM HANKOW TO BHAMO	<i>At the End</i>	

# FROM PEKING TO MANDALAY

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

THE journey of which an account is given in the following pages was not undertaken in the special interests of geographical or other science nor in the service of any Government. My chief object was to gratify a long-felt desire to visit those portions of the Chinese Empire which are least known to Europeans, and to acquire some knowledge of the various tribes subject to China that inhabit the wild regions of Chinese Tibet and north-western Yunnan. Though nearly every part of the Eighteen Provinces has in recent years been visited and described by European travellers, my route between Tachienlu and Li-chiang was one which—so far as I am aware—no British subject had ever traversed before me, and of which no description in book-form has hitherto appeared in any European language.

From the ethnological point of view the Chinese Far West—to which the greater part of this book is devoted—is one of the most interesting regions in the world, and presents problems the solution of which would settle many of the vexed questions relating to the origin and inter-relations of the

A

Asiatic peoples. As for its geographical interest, it may be sufficient to say here that the principalities of Chala and Muli contain what are probably the highest spots inhabited by man on the face of the globe, and that several of the passes crossed by my little caravan are loftier than the highest of the passes existing along the route traversed by the British expedition to Lhasa. My own contributions to geographical and ethnological lore are of the slenderest; but if I can persuade some of my readers that Tibetan Ssuch'uan and western Yunnan are worth visiting, be it only for the glory of their mountain scenery, I shall consider that my book has fulfilled the most useful purpose to which it aspires.

For those who are seized by a craving to revert for a time to something like the nomadic life of our remote forefathers, or to pass like the old Hindu ascetics into "the homeless state," there can be no country in the world more full of charm than some of the wilder and less-peopled regions of the Chinese Empire. There are enormous areas in that country covered with primeval forests in which man's foot has never trod, lofty mountains whose peaks are crowned with sparkling diadems of eternal snow, grand and savage gorges in which Nature has carved for herself in indelible letters the story of the world's youth, and gloomy chasms through which rush the mighty rivers that carry to the Indian Ocean and the Pacific snows that melted on the white roof of the world. And amid all this magnificence and desolation there are lovely valleys and stretches of garden-land

that might have been chosen as the Edens of a hundred mythologies, and which in historic times have been the homes of religious recluses and poets, who, like others of their kind in Western lands, found in silence and solitude a refuge from the bitterness and pain of the world, or a hermitage in which, amid scenes of perennial beauty, they could weave their flowers of thought into immortal garlands of human words.

It is a mistake to regard the Chinese as essentially a prosaic race, caring only for material things and nothing at all for what we should call things of the spirit. If they have less power of artistic creation than the Japanese—and even that may be doubted—they are quite as sensitive as the people of any other race to the magic of beauty in either nature or art; and especially do they—like our own Ruskin—take a vivid delight in the loveliness of mountain scenery. There is a well-known story of a Chinese scholar who, like the scholars of most lands, was blest with few of this world's goods, and, unlike a great many of them, was noted for his zealous devotion to the service of his country's gods. One night he heard the voice of an invisible being that spoke to him thus: "Your piety has found favour in the sight of heaven; ask now for what you most long to possess, for I am the messenger of the gods, and they have sworn to grant your heart's desire." "I ask" said the poor scholar "for the coarsest clothes and food, just enough for my daily wants, and I beg that I may have freedom to wander at my will over mountain and

fell and woodland stream, free from all worldly cares, till my life's end. That is all I ask." Hardly had he spoken when the sky seemed to be filled with the laughter of myriads of unearthly voices. "All you ask?" cried the messenger of the gods. "Know you not that what you demand is the highest happiness of the beings that dwell in heaven? Ask for wealth or rank, or what earthly happiness you will, but not for you are the holiest joys of the gods."

To those of our own day—and there are many such—whose highest ideal of happiness is that of this poor Chinese scholar, to roam at will through the beautiful places of the world, or perhaps even to dwell in some lonely hermitage far removed from

"The weariness, the fever and the fret  
Here, where men sit and hear each other groan,"

it must be a bitter reflection that man is by his own works dooming himself to lose for evermore the privilege of freedom and the solace of isolation. When an authoritative voice informs us, in connection with wireless telegraphy, that "our ultimate ideal must be instantaneous electrical communication with every man on earth, ashore or afloat, at a cost within the reach of every one," what becomes of the unhappy man who finds one of the greatest joys of travel in the very fact of his utter loneliness, and in the knowledge that he is for the time being severed from all possibility of communication with his civilised fellow-men? The writer I have just

quoted<sup>1</sup> assures us that owing to the recent triumphs of science “a severance of communication with any part of the earth—even the Antipodes—will henceforth be impossible. Storms that overthrow telegraph posts, and malice that cuts our cables, are impotent in the all-pervading ether. An explorer like Stanley in the tropical forest, or Geary amid ice-fields, will report daily progress in the *Times*. . . . Sir William Preece’s dream of signalling to Mars may (say by utilising Niagara for the experiment) yet be realised.” Thus even a flight to the virgin continents of another planet will not give the future traveller the delicious sense of freedom that comes from the knowledge of complete isolation or of entire severance from the cares of civilised life. How can we expect our mistress Nature to be gracious to us if we, with our unholy inventions, woo her so much more rudely and roughly than did her lovers of the golden time when the earth was young? For my own part I rejoice that a wireless-telegraphy apparatus has not yet become an indispensable item in every traveller’s equipment, and that no law has yet been enacted penalising any individual who presumes to sever himself from communication with his fellows.

If it appears churlish and ungrateful to speak of the pleasures of separation from all those comforts and delights that Western civilisation has placed within our grasp, and without which

<sup>1</sup> Mr J. Henniker Heaton, M.P., in *The Nineteenth Century and After*, September 1906.

the normal European would hardly find life worth living, it is only fair to remember that no one is in a position to appreciate such comforts and delights so heartily as the man who has been temporarily deprived of them; though the depth of his appreciation will, of course, vary according to the extent of his dependence on the amenities of civilised life during his ordinary existence as a social unit.

The journey described in this book was not the first undertaken by me in the countries of the Far East. Towards the close of 1902 I travelled through the French province of Tongking (erstwhile tributary to the Chinese Empire) and ascended the Red River to the high plateau of Yunnan. After traversing that province from east to west I reached the town of Ssumao, and thence struck southwards into the Chinese Shan States and the French Protected States of Upper Laos. A journey of many days in a dug-out canoe down one of the most beautiful rivers of that country gave me a delightful opportunity of becoming acquainted with the domestic life of the Lao-Shans—surely among the most attractive and hospitable races in the world. Leaving my canoe at the charming little Laos capital, Luang Prabang, I proceeded down the Mekong on a raft and visited the ruins of the obliterated kingdom of Vien-chan. There I left the Mekong and wandered overland through the great dry plain of eastern Siam to Korat. From Korat I was speedily conveyed by the prosaic means of a



railway to the perplexing city of Bangkok, with its curious medley of East and West, old and new, its electric trams, its royal white elephants, its gilded pagodas and State umbrellas, and its forlorn collection of European legations. Except for the baggage-coolies hired at intervals along my route, I was for the greater part of this four months' journey unaccompanied by friend or servant. At one point, indeed, I was literally alone: for in the country of the Lao-Shans my four baggage-coolies, owing to some unreasonable dread of perfectly non-existent dangers, suddenly left me to my own devices, and returned to their homes, obliging me to abandon all my baggage except what I was able to carry in my own hands and pockets. It was then that my eyes were first opened to the fact that civilised man encumbers himself with a great many material possessions which he could quite well do without; for at no time did I suffer the least inconvenience from the loss of any of the articles which up to that point I had considered absolutely essential to my comfort and well-being. Servants and heavy baggage can indeed easily be dispensed with in any tropical country in which the natives are not unfriendly, and provided that the traveller is willing to subsist entirely on such food as the country affords; and it is undoubtedly the case that a traveller with few *impedimenta* can penetrate with ease into remote places that are inaccessible to one whose train includes numerous coolies and beasts of burden. One who is travelling with some definite scientific object in view must, of course,

carry a suitable equipment of scientific instruments, and may require a retinue of servants and surveyors; but it is the mere wanderer—especially he who wanders in search of things strange and beautiful—not the scientific explorer, whose requirements I am here considering. It is perhaps unwise to render oneself absolutely dependent for supplies on the friendliness of natives, but in my own case it so happens that I have never met with inhospitable treatment from any of the Asiatic peoples among whom I have travelled, whether Chinese, Tongkingese, Tibetans, Shans, Siamese, or Burmese. I leave it to others who have had different experiences to tell their own tales.

At other times during my residence in China I have found opportunities to make tours, either in connection with official business or on leave of absence, in other parts of the Far East. In China I have made several excursions into the interior of the provinces of Kwangtung, Kwangsi, Kiangsi, and Shantung. In 1904 I travelled through the German colony of Kiaochou and the provincial capital, Chinan-fu, on my way to the little town of Ch'ü Fou, where I visited the tomb of Confucius and was entertained by the Duke K'ung, said to be the seventy-sixth descendant of the great sage in a direct line; and on the same occasion I ascended the famous sacred mountain of T'ai Shan, where the Emperor Shun is said to have sacrificed to heaven in the third millennium B.C. At the close of the same year, while the Russo-Japanese war was still raging, I was enabled

through the kindness of a distinguished naval officer to pay an interesting visit to the capital of the distracted kingdom of Korea.

The journey described in the following pages was of a more ambitious character than those just mentioned, and occupied the greater part of a year. My intention was to ascend the Yangtse to the province of Ssuch'uan, and thence to make my way across that province to those principalities of eastern Tibet that now own allegiance to the emperor of China. I intended if possible to make my way southward through those states, and so enter the province of Yunnan; whence, as I knew from the narratives of former travellers, I should have no difficulty in making my way into Upper Burma. The details of my route I left to be determined by circumstances. Though I was occasionally subjected to minor disappointments and delays, the assistance of the various local officials and the friendly spirit shown by the people among whom I travelled enabled me to carry out my plans with success.

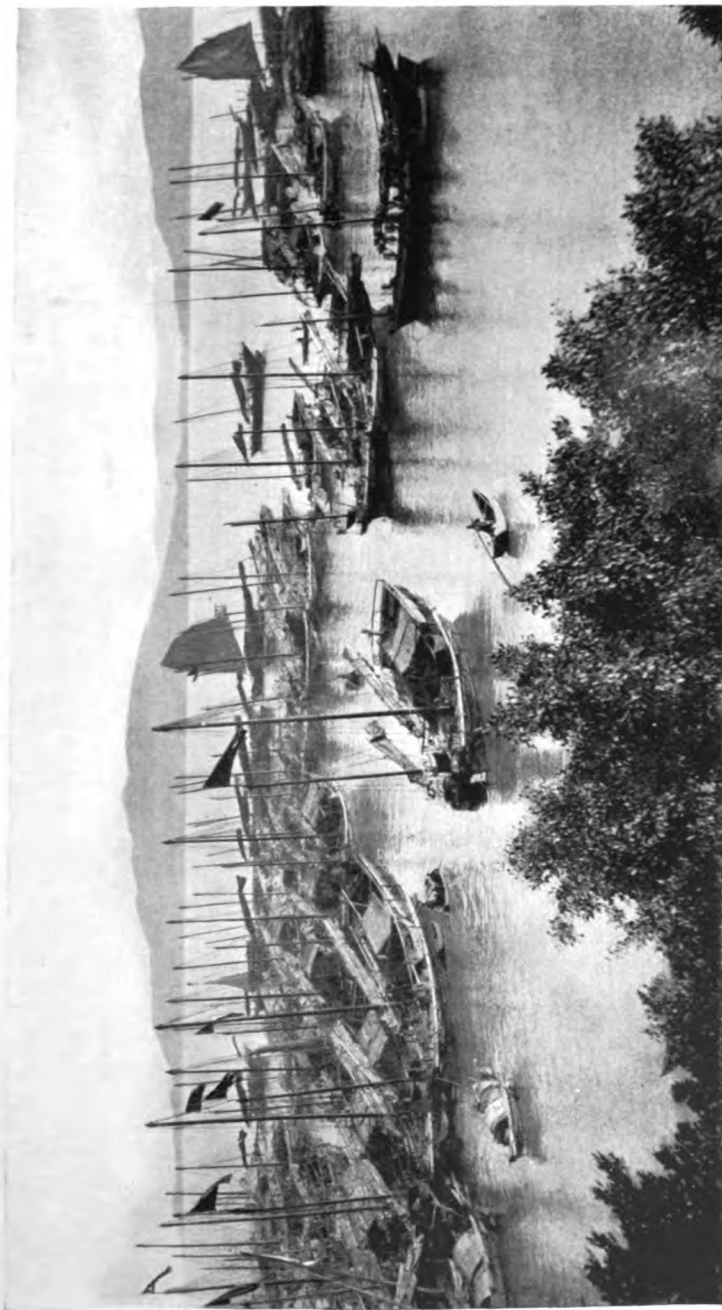
## CHAPTER II

### PEKING TO ICHANG

THE first part of my journey was accomplished with great rapidity, and my description of it will not occupy long in the telling. I had no desire to spend a longer time than was absolutely necessary in northern China, and was glad enough to avail myself of every facility for reaching Ichang—the port on the Yangtsé where steam navigation ceases—as soon as possible. The recent completion of the northern section of the great trunk railway of China has rendered it possible to travel from Peking to Hankow in four days,<sup>1</sup> and so makes it unnecessary to undertake a long and somewhat dreary journey on horseback or in springless carts over hundreds of miles of dusty plains and impossible roads.

I left Wei-hai-wei on 6th January 1906 in the steamer *Shuntien*, and reached the ugly and depressing little port of Chin-wang-tao on the 8th. In the evening of the following day, after a night spent in Tientsin, I reached the capital, and was glad to exchange the discomfort of a monotonous

<sup>1</sup> Since reduced to thirty-six hours.



A FLEET OF JUNKS.

[To face p. 10.]



railway journey for the luxury of that excellent Peking hostelry the "Hôtel des Wagons Lits." The next four days were spent in paying visits at the British Legation and elsewhere, and in fighting ineffectual battles against an unusually aggressive dust-storm. No one, except perhaps a traveller in the desert of Gobi or over the sand-dunes of Khotan, can form any conception of the penetrating power of Peking dust. Parched throats, husky voices, bloodshot eyes, are the price that must be paid for the pleasure of a walk through the streets of Peking during a dust-storm; even one's own residence is no sanctuary, for double window-sashes and padded doors are alike powerless to withstand the scourge. Most of the legations are fairly well protected by their lofty park-walls, but how to keep an ordinary Peking house or hotel free of dust is as insoluble a problem as that which baffled Alice's Walrus and Carpenter.

Peking being now one of the ordinary objectives of the modern globe-trotter, I will not encroach upon the province of the compiler of tourist guide-books by attempting a description. Even the Englishman who has never left his native soil knows something of the city that defied all the Powers of Europe seven years ago, and paid so bitterly for her defiance. There have, of course, been great changes in Peking since those dark days; but away from the railway stations and the legation quarter, with its bristling guns, its battlemented walls and its heterogeneous army of foreign guards, there is little to show that Peking was so recently in the grip of a victorious and remorseless

enemy. Its streets, temples, shops and palaces are very much as they were in 1900, showing the same mixture of grandeur and sordidness, splendour and decay. As for its people, who will venture to say how much or how little they have changed? That they love the people of Europe no better than they did eight years ago may be taken for granted: I am not aware that we have done anything to win their affections. That they have learned something of the secret of European prowess, and have realised why our arms were resistless, even against their Boxer champions, is no doubt true; and if this lesson does not, for some strange reason, fill them with admiration and reverence for Europe, it is certainly teaching them where to seek a cure for the ills of their own country. Events are now making it clearer every day that a true spirit of national feeling is rising among the people, and that the best minds in China are devoting themselves to the problem of their country's salvation. Nowhere is this state of things more obvious than in Peking, but it is not only in the capital that the new spirit is working strange wonders among the Chinese people. China is, indeed, rapidly growing to be more than a mere geographical term. The racial solidarity that is the underlying cause of her wonderful power of passive resistance shows no signs of disintegration at the present time, and it will form the best possible foundation for a new national patriotism. Only ten years ago an English traveller and politician, predicting the partition of China, explained that he used the word "China" only for convenience, for "there

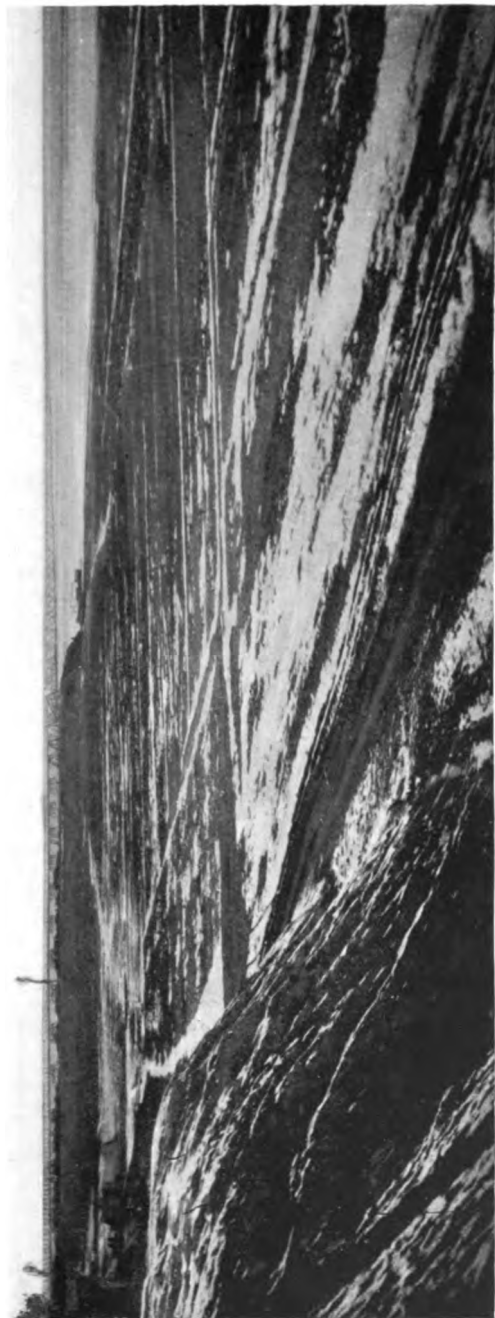


is really no such thing as 'China' at all."<sup>1</sup> For such a view there was some excuse at a time when humbled China was lying wounded and helpless at the feet of victorious Japan, but few, I fancy, will be inclined to endorse it now.

The position of Peking at the present time is one of peculiar interest, for all the different forces that are now at work to make or mar China issue from, or converge towards, the capital. There, on the Dragon Throne, beside, or rather above, the powerless and unhappy emperor, the father of his people and their god, sits the astute and ever-watchful lady whose word is law to emperor, minister, and clown alike. There dwell the heads of the Government boards, the leaders of the Manchu aristocracy and the great political parties, the drafters of new constitutions and imperial decrees, and the keen-witted diplomatists who know so well how to play against European antagonists the great game of international chess. To Peking come the memorials of viceroys and provincial governors; indictments and denunciations against high officials for ultra-Conservatism or for Radicalism; bulky petitions from visionary students who have studied Western politics, and hope against hope that their proposed measures of reform may chance to come under the imperial eye. And there the great Powers of the West, reproducing in miniature the mighty armed camps of Europe, watch each other with jealous eyes from the gates of their embattled legations.

<sup>1</sup> *The Far East*, by Sir Henry Norman, p. 593.

The Lu-Han railway, by which I left the Capital on 13th January, brought me to Hankow on the evening of the 16th. The total distance is 1,223 kilometres, or about 759 miles. The provinces traversed by this great trunk line are Chihli, Honan, and Hupei. The line for the most part lies through a rich, flat country, studded with innumerable trees, villages, and farmsteads, but presenting no features of special interest to the ordinary traveller. The train stopped every evening, and resumed the journey early each morning, the first stage being completed at Shun-tê-fu, in Chihli. The second day we entered the province of Honan and crossed the Yellow River by the great bridge which has been the subject of so much criticism and discussion in engineering circles in the East. The construction of this bridge—a screw-pile structure almost two miles long—was by far the most serious and costly work that faced the French and Belgian engineers in the course of their labours, the chief difficulties consisting in the enormous rise and fall in the river and the shifting sands and almost fathomless mud of its bed. What must strike most travellers who are devoid of any technical knowledge of engineering are the great length of the bridge, the flimsiness of its appearance (for its massive supports are sunk far below the bed of the river), and its narrowness. Whether it is really fit to stand the strain of an abnormal summer flood, and whether its piers have been sunk sufficiently deep to ensure permanent stability, are questions which time and experience alone can solve. It had only been opened a few



SOUTH BANK OF YELLOW RIVER, WITH VIEW OF RAILWAY BRIDGE.

[To face p. 14.]



weeks before I crossed it, and since then traffic has had to be suspended more than once. Only one train could pass over the bridge at a time, and each was taken across by a special light engine.

The second day's journey was completed at Chêng-chou, half an hour's journey from the south bank of the Yellow River. Here I found a quasi-European inn named the "Hotel Pericles," kept by an Italian ex-railway employee. Macaroni and chianti and the genial conversation of our host, Mr P. Mouchtouris, and two of his compatriots, afforded a cheerful interlude in a somewhat monotonous journey.

At the close of the third day we found ourselves at a place called Chu Ma-tien—a railway dépôt only, not within sight of any large centre of population. On the following day we passed through the mountainous country that divides the provinces of Honan and Hupei, with scenery the most picturesque to be found anywhere between the two railway termini. Hankow itself, which was reached a few hours later, lies on the flat banks of the Yangtse, at a distance of about 600 miles from Shanghai. On the opposite bank of the great river lies the provincial capital, Wu-ch'ang, the seat of Government of the viceroy or governor-general; while on the same side of the river as Hankow, but separated from it by the Han river, lies Han-Yang. These three places together form what is practically one vast city of something like two million inhabitants: a city so favourably situated in the heart of China

that it can hardly fail to become a commercial capital of pre - eminent importance. The large European trading community is fully alive to this fact, and building land is rapidly increasing in value. It is the terminus of the ocean - going vessels, and the starting-point of the smaller cargo and passenger-steamers bound for Ichang, about 390 miles further up the river. Hankow also derives great advantage from its position—denoted by its name—at the mouth of the Han, one of the Yangtse's greatest tributaries, itself navigable for native cargo boats for no less than 1,200 miles. Finally, Hankow is at present the terminus of China's only trunk railway, that by which I travelled from Peking, and it will soon be similarly connected with Canton in the south. It is perhaps no exaggeration to say that there is hardly a city in the whole world that has a greater commercial and industrial future before it than Hankow.

That the railway will pay, and pay enormously—especially when the connections with Canton and Kowloon are completed—is a matter beyond all possibility of doubt. That it will be of real benefit to the people of China is more to the point. It will undoubtedly enable the native merchants and farmers to send their goods and produce to markets which were formerly unattainable by them, and will go far towards minimising the misery caused by local famines. There is plenty of evidence that the Chinese are everywhere anxious and delighted to avail themselves of the wonderful new force that has been introduced into their country: the old days when the

Shanghai-Wusung railway had to be sold by the foreign owners to the Chinese Government, and was then deliberately wrecked and abolished to appease the prejudices of anti-foreign mobs,<sup>1</sup> have passed for ever away. The final proof—if one were needed—that the Chinese Government has definitely surrendered its old anti-railway policy, lies in the fact that it is itself promoting the construction of purely Chinese lines such as that from Peking to Kalgan; lines not only owned by Chinese capitalists, but actually engineered and constructed by Chinese engineers and contractors. The recent opposition of the Government to the construction of such lines as that from Kowloon to Canton, or from the Burmese frontier to T'êng-yüeh, lies simply in the rapidly-growing national hostility to the monopolisation of Chinese industrial enterprises by foreign capital, and the interference of foreign Powers—based on their subjects' pecuniary stake in the country—in the internal affairs of the empire. Therefore, though we hear a great deal just now about the difficulties placed by Chinese officialdom in the way of the employment of foreign engineers and foreign capital in railway construction and the exploitation of mines, this must not be interpreted as a reluctance on the part of China to have railways built or to have the mineral wealth of the country opened up. It is merely that the Chinese wish to build their own railways, and to work their

<sup>1</sup> But there is another side to this story which does not reflect much credit on the foreigners concerned. This aspect of the matter has been fully detailed by Mr Chester Holcombe, in *The Real Chinese Question*, chap. i.

own mines, in order that international disputes and political dangers may be avoided and that China may be exploited for the primary benefit of the Chinese Government and people, rather than for the benefit of foreign Governments and foreign capitalists. The European points out that the Chinese, either from want of money or from lack of technical knowledge and experience, are incapable of giving effect to these admirable ideals, however much they might wish to do so; to which the Chinese retort that rather than tolerate foreign interference, they prefer to wait until these disadvantages can be obviated, even if the country's advance in wealth and civilisation is thereby retarded. This attitude, even if economically unsound, is quite a natural one in the circumstances; but, unfortunately, there are a number of people in Europe and in the Far East who seem to regard any attempt made by China to keep or regain control of her own resources as a kind of international crime, which must, if necessary, be punished by gun-boats and bayonets. We resent the introduction of a Chinese element into British Columbia, Australia, and South Africa, but we make bitter protests against the "anti-foreign feeling in China" if the responsible statesmen of that country refuse to silence the cry of "China for the Chinese."

The Viceroy Chang Chih-tung—one of those able statesmen who prevented the spread of Boxerism in the Yangtse valley and so saved foreign commercial interests there from a serious disaster—was one of the first high officials in



China to realise the benefit that would accrue to all classes of the community from the construction of railways. "Is there any one power," he wrote, "that will open the door of learning for the scholar, the farmer, the workman, the merchant, and the soldier? To this question we reply emphatically, there is, and it is the Railway. The potentialities of the scholar lie in extensive observation; of the farmer, in finding a ready sale for farm products; of the workman, in the increase of machinery; of the merchant, in cheap and rapid transit; and of the soldier, in the quick despatch of the munitions of war. . . . The Railway is the source of the wealth and power of Western countries. . . . How can the people of our Flowery Inner Land progress, or even exist, without railways?"<sup>1</sup> This emphatic declaration by one of the greatest and most patriotic of Chinese officials is significant in more ways than one. China is to have railways, not merely as a means of rapid transport for merchandise and produce, but for the purpose of consolidating the military strength of the empire.

It must be a matter of serious regret to Chinese statesmen that the resources of the country—both in capital and in engineering skill—were not sufficient to enable China to undertake the whole financing and construction of the great trunk railway; and there can be little doubt that as soon as China is in a position to act upon Article V. of the Belgian Agreement, which she

<sup>1</sup> *China's Only Hope*, by Chang Chih-tung, translated by S. I. Woodbridge, 1901.

is entitled to do any time after 1907, she will refund all the Franco - Belgian capital advanced to her under the terms of that Agreement, and take over entire control of the whole northern section of the railway. It would probably be to the entire advantage of legitimate foreign trade and enterprise in China that she should do so, and the eventual benefit to be derived by China herself would be incalculable—provided, of course, that she honourably fulfilled her commercial treaties with the Western Powers.

On arrival at Hankow I spent two days in making such meagre preparations as I considered necessary for my long journey into the interior; for Hankow—being only four days distant by steamer from Shanghai—is the last town where it is possible to purchase European stores at a reasonable price.

Shallow-draft steamers with excellent accommodation for both Chinese and Europeans leave Hankow for Ichang two or three times a week. The traffic is divided among British, Chinese and Japanese companies. It was by a Japanese steamer that I started for the Upper Yangtse on 18th January. Our journey was not devoid of unforeseen incident. All went well until the 21st, when we ran on a shoal. All our efforts to get off proved unavailing till the 23rd, when by means of the process known to naval men, I understand as kedging, we hauled ourselves into deep water. This, however, was not effected without breaking a chain - cable and losing a

valuable anchor, which sank irrecoverably in the mud. Our Japanese captain then announced that the vessel drew so much water that he could not then attempt the only available channel, and that there was no alternative but to return to Hankow and discharge some of the cargo. This caused intense dissatisfaction among the hundreds of Chinese passengers, most of whom were on their way to their homes to spend Chinese New Year's Day (which fell on 25th January) with their families. Some of the passengers, I was informed, actually threatened to use force to compel the captain to proceed, and were only pacified when they were given the option of going ashore in the ship's boats, and finding their own way to their several destinations. Twenty or thirty passengers availed themselves of this offer, and were packed into a single boat towed by the ship's steam-launch. On their way to the shore some unfortunate accident caused the boat—which was by no means over-crowded—to upset, and all the passengers were thrown into the water. I never learned the exact number of those who were drowned, for no proper tally of the passengers who had embarked appears to have been kept, but it was almost certainly not more than three. The rescued passengers were all bundled into the steam-launch, the boat (which was bottom upwards) temporarily abandoned, and the survivors brought back to the ship. The families of the poor fellows who paid so severe a penalty for their anxiety to reach their homes were doubtless waiting to welcome them with all the exuberant

joy that the New Year festival brings into even the poorest Chinese household; and it was sad to reflect that in all probability no word of the tragedy would reach them until those whom they were waiting to greet were laid down at the doors of their homes in their coffins.

This sad event did not complete the chapter of our accidents. After we had anchored for the night some miles lower down the river, on our return journey to Hankow, our vessel was swung round by a back-eddy and crashed into several junks moored close to the shore. The damage, fortunately, was not very serious, and was promptly paid for by the captain of our ship. On the following day the ship's comradore came to me and asked if I could give him any medicine for a Chinese passenger who was showing signs of lunacy or delirium. As I had no remedies of the kind required, I could only recommend him to keep his patient under careful control until we reached Hankow. But about the middle of the day the poor man eluded the vigilance of those who, I presume, were looking after him, and deliberately jumped overboard. The ship was immediately stopped, a boat lowered with great promptitude, and the man rescued: he had never sunk below the surface, and it was obvious that he owed his safety entirely to his thickly-wadded winter garments, which were tied tightly at the waist and ankles and served as a temporary life-buoy. The cold waters of the wintry Yangtse had a more beneficial effect upon him than any drug, for on our arrival at Hankow he appeared to be

completely restored to health. Just before we dropped anchor off the Hankow bund, one of the Chinese crew fell down the companion and damaged his ankle. Whether any further disasters occurred on board this unlucky vessel is unknown to me, as the same evening I hastily transferred my luggage, my dog and myself to the ship *T'ai Yuan*, which was due to leave for Ichang early the following morning. I was not surprised to hear that the loss to the owners owing to this unfortunate journey was estimated at not less than \$10,000. Fortunately for the shareholders, the company is subsidised by the Japanese Government.

The *T'ai Yuan*, which was the property of the same company, was evidently smiled upon by a less malevolent star, for nothing except an hour's fog on the second morning interfered with our passage to Ichang. On arriving at the little treaty port of Sha-shih, on the morning of 30th January, I found from conversation with one of the Customs officials stationed there that the news of the tragedy described above had reached that port in a very distorted form. He asked me if it were true that twenty passengers had been drowned! In the evening of the same day we cast anchor at Ichang, where the number of the men reported to have lost their lives had risen to thirty.

## CHAPTER III

### ICHANG TO WAN-HSIEN, THROUGH THE YANGTSE GORGES

Just before Ichang is reached, the appearance of the Yangtse valley undergoes a sudden change. The great flat plains of the Lower Yangtse are left behind, and rugged hills creep gradually up to the river's edge. Ichang owes its importance to the fact that it is situated at the eastern entrance of the great gorges of the Upper Yangtse, at the highest point of the river which is at present attainable by steamers. Its distance from the mouth of the Yangtse is almost exactly 1,000 miles. Its situation on the left bank of the river, facing a striking mountain the shape and size of which are said to be almost identical with those of the Great Pyramid of Egypt, is very picturesque. The town is not large, the population being barely 40,000, including about thirty or forty Europeans, the majority of whom are missionaries. There are also consular and customs officials, and a few merchants. The port has been opened to foreign trade for many years, but there has not as yet been any great commercial boom. It is, indeed, little but a port of trans-shipment. The main item in the out-going trade is native

opium, for the poppy is grown very extensively in the valleys above Ichang. The town will therefore be considerably affected by the new anti-opium regulations.

Cargoes arriving by steamer and destined for the markets of the rich province that lies beyond the gorges are at Ichang transferred to large river junks. These junks, if they are fortunate enough to escape the manifold dangers of rocks and rapids, are hauled through the gorges by small armies of trackers, and take a month at least—sometimes far more—to cover the 400 miles between Ichang and Chung-king. With a favourable wind they can travel under their own sail in the smooth water between the rapids, but even then, owing to the strong current, the rate of progress is slow.

The right of steam navigation on the Upper Yangtse from Ichang to Chung-king and Hsü-chou-fu (Sui-fu) has existed since 1894, but the problem of the rapids is still an unsolved one, and steam-boats can only attempt the journey at a great risk. The dangerous portion is the 200 miles between Ichang and Wan-hsien. Mr Archibald Little successfully navigated his *Lee-chuen* through the gorges in 1898, but few attempts have since been made to connect Ichang and Chung-king by steam, though it is obvious that owing to the great cost and risk of the present methods of carrying on trade with the markets of Ssuch'uan, the development of a flourishing trade with that exceedingly rich and prosperous province is a matter of great difficulty. France, no doubt, hopes that by the extension of

her Yunnan railway beyond Yunnan-fu the trade of Ssuch'uan will to some extent be diverted to Tongking and Haiphong, but she is, of course, fully cognisant of the fact that once the problem of the Yangtse rapids is solved by engineering skill, any such trade as she may have captured will inevitably find its way back to its natural channel. It is to be hoped, therefore, in the interests of China and Great Britain, that the problem will before long be tackled in real earnest by competent persons; it is certainly not one on which the opinion of amateurs is of any value. British river gun-boats have surmounted the obstacles on several occasions,<sup>1</sup> and a couple of such vessels are now kept in permanent commission in the tranquil waters between Wan-hsien and Hsü-chou-fu. In summer they also ascend the Min river (which enters the Yangtse at Hsü-chou-fu) as far as Chia-ting, a distance from Shanghai of about 1,680 miles.

Apart from the serious question of the rapids, there is no doubt that the Yangtse, with its tributaries, forms a magnificent system of navigable rivers. Not only can gun-boats ascend the Min river as far as Chia-ting, but native craft further ascend at all times of the year as far as Ch'êng-tu, the capital of Ssuch'uan, a distance of 188 miles above Chia-ting, and over 1,800 miles from Shanghai. The main stream of the river known to Europeans as the Yangtse is navigable only to P'ing-shan, 40 miles above Hsü-chou-fu, making

<sup>1</sup> It was accomplished very successfully by a British river gun-boat as recently as the summer of 1907.



a total distance from the Pacific Ocean of about 1,600 miles. It is on account of the shorter navigable distance of the main stream that the Chinese popularly regard the so-called Min as the true Great River. Chia-ting is within a day's journey of Mount Omei, and from the summit of Mount Omei one can see the Great Snow Mountains which form the eastern buttress of the Tibetan plateau. It is thus possible to penetrate by steam-boat or other vessel so far into the interior of China as to be within sight of her western boundary. This fact may surely be adduced in support of the contention that China possesses the finest system of navigable waterways in the world.

At Ichang, through the kind assistance of Mr H. H. Fox, British Consul at that port, and by the courtesy of the local Chinese officials, I procured a "red-boat" to convey myself and my faithful bull-terrier Jim up the rapids and through the gorges to Wan-hsien. The so-called red-boats are Chinese Government life-boats. There are several stationed in the neighbourhood of each of the most dangerous rapids, and they are manned by skilful and daring water-men. Every year a large percentage of the trading junks are wrecked in the rapids, and the annual loss of life, great as it is, would be appalling if it were not for the red-boats. This life-saving institution is maintained by Government with the assistance of voluntary contributions. A subscription towards the up-keep of the service is granted annually by the British Admiralty. There is no institution in

China which reflects more credit on the government of the country, and is more deserving of unqualified praise.

In a red-boat I was more cramped in space than I should have been in one of the large house-boats usually chartered by European travellers, but my rate of progress was much more speedy. My only shelter was a mat-awning, open at both ends, and as the thermometer rarely went above 45°, and at night often went down to 36°, I should have suffered some inconvenience from the cold had I not been able to exercise myself by scrambling along the rocks and boulders ahead of my trackers. The red-boat in which I travelled was, of course, specially detached for my use and exempted from the performance of its ordinary duties, though for part of the way it acted as escort to a naval officer who was going up the river in one of the ordinary house-boats to join his ship.

So many descriptions—good, bad, and indifferent—of the wonders of the Yangtse gorges have already been thrust into the hands of a more or less grateful public, that most of my readers may be glad to learn that I do not intend to add to the number. The travellers who in recent years have endeavoured to emulate the excellent accounts of such pioneers as Mr Archibald Little are so numerous that I would in all diffidence suggest to those who may hereafter desire to publish their “impressions” of the gorges, that it would be a graceful act on their part to pay a small fine—let it be a large one if the public receives their work with cordiality—towards the

funds of the life-boat service. It would certainly be impossible to find a worthier object for their generosity. All I will venture to say myself—though I have already paid my fine—is that no description of the scenery of the gorges can do justice to the reality. For though I have beheld scenery more beautiful and quite as grand, I never saw anything in my travels that filled me with a deeper sense of awe. Perhaps one of the secrets of the fascination of the gorges is the ever-present contrast between the dumb forces of nature and evanescent humanity. For ages past human muscle has matched itself in a brave struggle with those titanic forces. The very rocks themselves, the standing symbol of changelessness, reveal something of the history of this unending strife. The smooth grooves worn deep into the jagged summits of innumerable crags have been scooped out by the ropes hauled by a hundred generations of dead trackers, and just above the water-line the deep holes in the hard lime-stone made by the poles of millions of toiling junkmen in past centuries are still used as hooks and points of leverage by their descendants of to-day. When it is remembered that more than a hundred trackers are sometimes required to haul a single junk against the current of the greater rapids, and that a junk may take half a day in covering a distance of 200 yards, some idea will be formed of the permanent difficulties that confront, and always have confronted, the indomitable Chinese navigator on these inland waters.

Much has been written by former travellers on

the subject of the terribly hard lives led by the Yangtse trackers, but I am not sure that the degradation of the tracker and the wretchedness of his life have not been greatly over-stated. Hard as the work is, the trackers' mode of life can be by no means unhealthy, and their daily food is, from the Chinese point of view, both plentiful and good. Better than all, their work is in its way interesting, and of such a nature that it can never become really monotonous. That they take a genuine satisfaction in its accomplishment, quite apart from the reward they are to receive, seemed to me, as I watched them at their labours, an obvious fact. I fancy that Ruskin would have supported the view that the tracker's lot is by no means so pitiable as that of myriads of factory hands in the hideous industrial centres of modern Europe. Personally, if I had to choose between hauling junks over rapids in the magnificent gorges of the Yangtse, and pulling cranks and levers in a dismal Lancashire factory, I should not for a moment hesitate in my choice: and I should not choose the cranks and levers.

My journey from Ichang to Wan-hsien occupied eleven days. We started on 2nd February, reached Pu-tai K'ou (the boundary between the provinces of Hupei and Ssuch'uan) on the 6th, passed through the Fêng Hsiang gorge—perhaps the grandest of all the defiles—on the 8th, and beached ourselves under the walls of the city of Wan-hsien on the morning of the 12th. Here I paid off my hardy boatmen, and prepared for my overland journey to Ch'êng-tu.

## CHAPTER IV

### WAN-HSIEN TO CH'ËNG-TU

WAN-HSIEN, though one of the most beautifully situated cities on the Yangtse, is, like most Chinese towns, more pleasing at a distance than close at hand. It lies on a slope at a bend of the river 200 miles above Ichang, and 1,200 miles from the ocean. It is not yet an open port, though I was shown a spot said to have been selected by the British consular authorities as the site of the future Consulate. The only resident Europeans are a few missionaries and a postal agent. The trade of the city is brisk and developing, for the numerous roads that lead from here into the interior of the province are much used by the native merchants of Ssuch'uan for the conveyance of their goods to the river. In time to come Wan-hsien will no doubt reap a large profit from its advantageous position at the point of contact of several main arteries of traffic.

At Wan-hsien I was very hospitably entertained for a day and a night by the Rev. J. C. Platt, of the China Inland Mission, who was also most courteous in assisting me in the engagement of coolies for the next stage of my journey.

My caravan consisted of three coolies to carry my sedan chair (purchased at Wan-hsien), which

I very seldom used, three to carry my baggage, and a temporary "boy," or personal servant, who was engaged to accompany me as far as Ch'êng-tu, the capital of the province. I was also furnished by the *chih hsien*, or district magistrate, with the usual escort of two or three Chinese soldiers who, whether they are wanted or not, always accompany Europeans on overland journeys in China. From this point onwards my method was to engage temporary coolies and "boys" at various stages of my journey, discharging them as soon as I had passed out of the district in which their local knowledge rendered them specially useful. I lived entirely on native food, except on the rare occasions on which I enjoyed the hospitality of European missionaries. My knowledge of Chinese rendered me independent of interpreters or guides, though the changes of dialect were sometimes disconcerting.

The journey from Wan-hsien to Ch'êng-tu consisted of fourteen long stages, the total distance being nearly 400 miles.<sup>1</sup> The road lies through one of the fairest and most fertile portions of the great province of Ssuch'uan, and is one of the best I have met with in the interior of China: a circumstance which is partly due to the fact that Chinese officials generally use this road in travelling from the east of China to the provincial capital. The inns are numerous and—from the Oriental point of view—fairly comfortable. The innkeepers, so far from showing any aversion to entertaining foreigners, tout eagerly

<sup>1</sup> For Itinerary, see Appendix B.



A CHINESE "BRAVE."

[To face p. 32.]





for their custom, and generally greet one with the amiable remark "*t'zũ hou ta jên*" ("At your Excellency's service") as one enters their courtyards. The people are peaceful and industrious, and annoy foreigners only by their insatiable curiosity. Europeans have not very often travelled by this road, as they generally prefer—having a good deal of heavy baggage—to keep to the Yangtse as far as Chung-king, and thence ascend the Min river; but there are now several missionary stations between Wan-hsien and Ch'êng-tu, and the country is quite well known to foreigners. The road lies partly over undulating hills, generally cultivated almost to their summits with rice, rape, wheat, maize, and many other crops, and partly over rich and densely-populated plains. The scenery is always picturesque, and sometimes,—among the hills—exceedingly beautiful. The villages, farm-houses, and temples are generally situated amid little forests of feathery bamboo. The hill-sides are studded with charming little *châlets*, and very often the submerged rice-fields in their immediate vicinity give the appearance of artificial lakes in an English park, especially when the banks or balks are lined with graceful vegetation. My dog, I was glad to find, attracted much greater attention than I did myself: for bull-terriers are unknown in China. Delighted cries of "*K'an yang kou*" ("Look at the foreign dog!") greeted us whenever we entered a village street, and in some places delight was tempered by amazement. "Call that a dog?" I heard a village patriarch remark rebukingly. "It's a bear!"

My readers may rest assured that my four-footed travelling companion was no more like a bear than a unicorn.

Though the climate of Ssuch'uan is always comparatively mild, the mornings were generally chilly enough to make walking a pleasanter mode of progression than chair-riding. The method adopted by the peasantry to keep themselves warm struck me as distinctly novel. They carry in their hands little wicker-baskets, in which is a diminutive metal receptacle containing glowing charcoal. This is the Ssuch'uanese equivalent to a European lady's muff; but sometimes they hide it away under their clothes, in which case their appearance is apt to be rather comic.

My second night after leaving Wan-hsien was spent in the small district city of Liang-shan, where the late Mrs Bishop, as she relates in her *Yangtse Valley and Beyond*, was mobbed and assaulted. No such unpleasant experience awaited me, and I found the people orderly and good-humoured. The evening of the fourth day brought me to Ta Chu, where I found an unusually good inn. Those who have travelled much in China need not be reminded of the joy with which one finds comfortable quarters awaiting one at the end of a tiring day's journey; the experience is none too common. During the fifth day's march I passed several out-crops of coal. It seems to exist in great abundance, though mining operations do not appear to have been carried far below the surface. The coal is used in the inns of this district, and burns well.

On the sixth day we crossed the Ch'ü river in a ferry-boat. This stream, which is navigable for local craft, rises in the high range of hills in the north-east of Ssuch'uan, and for part of its course is known as the Pai Shui, or White Water. Ch'ü-hsien and Kuang-an are the only fair-sized towns on its banks, the point at which I crossed being between these two towns. The river joins the Chia-ling, with other tributaries, at Ho-chou, and so goes to swell the Yangtse at Chung-king. The water is remarkably clear. The summer rise, judging from the appearance of the banks, is probably not more than 10 feet, if so much.

On the eighth day from Wan-hsien I reached the prefectural city of Shun-ch'ing-fu,<sup>1</sup> once a prosperous industrial centre but now somewhat decayed. A great industry here used to be the preparation of vegetable dyes from the safflower, but the trade has been killed by the introduction of aniline dyes from Austria. Sericulture, however, is still a flourishing industry. Three or four years ago a disaster befell the city in the shape of floods, which destroyed whole streets and undermined portions of the city wall.

Soon after leaving Shun-ch'ing our road lay over an excellent four-arched bridge called the Jung An Ch'iao ("Everlasting Peace Bridge"), and we then began the ascent of a hill commonly known locally as the Hsi Shan, or West Hill. Here there are cavern-shrines, and a number of

<sup>1</sup> The word *fu* attached to so many Chinese place-names is usually translated "prefecture," which is an administrative division including several *hsien* or district-magistracies. *Chou* also signifies an administrative division or "department," smaller than a *fu*.

honorific portals and tablets, which indeed are exceedingly common along all the main roads of Ssuch'uan. Many of the inscriptions consist of "legends of good women," but the great majority commemorate the virtues of local officials. The carved figures on the buildings of the Hsi Shan are curious and interesting, and would probably repay study. Some distance beyond this point I observed a large flat rock close to the road, bearing the significant inscription: *Ch'i ssü wu kao chuang* ("Die of anger but don't go to law"). This is part of a well-known proverb which goes on to say: *O ssü wu tso tsei* ("Die of hunger but don't be a thief"). It would be well for the peasantry of China—who as often as not ruin themselves over their law-suits—if they would pay as much respect to the first of these injunctions as they generally do to the second.

On the 25th February my road descended from an undulating range of hills to the edge of the great plain, in the middle of which is situated the provincial capital, Ch'êng-tu; but it was not till the close of the following day, the fourteenth since leaving Wan-hsien, that we entered the city.

As in all wealthy centres, the contrast between the rich and poor in the Ch'êng-tu plain is very striking. I never met so much evidence of great wealth elsewhere in China, and certainly never encountered so many beggars. One of them, seeing that I was alone and on foot—for I had left my chair some distance behind—offered to carry me to Ch'êng-tu on his back. Another tried to impress upon me the advantages of his

wheelbarrow as a mode of conveyance, though its wooden wheel was nearly broken in half. The number of bad characters in the city and neighbourhood seemed to me unusually large, and I was constantly warned against highway robbers. I hardly expected to have the good fortune to meet so picturesque a villain as a real highwayman, but such was my fate during my last day's journey before entering Ch'êng-tu. There were two of them, armed with pistols that were not only loaded, but could be discharged—a feature that is not characteristic of all Chinese fire-arms. They were lurking behind some bamboos on the side of the road, apparently waiting for an opportunity to attack and plunder any one whose docility of appearance marked him out as a suitable victim. One of them took fright at the sudden apparition of the three soldiers of my escort, who were walking in front of my chair, and bolted. He was immediately followed by his companion, and close on their heels came my scarlet-coated warriors, emboldened, no doubt, by the knowledge of the fact that they were three to two. I caused my chair to be put down in order that I might the better observe the race, and the fight which I supposed would ensue. But there was no struggle. Both the highwaymen, encumbered by the weight of their unwieldy pistols and a couple of heavy knives, were speedily overtaken and captured, and, when brought back to me, threw themselves to the ground and made a piteous appeal to my generosity. They explained that they had found the knives and

pistols in a field, and were trying to find the original owner in order to return them to him, and that they had no idea (until we demonstrated the fact by firing off the weapons) that the pistols were loaded. Whether they took up the same line of defence in the presence of the magistrate to whose care I consigned them, I do not know, nor have I learned their subsequent fate.

The Ch'êng-tu plain, with its marvellous system of irrigation and its three or four crops a year, is the richest and most populous district in the whole of the Chinese Empire. This extraordinarily productive plain is about 90 miles long by 70 wide, and supports a population estimated at no less than 4,000,000, of whom about 350,000 reside within the capital itself. It is studded with many prosperous towns and villages, and is cultivated to its utmost extent. Among the crops are rice, wheat, tea, tobacco, maize, the opium - poppy, which was not yet in bloom, and the yellow rape that turned hundreds of acres of land into seas of bright gold. The plain is connected by a navigable waterway (the Min) with the Yangtse, and it is in the heart of the richest province in China. The city of Ch'êng-tu has been identified with Marco Polo's Sindafu. "This city," wrote Marco in the thirteenth century, "was in former times a rich and noble one, and the kings who reigned there were very great and wealthy." Of the Min river—which had not then been subdivided to the same extent as at present into artificial channels for irrigation—he says: "The multitude of vessels that navigate this river is so

vast that no one who should read or hear the tale would believe it. The quantities of merchandise also which merchants carry up and down this river are past all belief.”<sup>1</sup>

Ch'êng-tu is a city of less importance now, but it is still one of the greatest and most prosperous in China. Its population is much smaller than that of Canton, but its general appearance is more attractive as well as far more imposing. Its streets are broad and clean, and its wall exceedingly well preserved. In mediæval times it was a frontier city of great political and strategic importance, for the Tibetan principalities extended then as far east as the lofty mountains that flank the Ch'êng-tu plain on the west. Even now large numbers of Tibetan traders are often to be seen in the streets of Ch'êng-tu, though most of their commercial transactions are carried on at the city of Kuan-hsien, about 80 miles away, a place which is also remarkable for the sluices which regulate the waters of the Min and divert them, as occasion demands, into the irrigation canals. The governor-general of Ssuch'uan, whose yamen is in Ch'êng-tu, is more like a real viceroy than any other provincial ruler in China, for he it is who, on behalf of the emperor, holds sway over, and receives the embassies of, the various Tibetan princes and tribal chiefs of the extreme west. There is at present a project to connect Ch'êng-tu by rail with a point on the Yangtse, probably in the neighbourhood of K'uei-chou-fu, a town which I passed on my way from Ichang

<sup>1</sup> Yule's *Marco Polo*, edited by Cordier, vol. ii. pp. 36-37.

to Wan-hsien. The provincial government—for the railway project is entirely a Chinese one—is at present actively engaged in trying to raise the funds necessary for so large an undertaking, / one method being—so I was told—to compel every local official to take a definite number of shares, the number to vary according to the official's rank and reputed wealth, each shareholder being permitted to get rid of his shares in the best way possible by distributing them among the well-to-do people subject to his jurisdiction. In passing through the towns and villages of eastern Ssuch'uan, I noticed many Chinese proclamations giving the people an outline of the railway scheme, pointing out the great benefits to the trade and prosperity of the province that would result from its fulfilment, and inviting or commanding popular co-operation. It may be that this railway will offer one solution of the problem of the Yangtse rapids: in any case, the enthusiasm with which the scheme was being discussed in both official and commercial circles was another proof of the gradual breaking-down of the old Chinese prejudice against railways.

Though so remote from the sea-board, the people of Ch'eng-tu—or perhaps I should say the officials—are among the most progressive and enlightened in China. This is especially so in the matter of education. The city possesses a Provincial College, where about three hundred young men are now being educated in Western as well as in Chinese branches of learning. There is an Englishman who lectures on chemistry and



physics, there are several Japanese lecturers, and a staff of Chinese teachers who have a knowledge of European languages. I have heard of an enterprising Chinese schoolmaster who once advertised that in his establishment English was taught "up to letter G." They are more ambitious than that in the college of Ch'êng-tu. Among the local industries the most important is that of silk-weaving. For this, as well as for other industrial purposes, foreign machinery and Western methods are being gradually imported and adopted.

Those who are acquainted with Baber's charming descriptions of Ssuch'uan and Yunnan<sup>1</sup>—descriptions which can never be superseded, though they are often neglected nowadays—will remember that he was much interested in a curious circular monolith which he discovered on the side of an artificial hill or mound in Ch'êng-tu. He was unable to get any satisfactory account of its history, though tradition said that it marked the grave of an emperor's son. It is, indeed, not improbable that the mound, which is oblong in shape, with a depression in the middle, and resembles, as Baber remarked, a half-buried dumb-bell, was raised in memory of some distinguished prince or leader of old times, perhaps when the Ch'êng-tu plain was still occupied by the so-called Man-tzü. I visited the spot, and found that the stone was still lying in the position in which he saw it. The portion that appears above the soil presents something of the appearance of the tilted

<sup>1</sup> First published in the Royal Geographical Society's *Supplementary Papers*, vol. i.

end of a huge stone barrel, badly damaged at one corner. The diameter of the circular face—of which barely half can be seen—I found to be about 17 feet. The greatest length of the visible body of the barrel is only about 2 feet 8 inches, but it is impossible to say how much of it is underground. An excavation of the mound at the spot where the stone lies might lead to some interesting results: but Baber was assured that any attempt to dig would cause the sky to darken and goblins to appear, so he left it alone, and I decided to follow his example.

Something of the grandeur of Ch'êng-tu in its most palmy days may be realised by a reference to extant Chinese books, as well as from the eulogies of Marco Polo. From the *Shu Hua Shih*<sup>1</sup> we learn that under the T'ang dynasty (618-905 of the Christian era) it was a great art centre, and a long list of paintings and frescoes relating to the Buddhist religion are mentioned in that work as hanging on the walls of the palaces of Ch'êng-tu. Some of the temples are worthy of a long visit, though the finest in the district is not in the city itself but in the neighbouring town of Kuan-hsien, where Li Ping and his son, the deified founders of the great irrigation system of the Ch'êng-tu plain, have had raised in their honour a temple that is said to be the most beautiful in China. But as has been well remarked of Li Ping by a recent English traveller,<sup>2</sup> the perennially fertile fields around Ch'êng-tu are his finest monument.

<sup>1</sup> 書畫史.

<sup>2</sup> Clive Bigham, in *A Year in China*, p. 125.

## CHAPTER V

### CH'ÊNG-TU TO OMEI-HSIEN

My next objective after leaving Ch'êng-tu was the sacred summit of Mount Omei, one of the most famous of the many historic mountains of China. I left Ch'êng-tu on 1st March in a small, leaky, and most uncomfortable craft, which took me down the Min river to Chia-ting in four days, the total distance being slightly over 180 miles. The Kuan-hsien sluices having not yet been opened to give the great plain its spring flooding, there was very little water in the stream till we reached Chiang K'ou<sup>1</sup> on the morning of the third day, and in some places it was necessary to pull the boat over mud shoals. At Chiang K'ou the various subdivided waters (of which the branch that brought me down from the east gate of Ch'êng-tu was one) reunite and form a river which is broad and deep enough at all seasons of the year for cargo-junks of a considerable size. This is the Min river, which, as already stated, is regarded by the Chinese of central Ssuch'uan as the true Upper Yangtse. The far greater but un-navigable stream which rushes impetuously from the Tibetan mountains in the north-west and is joined by the Min at Hsü - chou - fu,<sup>2</sup> is known by the Chinese for a great part of its course as Chin Ho (Gold River) and as the Chin Sha

<sup>1</sup> 江口.

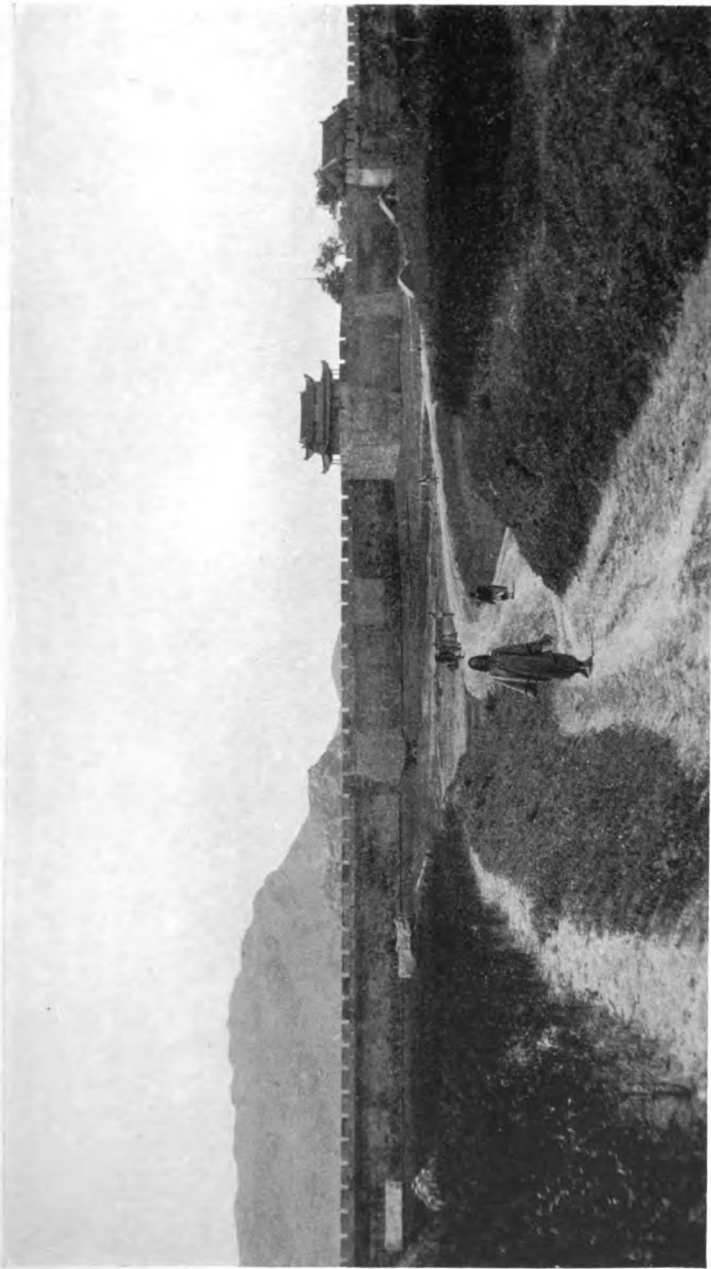
<sup>2</sup> See Map.

Chiang<sup>1</sup> (the River of Golden Sand). The name Min being apparently unknown to the Chinese, Baber suggested that it had been invented by the early Jesuit geographers.<sup>2</sup> If so, it was no doubt derived from the range of mountains known to the Chinese as the Min Shan (岷山) in the north-west of the province, for it is there that the river rises. But all the rivers of China have a multitude of names; in fact the Chinese do not appear to be endowed with a proper sense of the continuity of rivers, and the country people who dwell on the banks of a stream from which they derive their livelihood are seldom aware of where it comes from or whither it goes. This circumstance has been a source of embarrassment to many European travellers, whose passion for geographical exactness is incomprehensible to the rustic mind in China.

The scenery of the Min is always picturesque. The river flows for the most part through richly cultivated districts, broken only here and there by low hills. Nearly opposite the town of P'êng-shan-hsien, on the third day from Ch'êng-tu I visited a fine twelve-storied pagoda (the So Chiang T'a or Lock-River Pagoda), which, unlike most buildings of the kind, is in sufficiently good repair to enable one to ascend it by a spiral staircase. The pagoda is built of hard brick and the staircase is of sandstone blocks. The scenery on the

<sup>1</sup> It will be observed by those acquainted with Chinese that here and elsewhere I have, for the sake of uniformity, transliterated all Chinese names according to the sounds of Pekingese, except in the case of a few stereotyped words.

<sup>2</sup> It is used, however, in the official Annals of the province (*Szech'uan Tung Chih*).



A CHINESE WALLED CITY.

[To face p. 44.]



river becomes finer as one approaches Chia-ting. Well-wooded hills come close to the water's edge, and broken cliffs covered with verdure reveal openings into fairy vistas of greenery and mysterious grottoes that would have delighted the soul of a Keats.

The town of Chia-ting, which I reached on the evening of 4th March, is beautifully situated on the right bank of the Min, just above its junction with the T'ung (more generally known as the Ta Tu) and Ya rivers. From this point onwards the three streams flow in a broad, navigable river for a distance of about 180 miles, when they join the Yangtse at Hsü-chou-fu. My river-journey, however, ended at Chia-ting.

Apart from its proximity to the sacred mountain of Omei, Chia-ting is interesting for its temples, its prehistoric cave-dwellings, its sericulture, and for the white-wax industry. High on a rocky hill on the left bank of the river is a remarkable monastery known as "The Monastery of the Voice of the Waters." It was founded in the T'ang dynasty, nearly twelve hundred years ago, and restored in 1667 by the munificence of a Provincial Judge. It bears the alternative name of "The Great Buddha Monastery," the reference being to a huge image which has been carved out of the face of a cliff that overhangs the waters of the Min. The story goes that a holy monk named Hai T'ung came to this locality in the eighth century of our era and determined to perform some act of religious devotion which would save the surrounding country from the ruin and desolation caused by the overflowing of

the three neighbouring rivers. He therefore spent nineteen years in hewing out of the rock an immense image of Maitrêya Buddha. The carving, which is in bold relief, must have been a work of immense labour and considerable danger; but its artistic merits are obscured by the partial decomposition of the rock and the growth of vegetation in the fissures. Parts of the body are almost indistinguishable. The whole figure is about 386 feet high. An exceedingly steep and rather perilous scramble down a cutting in the precipice enabled me to study the great figure from various points of vantage, and also to inspect some little rock-shrines containing innumerable small Buddhas. It is doleful to reflect that in spite of Hai T'ung's piety and extraordinary industry the three rivers have not yet ceased to cause periodical floods.

Amongst other objects of great interest in the monastic grounds are some of the prehistoric cave-dwellings which were first described by Baber. One of these caves, in close proximity to the monastery, has been diverted from its original uses (whatever they may have been), and is now a Buddhist chapel, with altar, bell, and images all complete. These caves, of which there are many in the neighbourhood of Chia-ting and a great quantity in other parts of what is known as the "Red Basin" of Ssuch'uan, constitute one of the unsolved problems of Chinese archæology. I visited several of them during the two days I spent at Chia-ting, but am not in a position to add much to the information already available, or to offer any novel theory regarding their origin.



The caves are entirely artificial, and have been hewn out of the sandstone by people who were evidently skilful in the handling of their tools. There is little evidence of a strong artistic instinct, but it is curious to note that the decoration, such as it is, bears no resemblance to any Chinese work, and seems rather of Hindu type. The square or oblong doors are generally on the face of a cliff, and the majority are at the present time quite inaccessible without the use of ropes and ladders. In some cases the cliffs are honey-combed with caves, the insides of which have never been trodden by human foot for untold ages. Other caves, however, are quite easily accessible. The interiors vary in details, but in general design they are alike. The door leads into a long room, which is in most cases connected with other rooms, and there are holes and grooves in the walls which show that there must at one time have been wooden partitions. Within the rooms, which are quite lofty and broad enough for human habitation, there are cistern-like troughs, deep recesses, bench-like seats, and projections that may have been used as shelves: all of which are hewn out of the rock and remain immovable. No one can now say definitely whether the caves were used as strongholds, as tombs, as houses or as places of worship. Arguments may be adduced in support of each and all of these theories. The inaccessibility of the majority of the cave-apertures lends support to the stronghold theory. Perhaps they were reached by temporary ladders which were drawn up on the approach of an enemy. Possibly the enemies to be feared

in those remote days were wild beasts as well as human beings. The narrow rooms, with their immovable stone coffers and shallow recesses, suggest mausolea; yet the existence in some cases of fire-places (without chimneys) and stone projections that were evidently intended to be sat upon are more suggestive of dwelling-places. As regards the temple theory, all that can be said is that some of the more accessible of the caves have been turned into Buddhist shrines, as in the case already mentioned; but there is no evidence whatever that they were originally intended for religious purposes. On the whole, it seems probable that the caves were actually used as the ordinary dwelling-places of a primitive people that lived chiefly by hunting and fishing, had attained a fair degree of civilisation and social organisation, and found themselves in constant danger of attack by hostile tribes, perhaps Tibetans, by whom—if not by advancing Chinese—they were eventually scattered or exterminated.

All I propose to add by way of comment is this. In the *Journal* of the Royal Asiatic Society for July 1904 and January 1906, Mr E. Crawshay-Williams described some mysterious rock-dwellings which he discovered at Raineh, in Persia. Now from his description of those caves I gather that they must be exactly similar in situation, size, and general appearance to those which we are now considering. Unfortunately, neither the Raineh caves nor those of Ssuch'uan contain inscriptions. Whether the resemblance is purely accidental or has some deeper significance is a question which I leave to archæologists. It

might, if we had corroborating evidence, tend to show that regions so far apart as Persia and the Min valley of Ssuch'uan were once inhabited by allied races, perhaps of Indian origin. As we shall see later,<sup>1</sup> there is, indeed, some reason to believe that the Chinese cave-dwellers were connected with the Vaggians or Licchavis, a race that attained to great political strength in the extreme north-east of India, and which—according to one authority at least—is identical with the Yüeh-chi.<sup>2</sup> The latter, however, who after their disastrous defeats by the Hiung-nu on the confines of China in the second century B.C. migrated to western Asia, never seem to have penetrated so far west as Raneh in Persia. Their empire was founded on the ruins of the Græco-Bactrian dominion in Sogdiana and on the left bank of the Oxus, and their ambitions led them south rather than west. It may be that future explorers will discover in other regions caves of a similar pattern to those of Persia and China, and in that case it may be possible to trace the migrations of the cave-dwellers and so find a clue to their identification. The caves noticed by the abbé Huc on the fringe of the Mongolian desert, and those that exist near the Yamdok lake on the road to Lhasa<sup>3</sup> have not been described fully enough to justify our drawing many deductions. The rock-cut caves on the Murghab near the Afghan frontier, and those of Bamian close to the

<sup>1</sup> See chap. xv. p. 286 (note 1).

<sup>2</sup> S. Beal in the *Journal* of the Royal Asiatic Society, January 1882, p. 39. His view does not seem to have attracted much attention.

<sup>3</sup> See Waddell's *Lhasa and its Mysteries* (John Murray, 1905), pp. 289-290.

Indian Caucasus on the road between Kabul and Turkestan,<sup>1</sup> have many characteristics in common with those of Ssuch'uan, but appear to have served only religious uses. Professor Parker has discovered in the records of the T'ang dynasty (seventh to tenth century A.D.) what appear to be references to the existence of a race of cave-dwellers in Ssuch'uan as late as that time, and a further reference to cave-chiefs (one of whom was named T'ien Shih Ch'ung) in records corresponding to the year 1012 of our era.<sup>2</sup> But there is nothing to prove that these were the descendants of the original cave-dwelling race, and the probabilities are rather against their being so.

What the Chinese themselves say is that the caves were inhabited by the "Man-tzŭ" in prehistoric times; but Man-tzŭ is a term which has a very elastic meaning, for, as we shall see below,<sup>3</sup> it has been made to embrace Tibetan border tribes, Lolos and "savages" generally. It must reluctantly be admitted that until a proper archæological enquiry has been made into the subject and the more inaccessible caves have been thoroughly searched for relics, the only theory with which no fault can be found is the illuminating one propounded by Baber. "My own theory," he said, "which I offer with diffidence, is that these excavations are of unknown date, and have been undertaken, for unexplained purposes, by a people of doubtful identity."

On 6th March I set out for Omei-hsien, the

<sup>1</sup> See *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, January and July 1886.

<sup>2</sup> See *China Review*, vols. xv. and xix.

<sup>3</sup> See chap. xv.

little city that lies at the foot of Mount Omei. The distance from Chia-ting is only about 16 miles, and was easily covered during the day. My retinue consisted of three chair-bearers, three baggage coolies and a useless "boy" whom I had picked up at Ch'êng-tu and hoped to get rid of as soon as I could find a suitable man to take his place. The road led us over the river Ya and across a great plain almost entirely occupied by myriads of the dwarf ash-trees which are used in connection with the production of the famous white wax. The wax-insects, which are brought annually in baskets from the Chien-ch'ang valley south of the Ta Tu, are placed on the branches of this tree, and in due time proceed to cover themselves and the branches with a thick coating of the wax. The branches are then cut off and the wax carefully removed. The whole process has been carefully described by Sir Alexander Hosie in several Foreign Office reports and in his *Three Years in Western China*.

The inns of Omei-hsien are unusually good, and as the pilgrim season had not yet begun I was able to select the best quarters that the city could provide. Western readers must not suppose that even the best of Chinese inns would meet with commendation in England or America. If in China I am shown into a room that has been moderately well swept, and possesses a wooden floor which does not give way, and walls without holes; that contains a steady table, an unbroken chair, a window recently papered, and that does not smell too offensively of stale opium; and if the room is not next door to the stables and opens

into a yard that is reasonably clear of garbage and filth, and is not the common resort of peripatetic pigs and diseased dogs,—I then consider that good fortune has brought me to an inn that may be described as excellent. The furniture is, of course, in all cases of the simplest description, the principal guest-room generally containing only a table and a couple of chairs. The walls are either of bare stone or brick, or of mere lath and plaster. Sometimes they are adorned with a few hanging scrolls containing “antithetical couplets” or crude paintings—probably New Years’ gifts to the landlord from his “foolish younger brothers.” Washing-stands, dressing-tables and side-boards and similar luxuries are unknown, and the bed consists either (in north China) of a *k'ang*, which is built of bricks, or (in the warmer regions) of a couple of planks placed on trestles. For several reasons a camp-bed is to Europeans an indispensable part of even the most modest travelling equipment. If such are the good inns, what is to be said of the worst? Earthen floors saturated with damp and filth and smelling of decaying refuse; windows from which the paper (glass being, of course, unknown) has been torn away; tables which collapse under the weight of the traveller’s frugal dinner unless they are propped up by his portmanteau and gun-case; roofs from which hang trailing cobwebs spun by spiders of a vanished generation; walls of mud through which the village urchins make holes by the simple pressure of their grimy fingers; wicked-looking insects of uncouth shapes that issue at night-time from a hundred gloomy lurking-places and crawl over





CHILDREN OF CHINA.

*[To face p. 53.]*



the edge of one's rice-bowl; an entire lack of means of illumination except a single sputtering wick protruding from a saucer filled with rancid oil: these are but a few of the more obvious discomforts of many a Chinese hostelry. The inns of the large towns are with a few exceptions no better than those of the villages, and often much less comfortable on account of the greater amount of noise and dirt. As a rule it is preferable, if possible, to complete a day's march at a village rather than in a town; not only for the sake of quietness and peace, but also because one is less likely to be disturbed by inquisitive crowds if one ventures outside the door of the inn.

The people of Omei-hsien, however, are unusually amiable. Many of them earn their living by attending to the wants of pilgrims to the great mountain, and vie with each other in their efforts to show civility to the stranger within their gates. Not many Chinese venture to climb Mount Omei so early in the year as March, as it is still covered with snow for several thousand feet of its height; but I observed a large number of Tibetan pilgrims on their way to and from the mountain, and ascertained from them that there was no great difficulty in the ascent. On the morning of the 7th March, therefore, I left my servant (who was appalled by the mere shadow of the mountain) to look after my baggage in Omei-hsien, and started the ascent in the company of the two soldiers of my escort. The town of Omei-hsien lies at 1,500 feet above sea-level: the summit of the mountain is about 9,500 feet higher.

## CHAPTER VI

### MOUNT OMEI AND CHINESE BUDDHISM

THE forests and ravines of Mount Omei<sup>1</sup> teem with mystery and marvel, for there are legends that carry its story far back into the dim days when the threads of history meet together in the knots of myth. There is hardly a peak ungarlanded with the flowers of romance, hardly a moss-grown boulder that is not the centre of an old-world legend. The many stories of wonderful visions and wizard sounds that have come to the eyes and ears of the pilgrims to the shrines of Omei may raise a smile of amusement at human credulity, yet they are easily enough explained when we remember how strangely both sights and sounds may be affected by mountain-mists; and it is seldom that the giant bulk of Omei is bathed from peak to base in clear sunshine.

“The swimming vapour slopes athwart the glen,  
Puts forth an arm, and creeps from pine to pine,  
And loiters, slowly drawn.”

It is, indeed, true that “many-fountain'd” Omei would lose a great part of its spell if the mists were to melt away into garish daylight. No more

<sup>1</sup> 蛾眉.

could the pilgrim pour into the ears of wondering listeners tales of how, when ascending the mountain amid gloom and silence, he had suddenly heard his own praises of the Lord Amitabha re-chanted by spirit voices; how a rift in the curtain of white cloud had suddenly disclosed landscapes of unearthly loveliness, with jewelled palaces and starry pinnacles such as were never raised by the hands of men; how he had caught glimpses of airy forms that passed him with a sigh or a whisper, but left no traces in the forest or the snow and made no sound of footfall; or how when approaching unwittingly the edge of some terrible abyss he had felt the touch of a ghostly finger that led him back to safety.

It is believed that the Lolos, who are not Buddhists, worshipped on Mount Omei a triad of deities of their own, and it is at least certain that men of that race are sometimes met on Omei's slopes. But the earliest legendary associations of the mountain are in Chinese minds naturally connected with those mythical progenitors of the Chinese people — Fu Hsi and Nü Wo. This carries us back to the twenty-ninth century B.C. Both these mysterious persons have their "caves" on Mount Omei, but they are in such inaccessible situations that no mortal eye has ever seen them. The first of the legendary hermits was a holy man named T'ien Chên Huang Jên,<sup>1</sup> the Heavenly Sage and Imperial Man. He lived in the age of phoenixes and unicorns; and on Mount Omei he once received a visit from Huang Ti,<sup>2</sup> the

<sup>1</sup> 天眞皇人.

<sup>2</sup> 黃帝.

Yellow Emperor, who flourished in the twenty-sixth century B.C. Though one of the few of the world's monarchs who appear to have lived long enough to celebrate the centenary of their succession to the throne, Huang Ti wished to attain the crowning distinction of immortality. It was to acquire the elixir of life from the Heavenly Sage that Huang Ti paid him his memorable visit. A short record of the conversation between the Sage and his imperial disciple has been preserved, and we may gather from it that Huang Ti derived from the interview a good deal of sound practical advice, but the Sage seems to have skilfully evaded the main point. He kept his secret, but made such excellent personal use of it that he is supposed to have lived for at least a millennium or two, and indeed his death has not yet been recorded. In order to keep count of time he acquired the useful habit of changing his name with each successive epoch,<sup>1</sup> and his name in the Chou dynasty—which occupied the throne about a millennium and a half after the Yellow Emperor's time—was the singularly appropriate one of The Old Man.

Omei-shan — like other sacred mountains in China—has always been famous for the medicinal value of its roots and herbs, and the monks still derive no little benefit from their sale. Perhaps it was among these herbs that The Old Man found his elixir of life, and if so he did not remain in exclusive possession of the secret. The records

<sup>1</sup> 隨時易名.

of Omei are full of accounts of recluses and others whose span of life extended far beyond the normal. One of them is known to legend as Pao Chang,<sup>1</sup> but more popularly as Ch'ien Sui Ho Shang,<sup>2</sup> or "The Monk of a Thousand Years." The period of his long and useful life is given in the records. He was born in the twelfth year of Wei Lieh Wang of the Chou dynasty, and died in the eighth year of Kao Tsung of the T'ang dynasty at the ripe old age of precisely one thousand and seventy-one. He was a native of India, but came to China in the Chin dynasty (265-419 of our era) and went to worship at the shrine of P'u Hsien Bodhisattva on Mount Omei, where he spent the declining centuries of his life. According to another account his arrival at Omei was a good deal earlier than the Chin period, for his name is connected with the most famous of all the Omei stories—one which refers to the reign of Ming Ti of the Han dynasty.

This story relates to the foundation of what may be called the Buddhistic history of Omei and the beginning of its long religious association with its patron saint, P'u Hsien Bodhisattva. We are told that in the reign of Ming Ti (58-75 of the Christian era) a certain official named P'u<sup>3</sup> happened to be on Mount Omei looking for medicinal herbs. In a misty hollow he suddenly came upon the footprints of a deer. They were

<sup>1</sup> 寶掌.

<sup>2</sup> 千歲和尚.

<sup>3</sup> This name (潘) is not to be confused with the P'u (普) of P'u Hsien. The sound is the same but the Chinese characters are different.

shaped not like the footprints of an ordinary deer but like the flower of the lotus. Amazed at the strange sight, he followed the tracks up the mountain. They led him continually upwards until at last he found himself on the summit, and there, at the edge of a terrible precipice, they disappeared. As he gazed over the brink he beheld a sight most strange and wonderful. A succession of marvellous colours, luminous and brilliant, gradually rose to the surface of the vast bank of clouds that lay stretched out below, and linked themselves together in the form of a glorious iridescent aureole. P'u, full of wonder at so extraordinary a spectacle, sought the hermitage of the famous "Monk of a Thousand Years" and told him his strange story. "You are indeed happy!" said the monk. "What you have seen is no other than a special manifestation to you of the glory of the great Bodhisattva P'u Hsien: fitting it is, therefore, that this mountain should be the centre from which his teachings may be spread abroad. The Bodhisattva has certainly favoured you above all men." The end of the whole matter was that P'u built, on the spot from which he had witnessed the sublime manifestation, the first of the Buddhist temples of Mount Omei, and dedicated it to P'u Hsien Bodhisattva; and the present monastic buildings known as the Hsien Tsu Tien and its more modern neighbour the Chin Tien occupy in the twentieth century the site chosen for the original P'u Kuang Tien, or Hall of Universal Glory,<sup>1</sup> in the first century.

<sup>1</sup> The word P'u, which means Universal, is also the first character in the name of P'u Hsien.

This story is interesting as carrying back the Buddhistic traditions of Omei to the very earliest days of Buddhism in China. My readers will probably remember that it was in the same epoch—the reign of Ming Ti—that the emperor had his famous vision of the Golden Man, which is supposed to have led to the introduction of Buddhism into China under direct imperial patronage. The story is also of interest as embodying the first record of the remarkable phenomenon known as the Glory of Buddha, which has always been one of the principal attractions of the mountain and may well have been the real cause—as the story itself indicates—of its special sanctity.

The other curiosities of Omei are so numerous that most of them cannot even be referred to. Near the foot of the mountain is a scooped-out rock which is said to have once formed a bath in which pilgrims were required to go through a course of purification before ascending the mountain. This, if true, is curious and suggestive. There is a spot shown where a miraculous lotus-plant—the lotus is sacred to the Buddha—used to blossom in every season of the year. There is a flying bell, the tolling of which has been heard in many different parts of the mountain, though it is never moved by human hands. There are rock-inscriptions written by emperors and empresses and by the great Sung dynasty poet, Su Tung-p'ò. Not far from the Wan-nien monastery—perhaps the second oldest on the mountain—is a stream called the Black Water.

In the T'ang dynasty a wandering monk, looking for a home, came to this stream and wished to cross it, for he espied on the further bank a spot which he thought would make an excellent site for a hermitage. But the stream was turbulent and violent and he could not cross. Suddenly out of the midst of the torrent came a huge tiger. The tiger looked at the monk, and the monk, unabashed, looked at the tiger. The wild beast recognised a teacher of the Good Law, and lay down at his feet, tamed and obedient. The monk mounted on his back and was carried safely across the water. The tiger has gone and the monk has gone, but the story must be true, for a bridge was built to span the Black Water at the spot where the miracle occurred, and it is known as the Tiger Bridge to this day. In another place there is a great split rock inside which a mighty dragon slumbered for untold ages. One night in a terrible thunderstorm the rock was cleft asunder by lightning. The dragon flew away and was never seen again, but the story is true, because the sundered rock is still there and can be touched.

The numerous caves on the mountain have endless stories connected with them. One is supposed to be the haunt of nine great demons. Once upon a time some audacious monks determined that they would probe its mysteries. They advanced some distance into the interior without accident, when suddenly they were met by a prodigious bat that breathed fire. The monks turned round and walked away, wiser and sadder.



Another cave—the Thunder Cavern—is the haunt of a ghostly dragon, who lurks in the depths of a gloomy tarn. This cave, with its lake, has probably a very ancient history, for it seems to be associated in some way with animistic worship, of which there are many traces on Omei.<sup>1</sup> In seasons of drought it is or was formerly the custom to go to the cave with offerings of rich silks. If rain did not speedily fall as a result of the offerings, the correct procedure was to insult the dragon by throwing into his cave a dead pig and some articles of a still more disagreeable nature. This infallibly raised the wrath of the dragon, who immediately issued forth from his damp and gloomy home and roared. This meant thunder, and then the rain fell and all was well.

Mount Omei has several famous trees. Of one of them this story is told. In the Hui Tsung period (1101-25) of the Sung dynasty there was a very old tree, which about the year 1112 was torn open by a violent storm. Inside it was found a Buddhist monk, alive, in a state of ecstatic trance. The whole of his body was covered with his long hair and whiskers, and his nails were so long that they encircled his body. The emperor having heard of this living relic of the past, directed that he was to be carefully conveyed to the capital. Having with difficulty induced him to emerge from his tree, the messenger asked him his name. "I am the disciple," he replied, "of Yüan Fa-shih of Tung Lin. My name is Hui Ch'ih. I came to Omei on pilgrimage and entered

<sup>1</sup> See Note 1 (p. 411).

into meditation in this tree. How is my master Yüan? Is he well?" "Your master Yüan," said the imperial emissary, "lived in the time of the Chin dynasty, and died seven hundred years ago." Hui Ch'ih answered not a word, but turned his back and resumed meditation in his tree. A somewhat similar story is as follows. In the fourteenth century of our era there was a monk who had chosen for the scene of his meditations the hollow interior of an ancient decayed tree. There he sat cross-legged in silent contemplation until he was about eighty years of age. His piety apparently communicated some mysterious vitality to the tree, for suddenly it underwent an extraordinary change: the withered branches put forth fresh shoots, green foliage reappeared, and the gaping fissure in the trunk closed up, leaving the contemplative monk inside. The chronicler goes on to remark with ill-timed levity that the monk had begun by taking possession of the tree, but the tree had ended by taking possession of the monk. It is understood, however, that the accident by no means interrupted his meditations, and that he is still sitting cross-legged in the darkened interior of his sylvan retreat, wrapped in profound reverie.

There is a legend that the Buddha himself visited Mount Omei, and his footprint in a rock is still shown near the summit, though in this age of little faith its outline is scarcely recognisable. As one of the monasteries also possesses an alleged Buddha's tooth it is clear that the fame of Omei ought to be as far-reaching as that of Adam's Peak and Kandy combined; but Ceylon and

China are not the only countries that rejoice in the possession of footprints and teeth of the Buddha.

The local myths that have gathered round the name of the patron saint of Omei, P'u Hsien<sup>1</sup> Bodhisattva, who is said to have brought the sacred books of Buddhism from India to China on the back of an elephant, and deposited them on the mountain, are quite devoid of historical foundation, for P'u Hsien was merely one of the numerous figures invented by the Mahayana Buddhists to fill up the broad canvas of their vast symbolical system.<sup>2</sup> He represents, or rather is, the Samanta Bhadra of Indian Buddhism, and figures as such in that great Chinese Buddhist work, the *Hua Yen Ching*,<sup>3</sup> one of the voluminous productions of Nāgārjuna.<sup>4</sup> The monks of Omei have invented the famous elephant-ride simply because Samanta Bhadra is always associated with an elephant in such authoritative Mahayana works as the Saddharma - Pundarīka. The third last chapter of that work (in Kumarajiva's translation) deals with P'u Hsien, who is represented as declaring to the Buddha that he will "mount a white elephant with six tusks" and take good monks under his special protection, shielding them from gods, goblins and Mara the Evil One. The monks of Omei say that having come to the mountain on his elephant he established himself

<sup>1</sup> 普賢.

<sup>2</sup> He must not be confused with the Adi-Buddha or primordial deity of Red Lamaism, though the name is the same.

<sup>3</sup> 華嚴經. See especially *chian*, 7-10.

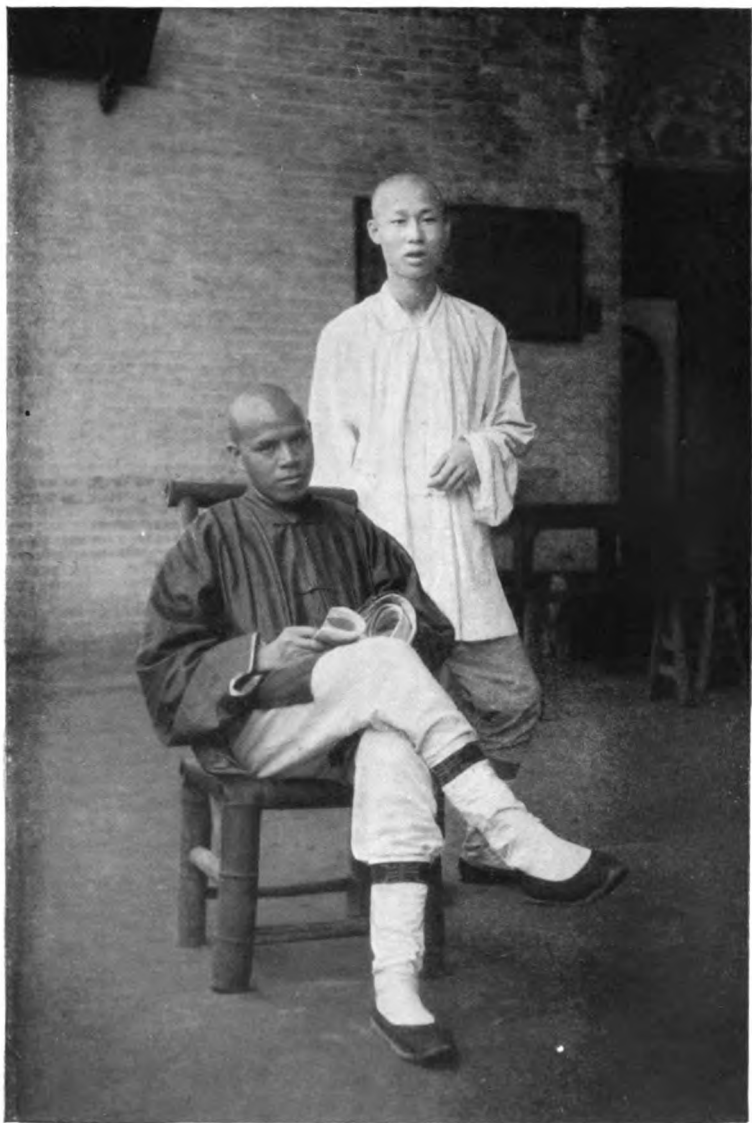
<sup>4</sup> 龍樹 (*Lung Shu*) in Chinese.

there as a teacher of the Law of Buddha, and attracted three thousand pupils or disciples. It is quite possible that one of the original Buddhist hermits or monks of Omei acquired so great a celebrity that he became identified in the popular imagination with P'u Hsien. Something of the kind certainly happened in the case of other Bodhisattvas — Manjusri and Avalokiteçvara, for instance. But all trace of historic truth soon vanished in myth. In a Buddhistic work that relates to Omei, P'u Hsien is described as the eldest son of the Buddha himself. "The Tathâgata (Buddha) sits on a great lotus consisting of 1000 leaves. Each leaf has 3000 Universes. Each Universe has a Buddha to expound the Law, and each Buddha has a P'u Hsien as eldest son (*changtzü*)." This is not an attempt to identify P'u Hsien with Rahula, the son of the historical Buddha; it refers to the Mahayana doctrine that Samanta Bhadra or P'u Hsien is the spiritual son or reflex of the celestial Vairocana, one of the five mythical Buddhas, just as Gautama Sakyamuni (the historical Buddha) was supposed to be the earthly embodiment of the celestial Bodhisattva Avalokiteçvara, the spiritual son or reflex of the celestial Buddha Amitabha. As regards the significance of the elephant, it need only be mentioned here that in Indian Buddhistic mythology this animal (apart from its sacred association with the well-known dream of the Buddha's mother) is symbolical of self-control.<sup>1</sup>

The earliest religious buildings on Mount Omei

<sup>1</sup> See *Dhammapada*, chap. xxiii. *S.B.E.* vol. x. p. 78.





CHINESE BUDDHIST MONKS IN "UNDRESS."

[To face p. 65.]

were no doubt solitary hermitages, erected by recluses whose religious enthusiasm impelled them to find in the deep recesses of its forests and gorges a welcome retreat from the noise and vanity of a world that they despised. As time went on, richly-endowed monasteries—nobler and more splendid than any now existing—rose in its silent ravines and by the side of its sparkling water-courses, and opened their doors to welcome those whom spiritual ecstasy or longing for a life of philosophic contemplation, or perhaps the anguish of defeated ambition, drove from the haunts of men. But gradually as religious fervour died away, the mountain recluses and solitary students of early days were succeeded by smaller men, distinguished neither for piety nor for scholarship. It must, indeed, be confessed that no tradition of sound learning has been kept up in the Buddhist Church in China. To some extent the lack of scholarship among Chinese Buddhists may perhaps be traced not too fancifully to the practice and teaching of Bodhidharma,<sup>1</sup> the so-called twenty-eighth patriarch of the Indian Buddhists, and the first of the patriarchs of China. He it was who, having landed in China early in the sixth century of our era, at once made it his business to discourage book-learning in the monasteries and to inculcate the doctrine that supreme enlightenment or mystical union with the Buddha can only be achieved by disregarding all exoteric teaching and by passive contemplation. By the recognition of all phenomena, including one's own personality, as illusory, the mind was to

<sup>1</sup> See Note 2 (p. 412).

be maintained in a condition of intellectual quiescence and receptivity, whereby it would be in a fit state to enter into communion with the Absolute. Of Bodhidarma the story is told that he sat for nine years in one position looking at a wall, which is a crude way of explaining that he was a contemplative mystic. In China his teachings have undoubtedly had a sterilising influence on thought, somewhat similar—though for different reasons—to the baneful influence exercised in Europe by the too-exclusive devotion of the mediæval schoolmen to Aristotle and Thomas Aquinas.

It may seem a far-fetched hypothesis to attribute part of the present degeneracy of the Buddhist monkhood in China to the teachings of a wall-gazing recluse who died nearly fourteen centuries ago. It might be urged that in searching for the cause of the present state of decay one need only point to the low orders of society from which the monks are recruited, the disfavour with which Buddhism is and always has been regarded by the orthodox Confucian, and the contempt which the thoroughly practical and worldly-minded Chinese layman almost invariably feels and expresses for the monastic profession. That these causes have powerfully assisted in accelerating the corruption that we witness to-day is unquestionably true; but there is a good deal of historical justification for the view that they are results rather than causes of Buddhist decay, and that the first and third would never have come into existence if Buddhism in China had not sunk into a state of intellectual torpor. If it had retained



sufficient vigour and independence to reject all esoteric teachings and alien dogmas, even the great controversies with Confucianism would probably never have assumed the bitterness they did. Unfortunately, the extravagances of the later Mahayana doctrines and the foolish eclecticism which led the Buddhist Church to admit into its own system the crudities and banalities of corrupt Taoism, rendered the Buddhist position liable to attack at indefensible points, and compel us to admit that the controversial victories gained by Confucianism over its rival were the victories of light over darkness. It is strange that the repeated defeats and persecutions of Buddhism in China have not had the effect of bringing about either extinction or reform.

Chinese Buddhism is *sui generis*, and without a qualifying adjective it can scarcely be said to be Buddhism at all. This is no place to attempt a sketch of the history of that great religion in either its orthodox or its heretical aspects, but a few words may be necessary to enable the general reader to judge for himself whether Buddhism in China—quite apart from its present stagnant condition or the corruption of the monkhood—is entitled to the name it bears.

If there is one tenet of real Buddhism—by which I mean the doctrines on religious, philosophical and ethical subjects taught or sanctioned by the historical Buddha—which is more characteristic of that system than any other, it is the doctrine of the non-existence of the *attā* (*âtman*) or “soul.” It was this doctrine, among others, which

made Buddhism a Brahmanical heresy, for it involved the rejection of the Vedas as the final and supreme authority on matters of religion. The crude impression of some people that Buddhism teaches the "transmigration of souls" is absurd, for the simple reason that in the Buddhist system "souls" in the Western sense do not exist. What survives the death of the individual and transfers itself to another living being is not his soul but the cleaving to existence, a *tanha* or thirst for life, an unconscious—or semi-conscious—"will to live"; and with this *tanha* is inevitably associated *karma*, the integrated results of action or character. Buddhism regards the cleaving to existence as the outcome of the worst kind of ignorance or delusion—the mistaking of the phenomenal for the real, the false for the true; and until this delusion has been completely removed and the character purified from all lusts and all evil tendencies, the reintegration of karma in a world of pain, sorrow, sickness and death cannot by any possibility be avoided. Karma,<sup>1</sup> apart from its technical connotation, signifies "action" or "deeds." In the Buddhist sense it represents the accumulated results of the past actions and thoughts which every individual has inherited from countless multitudes of dead men, and which he will hand on, modified by the newly-generated karma of his own life-span, to countless

<sup>1</sup> The Pali word is *Kamma*, which, like the Sanskrit, simply means "doing; action; work; labour; business." See Childers' Pali Dictionary, *s.v.* *Kammam*. Mr A. E. Taylor, in his admirable work *The Elements of Metaphysics*, describes the Buddhist karma as "the system of purposes and interests" to which a man's "natural deeds give expression."

generations yet unborn. It is karma which forms the character of each individual, and determines the condition of life in which he finds himself placed. The man dies, and his conscious individuality ceases to be; but his karma continues, and determines the character and condition of life of another individual. Each individual may make or mar the karma that he has inherited: if he spoils it he may literally sink lower than the beasts; if he improves it he may literally rise higher than the gods. But to the Buddhist the final goal to be aimed at was not a continued personal existence, either in this world or elsewhere: it was the total extinction of reproductive karma by the attainment of Arahatsip or Nirvana, and final release from the ever-circling wheel of existence, with its endless rotation of birth, disease, sorrow and death.<sup>1</sup>

On the question of a *primum mobile* — the force which produced the conditions under which arose the will-to-live with its illusions, and which brought into being the first appearance of karma

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Virgil, *Aeneid*, vi. 719-721 :

“O pater, anne aliquas ad caelum hinc ire putandumst  
Sublimes animas iterumque ad tarda reverti  
Corpora? Quae lucis miseris tam dira cupido?”

The whole passage from 703 to 751 is of great interest to those who like to trace Buddhist thought in non-Buddhistic literature. Lines 66-68 of the Third Georgic are equally striking in this respect :

“Optima quaeque dies miseris mortalibus aevi  
Prima fugit, subeunt morbi tristisque senectus  
Et labor et durae rapit inclementia mortis.”

It was just such reflections as this that filled the heart of the Sakya prince with pity and love for mankind. *Sunt lacrimae rerum et mentem mortalium tangunt*, the beautiful utterance of “the chastest and royalest” of poets, expresses the feeling that prompted the Great Renunciation and gave to the world a Buddha.

—Buddhism is agnostic or silent,<sup>1</sup> just as it is on the question of the existence of a supreme God. What Buddhism emphatically teaches is that karma once produced, continues ceaselessly to reproduce itself, carrying with it the modifications impressed upon it by the successive individuals through whom it has “transmigrated”; that the only way to release karma from the wheel of phenomenal existence is to eradicate the desire for a continuance or renewal of conscious personality; and that this end can only be attained by following the Noble Eightfold Path,<sup>2</sup> leading to Nirvana, which was pointed out by the Buddha. Mystical and fanciful interpretations of the meaning of Nirvana were forthcoming at an early date, but the canonical scriptures know nothing of such interpretations. It is quite clear that Nirvana was not the infinite prolongation of individual existence in a state of spiritual beatitude nor an absorption into a pantheistic Absolute; nor was the word intended to be a euphemism for death. It was simply a release from the thralldom of sense and passion; a “blowing-out” of personality and selfishness, of ignorance and delusion; an enfranchisement which in this present life would confer the boon of “the peace which passeth all understanding,” and after this life would prevent rebirth, or rather reintegration of karma, in a world of pain and sorrow. To the Buddhist the whole world of sense, in which while subject to karma we live and move and have our being, is an illusion and unreal,—far more so than to the Platonist, to whom the phenomenal

<sup>1</sup> See Note 3 (p. 412).

<sup>2</sup> The Chinese 八聖道分.

world is the reflexion, though an imperfect one, of an ideal archetype; and as the early Buddhist believed that the idea of self or personality was closely interwoven with the net of illusion, he was quite consistent when he held that the destruction of the one must involve the destruction of the other, and that release from the net is a desirable consummation. Nirvana may thus be described as full enlightenment as to the unreality and impermanence of phenomena, the removal of delusions about the self, and the eradication of the cleaving to life. Those who attained this enlightenment were the saints or "arahats" of primitive Buddhism.<sup>1</sup> The Buddha himself, it must be remembered, never laid any claim to godhead or even to personal immortality. His disciples revered him as the Fully Enlightened Sage, the Blessed One, the Teacher of gods and men, and he was the expounder of truths by the grasp of which men would be enabled to realise the condition of arahatship; but in the last resort it was to themselves and not to Buddha that men must look for salvation. "Therefore, O Ananda," said the Buddha in one of his last discourses, "be ye lamps unto yourselves. Be ye a refuge to yourselves. Betake yourselves to no external refuge. Hold fast to the truth as a lamp. Hold fast as a refuge to the truth. Look not for refuge to any one besides yourselves."<sup>2</sup>

How vastly different are the teachings of

<sup>1</sup> See Note 4 (p. 413).

<sup>2</sup> The *Mahā-Parinibbāna Suttanta*, translated by Rhys Davids (*Sacred Books of the East*, vol. xi. p. 38).

Chinese Buddhists from those of the simple creed promulgated by the Buddha is obvious to all who have visited a Chinese monastery, or glanced at the wearisome sutras, in which the unorthodox dogmas are so elaborately set forth. The Brahmanical belief in the *âtman* or "soul" is practically reintroduced; arahatship is no longer the ideal to be aimed at by the virtuous man; Nirvana ceases to have any intelligible meaning; faith takes the place of works as a means to salvation. Celestial (Dhyâni) Buddhas are invented as heavenly reflexes of the various human Buddhas that are supposed to have lived on earth, and some of them receive worship as immortal gods; arahats are regarded as inferior to a class of mythical Bodhisattvas, who purposely refrain from entering into the state of Buddhahood in order that they may continue to exercise a beneficent influence among the beings who are still bound to the wheel of existence; the most glorious lot attainable by the ordinary man is held to be not a release from delusion and the pains of birth, sickness, and death, but a final rebirth in the glittering Paradise of the West. In this Paradise reigns the Lord of Eternal Life and Boundless Light, the great Dhyâni Buddha Amitabha; on his right and left are enthroned the Bodhisattvas Mahâsthâma and Avalokiteçvara,<sup>1</sup> the lords of infinite strength

<sup>1</sup> Avalokiteçvara is the Chinese Kuan Yin, generally represented in China (where temples to this divinity are exceedingly numerous) as a female, and known to Europeans as the "Goddess of Mercy." The change of sex is due to an identification of this Bodhisattva with a legendary Chinese princess, who devoted herself to saving human lives, especially from the dangers of the sea. She has thus become in a

and pity, the saviours of mankind. To win utter happiness in Sukhâvatî, the Western Paradise, is the object of the longings and prayers of the devout Chinese Buddhist. The name of Sakya-muni Buddha means little to him, and he may even be ignorant of who the Buddha was, and where he lived; but the names of "O-mi-to-fo" (Amitabha Buddha)<sup>1</sup> and of Kuan Yin P'u Sa (the Bodhisattva Avalokiteçvara) stand to him for everything that is holiest and most blissful. To such an extent have Amitabha and his attendant Bodhisattvas taken the place of the "Three Refuges"<sup>2</sup> of orthodox Buddhism that one almost feels justified in suggesting that the prevailing (though not the only) form of Buddhism in China should once and for all be differentiated from that of Burma and Ceylon, by the adoption of the name of Amitabhism, just as the corrupt religion of Tibet has rightly been given the special name of Lamaism.

If the Mahayana teachers in China had been satisfied with substituting the doctrine of a more or less sensual heaven for that of the orthodox arahatship or Nirvana on the ground that it was more suited to the comprehension of the ordinary

special sense the guardian deity of sailors; but she is also worshipped by women as the goddess who grants male offspring. Mahâsthâma is the Chinese Ta Shih Chih, the Bodhisattva of Great Strength. Eitel, in his *Handbook of Chinese Buddhism*, says that this Bodhisattva is perhaps the same as Maudgalyâyana; but this is a mistake, as is quite clear from the fact that, in certain sutras, such as the Amitâyur-dhyâna Sutra, they figure as separate personalities.

<sup>1</sup> The Japanese Amida.

<sup>2</sup> "The Buddha, the Dharma, and the Samgha": i.e. the Buddha, the law and doctrine of the Buddha, and the Church or Community of Brethren established by the Buddha.

layman, and would be more effective in teaching the people to lead virtuous lives, their distortion of the early teachings might, perhaps, to some extent be justified ; but unfortunately the form which the new doctrine took at a very early stage shows that no such theory was in their minds. Instead of exhorting to strenuous lives of virtue and good works, they went out of their way to teach that nothing was really necessary to salvation but loud and frequent appeals to the name of Amitabha Buddha and zealous repetitions of the appropriate sutras. One of the principal sutras of this class contains the following emphatic statement:—

“ Beings are not born in that Buddha country of the Tathâgata Amitâyus as a reward and result of good works performed in this present life. No, whatever son or daughter of a family shall hear the name of the blessed Amitâyus, the Tathâgata, and having heard it, shall keep it in mind, and with thoughts undisturbed shall keep it in mind for one, two, three, four, five, six or seven nights,—when that son or daughter of a family comes to die, then that Amitâyus, the Tathâgata, surrounded by an assembly of disciples and followed by a host of Bodhisattvas, will stand before them at their hour of death, and they will depart this life with tranquil minds. After their death they will be born in the world Sukhâvatî, in the Buddha country of the same Amitâyus, the Tathâgata. Therefore, then, O Sâriputra, having perceived this cause and effect, I with reverence say thus, Every son and every daughter of a family ought with their whole mind to make





西 方 公 方 接 引 阿 彌 陀 佛  
 天 下 大 眾 共 行 普 賢 願 王 菩 薩

如是哉聞而佛在靈山會上波若常說法及四眾大龍八部諸人等依聽法聞佛所說緣經南閻浮提諸惡世不重出若有入  
 生大地覺夜受善無有出期若善信女欲修善業持五戒十善入天福報受諸福祿得在極勝慈感感春四時轉進善緣修習慧七修  
 方復大願夜修三昧修佛果菩提不聞普賢願王時乘空身自乘雲而來降使我眷我親族夫亦普照矣世東共善男信女朝觀著  
 福增無量禮敬者罪滅河沙普賢願王常現相誘引直捷最若有信心能持念禪十萬聲即得往生蓮華世界蓮花化生臨命終時隨願云道  
 將所積善業功隨身執照轉輪寶蓋親來接引如遇至般神祠閣津渡口驗實放行行聖三寶同行伴依教欽遵 佛勸接合通行准些勝  
 方也給公擴衆生得生天界今奉 大清國 府 縣 地 名 住長請受信 本命 年 月 日 時 生 人 十  
 歲庚辰 年 月 日 留 時 在 於 宅 身 故 生 前 應 悲 念 恩 德 喜 然 普 提 我 我 出 佛 前 請 留 勞 大 引 道 以 爲 報 暗 燈 須 至 引  
 善 助 念 彌 陀 佛 圖 聲 靈 共 興 西 路 王 爲 劫 劫 前 前 作 教 事 有 給 付 信



阿彌陀佛十月十日降生



愛國天波菩薩寶號



引 被 輪 覆 及 草 命 陀 千 年 月 日 時 留 時 信 人  
 南無西方極樂世界三寶佛處于萬九千五百四萬萬諸本師和尚西方教主接引度入無量阿彌陀佛 示 掌 攝 召 聖 光 接 引

CHINESE PLAN WITH AMITABHA BUDDHA AS CENTRAL FIGURE.

To face p. 74.



fervent prayer for that Buddha country.”<sup>1</sup> Numerous Buddhist tracts are in existence and widely circulated among the people, in which it is explicitly stated that if a man calls sufficiently often on the name of Kuan Yin, he will be delivered from any danger or difficulty in which he may be placed, quite regardless of his deserts. There are popular stories in which it is told that even if a man be guilty of grave crimes for which he has been imprisoned and condemned to death, the knife of the executioner will break in pieces and do him no hurt provided only he has, with a believing heart, summoned to his aid the “Goddess of Mercy.” Stories of this kind, even if educated men do not believe in them, can hardly have a beneficent effect upon morality, and hardly redound to the credit of the monks who invented them.

To blame the Chinese Buddhists, however, for failing to preserve their religion from corrupt influences is hardly fair: for it must be admitted that the stream of Buddhist literature and tradition that flowed for centuries into China from Northern India and Nepal issued from a source that was already tainted. Sakyamuni Buddha probably died in the fifth century B.C. Buddhism did not obtain a foothold in China till five or six centuries later, and it was not till the fourth century of our era that native Chinese began in large numbers to take the vows as Buddhist monks. By this time primitive Buddhism had already been cruelly distorted.

<sup>1</sup> The Smaller Sukhāvati Vyūha, translated by Max Müller (*Sacred Books of the East*, vol. xlix.).

Where it was at all possible, the Mahayana dogmas were read into the simple scriptures that formed the Asokan canon; where the utmost ingenuity failed to find the germs of these dogmas in the canon, the doctors of the Mahayana school deliberately set themselves to compile a series of colossal forgeries by putting forth new sutras, purporting to have been uttered by the Buddha himself, but containing an entirely new book of doctrine.<sup>1</sup> Part of it was probably brought from Persia and Arabia, and nearly all was totally inconsistent with the primitive doctrine of the Buddha. Like the founder of the Mormons in after-ages, the pious forgers—let us hope they were unconscious of their guilt—pretended to be merely the “finders” of the new sutras. Sometimes they were said to have been discovered in caves guarded by demons. Nāgārjuna, for instance, who was one of the worst offenders, is supposed to have found in “the palace of the Dragon” the great Hua Yen sutra, already referred to, a work which justifies us in regarding Nāgārjuna as one of the principal inventors or adapters of the Mahayana doctrines, or at least as one of those who grafted them on the original Buddhistic stock. The Chinese admire him so much that they have elevated him into the position of a Bodhisattva, and celebrate his birthday on the 25th day of the seventh moon. Among the principal speakers in the Hua Yen sutra are the Buddha himself and the mythical Bodhisattvas P’u Hsien and Manjusri. The Mahayana doctrine concerning this order

<sup>1</sup> See Note 5 (p. 414).

of being is, as I have said, totally unknown to early Buddhism ; and out of or beside this central doctrine of the Mahayana system grew up a cluster of dogmas which, like some parasitic weed, could only have the effect of choking and killing the original plant of which the Buddha himself had sown the seed. The Chinese "fathers" were not primarily responsible for all this. The vast mythology that culminates in the doctrine of Amitabha's heaven was accepted in China only too readily, but it was not a Chinese invention. If the history of these fanciful dogmas can be more readily traced in China and Tibet than elsewhere, it is only because Buddhism practically ceased to exist in the country of its origin. What Chinese Buddhism might have been if it had sought to establish itself upon the Asokan canon instead of upon a bundle of crude myths and grotesque allegories may be realised easily enough by comparing it with the Buddhism of Burma and Siam, which—in spite of their tolerance of a system of animistic worship alien to Buddhism—have preserved almost intact the body of doctrine that they inherited through Ceylon from the orthodox Church. What with the growth of the mystic schools derived from Bodhidarma, the Tantra schools with their magic spells and incantations, the Lin Tzū school that teaches religion in the form of enigmas, the Wu Wei school with its doctrine of a Golden Mother, the hideous demonology introduced into Buddhism by a debased wonder-working Taoism, and the innumerable schools that unite in their praises

of the bejewelled Western Heaven which can be attained merely by repeating the name of Amitabha Buddha or Kuan Yin P'u Sa, it is no wonder that Buddhism in China has fallen a victim to the fangs of its own grotesque offspring.

In the following chapter some further remarks on Mount Omei will, I trust, serve to emphasise the observations already made, and will perhaps help the European reader who has not visited China to form some conception of the theory and practice of Chinese Buddhism at the present day. I hope I may be excused if I depart so far from the usual practice of travellers in China as to refrain from entering into a discussion of the general question of religion, especially in connection with Christian propaganda. For my own part, I may perhaps venture to express the hope and belief that the missionary question is one which time will solve at no very distant date. As soon as a reformed China has earned for herself—by the reform of her legal codes and judicial procedure—the right to demand the total abolition of foreign consular jurisdiction within Chinese territory, missionaries will cease to be a thorn in the flesh of Chinese officialdom. They may obtain fewer converts, but they will at least have the satisfaction of knowing that such converts as they may then gain will not be actuated by the desire to secure foreign protection against the laws of their own country; whereas the official classes will no longer have cause to regard missionaries as a political danger. There is no doubt that many of the outbreaks of fanatical hatred against foreigners

are directly or indirectly traceable to the missionary question.<sup>1</sup> In spite of this fact it will be generally conceded that, like most Orientals, the Chinese are, in purely religious matters, inclined to be extremely tolerant: far more so, needless to say, than Western peoples usually are. History proves that the Chinese people are not hostile to foreign religious doctrines as such, but only when foreign religions tend to introduce disintegrating forces into the social fabric. Similarly the official classes are not inimical to foreign religions as such, but only when foreign religions threaten the stability of the political fabric and the independence of the State. These dangers will no longer operate when foreign missionary enterprise absolutely ceases to have even the semblance

<sup>1</sup> Any one who is not hopelessly narrow-minded can thoroughly sympathise with the missionary position. The missionaries as a body are men of religious enthusiasm. They believe they have been summoned by their Master to preach to non-Christians a faith which they believe to be the only true faith; and some of them believe that an acceptance of this faith is "necessary to salvation." From their point of view, all missionary work is entirely justified; and from any point of view the work the Christian missions have done in alleviating sickness and pain in China is wholly admirable. As regards the purely religious aspect of the question, I am glad to refrain from expressing a personal opinion. It is a subject which requires to be handled with extraordinary delicacy, for many people are unable to discuss it dispassionately, and it gives rise to endless arguments which from the nature of the case are and must be utterly devoid of persuasive power. Now that Religion, as distinct from any systematised Creed, has taken its place among the recognised subjects of philosophical investigation (and psychological also, as in Professor James's brilliant book, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*), we may expect to hear missionary work discussed (at least by educated persons) with less bitterness and strong language than has sometimes disgraced the controversialists on both sides. A short and incomplete but very interesting discussion of the missionary question from an obviously impartial point of view may be found in Professor Knight's *Varia*, pp. 31-35. (John Murray: 1901.)

of a connection with international politics, and foreign missionaries become in all respects amenable to the courts of the country in which they live and work. Whether the change will tend to spread the doctrines of Christianity in China with greater rapidity, or will, on the other hand, bring about its ultimate extinction, is a question regarding which it would be rash to prophesy. Given fair field and no favour it might well seem that the disorganised forces of a corrupt Buddhism would be ill fitted to cope with such strenuous and well-equipped adversaries as the Churches of Christendom: yet perhaps it is more likely that the ultimate victory will rest with neither. The clashing of forces that must assuredly result from the weakening of the hold of Confucianism on the educated classes and the introduction of new political and social ideals may lead to an intellectual upheaval tending to the destruction of all religion. Even to-day, the only vigorous element in the heterogeneous religious systems of China consists in that expansion of the ideal of filial piety which takes the form of the cult of ancestors: a cult which has done so much in the past to preserve, consolidate and multiply the Chinese people and make them peaceful, law-abiding and home-loving, and which has nevertheless been condemned as idolatrous by the two great branches of the Christian faith. It was this rock of Chinese orthodoxy that shattered the power of the Church of Rome in China, and that rock is still a danger and an obstruction in the troubled waters through which glide the frail



barks of the Christian missions. On the whole, it seems improbable that the dogmas, at least, of any of the Christian Churches will ever find general acceptance on Chinese soil. The moral and spiritual regeneration of China is more likely to be brought about by the growth of a neo-Confucianism frankly accepting such adaptations as the social and political conditions of modern times may render necessary; and if this is insufficient to satisfy the spiritual aspirations of the people, there may arise a reformed Buddhism drawing its inspiration either from the simple faith of Burma, Siam, and Ceylon, or—far more probably—from one of the complex systems (near in kinship to those of China but with a vitality of their own) that have evolved themselves upon the soil of Japan.

## CHAPTER VII

### MOUNT OMEI

VERY few of the buildings now existing on Mount Omei can boast of antiquity, for a damp climate and the ravages of fire have in the past made short work of their fragile timbers. The monasteries are humble structures, being simply one-storied bungalows of wood. Compared with the richly-carved teakwood *wats* of Siam and *kyauungs* of Burma, they are unpretentious buildings with little decoration, and what there is possesses small artistic merit. Over the doorways and under the eaves hang sundry massive wooden boards, resplendent with richly-gilded characters, giving the name of the monastery and brief quotations from the Buddhist scriptures. Most of the tablets containing inscriptions or quotations have been presented by devout pilgrims, but the periodical regilding of the characters is paid for out of the corporate funds. The interiors are generally more imposing; for every monastery on Mount Omei is also a temple, and the decoration of the halls containing the images of the Buddha and his saints is generally on a fairly lavish scale. The larger temples have

a series of such halls one behind the other, with courts or quadrangles intervening, the sides of each quadrangle being occupied by the monks' living quarters. There are also spacious quarters for visitors. The office in which the financial and other secular affairs of the monastery are administered is generally a small room on the left side of the first hall of images, corresponding to a room on the other side which is used as a kind of porter's lodge. In the latter room the monks spend a great deal of their time in the cold weather, and sit huddled round a charcoal brazier. From the middle of the room they can see, through the open door, every one who enters and leaves the temple by the main entrance; and one of them is generally deputed to attend on every group of visitors or pilgrims. All pilgrims bring their own food with them—the Chinese their rice, and the Tibetans their *tsamba*; but those whose appearance entitles them to respect, or who have given a substantial donation to the funds of the establishment, are invited to drink tea and eat sweetmeats, and warm themselves by the charcoal fire. The Buddhistic injunction to avoid taking life is rigorously obeyed on Mount Omei by visitors as well as residents, all of whom conform to a strictly vegetarian diet. The only persons who ever disregard this rule are some inconsiderate Europeans. Small subscriptions—generally in the form of copper “cash”—are placed on an offertory plate, or on the altar table in front of one of the principal images, and are deposited there by the pilgrims after they have

finished their devotions. Those who wish to leave a permanent record of their visit, or whose donation exceeds a *tael* (say three shillings), inscribe their names or paste their cards in the subscription book, with a statement of the amount of their donations. An ingenious plan has been devised to relieve pilgrims of the necessity of carrying large quantities of coin up the mountain, and at the same time to invalidate excuses of want of money. In the town of Omei-hsien, where every pilgrim spends the night before beginning the ascent, he is visited by a banker or broker, who offers him little paper notes or chits called *fei tzü*, bearing various face-values from ten taels down to one hundred cash (about twopence). They are printed from wooden blocks, and in many cases the amount of money represented is inserted in writing. The pilgrim selects as many *fei tzü* as he thinks he may require or can afford, and pays over their face-value to the banker. The notes are handed as occasion requires, or benevolence prompts, to the temple treasurers, or are deposited on the altars, and are received in the temples as readily as coin. When a considerable collection of them has been made in any monastery they are sent down to the banker, who deducts his very small commission and settles the account either by sending silver in return, or by crediting the monastery with the amount in his books.

The monasteries naturally vary in size. Some of them are the homes of a score or more of monks and acolytes, while the smaller ones

shelter but three or four. When a monastery is destroyed by fire or other cause, its elderly or infirm inmates lodge themselves temporarily in one of the neighbouring religious houses, while the more energetic go forth on a pilgrimage—sometimes as far as the Eastern sea-board—carrying with them a donation book for the purpose of collecting funds for rebuilding. When the monastery arises again from its ashes it is practically a new foundation with new endowments, even its name being sometimes altered. In spite of the apathy concerning religious matters that strikes every European observer as characteristic of China to-day, it is a significant fact that large subscriptions for religious purposes can always be obtained from the Chinese layman notwithstanding his protestations of contempt for the monastic ideal and for the idle and useless lives led by the vast majority of Chinese Buddhist monks.

Passing by the Pao-ning monastery, which is situated on the plain between the city and the mountain-base, I visited the monasteries of the White Dragon (Pai Lung Ssü), and the Golden Dragon (Chin Lung Ssü), and stopped for the night at the Wan-nien Ssü, formerly the White Water Monastery of P'u Hsien. This is one of the largest establishments on the mountain, and its written history goes back to the third century, if not further. It contains many objects of interest, the chief of which is the life-size bronze elephant discovered, or rather first described, by Baber. The very curious spiral-roofed brick

building in which it stands—believed by Baber to have been erected by Hindu Buddhists not later than the sixth century of the Christian era—is unfortunately so small and shut in that it is impossible either to photograph the elephant or to view it from a proper standpoint. Baber believed that this edifice was, next to the Great Wall, the oldest building in China of fairly authentic antiquity, and he considered that the elephant was the most ancient bronze casting of any great size in existence,—perhaps fifteen centuries old. I have some reason, however, to doubt the alleged antiquity of both building and elephant.<sup>1</sup> Upon the animal's back is a bronze statue of P'u Hsien P'u Sa (Samanta Bhadra Bodhisattva), who, as I have said, is supposed to have come from India to Mount Omei on an elephant. Among modern curiosities at the Wan-nien Ssü is a small alabaster image of Gautama Buddha, which was recently brought from Burma by a Chinese Buddhist monk who had been on pilgrimage to the shrines of Mandalay and Rangoon. The same pilgrim presented a coloured print of the great Shwe Dagon pagoda at Rangoon, which is regarded by the monks of Wan-nien as a precious work of art, though its intrinsic value is, of course, trifling. There is also, in a separate building called the Hai Hui T'ang,<sup>2</sup> a supposed tooth-relic of Buddha, which is treated with strange lack of reverence.<sup>3</sup> But it is only an elephant's molar, and the monks know it.

<sup>1</sup> See Note 6 (p. 414).

<sup>2</sup> 海會堂

<sup>3</sup> See Note 7 (p. 417).

Wan - nien Ssü is situated at a height of about 3,500 feet above the sea-level. The summit of the mountain (11,000 feet<sup>1</sup>) is therefore still a long way off; but as I succeeded in reaching it on the evening of the day on which I left Wan-nien Ssü, in spite of the fact that the path was often obliterated by snow and ice, I satisfied myself that the difficulty of the climb has often been much exaggerated. In dry weather, indeed, there is no reason why a healthy man of average physical vigour should not accomplish in one day the whole climb from base to summit: though such a feat of endurance would prevent him from paying much attention to the objects of interest on the way. The mountain sides are luxuriantly wooded, and it is only when the path approaches the edge of a precipice or a steep slope that any extensive view can be obtained during the greater part of the ascent. The silver fir, ever-green-oak, pine, cypress, laurel, birch, chestnut, spruce, *nan-mu*, maple (several species) and *camp-totheca acuminata* are all to be met with, and there are innumerable flowering plants and ferns; but the character of the flora naturally varies a great deal at the different altitudes. On the exposed parts of the summit there is little but dwarf bamboos, junipers and rhododendrons, though in sheltered places I noticed the silver fir, liquidambar, yew, willow, pirus, and several kinds of shrubs. Other trees, like the alder, Chinese ash, and banyan, are confined to the plain

<sup>1</sup> This is the usually accepted estimate; but Sir A. Hosie has recently stated it to be only 10,158 feet.

or to the lower slopes. The banyans<sup>1</sup> of the Omei plain are magnificent trees, some of them of enormous girth.

Below Wan - nien Ssü I left behind me spring warmth and sprouting vegetation. By the time I had reached a height of 4,000 feet there were patches of snow on the roadside; 2,000 feet higher all visible trace of the path was gone, icicles hung from the leafless trees, while small acolytes from the monasteries, clad in their wadded winter garments, were busily sweeping away the snow in front of the gateways. When I left Omei-hsien my thermometer registered 64° Fahr. At Wan-nien Ssü the temperature had sunk to 49°; on the summit of the mountain there were 18 degrees of frost after sunset.

The next temple to Wan - nien Ssü is the Kuan Hsin Ting,<sup>2</sup> a poor building which was apparently in sole charge of a child of nine. The next is the Hsi Hsin So.<sup>3</sup> These words may be interpreted as "The Haven of the Tranquil Heart," but they also mean "The Pilgrim's Rest," for *hsi hsin* are the words used to translate or explain the Sanskrit term *sramana*,<sup>4</sup> an ascetic or monk. The records of the mountain explain the name by saying that when the pilgrim reaches this place, he can no longer hear the growlings and mutterings of the "dusty world": his heart therefore becomes as peaceful as his surroundings. In the building is a large image of Maitrêya, the "Buddha of the Future," who

<sup>1</sup> *Ficus infectoria*.

<sup>2</sup> 觀心頂.

<sup>3</sup> 息心所.

<sup>4</sup> Literally, "the quelling of the passions."



is supposed to be in the Tushita heaven, awaiting incarnation.

Passing by the Ch'ang Lao P'ing<sup>1</sup> temple, the next is the Ch'u Tien,<sup>2</sup> otherwise known as the Tsu Tien. *Tsu* is a kind of red-eyed duck, and the allusion is to the duck-like shape of a neighbouring rock. The temple contains rather life-like images of the eighteen *lo-han*.<sup>3</sup> These Chinese words represent the Sanskrit *arhat* or *arahat*, "venerable" or "worthy." We meet with arhats in the oldest Buddhist scriptures. They were the worthiest and most enlightened of Buddha's disciples; men who fully understood the doctrine as it was delivered to them by their master, and accepted it as a final statement of truth. Arahats, as we have seen in the last chapter, is the goal aimed at by all true Buddhists, and implies a release from all delusion, ignorance and sorrow. In technical language the arahat is the man who has acquired the "four distinctive qualifications" (*patisambhidā*) and has attained the state of "final sanctification." In the hands of the Mahayanists the arahats come to be persons possessing magical powers,<sup>4</sup> such as that of moving without support through space, in which respect they are the nearest approach to the mysterious Tibetan beings invented by the self-styled "theosophists": but

<sup>1</sup> 長老坪.

<sup>2</sup> 開山初殿. See Note 8 (p. 418).

<sup>3</sup> 阿羅漢.

<sup>4</sup> In the early Buddhist scriptures we learn that super-normal powers were even then supposed to be characteristic of the arhats, but it was generally considered undesirable to put such powers to the test.

arahatship as an ideal becomes altogether subordinate to that of Bodhisattship, the state of the holy man who, having arrived at the stage next preceding that of Buddhahood, voluntarily refrains from taking the final step, in order that he may remain as a teacher and saviour among men. In the Chinese Buddhistic system there are several classifications of the arahats or *lo-han*: we find them in groups of twelve hundred, five hundred, eighteen and sixteen. The twelve hundred are only met with, so far as I am aware, in books; but many large temples in China contain images of the five hundred. In Canton, for example, there is what Europeans have rather foolishly named the Hall of the Five Hundred Genii. Some wag once fancied he saw a resemblance in one of the figures there to Marco Polo, and for some reason or other the idea struck the professional Canton guides as such a happy one that for many years past they have been in the habit of deluding thousands of European and American travellers with the belief that Messer Marco has been turned into a Chinese "god." The mistake assumes a somewhat grotesque character when we remember that, according to the Chinese belief, each of the five hundred *lo-han* is destined at some remote period to become a Buddha.<sup>1</sup> In the majority of Chinese temples—as in those of Mount Omei—the number of *lo-han* represented by images is only eighteen; but there is a difference of opinion among the

<sup>1</sup> See the *Saddharma - Pundarika*, translated by Kern in the *Sacred Books of the East*, vol. xxi. The Chinese version is known as the *Miao Fa Lien Hua Ching* (妙法蓮華經).

followers of different schools as to the identity of two of these. In Korea and Japan the temples generally contain sixteen lo-han, while Tibetan Lamaism sometimes recognises sixteen and sometimes eighteen.<sup>1</sup> The two extra ones seem to have been added as an after-thought by Chinese Buddhists in comparatively modern times.

Above the Temple of the Red-eyed Duck comes the Hua Yen Ting.<sup>2</sup> As already mentioned, the name *Hua Yen* is that of a famous sutra "discovered" by Nāgārjuna. The temple contains the eighteen lo-han and figures of Sakyamuni Buddha and the two Bodhisattvas P'u Hsien and Manjusri.<sup>3</sup> Behind these three central figures is a small Kuan Yin (Avalokiteçvara). On leaving this temple the road strikes downwards for a short distance, and, soon after recommencing the ascent, we arrive next at the monastery known as the Lien Hua Shih<sup>4</sup> ("Lotus Flower Stone"), where there is a holy relic consisting of the curiously-

<sup>1</sup> See an article on this subject by T. Watters, in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, April 1899. See also Edkins, *Chinese Buddhism*, pp. 249 and 394-395.

<sup>2</sup> 華嚴頂.

<sup>3</sup> Manjusri (文殊師利) is a Bodhisattva who in China is practically worshipped as the God of Wisdom. Like Ti Tsang, Kuan Yin and others, he is supposed to have had a human prototype, or rather to have been incarnated in the body of a historical personage. But the truth probably is that any person of superlative wisdom was liable to be identified by his admirers with Manjusri. There is an interesting reference to him in I-Tsing's *Records of the Buddhist Religion*, translated by J. Takakusu (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1896), p. 169. The translator comments on the fact that Manjusri was even by the people of India supposed, at one time, to be somehow connected with China, and the actual place of his residence was identified as Ping Chou in Chih-li.

蓮花石.

shaped stone from which the place derives its name. I found a number of Tibetan pilgrims rubbing coins on it; the coins to be afterwards carefully preserved as charms. The stone is said by the monks (on no authority that I can discover) to have been brought up from deep waters by miraculous agency, and to have floated on the surface like the flower of the lotus. The lotus myth in Buddhist cosmology is based on a very picturesque allegory, with which most of my readers are probably acquainted. Its meaning has been accurately described in the following words by E. J. Eitel, who, though he possesses the usual bias against "heathendom," is a fairly sympathetic writer on Buddhist subjects. "The idea conveyed in this flowery language of Buddhism is of highly poetic and truly speculative import, amounting to this: that as a lotus flower, growing out of a hidden germ beneath the water, rises up slowly, mysteriously, until it suddenly appears above the surface and unfolds its buds, leaves, and pistils, in marvellous richness of colour and chastest beauty of form; thus also, in the system of worlds, each single universe rises into being, evolved out of a primitive germ, the first origin of which is veiled in mystery, and finally emerges out of the chaos, gradually unfolding itself, one kingdom of nature succeeding the other, all forming one compact whole, pervaded by one breath, but varied in beauty and form. Truly an idea, so far removed from nonsense, that it might be taken for an utterance of Darwin himself."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Three Lectures on Buddhism*, pp. 60-61.

Visitors to Buddhist temples cannot fail to observe how frequently the lotus allegory has been made to subserve religious and artistic purposes, and we have seen in the last chapter how it has been associated with the story of the beginning of P'u Hsien's worship on Mount Omei. The images of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas are nearly always represented as sitting or standing in the centre of a huge open lotus, and even P'u Hsien's elephant stands on the same sacred plant.

As regards the stone in the Lien Hua monastery, I may add that it does not bear the smallest resemblance to a lotus or any other plant, and apparently it is not supposed to do so. Its original crude shape has evidently never been tampered with, though its surface has been worn smooth by constant rubbing.

Into the same temple another stone—not a sacred one—has found its way. It is a huge boulder, many tons in weight, that was brought down the mountain side some years ago by an avalanche, and crashed into the back of the main hall, where, for superstitious reasons—and perhaps because its removal would be a matter of immense difficulty—it has been allowed to remain. On a hanging scroll above the central images I noticed a Chinese transliteration<sup>1</sup> of the well-known Tibetan formula, “*Om Mane Padme Hom* (or *Hung*),”<sup>2</sup> generally translated—but this is a controversial matter—“Hail! The Jewel in the Lotus.” The

<sup>1</sup> 唵 嘛 呢 叭 彌 吽.

<sup>2</sup> ཨོཾ་མ་ཎི་པདྨ་ལྷོ་རྩུབ་

first word *Om* or *Aum* is the well-known sacred syllable of Brahmanism; practically it is simply a *syllaba invocationis*. The Jewel may mean the Buddha, or his Law (Dharma), or the Buddhist Church (Sangha), or all three combined, or more probably signifies Avalokiteçvara (the Chinese Kuan Yin and Japanese Kwannon), who in Lamaism is supposed to be incarnated in every successive Grand Lama. But, as a matter of fact, very few of the Tibetans who mutter the sentence as they walk or turn it in their prayer-wheels, or carve it on stones and rocks by the wayside, can give any clear idea of what they mean by it. Like the Chinese *Nam - Mo* (or *Nan - Wu*) *O-mi-to-Fo*<sup>1</sup> ("Praise be to Amitabha Buddha"), it is regarded as a kind of *dhâranî* or mystic spell, the constant repetition of which will lead the believer to a life of bliss in Sukhâvatî, the Western Paradise. The only Chinese whom I met on the mountain besides the residents were Buddhist monks on pilgrimage, and the invocation to Amitabha was constantly on their lips; the other was repeated with equal persistence by the Tibetan pilgrims. During part of my climb the mountain was enveloped in a thick mist, which muffled the sound of footsteps; but there was seldom a moment that I did not hear one or other of these mystic sentences floating weirdly in the air above me or below.

A steep climb soon brought me to the Hsi Hsiang Ch'ih<sup>2</sup> ("The Elephant's Bath"), where a

<sup>1</sup> 南無阿彌陀佛  
<sup>2</sup> 沈象池。

temple has been built close to a pool of water where P'u Hsien's famous elephant is said to have bathed after his long journey. The temple contains images of Sakyamuni Buddha, P'u Hsien and Manjusri. Behind them, in the same hall, are three beautifully gilded figures, larger than life-size, representing Amitabha Buddha attended by Kuan Yin and Ta Shih Chih<sup>1</sup> Bodhisattvas. These are the three beings who are supposed to preside over the Western Paradise; their images are therefore frequently found together, Amitabha always in the centre. In another hall is an image of Kuan Yin unattended.

The next temple is known as the Great Vehicle<sup>2</sup> or Mahayana monastery. Here are images of Sakyamuni, Manjusri and P'u Hsien, who are also constantly associated in this manner; and behind them, facing in the opposite direction, is a large Maitrêya, the Coming Buddha. After a fairly steep ascent thence and a short descent the path rises to the Pai Yün Ku Ch'a<sup>3</sup> ("The Old Monastery of the White Clouds")—which at the time of my visit I found to be a most appropriate name. Here there is a colossal sedent image of Chang Liang,<sup>4</sup> a warlike hero who died in the second century of our era, after he had made an ineffectual attempt to achieve immortality by starving himself. He was subsequently canonised by the name of Wên Ch'êng.<sup>5</sup> In another hall are Sakyamuni Buddha, Manjusri and P'u Hsien, supported by the eighteen lo-han.

<sup>1</sup> 大勢至.      <sup>2</sup> 大乘寺.      See Note 9 (p. 418).

<sup>3</sup> 白雲古剎.      <sup>4</sup> 張良.      <sup>5</sup> 文成.

In ascending to the next temple, the Lei Tung P'ing,<sup>1</sup> all pilgrims are expected to preserve absolute silence. The Lei Tung or Thunder Cavern is that which shelters the irascible Dragon of rain and thunder, to whom I referred in the last chapter. An inscription that hangs in the temple apparently refers to his controlling powers over lightning and rain - clouds.<sup>2</sup> The slightest sound of the human voice, either in laughter or in speech, is liable to produce a terrific whirlwind and thunderstorm.

Next above this perilous locality comes the Chieh Yin Tien<sup>3</sup> — the Temple of Amitabha. The words *chieh yin* mean "to receive and lead," and are applied to Amitabha because he it is who is supposed to assist the faithful to reach the Western Heaven in which he reigns. The first hall contains a richly-gilded colossal statue of this Buddha, standing upright. Behind him is a figure of Wei To<sup>4</sup> (*Vêda*), a Bodhisattva who is regarded as a *vihârapâla*, or tutelary deity of the Buddhist monkhood. He is responsible for seeing that the recluses do not suffer through lack of nourishment, and that the monastery is properly supplied with necessaries. The second hall contains the eighteen lo-han in bronze. There are also the usual images of Sakyamuni and his attendant Bodhisattvas, and a colossal gilded P'u Hsien sitting on a lotus on the back of a white elephant.

<sup>1</sup> 雷洞坪

<sup>2</sup> 擊電飛雲

<sup>3</sup> 接引殿

<sup>4</sup> 韋陀 or 護法韋陀: *Veda Fidei Defensor*—a Hindu deity who was regarded as one of the protectors of the four "Continents" of the world or Universe.



In the right-hand corner of this well-populated hall is another triad of divinities: Yo Shih Fo,<sup>1</sup> a mythical Buddha who dwells in an eastern world, with Ti Tsang and Kuan Yin Bodhisattvas on his left and right. This is a favourite Buddha in China, and is supposed to hold in the East a position somewhat analogous to that of Amitabha in the West. In the popular imagination he has replaced the Motionless (*wu tung*) Buddha Akchôbhya (A-ch'ü-p'ô) and is worshipped as the healer of sickness. Ti Tsang<sup>2</sup> is one of the great Bodhisattvas, like P'ü Hsien, Ta Shih Chih and Manjusri. The principal seat of his worship in China is in the province of Anhui. He is the benevolent being who seeks to save human beings from the punishments of hell. His prototype is said to have been a Siamese prince.

A steep ascent from this interesting monastery leads to the Ku T'ai Tzū P'ing,<sup>3</sup> the "Ancient Temple of the Prince Royal." It is said that this building is named after a prince of the Ming dynasty, but the monks of to-day prefer to regard the T'ai Tzū as Sakyamuni Buddha himself, in the character of Prince Siddharta, son of the king of Kapilavastu. The figure representing him is attired in real robes, richly embroidered. On his right is P'ü Hsien, seated on a white tuskless elephant. As already mentioned, P'ü Hsien's elephants are generally characterised by their six

<sup>1</sup> 藥師佛, whose common title *Lüi Li Fo* (琉璃佛) translates the Sanskrit *Vaidūrya*, *lapis lazuli*. This precious stone seems also to have been associated with a favourite Assyrian deity, Ênu-réstü.

<sup>2</sup> 地藏.

<sup>3</sup> 古太子坪.

tusks. On the prince's left is Kuan Yin; and behind these three central figures are images of Ti Tsang, Ta Shih Chih, Wên Ch'êng (Chang Liang) and Manjusri, all of whom have been described.

The next is the Yung-ch'ing Ssü<sup>1</sup> or Eternal Happiness monastery. Here a many-armed Kuan Yin faces the entrance, and behind him (or her) is an Amitabha. The only new figure among the rest is that of Bodhidarma or Ta-mo, the St Thomas of the Catholic missionaries.<sup>2</sup> He sits cross-legged with the first finger of the right hand raised. A small P'u Hsien is seated on an elephant with four tusks, the other two being lost. In this hall I observed some heaps of broken statues in bronze and iron, the remains of a ruined temple. From here a level path leads to the K'ai Shan Jou Shên Tsu Shih Tien,<sup>3</sup> which, as the name partly indicates, contains a gruesome relic in the shape of the mummified body of a former abbot, attired in the robes he wore in life. The dried shrunken face has been lacquered with great care, and no one would guess that the figure was not made of clay or bronze. It is not the only mummy on the mountain. From here a short steep path leads to the Eagle-wood Pagoda,<sup>4</sup> a monastery named after a miniature nine-storied bronze pagoda, the gift of a Ming empress. The next temple bears the imposing inscription of "The

<sup>1</sup> 永慶寺.

<sup>2</sup> See above, p. 66.

<sup>3</sup> 開山肉身祖師殿.

<sup>4</sup> 鷲木塔. The aloes or eagle-wood is so-called because it sinks (*ch'ên*) in water. It is supposed to be the aloes-wood mentioned in the Bible.

August Guard of the Gate of Heaven,"<sup>1</sup> where there is a large Sakyamuni with the usual attendant Bodhisattvas. Next comes the Ch'i T'ien Ch'iao<sup>2</sup>—The Bridge of the Seventh Heaven—where there is a small temple in which the three Bodhisattvas—P'u Hsien (in the middle) and Manjusri and Kuan Yin (on the right and left)—sit in a row in front of a solitary image of Sakyamuni. The next temple is the P'u Hsien Pagoda,<sup>3</sup> where the patron saint of Mount Omei, as is natural, occupies the place of honour in the middle of the hall facing the entrance. Behind him is Amitabha, and at the back of the hall, right and left, are Sakyamuni and Kuan Yin. On the left side of the hall is an image of one of the favourite personages in the Chinese theogony—Ts'ai Shên, the "God of Wealth."<sup>4</sup> This god is so popular in China that Buddhism could not afford to neglect him, but as he is really a Taoist divinity he is only allowed to appear in a Buddhist temple as an act of grace. The same may be said of Kuan Ti,<sup>5</sup> the God of War, Lung Wang<sup>6</sup> the Dragon Raja or Naga-king, and the San Kuan.<sup>7</sup>

From this temple a short walk over a wooden-paved path, kept clear of snow by sedulous sweeping, leads to the Hsi Wa Tien<sup>8</sup>—the Pewter-Roofed Hall. At one time there were three "halls," with roofs of pewter, bronze and iron respectively.

<sup>1</sup> 威靈殿

<sup>2</sup> 普賢塔

<sup>3</sup> 關帝

<sup>4</sup> 三官

<sup>5</sup> 七皇廟

<sup>6</sup> 財神 or 財帛星神

<sup>7</sup> 龍王

<sup>8</sup> 錫瓦殿

The metal roofs have vanished, though the names remain. "Pewter - roof" is specially appropriate to a Buddhist monastery, for pewter is the only metal that Buddhist monks may—in theory—possess. Each monk is supposed to carry a pewter-headed staff when he goes on pilgrimage or on his begging-rounds; and when he lodges at a monastery he is said to *kua hsi*, which literally means "to hang up the pewter." In south China there is a spring called the Pewter Spring, because it bubbled up at the bidding of a thirsty monk who struck the ground with his staff.

Another short climb brought me at last to the summit of Mount Omei, where, at a height of about 11,000 feet, I found welcome and rest in the spacious monastery that proudly describes itself as "The Golden Hall of the True Summit."<sup>1</sup>

Though I was not expected by the monks—for my two soldiers had failed to keep up with me in spite of my efforts to send them on as my ambassadors—I was at once made comfortable in a large, clean apartment on the first floor; and when my hosts heard that I was a humble student of their religion they soon provided me with as ample a vegetarian banquet as I could have desired, and treated me with great kindness.

An hour after my arrival I stood outside the temple gateway watching the sun set below

<sup>1</sup> Chêng Ting Chin Tien (正頂金殿). There is another Chin Tien or Golden Temple on the summit of a range of mountains north-east of Tali-fu in Yunnan (the Chi Shan) which is also a noted centre for Buddhist pilgrimages. A short account of the temples of this mountain is given in a Foreign Office Report by the late Mr Litton. (China, No. 3: 1903, pp. 4-6.)

a wild white ocean of clouds that laved the mountain side about 2,000 feet below me and turned the summit of Mount Omei into a snow-draped island. The air rapidly grew bitterly cold, and I was glad to seek warmth indoors by the side of my charcoal fire. My dilatory escort, carrying my modest baggage, came wearily in just as it began to grow dark.

The next morning held in store a wonderful surprise. The vast ocean of white clouds had entirely disappeared, and the wide country that lay far below me was bathed in the glory of brilliant sunlight. The sun rarely reveals himself in his full splendour in Ssuch'uan—so rarely that when he does so the dogs are said to bark at him<sup>1</sup>—and on Omei's summit sunshine is rare even for Ssuch'uan; but by good fortune it was on one of those exceptional occasions that I spent there the whole of one memorable day.

There are several monasteries on or near the summit. The one in which I lodged for two nights is crowned with a gilded ball that scintillates on its roof. Just behind the various buildings of this monastery is the tremendous precipice from the edge of which fortunate pilgrims witness the phenomenon known as the "Glory of Buddha."<sup>2</sup> As mentioned in the last chapter, this is the appearance of a gleaming aureole floating horizontally on the mist a few thousand feet below the summit. This beautiful phenomenon, to which is probably due the special sanctity of Mount Omei, has not yet been quite satisfactorily explained. It

<sup>1</sup> 日出則犬吠.

佛光.

has been likened to the famous Brocken Spectre, and to the Shadow of the Peak in Ceylon, but the brilliant and varied colours of "Buddha's Glory"—five colours, say the Chinese—give it a rainbow-like beauty which those appearances do not possess.<sup>1</sup> The pious Buddhist pilgrim firmly believes that it is a miraculous manifestation of the power and glory of the Buddha—or of his spiritual Son P'u Hsien—and is always much disappointed if he has to leave the mountain without catching a glimpse of it.<sup>2</sup> The necessary conditions of its appearance are said to be a clear sky above and a bank of clouds below, and as those conditions were not fulfilled for me I must sorrowfully confess that I cannot describe the spectacle from personal experience. But the circumstance that deprived me of that privilege enabled me to have a superb view of the surrounding country. Nearly 10,000 feet below me to the north and east lay the rich rolling plains of central Ssuch'uan; to the south the silver streak of the Ta Tu river and the wild mountains that enable the mysterious Lolo races to maintain their solitary independence; slightly to the south-west appeared the huge mass of the

<sup>1</sup> A somewhat similar phenomenon, described as an "anethia," may be witnessed in Ceylon. Sir James Emerson Tennent, in his *Ceylon* [Longmans: 1859, 2nd edition], states that phenomena of this kind may have "suggested to the early painters the idea of the glory surrounding the heads of beatified saints." He adds this description: "To the spectator his own figure, but more particularly the head, appears surrounded by a halo as vivid as if radiated from diamonds. The Buddhists may possibly have taken from this beautiful object their idea of the *agni* or emblem of the sun, with which the head of Buddha is surmounted. But, unable to express a *halo* in sculpture, they concentrated it into a *flame*."—Vol. i. 72 *seq.*

<sup>2</sup> See Note 10 (p. 419).



**“JIM” ON THE SUMMIT OF MOUNT OMEEL.**

*[To face p. 102.]*





Wa mountain, with its extraordinary flat summit and its precipitous flanks; and, grandest sight of all, clear and brilliant on the western horizon stood out the mighty barrier of towering peaks appropriately known by the Chinese as the Ta Hsüeh Shan—Great Snow Mountains. Those are the peaks—some of them 20,000 feet high, and more—that keep watch and ward over the lofty Tibetan plateau on the one side and the rolling plains of China on the other: the eastern ramparts of the vast Himālayan range, whose icy fingers seem ever to grope outward into the silent abyss of space as if seeking to grasp the fringe of a mightier world than ours. Even at a distance of nearly 100 miles as the crow flies the pinnacles seemed too lofty to be real; but it was pleasant to know that a few weeks hence I should be in the midst of the great mountains, perhaps learning something of their hidden mysteries.

The narrow gallery behind the monastery from which one watches for a manifestation of Buddha's Glory is carefully railed, for a fall from this spot would mean a sheer drop of more than a mile down the face of a precipice which, as Baber has remarked, is perhaps the highest in the world. Many are the stories told by the monks of men and women who in moments of wild religious exaltation have hurled themselves down to win death and paradise in one glorious instant by throwing themselves into the bosom of their Lord Buddha: true stories, which have well earned for this terrible precipice the name of

“The Rejection of the Body.”<sup>1</sup> Less sinister names which have been given it are the Diamond Terrace and the Silvery Boundary,—the latter<sup>2</sup> perhaps because Mount Omei is regarded as the eastern buttress of the Great Snow Mountains; or perhaps the words refer to the view of those mountains on the western horizon. Near the edge of the cliff are the remains of a once famous bronze temple, which was several times struck by lightning and has never been restored since the date of the last catastrophe. Some of the castings are exceedingly fine and well worthy of preservation. A Chinese proverb says that Heaven grants compensation for what the lightning has destroyed,<sup>3</sup> but in this instance it seems to have failed of fulfilment.

The temple at which I stayed harbours about twenty monks and acolytes, and visitors both lay and monastic are constantly coming and going. I observed there the performance of an interesting custom, whereby the monks who come on pilgrimage from distant monasteries produce papers of identification and have them stamped with the seal of each of the monasteries they visit. As their journeys are made that they may “gain merit,” not only for themselves but also for the religious communities which they represent, it is important that on their return they should be able to produce duly authenticated certificates that they have actually attained the objects of

<sup>1</sup> 捨身崖. There is a similar Suicide's Cliff near the summit of T'ai Shan. *Shai shan*, it may be remarked, has a double meaning.

<sup>2</sup> 銀色界.

<sup>3</sup> 雷打天補.





CHINESE PLAN OF MOUNT OMEI, SURMOUNTED BY THE SEAL OF THE MONASTERY OF THE GOLDEN SUMMIT.

[To face p. 105.]

their pilgrimage. In many cases the establishment visited also grants Buddhist tracts or plans of its own buildings. One such crude plan—representing the mountain of Omei with its principal religious houses—is reproduced here on a reduced scale. The monastic seal (in red in the original) appears at the top. Some yellow-robed monks from a large monastery near Pao-ning-fu in north-eastern Ssuch'uan, and a small group of lamas from Litang, on the Tibetan border, were having their papers sealed at the time of my arrival at the Golden Summit.

During my day's rest I attended two religious services, besides a "choir-practice" of young boys who had not yet become fully-fledged monks. The services were well intoned, and, considering one's strange surroundings, had a singular impressiveness. The ordinary daily prayers are very simple, consisting in little more than repeated invocations of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas: they are "praises" rather than prayers. The ordinary Morning Service or Matins (Tsao K'o)<sup>1</sup> begins with a procession of monks into the principal hall or chapel—*Ta hsiung pao tien*,<sup>2</sup> "The Precious Hall of the Great Lord (or Hero)"—where, after circling round the central figure of Sakyamuni, keeping one bared shoulder towards the image, they take their seats on low benches on left and right. In front of Sakyamuni are lighted candles

<sup>1</sup> 早課.

<sup>2</sup> 大雄寶殿. The first two characters, rendered Great Lord or Hero, represent the Sanskrit *Vīra*, used as the epithet of a Buddhist saint.

and burning sticks of incense. The service then begins by the general invocation, *Nam Mo Pên Shih Shih Chia Mou-ni-Fo*:<sup>1</sup> "Praise to our Lord Sakyamuni Buddha." This is followed by *Nam Mo Tan Lai Mi Lei Tsun Fo*:<sup>2</sup> "Praise to the Honoured One Maitrêya, the Buddha that is to be." The Buddhas of the past and future having thus been honoured, a bell is sounded to announce a change in the manner of address, when somewhat similar phrases of adoration, interspersed with short hymns of praise, are sung in honour of some of the great Bodhisattvas, those selected at the service attended by me being the following, in the order named: *Wên Shu Shih Li*<sup>3</sup> (Manjusri, the Lord of *Ta chih*,<sup>4</sup> Great Wisdom); *P'u Hsien*<sup>5</sup> (Samanta Bhadra, the patron saint of Mount Omei); *Hu Fa Chu T'ien P'u Sa*<sup>6</sup> (all the Bodhisattvas, Defenders of the Faith); *San Chou Kan Ying Hu Fa Wei To Tsun T'ien P'u Sa*<sup>7</sup> (the Honoured Bodhisattva Wei-To,<sup>8</sup> the Distributer of Rewards and Punishments throughout the three Continents, Defender of the Faith); *Jih Kwang Pien Chao* and *Yüeh Kwang Pien Chao*<sup>9</sup> (the Bodhisattvas of the Far-Shining Light of the Sun and of the Moon—who are regarded as attendant on Yo-Shih Fo, the Healing Buddha of the East); *Tsêng Fu Ts'ai Shên*<sup>10</sup> (the Bodhis-

<sup>1</sup> 南無本師釋迦牟尼佛。

<sup>2</sup> 南無當來彌勒尊佛。      <sup>3</sup> 文殊師利。

<sup>4</sup> 大智。      <sup>5</sup> 普賢。      <sup>6</sup> 護法諸天菩薩。

<sup>7</sup> 三洲感應護法韋陀尊天菩薩。

<sup>8</sup> 韋陀。      <sup>9</sup> 日光 and 月光遍照菩薩。

<sup>10</sup> 增福樹神。

attva who increases happiness and wealth—the Chinese “God of Wealth”<sup>1</sup>); and finally *Shih Fang P'u Sa*<sup>2</sup> (the Bodhisattvas of the Ten Quarters of the Universe).

The most interesting part of the service consists in the short “lections” of extracts from the scriptures, which take the place of the lessons and sermons of Christian churches. The lections are followed by short hymns, some of which have been specially composed for liturgical purposes and are not to be found in the sacred books. Several processions and prostrations take place during the service. The intoning when heard from some distance is often not unlike a Gregorian chant, but the words are uttered rather too quickly, especially in the constantly-repeated invocations.

The Evening Service or Vespers (Wan K'o<sup>3</sup>) begins with a solemn invocation to the mythical Buddha of the Western Paradise, the sublime Amitabha.<sup>4</sup> Then follow the praises of Yo Shih Fo, the Healing Buddha, who “averts calamity and lengthens human life.”<sup>5</sup> Two Buddhas, as in the Morning Service, having thus been invoked, the next to be lauded are a new selection of the great Bodhisattvas, in the following order: *Kuan Yin* or *Kuan Shih Yin*, the “Goddess of Mercy,” and *Ta Shih Chih*, the Bodhisattva of Great Strength,<sup>6</sup> the two who under Buddha Amitabha

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 99.

<sup>2</sup> 十方菩薩.

<sup>3</sup> 晚課.

<sup>4</sup> 極樂世界阿彌陀佛.

<sup>5</sup> 消災延壽藥師佛.

<sup>6</sup> 大悲觀世音 and 大勢至 (Avalokiteçvara and Mahāsthāma : see footnote, p. 72).

preside over the Western Paradise; *Ti Tsang Wang*,<sup>1</sup> who saves men from the terrors of hell; *Wei To*, Defender of the Faith—the only divinity whose name is included in both Morning and Evening Services; *Chia Lan Shêng Chung P'u Sa*<sup>2</sup> (“the holy Bodhisattvas, Protectors of the Monasteries,” of whom Kuan-Ti, the Taoist “God of War,” is one); *Li Tai Tsu Shih P'u Sa*<sup>3</sup> (the Patriarchs, the Bodhisattvas of Successive Ages); *Ch'ing Ching Ta Hai Chu P'u Sa*<sup>4</sup> (all the Pure Bodhisattvas of the Great Ocean: *i.e.* of life and death or continual metempsychosis).

“Buddha’s Glory” is not the only marvel that the fortunate pilgrim may hope to behold when he reaches the Golden Summit. Night, on Mount Omei, has its treasures hardly less glorious than those of day. These take the form of myriads of little lights, moving and glimmering like winged stars in the midst of an inverted firmament. They are known as the *Shêng Têng* (Holy Lamps),<sup>5</sup> and have been described to me—for alas! I saw them not—as brilliant specks of light darting hither and thither on the surface of the ocean of mist on which in daytime floats the coloured aureole. A fanciful monk suggested to me that they are the scintillating fragments of the “Glory of Buddha,” which is shattered at the approach of night and

<sup>1</sup> 地藏王.

<sup>2</sup> 伽藍聖衆菩薩. The two first characters represent the Sanskrit *Sanghârâma*, the park or dwelling-place of monks, equivalent to a *vihara* or monastery.

<sup>3</sup> 歷代祖師菩薩.

<sup>4</sup> 清淨大海諸菩薩.

<sup>5</sup> See Note 11 (p. 419).



reformed at the rising of the sun. Foreigners have supposed that they are caused by some electrical disturbance; but the monk's explanation, if the less scientific of the two, is certainly the more picturesque.

The monastery in which I was entertained is probably the largest on the summit, but by far the most famous is its neighbour, the Hsien Tsu Tien,<sup>1</sup> which is believed to occupy the site of the original temple to P'u Hsien that according to the legend was built by P'u Kung in the Han dynasty after he had tracked the lily-footed deer to the edge of the great precipice and had beheld the wonderful sight thenceforth known as the "Glory of Buddha." The temple contains a large sedent image of the patron saint, and behind it is a terrace from which may be seen the manifold wonders of the abyss. Not far from this building is the Monastery of the Sleeping Clouds,<sup>2</sup> and further off are the temples of the Thousand Buddhas (Ch'ien Fo) and the White Dragon.<sup>3</sup>

I regretfully left the summit of Mount Omei on my downward journey early on the morning of 10th March, and, after many a slip and sprawl on the snow, reached the Wan-nien monastery in the afternoon. Here I spent a night for the second time, and continued the descent on the following morning. Just below the temple of the Pai Lung (White Dragon) which I had already visited, the road bifurcates; and as both branches lead eventually to Omei-hsien, I naturally chose

<sup>1</sup> 先祖殿. See Note 12 (p. 420).

<sup>2</sup> 峰頂臥雲庵.

<sup>3</sup> 白龍池.

the one that was new to me. By this time I had left far behind me the snow and icicles of the higher levels, and had entered a region of warm air and bright green vegetation. The change was startling, as though by some magic power the seasons had been interchanged.

“I dreamed that as I wandered by the way  
Bare winter suddenly was changed to spring,  
And gentle odours led my steps astray,  
Mixed with a sound of waters murmuring.”

Shelley's dream would have been realised on the slopes of Mount Omei.

Between the bifurcation of the roads and the foot of the mountain there are a number of monasteries, few of which possess any feature calling for special remark, except the romantic beauty of their situations. The most conspicuous are the Kuang Fu Ssü,<sup>1</sup> or “Monastery of Abounding Happiness”; the Lung Shêng Kang,<sup>2</sup> or “Mountain Ascending Dragon,” from which there is a splendid view of the Golden Summit; the Kuan Yin Ssü,<sup>3</sup> or “Monastery of Avalokiteçvara”; the Chung Fêng Ssü,<sup>4</sup> “Half-Way Monastery”; and the Ta O Ssu,<sup>5</sup> the “Monastery of Great O” (*i.e.* Omei Shan, Mount Omei), which is a spacious building, often visited by holiday-making Protestant missionaries from Chia-ting. After passing this building the downward path leads across a small bridge, called the “Bridge of the Upright Heart” (Chêng Hsin

<sup>1</sup> 廣福寺.

<sup>2</sup> 龍昇閣.

<sup>3</sup> 觀音寺.

<sup>4</sup> 中峰寺. See Note 12 (p. 420).

<sup>5</sup> 大峨寺. See Note 12 (p. 420).

Ch'iao<sup>1</sup>), to the monastery named Hui Têng Ssü<sup>2</sup> ("The Spiritual Lamp"), from the neighbourhood of which the view of the mountain summit is of exceptional beauty. A charming road leads thence past several other monasteries, down to the level plain, whence the walk to Omei-hsien is easy. Before I reached the city the great mountain had vanished from my sight and I never saw it again: from peak to base it had disappeared into impenetrable mist. There was only the soft sound of a distant monastery bell to assure me that somewhere in the clouds the sacred mountain might still be looked for not in vain.

I have dwelt long upon the Buddhistic associations of Omei; and perhaps the reader is wearied by an account of temples and of forms of belief that he considers grotesque and uncouth. I should be sorry if I were to leave him with the impression that Omei possesses no interest beyond the glimmer that is shed upon it by the Light of Asia. If every monastery were to crumble into dust, if the very memory of Buddhism were to be swept utterly away from the minds of men, Omei would still remain what it was before the first Buddhist recluse had built there his lonely hermitage—it would still be a home of portent and mystery, the abode of nameless spirits of mountain and flood, the source of inspiration to poet and artist, the resort of pilgrims from many lands, each of whom—whatever his faith—would find, as he gazed from the edge of the Golden Summit into the white abyss below, a manifestation of the Glory of his own God.

<sup>1</sup> 正心橋.

<sup>2</sup> 慧燈寺.

## CHAPTER VIII

### OMEI-HSIEN TO TACHIENLU

AN easy journey of four days from Omei-hsien brought me to the prefectural city of Ya-chou-fu. During the first day the road lay through the northern portion of the same well-cultivated plain that stretches to the south-east as far as Chia-ting. Large areas were devoted to the cultivation of the small ash-tree which is used to assist in the production of the insect-wax. The yellow blossom of the rape was everywhere in bloom, and pervaded the air with the most delicate of perfumes; while the wheat-fields were just beginning to wear their spring raiment of bright green. Towards evening my road lay across the river Ya to the small magisterial town of Chia-chiang, where I spent the night. Next day, soon after starting, we again crossed the Ya in a ferry-boat and thence proceeded for a few miles along the right bank. Near the ferry-crossing I noticed on the left bank numerous shrines and small caves hollowed by nature and by art out of the face of a cliff. Sticks of incense were burning in front of several of the miniature images contained in them. From this point onward the road lay through a very picturesque district studded with groves of fine

trees and two or three good pagodas, and beautified by the fresh blossoms of peach and cherry and by wild primroses that seemed to grow out of the solid rock. In the afternoon we again crossed to the left bank of the river in order to reach the magisterial town of Hung Ya, the main street of which we passed through. Another six miles brought us to the poor village of Chih-kuochên. The accommodation was very bad, as I had passed beyond the ordinary stage. The whole river-valley from Chia-chiang upwards is the resort of great numbers of wild-duck, a few of which fell to my gun, though the season was late, and they were not at that time plentiful. A curious feature of the shallower waterways of this district is the basket-bridge. Large wicker baskets are filled with loose stones and deposited in the bed of the river at even distances of about 10 feet. Planks of that length are placed on the top of them and constitute the bridge. This device has the merit of cheapness, but as soon as the basket is rotted by the action of the water, the stones gradually subside, and the planks are submerged. The Ya river, here as elsewhere, is too full of rocks and rapids for navigation. Long timber rafts, however, make the journey from Ya-chou to Chia-ting at all seasons of the year, except in the height of the rainy season, and serious accidents are rare.

Next day the road led tortuously through the river-valley and crossed the stream several times. After one ferry-crossing I was faced by a stiff climb of about 800 or 1,000 feet leading to a pass

H

where there is a primitive tea-house. A corresponding descent on the other side soon led us back to the river's edge, at a point where the stream is very turbulent. We crossed by a bridge called the "Bridge of the Goddess of Mercy" (Kuan Yin Ch'iao), formed of long slabs of stone, and immediately afterwards passed through the village of the same name. Another 4 or 5 miles brought me to the small town of Ts'ao Pa, where I spent the night. This town lies in a plain surrounded by hills in every direction except the east and north-east. It lies on the left bank of the river at a point where the current is gentle and the bed very broad and shallow.<sup>1</sup>

On the morning of the following day, 14th March, I reached Ya-chou-fu, the seat of government of a taotai, whose jurisdiction extends to the Tibetan border. The town is important as being on the "mandarin" road from Peking to Lhasa, and also as being the centre of a great tea district.<sup>2</sup> It is in the plains surrounding Ya-chou that the inferior tea which is considered good enough for the Tibetan market is grown, and from here it is carried in long, narrow bundles on the backs of coolies to Tachienlu. There it is cut into cakes or bricks, packed in yak-hides, and carried by Tibetans all the way to Lhasa, and even to the borders of India.

At Ya-chou I was most hospitably entertained by the members of the American Baptist Mission, who, judging from the friendliness with which they

<sup>1</sup> From here a road leads direct to the capital, Ch'eng-tu, which can be reached in three stages.

<sup>2</sup> See Note 13 (p. 421).

were greeted in the streets, were evidently on excellent terms with the people. The Mission has established a dispensary and a school, and at the time of my visit was engaged in the construction of a large hospital. To make invidious comparisons between different missionary bodies in China is unbecoming for a traveller who has been treated by all with every possible courtesy; but if I venture to refer to the American Baptist Mission with special praise, it is only because the members of that Mission whom I have had the good fortune to meet happen to have been persons of broad sympathies and more than ordinary culture and refinement.

The hospitalities of Ya-chou induced me to break my journey here for one day, which I spent in exploring the town and neighbourhood. It is situated in a rather confined plateau nearly surrounded by hills, including one mountain, the Chou Kung Shan, which, as a place of pilgrimage, is a humble rival of Omei.<sup>1</sup> At Ya-chou I paid off the somewhat uncouth "boy" whom I had engaged at Ch'êng-tu, and found a successor to accompany me to Tachienlu. I also engaged a new set of coolies. A sedan-chair which I had bought on leaving the Yangtse at Wan-hsien had been with me the whole way, but I very seldom used it, except when entering and leaving large towns. At Ya-chou I might as well have left it behind, and so reduced the number of my coolies by half; for I did not enter it after the day I left that city. I abandoned it finally at Tachienlu.

<sup>1</sup> See Note 1 (p. 411).

Almost immediately on leaving Ya-chou on the next portion of my journey I entered into the mountainous region that fringes the Tibetan plateau. Marco Polo evidently passed through the Ya-chou plain on his journey from Ch'êng-tu to Yunnan-fu *viâ* the Chien-ch'ang valley. In his day Ya-chou must have been a frontier town on the extreme west of Cathay, for all the mountainous region beyond belonged to Tibet. Like most border regions this district was the scene of constant warfare, and Messer Marco draws a pitiful picture of its utter desolation. It was infested, apparently, by wild beasts, as well as by wild men. But since his day the political boundary of China has been moved steadily westwards, and the province of Ssuch'uan now nominally includes a vast tract of country that was once, and still to a great extent is, inhabited by Tibetans or allied tribes.

On 16th March, a few miles' walk from Ya-chou brought me to the Flying Dragon Pass (Fei Lung Ling), about 3,600 feet high. Hosie, describing this road, says that "a long pull over a frightful road brought us to the summit";<sup>1</sup> but the weather must have been against him, for I experienced no difficulty, and found the road no worse than roads in China usually are. About 65 *li* (barely 20 miles) from Ya-chou brought me to the village of Shih-chia Ch'iao, where I spent the night in a rather good inn. Next day I went up the right bank of a stream that flows north-east to meet the Ya, and after

<sup>1</sup> *Three Years in Western China*, p. 95.



twice crossing it reached the small district town of Jung-Ching, in the streets of which I smashed a carved Buddha-headed mountain-pole that I had bought on Mount Omei, in my efforts to beat off a dog that presented every appearance of insanity. Late in the afternoon I reached the end of the stage at Huang-ni-p'u, a small straggling village on the slopes of the mountain range that was to be crossed on the following day. The pass, which is known as the Great Elephant (Ta Hsiang Ling) is 9,200 feet high — less than 2,000 feet lower than the summit of Mount Omei. Huang-ni-p'u lies at a height of about 8,870 feet; so the actual climb that faced us on the 18th March was about 5,330 feet. The pass, according to one interpretation, derives its name from the elephant on which P'u Hsien rode from India to Mount Omei; but that legend, as we have seen, has no basis in fact.<sup>1</sup> I started the ascent early in the morning, amid the glorious weather that had smiled upon me ever since I entered Ssuch'uan; and my dog Jim and I climbed the pass amid slush and snow with a rapidity which entirely baffled the efforts of the two soldiers who formed my escort to keep up with us. I reached the summit about midday, and rested in one of the numerous refreshment shanties that cater for the tea-coolies, of whom I passed many hundreds during the journey from Ya-chou to Tachienlu. The weights that these men carry on their backs are enormous. A single man carries as much as 300 and sometimes 400 pounds

<sup>1</sup> See Note 14 (p. 421).

weight.<sup>1</sup> They receive twenty or thirty cents a day each, according to the weight carried, and spend about three weeks on the journey. An unburdened traveller traverses the same distance in eight days. The coolies walk very slowly, as a slip might have dangerous consequences. My own greatest difficulty in making the ascent of the Ta Hsiang Ling was to pass these people on the narrow path, especially when a string of them stood sideways to rest their burdens on their wooden props: for they never unload themselves on the road, owing to the great difficulty of getting the burden on to their backs again. I saw only one man meet with an accident. He was passing under an overhanging ledge of rock, and tried to dodge a long ice stalactite. This unbalanced him, and he fell on the path with his huge load uppermost. Till we had extricated him I saw nothing but his legs; but he rose up smiling, and some friendly hands assisted him in replacing his burden.

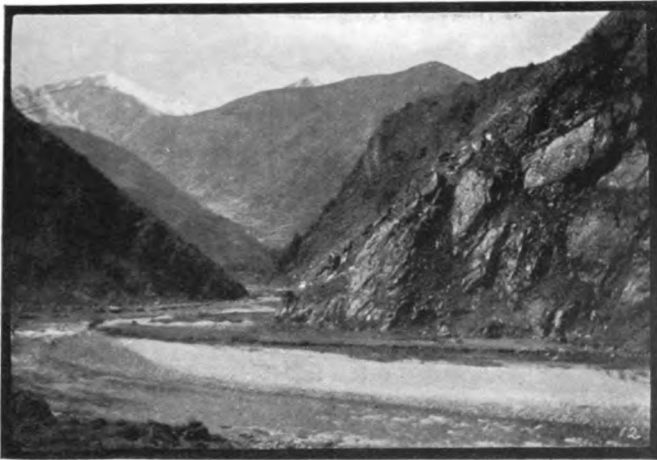
The temperature at the summit was not lower than 43° in the shade, according to my thermometer, but that was at midday. The snow was melting fast under a hot sun. The view from the ridge was on both sides magnificent. There was no mist, and the bright sunshine made the distant peaks with their white caps stand out with marvellous vividness against the deep-blue sky.

Having descended from the snowy heights of the Great Elephant Pass, and so having left the

<sup>1</sup> Baber mentions an instance of a coolie who "must have had, at the lowest computation, more than 400 English pounds on his back."



**TEA-CARRIERS ON THE ROAD TO TACHIENLU.**



**APPROACH TO TACHIENLU.**

*[To face p. 118.]*



plains of China out of sight for many weeks to come, I found myself in the little city of Ch'ing-ch'i-hsien, which in spite of its diminutive size and remoteness from Western influences is so far advanced in civilisation as to possess a girls' school. There is also a temple dedicated to Kuan-Ti (the so-called "God of War"), which was an appropriate circumstance, as soldiers and military supplies were being duly hastened through the town in connection with the border warfare that was being carried on between the Chinese and Tibetans south of Batang. I noticed a versified proclamation in the streets warning the people not to be alarmed at the sight of the soldiers, and promising that all supplies required for their use would be paid for at current market rates. I passed several small bodies of troops between Ya-chou and Tachienlu, and as far as I could observe they were very well-behaved. There were no foreign-drilled troops among them, and they carried the old-fashioned firearms that China is now rapidly learning to discard. What was perhaps a more noteworthy circumstance was the fact that the troops were being regularly paid, and that the commissariat arrangements worked without a hitch. I heard few details of what was actually taking place at the front until I reached Tachienlu, but it was evident that the provincial authorities were dealing with the trouble in a thoroughly energetic manner. The difficulties of sending military supplies and munitions of war from Ch'êng-tu to the borders of Tibet must have been enormous. Ta Hsiang Ling was only one of a number of great passes that had to be crossed

before the scene of warfare could be reached. The dragging of field artillery over a succession of wild mountains where the highest of the passes rises to more than 15,000 feet, is a feat which can perhaps be best appreciated by those who helped to perform a similar one during the British march to Lhasa.

Ch'ing-ch'i-hsien was at one time a city of great strategic importance, and was the scene of many a fierce struggle between the Chinese and the Lolos—who have now retired many miles to the south. At other times, too, the Chinese have been hard put to it to defend themselves against the quasi-Tibetan tribes and Mantzŭ who still inhabit the mountains to the west. Its natural position, at the edge of a ravine or natural moat, is a very strong one, and a besieging force armed with primitive weapons would have very little chance of taking it by storm unless they first secured the Great Elephant Pass: for on that side only the city has no natural protection except the mountain range itself.<sup>1</sup>

Immediately on leaving Ch'ing-ch'i by the west gate we descended into the ravine which protects it on the west and south, and crossed the sparkling mountain stream from which the city derives its name. The road then gradually ascends along the flank of some bare hills, picturesque but with little cultivation. It then descends and passes between high hills, issuing thence into a broad valley in which flows the stream Liu Sha ("Shifting Sands"). On its left bank is the village of Fu Chuang.<sup>2</sup> A little

<sup>1</sup> See Note 15 (p. 422).

<sup>2</sup> Also known as Man Chuang (蠻庄).

further on the valley gradually contracts, leaving only an insignificant area for cultivation. What there is of it is said to be very rich, chiefly owing to the periodical inundations, which render it suitable for rice. The hills are mostly bare, and trees are few except in the neighbourhood of houses. The next place of any importance is known as Ni (or I) T'ou Courier Stage, which is a large village of comparative importance, and contains excellent inns. Here we spent the night to recuperate our energies in anticipation of the pass that lies just beyond.

Ni T'ou lies about 4,900 feet above the sea-level, and the summit of the Fei Yüeh Ling is 9,000 feet high, only slightly less than the Great Elephant. For a considerable part of the way the path led up the valley of the Liu Sha, which rises in the mountains on the east side of the pass. Above Ni T'ou it is simply a turbulent mountain stream rushing downwards through a picturesque gorge.<sup>1</sup> The final climb of 1,500 feet is very steep, but the dangers and difficulties of the pass have been much exaggerated not only by the Chinese chroniclers—who, like all the *literati* of their country, are sure to have been bad pedestrians—but also by at least one European. The *Hsi Tsang T'u K'ao* quite unnecessarily describes it as “the most dangerous place in China.”<sup>2</sup> The view from the top—which is a narrow ridge—is less grand than that from the Ta Hsiang Ling, owing to the proximity of other lofty ranges.

<sup>1</sup> See Note 16 (p. 422).

<sup>2</sup> 內地第一險阻也。

One of the poets of the present dynasty (Hsü Chang) has declared in a pleasant poem that the ascent of this mountain is like the soaring of a swan, the descent like the swooping of a hawk. This is a picturesque description, but it could hardly be applied with appositeness to a certain Buddhist monk who was met on the pass some years ago by a Western traveller.<sup>1</sup> The monk was doing a pilgrimage from P'u T'o (Chusan) to Lhasa, and had already been seven years on the road. His somewhat slow progress was accounted for by the fact that at every two steps of his journey he prostrated himself at full length on the ground. He was quite cheerful, and anticipated that in two or three years more he would reach Lhasa. Without assuming that there was anything either swanlike or hawklike in my movements I may claim to have crossed the Fei Yüeh Ling rather more rapidly than the monk, and I reached the end of the day's stage—the village of Hua-lin-p'ing—early in the afternoon.<sup>2</sup> Shortly before arriving there I turned off the road to visit a picturesque temple which I espied embowered in a grove of trees on the right bank of a mountain torrent. It is dedicated to Kuan Yin, but the Guardian Deity of the Kao Shan ("Lofty Mountain") also has a shrine in the temple grounds. Behind the main hall, which contains the eighteen lo-han in miniature, and a cast-iron bell dated the second year of 'Tao Kuang (1822), there is a timber-built monastery in which a few

<sup>1</sup> Rockhill, *The Land of the Lamas*, p. 306.

<sup>2</sup> See Note 17 (p. 422).



monks reside. Higher up is a pavilion which contains among other things a black wooden tablet recording the names of those who had subscribed towards the restoration of the building after its destruction by wind and rain. The grounds of the temple are well laid out, and there is a fine view.

Hua - lin - p'ing is a village of two streets, one of them broader and cleaner than is usual in Chinese villages. Most of the inhabitants, however, are not pure Chinese. A proclamation on the walls stated that a large number of coolies were being employed by Government on transport service, in connection with the border war, and that if any such coolie used any military supplies for his own purposes or sold them to civilians he would be punished with relentless severity; and that a like fate would befall any civilian who bought such goods from him.

There is great abundance of coal in the hills about Hua-lin-p'ing, and it is freely used by the poorest peasants for heating and cooking purposes. Judging from the coal which was brought to me in a brazier it appeared to be of excellent quality, for it burned well, and gave out considerable heat with hardly any smoke. The temperature in these mountain villages was generally low enough to make artificial warmth very desirable; but the fumes of charcoal are not conducive to cheerfulness or to health, and coal was a welcome surprise.

For the remaining three days of my journey to Tachienlu the scenery was of great beauty and grandeur. I have seldom seen anything

more magnificent than the view of mighty mountains that greeted me as I left Hua - lin - p'ing, and continued to face me nearly all the rest of the way. The lustre of the snow, the rich azure of the sky and the sombre shadows of the gorges and ravines combined to make a series of pictures which no words can describe, and which time can never efface from the memory. There are scenes which an artist could never be weary of painting, a poet never weary of describing: yet both would assuredly fail to communicate the secret of their loveliness to those who had never seen. There are times, of course, when the glories of the scenery are hidden by clouds or dimmed by rain and mist, and many a traveller must have gone through this country with very little idea of the wonderful sights that were hidden from him; but the good fortune that accompanied me to the summit of Mount Omei did not forsake me for even half a day during my long walk to Tachienlu, for the sun was never eclipsed by a cloud, and the lustrous peaks that towered skyward never once robed themselves in fog.

From Hua - lin - p'ing the road descends steeply till it reaches the beautiful valley of the Ta Tu. This great river I had not seen since I left Chia-ting, where it joins the Min. Like the Ya river, its current is too swift and the rapids are too dangerous to admit of navigation. Between Lu Ting Ch'iao (which I reached the same day) and the junction with the Min the fall of the river is no less than 3,750 feet.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See Note 18 (p. 423).

The road to Lu Ting keeps to the left bank of the river, sometimes at a height above it of several hundred feet, and sometimes (as at the village of Lêng Chi) close to the river bank. Lu Ting, which gives its name to an important suspension bridge, is about 20 miles from Hua - lin - p'ing. Shortly before reaching it I passed safely over a somewhat dangerous section of the road, where from a steep bank rocks and stones frequently crash down over the path and into the river, with disastrous results to unwary passengers. Hosie describes how a large stone the size of his head narrowly missed striking him, and how he saw the body of a man who had been struck dead, his weeping wife and friends trying to remove the corpse without endangering their own lives. The vicinity of Lu Ting must be beautiful at all seasons, but it was particularly so at the time of my arrival there, on account of the wonderful display of myriads of fruit-tree blossoms. Had I come at a later season I should no doubt have been able to endorse Rockhill's verdict as to the excellence of the peaches.<sup>1</sup> The town itself is small and dirty, but its position renders it of some commercial importance, for through it all the trade that follows this main route between China and Tibet must pass. The iron suspension bridge towards which all the streets of the town converge affords the only means of crossing the Ta Tu. This fine bridge, which has been several times repaired since its construction more than two hundred years ago, is about 120 yards long.

<sup>1</sup> *Land of the Lamas*, p. 304.

It may now be regarded as the iron chain that connects China and Chinese Tibet.<sup>1</sup> Geographically and ethnologically the Ta Tu river is the eastern boundary of Tibet, for, though the steady advance of Chinese influence has caused the political boundary to be moved further and further west, the races that inhabit the western side of the Ta Tu are still predominantly Tibetan, Mantzū, or Hsi Fan,<sup>2</sup> and the tribal chiefs are still left in complete control of their mountainous territories. The Chinese have indeed driven a wedge into this region as far as Tachienlu in order to maintain control over the high-road to Lhasa; but they interfere very little with the government of the country. Beyond the Ta Tu the country is not divided into magisterial districts, and the jurisdiction of the Ch'ing-ch'i magistrate extends only as far as Lu Ting. Recent maps of China make the province of Ssuch'uan extend further west even than Batang, but the whole of the region I have referred to should properly be marked on the maps as Chinese Tibet,<sup>3</sup> or as Tibetan Ssuch'uan. There is, of course, an extraordinary mixture of races and languages in this wild border region, but the prevailing type is anything but Chinese; and in religion, history and social customs the people who inhabit this territory obviously belong to one of the numerous allied races of which Tibet is composed to-day.<sup>4</sup>

After crossing the bridge the road leads along

<sup>1</sup> See Note 1Q (p. 423).

<sup>2</sup> See chap. xv.

<sup>3</sup> I observe that it is so marked in Waddell's map attached to his recent book on the British expedition to Lhasa.

<sup>4</sup> For a brief discussion of the ethnology of this country, see chap. xv.

the right bank of the Ta Tu for a distance of nearly 20 miles. Villages are few and the population is scanty. In the hamlet of Ta P'êng Pa I rested in an eating-house kept by a Chinese, who, to my surprise, greeted me in Pekingese. As I sipped my tea he cheerfully informed me that he had been a Boxer, and had left Peking immediately after the allies had entered it. I fancy he must have done so under a cloud; but I did not press the subject, and amiably accepted his assurance that, in spite of troublesome political estrangements, he was sentimentally attached to all foreigners. After Ta P'êng Pa there is a long upward climb, followed by a short and sudden descent to a wooden bridge crossing a mountain stream. From here there is a magnificent view of the snowy mountains in the south-west.

As this road is frequently tramped by Tibetan pilgrims on their way to Mount Omei, I was not surprised to find a number of wayside shrines. If the name of Thomas Atkins is—I hope it is not—scribbled over the walls of the Lhasa cathedral, it is satisfactory to know that Tibetan feelings cannot have been outraged thereby; for no more inveterate wall-scribbler exists than your Tibetan pilgrim. I found abundant evidence of this in the shrines just referred to, as well as in the temples of Chia-ting and Mount Omei.

Twenty-five *li* beyond Ta-P'êng Pa the road suddenly branches off to the left, leaving the valley of the Ta Tu, and entering that of its tributary the Lu, or, as the Tibetans call it, the Do river. A steep descent soon led us to our resting-place, the village of Wa Ssü Kou ("The Ravine

of the Tile-roofed Monastery"). It consists of one street, behind which are a few small maize-fields, orchards and walnut trees in the level ground between the village and the water's edge. A small temple, presumably that from which the village is named, overlooks a rather cranky iron suspension bridge. This bridge crosses the Lu to a steep path which climbs along the opposite mountain side in the direction of the valley of the Ta Tu, or Chin Ch'uan ("Gold Stream")<sup>1</sup>—as the Ta Tu is called above the junction with the Lu. The path leads into the territory of a tribal chief, subordinate to the Tibetan prince who rules at Tachienlu. Hosie states that respectable Chinese settling there are allowed to take unto themselves temporary native wives, on payment to the chief of three taels (less than half a sovereign) per wife. "They are free," he adds, "to leave the country when they choose, but the wives and children must remain."<sup>2</sup> I spent an afternoon exploring the fringe of this region, the northern part of which was in the eighteenth century the scene of a long and terrible struggle between the imperial troops and the Chin Ch'uan chiefs. Near the summit of the steep path that creeps along the precipitous face of the cliff opposite Wa Ssu Kou, there is a small shrine dedicated to Kuan Yin, who is here regarded as the protectress of a road which, without her protection, might subside into the turbulent river hundreds of feet below.

The next day I walked the remaining distance

<sup>1</sup> Gold-washing is carried on here to a considerable extent, as in nearly all the rivers of western Szech'uan.

<sup>2</sup> *Journey to the Eastern Frontier of Tibet*, pp. 24-25.

—about 15 miles—to Tachienlu.<sup>1</sup> The road keeps to the right bank of the river the whole way, and gradually ascends from 5,300 feet at Wa Ssü Kou to 8,400 feet at Tachienlu. This is sufficient to indicate that the Lu river is a wild torrent with many waterfalls. In summer, after the melting of the snows, it must present the appearance of a continuous white cascade; even in spring its waters are turbulent enough. I reached Tachienlu early in the afternoon about five hours in advance of my sluggish followers, and found a warm welcome in the hospitable house of Mr and Mrs Moyes, well known by name to those who have studied the interesting history of missionary enterprise among the Tibetans.<sup>2</sup>

Tachienlu is a long, narrow little city which has had to adapt its shape to that of the mountains by which it is hemmed in. The summits of these mountains are covered with snow all the year round, and some are very lofty. According to Bretschneider's map, one of them is estimated at 25,592 feet, and another at 24,900 feet. Outside the walls of the city there is hardly a foot of level ground, except along the banks of the river, which, on entering the city, cuts it into two parts. It is the great emporium of trade between China and Tibet, being the point at which Tibetans and Chinese come from west and east, respectively, to exchange the produce of the two countries.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See Note 20 (p. 424).

<sup>2</sup> Mrs Moyes (then Mrs Rijnhart) is the well-known author of the book, *With the Tibetans in Tent and Temple*, in which she ably describes the life of adventure and hardship which she led in the far interior of Tibet, where she lost both husband and child.

<sup>3</sup> See Note 21 (p. 425).

The contribution of China to this trade is chiefly tea, with limited quantities of tobacco and cotton; that of Tibet mainly consists of musk, gold-dust, skins and various mysterious concoctions used for medicines. The population of the town is predominantly Tibetan, there being about seven hundred Tibetan families to about four hundred Chinese.<sup>1</sup> In addition to the Tibetan families, however, must be reckoned a great number of lamas, most of whom live in large lamaseries outside the city walls. Many of the houses—especially the large inns—are of the well-known two-storied Tibetan type, and on their flat roofs flutter innumerable prayer-flags giving to the winds the universal Tibetan hymn of praise, *Om mane padme hom*. The streets are generally noisy with the sounds that always accompany buying and selling in Eastern countries; but rarely so noisy as to stifle the pious murmurings of red-frocked lamas. For Tachienlu, like all Tibet, is priest-ridden. Even the Chinese seem to succumb, after a few years of residence there, to the wiles of priest-craft, and constantly seek the assistance of lamas in exorcising demons and invoking the protection of the saints of lamaism. Many of the lamas make a good deal of money by securing temporary engagements as domestic chaplains; and the deep, sonorous voices (assiduously cultivated from youth upwards) in which they intone their dirge-like spells and unintelligible prayers, penetrate far beyond the walls of their improvised chapels.

<sup>1</sup> Hsieh, *Journey to the Eastern Frontier of Tibet*.



## CHAPTER IX

### TACHIENLU

I REMAINED in Tachienlu, where I found excellent quarters in a Tibetan inn, from 23rd March to 15th April. During this period of more than three weeks I exchanged visits with the Chinese prefect and the Tibetan chief or "king" of Chala, and made excursions to various places of interest in the vicinity. My main object in staying so long in one place was that I might devote some attention to the Tibetan language, of which I had previously acquired a very rudimentary knowledge. With this end in view I engaged a native teacher, a pleasant and mild-mannered old gentleman, who, in the approved Tibetan fashion, put out his tongue at me most respectfully whenever I chanced to pronounce or spell a word correctly. He officiated at the king's court as a kind of soothsayer. I hoped that my acquaintance with him might lead me to endorse the opinion of Marco Polo, that among the Tibetans are to be found "the best enchanters and astrologers that exist in all that quarter of the world." They, he goes on to remark, "perform such extraordinary marvels and sorceries by diabolic art that it astounds one to

see or even hear of them.”<sup>1</sup> Ser Marco was more fortunate than I was, for no blandishments on my part could wring any necromantic secrets from my soothsayer. But perhaps he had none to impart.

The climate of Tachienlu, as might be expected at an altitude of over 8,000 feet, is very bracing. The temperature sometimes sank to the freezing point, and snow often fell during the night, but the days were almost uniformly bright and sunny. There was a slight shock of earthquake on 30th March, and I was told that the occurrence was a common one; certainly it caused no consternation. The people of Tachienlu are generally healthy and vigorous, but the annual recurrence of typhus fever is a great scourge. The poorer class of Tibetan house is exceedingly dirty, and it can only be the fine climate that prevents Tachienlu from being frequently devastated by terrible epidemics.

I have already observed that west of the river Ta Tu the country is ruled by tribal chiefs, and is not under the direct rule of China. The chiefs are never interfered with so long as they abstain from political intrigues, and are punctual in the payment of their small tribute to the Chinese Government. The Chinese, however, fully recognise the importance of controlling the main road into Tibet proper; they have, therefore, stationed an officer of prefectural rank (*chün liang fu*) at Tachienlu, and his duty it is to protect Chinese interests, and keep a watch over

<sup>1</sup> Yule, *Marco Polo* (Cordier's edition), vol. ii. p. 49.

the movements of the Tibetan chiefs and kings. He exercises jurisdiction over the Chinese of the district — there are very few outside the town itself — but has no judicial or administrative control over the rest of the population. His official duties are chiefly connected with transport and commissariat arrangements, and in keeping up regular communications between the governor-general in Ch'êng-tu and the amban<sup>1</sup> or *ch'in ch'ai* at Lhasa. At the time of my visit his hands were full owing to the frontier war, and he was also burdened with the responsibility of looking after the new amban, who arrived in Tachienlu shortly before me on his way to Lhasa, and was still there when I left three weeks later. His predecessor, it may be remembered, was brutally murdered at the instigation of the lamas on the Tibetan frontier; and it was freely admitted by the new amban's numerous retinue that his courage, which had steadily diminished as he proceeded westwards, had vanished altogether when he reached Tachienlu. When it appeared that the frontier war showed no signs of coming to an end he applied, I understand, for leave to proceed to Lhasa by way of India; but this request was promptly refused by his superiors at Peking. Some yak - loads of his baggage started for the west shortly before I left the city, and I presume he had made up his mind to make a start soon afterwards. The turbulent

<sup>1</sup> The word *Amban*, now so well known to Europeans, is *Manchu*, and is applied to many high Chinese officials serving in the Mongolian and Tibetan dependencies of China, besides the Resident at Lhasa.

condition of the tributary states which had culminated in the murder of some French missionaries and the assassination of the amban seems to have forced the Chinese Government to give its serious attention to the problems of the frontier. As usually happens in China, the policy determined on was one of ruthless severity. Two large lamaseries were destroyed by the Chinese troops, several of the leading lamas were put to death, and the rest driven westward at the point of the sword. Two tributary Tibetan chiefs, of rank nearly equal to that of the king of Tachienlu, were found guilty of treasonable intrigues, and promptly executed. All these persons, if the stories told of them were true, seem to have deserved their fate. The events had occurred some time before my arrival in Tachienlu, but as the war was still in progress, and the lamas of the extreme west were known to be the implacable enemies of China, future possibilities still agitated the minds of Chinese and Tibetans alike. The loyalty of the chief or king of Chala was probably above question, and he was quite powerful enough to control any restlessness that might show itself among the lamas of his own principality; but there was some reason to believe that pressure was being brought to bear on the Chinese Government from an unknown source to induce it to abolish all the territorial chieftainships, and parcel out the whole country into regular magistracies under Chinese officials right up to the nominal frontier of Tibet proper. It was rumoured that Tibet itself was to be turned into a Chinese

province, and furnished with the usual hierarchy of Chinese officials — the main object probably being to frustrate the supposed designs of England on that country—and that Ssuch'uan was to be divided into two separate provinces. In view of all these possibilities, it is clear that the position of the tributary princes of Ssuch'uan was, and probably still is, a somewhat precarious one; and that the king of Chala, who could at any moment be placed under lock and key by the prefect at Tachienlu, would probably be the first to suffer from the change of policy. It would not be difficult for an unscrupulous Chinese official to trump up vague charges of treason which might quickly lead to the king's overthrow. Among other rumours I heard that the Ya-chou taotai was expected to move his headquarters temporarily or permanently to Tachienlu, and that the king's palace had already been selected as a suitable residence for him. The king had not apparently been consulted in this little matter. How the local politics of Chala have developed since I left that distracted kingdom I have had no opportunity of learning; but if in another five years the king is still swaying the fortunes of his little monarchy he will deserve a good deal of credit for his skilful manipulation of affairs during a very trying period.

The territory of this potentate, including that of the small chiefs subordinate to him, extends from the Ta Tu river on the east to the Yalung on the west, and for about seventeen days' journey from north to south. The name of his princi-

pality is spelt in Tibetan *Lchags-la*, but, as usual in Tibetan words, it is not pronounced as it is written. *Lchlags* (pronounced *cha*) is the Tibetan for "iron," and *la* means a mountain-pass. The Chinese transliteration<sup>1</sup> of the word would in the Pekingese dialect read Chia-na: but in western Mandarin the *i* is elided, and the *n* is sounded like an *l*. The king's own name in Chinese is Chia I Chai.<sup>2</sup> His Tibetan title, *gyal-po*, which means "king" or "ruling prince," sufficiently well expresses the nature of the authority which he exercises.<sup>3</sup> Rockhill describes him as "one of the most powerful chiefs of eastern Tibet, for among them he alone demands and obtains obedience from the lamas dwelling in his principality."<sup>4</sup> He rules by hereditary right, and has absolute power over the lives and fortunes of his subjects. The Chinese in his territory are exempt from his jurisdiction, but they are so few in number, except in the city itself, that the exemption counts for little. Beyond the periodical payment of a small tribute, the only concession which he is obliged to make to the suzerain power is the privilege of *ula*. This word is neither Chinese nor Tibetan, but is in universal use in Mongolia and Tibetan countries.<sup>5</sup> *Ula* is a system whereby all Tibetans living in the neighbourhood or within a certain distance of a caravan route are com-

<sup>1</sup> 甲哪.

<sup>2</sup> 甲宜齋.

<sup>3</sup> See Note 22 (p. 425).

<sup>4</sup> *Land of the Lamas*, p. 276.

<sup>5</sup> The Chinese is 烏拉, which is merely phonetic. The word *ula* is Mongolian. Rockhill observes that *ula* (*ouldak*) was known in India in mediæval times.—(*Land of the Lamas*, p. 52.)

pelled to furnish Government officials (Chinese and Tibetan) with men, baggage-animals, and food, either free of all cost or for a very small fixed sum. The system has given rise to great abuses, and has in some places caused so much distress among the people that whole villages have been abandoned and rich valleys left uncultivated. The subjects of the king of Chala were groaning under the weight of the *ula* system at the time of my visit, and I heard the king himself lamenting the sufferings which—owing to the greed and harshness of Chinese military officials—it caused his people. The burden at that time was more than usually heavy, for the Chinese Government insisted on exacting its full rights of *ula* in connection with the carriage of military supplies to the scene of warfare.

The only three official buildings of any importance in Tachienlu are the residences or *yaméns* of the king, the prefect or *chün liang fu* and a Chinese colonel (*hsieh-t'ai*). Of these by far the largest is the king's. I visited him a day or two after my arrival, and was received very cordially. He is a man of about forty years of age, of rather delicate appearance, but active and vivacious. He speaks Chinese (with a strong Ssuch'uan accent) in addition to his own language, and has adopted Chinese dress. His position in Tachienlu cannot be a very pleasant one, owing to the peculiar nature of his relations with the Chinese Government. The prefect appears to regard him as a kind of enlightened savage, and apparently considers that

the most effective method of demonstrating the superiority of the suzerain power is to treat the vassal with the least respect possible. The Chinese regard all Tibetans much as they used to regard Europeans—as barbarians outside the pale of true civilisation. I heard it stated that if a Chinese in Tachienlu kills a Tibetan he is merely mulcted in two packets of tea, but that if a Tibetan kills a Chinese the lives of three Tibetans must pay the forfeit; I cannot, however, vouch for the truth of this. The king would be glad to remove the centre of his government to another part of his territories and leave Tachienlu to the absolute control of China; but this he is not allowed to do. A few years ago a lama versed in magic spells prophesied to the king that if he spent any one of the next three consecutive New Year seasons in Tachienlu great misfortunes would fall upon him, but that if he spent them elsewhere all would be well. The king, who like all Tibetans is prone to superstition, lent a willing ear to the wisdom of the lama, and spent the last and first months of the next two years in one of his mountain retreats. When the third New Year season came round the frontier war had commenced, and the king's presence was urgently necessary in Tachienlu in connection with the transport arrangements; but his superstitious dread of unknown calamities again decided him to retire to the mountains. He came back in due course to find that he was in trouble. The *ula* arrangements had suffered by his absence, and the Chinese officials held



him to blame. Since then he has been zealously endeavouring to regain the confidence of his Chinese masters, with only partial success. His friendly intercourse with the few Europeans he has met is regarded somewhat suspiciously by the Chinese as well as by the lamas; and it is possible that when the days of trial and tribulation come to him he will look—I fear he will look in vain—to his European friends for protection and support. With two or three of his Protestant missionary friends he has actually entered into "sworn brotherhood,"<sup>1</sup> an old Chinese custom whereby close friends enter into a mutual compact which creates between them a kind of fictitious relationship. This may explain a not quite accurate passage which occurs in Waddell's recent book, *Lhasa and its Mysteries*.<sup>2</sup> He says that "the Tibetan chief of Dartsendo (Tachienlu), the king of 'Chala,' is especially well-disposed towards foreigners; and when the Dalai Lama threatened to punish him on this account, he is reported to have become 'sworn brothers' with the Protestant Christian *Tibetans*." Colonel Waddell adds that the king of Chala was said to be building forts in his country, and could put ten thousand fighting men in the field; but I know no reason for supposing that the king's intentions are other than entirely pacific.

A few weeks' residence in Tachienlu served to open my eyes to the fact that scandal and gossip are not confined to Western societies. Even the

<sup>1</sup> *Huan-t'ieh* (換帖), literally "the exchange of cards."

<sup>2</sup> See p. 358 of that work.

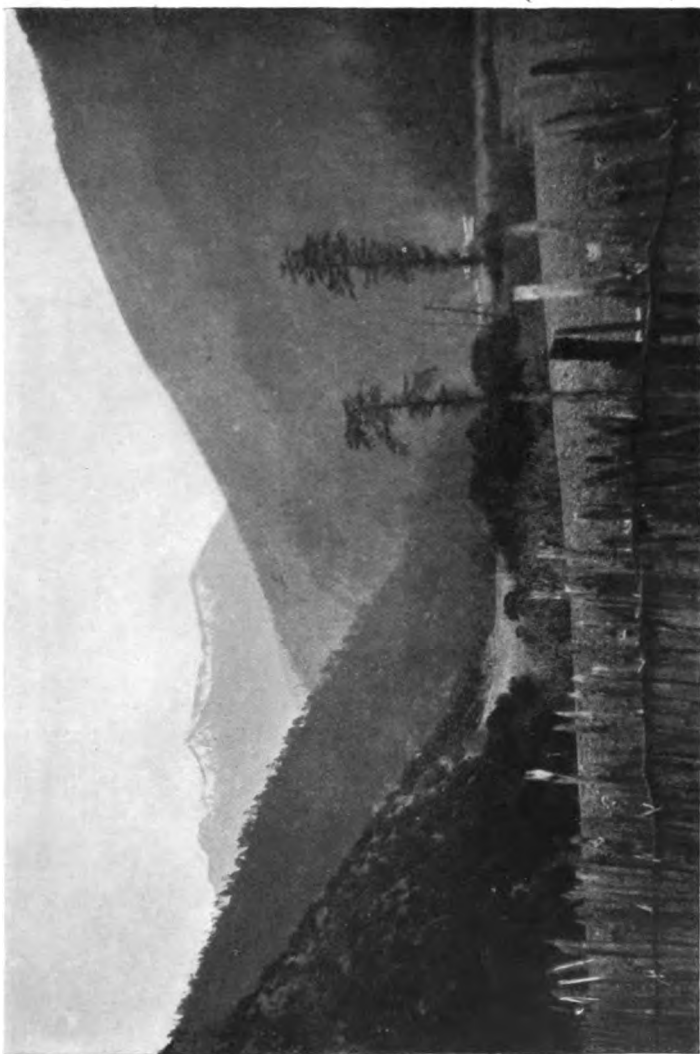
Tibetan is sufficiently civilised to take an intelligent interest in his neighbour's sins. One story which caused much hilarity among the Smart Set of Tachienlu concerned the wife of a certain court official. A distinguished person of royal lineage (not the king) is a man who is known to be of an amorous disposition, and has been the hero of several pathetic romances. He gazed upon the court official's lady and saw that she was fair. Steps were immediately taken to send the husband on a mission to a far country, he having been assured that his domestic interests would be carefully protected in his absence. The lady, reluctantly or otherwise, speedily bestowed her caresses on her exalted lover. For some time all went well; but, unlike the less fortunate Uriah in the Biblical story, the official returned to his family in safety, discovered the intrigue, and promptly repudiated his lady. The tragedy of the situation consists in the fact that she was also repudiated by her "royal" lover, his fickle affections having meanwhile found another object. The lady subsequently consoled herself by marrying a Chinese merchant, and is said to be still carrying on a monotonous existence within the curtained recesses of that gentleman's private house. The episode is one which might perhaps be commended to Mr Stephen Phillips for dramatic treatment.

Court intrigues have given rise to incidents more sombre than this. The last king, elder brother of the present one, is said to have had the date of his death foretold to him by a certain

lama. When the date was close at hand, the king took ill and died, after two days' illness, exactly on the date prophesied. For some dark reason the lama—who should probably have been tried for murder—succeeded in acquiring such potent influence over the dead man's successor, the present king, that he persuaded his Majesty to adopt his daughter. Quite apart from the fact that lamas have no right to possess daughters at all, it does not seem to be quite clear what the lama stood to gain by this proceeding. The king was at that time childless, but he has since acquired a daughter of his own. I saw both the lama's child and the king's during a visit to the Summer Palace in the mountains, and was astonished to find that the lama's daughter—a little girl of eight—was being brought up as a boy, and was attired in boy's clothes. There was some mystery connected with the whole affair which I failed to fathom. As may be gathered from stories of this kind, the lamas do not enjoy a good reputation. Their private morals are not above reproach, and they are too fond of meddling in mundane affairs; but they do not wield the great political power of which in other Tibetan states the lamas have gradually possessed themselves.

The heir to the "kingdom" is the king's younger brother, a very amiable man whose love of outdoor sports would endear him to the heart of many an Englishman. He does not meddle with questions of *la haute politique*, and loves to spend his time in the delightful mountain residence to which I have just referred as the Summer

Palace, a place known in Chinese as the Yü Lin Kung. I was invited to spend a few days there as the king's guest, and was received and most hospitably entertained by his brother. It is a large, rambling building, beautifully situated in a lonely spot among the mountains about 8 miles from Tachienlu. One of the greatest attractions of this place is a hot sulphur spring, the water from which is made to flow into a capacious tiled bath. The Tibetans are said to be an unclean race—and I will not gainsay it—but they delight in hot water when they can get it. The neighbouring forests are strictly preserved for sporting purposes, and afford splendid cover for pheasants and other game. Our "bag" was an insignificant one; but I was filled with admiration for the zeal of the king's brother, who was armed only with an old-fashioned muzzle-loading weapon of venerable appearance and doubtful efficiency. He deserved success, if he failed to command it. Behind the palace are some of the tombs of the royal family. They are surrounded by clusters of prayer-flags—strips of white cloth tied to the top of sticks or slender poles and bearing the usual prayer formulas. Close by is a rivulet in which there is a large prayer-wheel: a large wooden cylinder, appropriately inscribed, placed perpendicularly in a strong framework of timber. Through the cylinder runs a fixed wooden pin, and the whole structure is so arranged that the lower end of the cylinder is always in the water. The flow of the stream causes it to revolve unceasingly, and each revolution is supposed to be equivalent to



VIEW FROM THE "SUMMER PALACE" NEAR TACHIENLU.

[To face p. 142.]



a single utterance of the words, *om mane padme hom*. The prayer-flags and prayer-wheels may thus be regarded as continually engaged in saying masses for the souls of the dead princes. In my subsequent travels through the Tibetan states I found wheels and flags of the same kind in great abundance; and they are, of course, well known to all who have travelled anywhere in Tibet. As a rule, a cluster of flags is all that marks a Tibetan graveyard, especially in places where cremation is the general method of disposing of the dead. Prayer-wheels may be found wherever there is flowing water; and I observed that the Tibetans—who have not as much objection as the Chinese to imbibing cold water—would often stop to drink just below a prayer-wheel, as if under the impression that the water, which had performed the pious act of turning the wheel, had acquired thereby some mysterious sanctity. In connection with this I may mention that holy water is not a monopoly of Roman Catholic countries, for it is quite commonly used for ritualistic purposes in lama temples. As every reader knows, this is not the only respect in which there are resemblances or coincidences—sometimes startling enough—between the ceremonial usages of lamaism and Catholicism.

Prayer-wheels<sup>1</sup> may be turned either by water or by hand. The ordinary small hand-wheel is constantly seen in the hands of both lamas and laymen. Old men, especially, who are anxious to

<sup>1</sup> For the origin of the Prayer (or perhaps rather *Praising*) Wheel, see Rhys Davids' *Hibbert Lectures* (1881), p. 138 (4th ed.). See also Tylor's *Primitive Culture*, ii. 372-373 (4th ed.).

devote their slender remnant of life in acquiring new merit or destroying bad karma, hardly ever go out of doors without their wheels. They twirl them with their fingers as they walk, and years of practice enable them to do it without any conscious effort: indeed, I fancy that many old men would twirl an imaginary wheel if the reality were taken from them. It is curious to note that the older a wheel is—that is, the more it has been twirled—the more valuable it becomes; for few Tibetans will exchange an old wheel for a new one, and only the direst poverty will induce them to sell this most precious of all their possessions to a curio-hunter. Another form of hand-wheel is similar in size and appearance to a water-wheel. It is inserted perpendicularly in specially-constructed recesses, and may be twirled round its pin by any devout passer-by. Sometimes it is found in the wall of a temple, and not infrequently in a private house. In the latter case it is generally found inside the house on the right-hand side of the main doorway as one enters. Every one who goes in or out gives it a revolution or two. The stranger on entering thus confers a kind of benediction on his host, and at the same time accumulates a little merit for himself. The custom is an amiable one, and certainly does no one any harm. Not content with flags and prayer-wheels, the Tibetans are also very fond of erecting piles of stones on which are loosely-placed innumerable flat slabs, of varying shapes and sizes, each bearing the *om mane* formula in large, carved letters. These



are variously termed *obo*,<sup>1</sup> *mani-drombo* and *mani-dong*. They were specially numerous in the country through which I passed after leaving Tachienlu, but there are many of them also in the immediate neighbourhood of that town. Lamaism shares with other forms of Buddhism the rule that sacred objects should, as far as possible, be kept on the right-hand side. Where an *obo* or *mani-drombo* occurs, therefore, the road always bifurcates so as to enable the devout traveller to keep it on his right whichever way he is going. The inscribed slabs are the pious gifts of pilgrims, or of any person who wishes to conciliate or show his respect to the unseen powers. Every lamasery has among its inmates one or two masons who are employed by such persons in carving the inscriptions.

Before reaching Tachienlu I had purposely left undecided the route to be followed thereafter, as I was only too well aware of the obstructions which the authorities would be certain to put in my way when I attempted to leave the main routes. I had a vague idea of making an effort to cross the frontier into Tibet proper, and so proceeding to Lhasa by the route which no European has traversed since the days of the abbé Huc; but it soon became obvious that this would be impossible—at least so long as a state of war existed on the border. The Chinese prefect had no doubt acquainted himself with the fact that I was engaged in the study of Tibetan, and when I called upon him he showed

<sup>1</sup> A Mongolian word which the Chinese have naturalised as *o-pu* (阿卜).

considerable anxiety and curiosity as to my intentions. The new amban showing no eagerness to avail himself of a unique opportunity to add a British adviser to his staff, and the undertaking being otherwise impossible in the face of Chinese and Tibetan opposition, I was obliged to give up the idea of a ride to Lhasa, and had to fall back on my original intention of travelling through the Sino-Tibetan states of the Yalung valley to the north-west of Yunnan. If I were prevented by official opposition from following this route as well, I decided to return to the Ta Tu river, and find my way down the Chien-ch'ang valley to Yüeh-hsi and Ning-yüan-fu, the route which has been made famous by the journey of Marco Polo, and has been in recent years traversed by E. C. Baber and Sir A. Hosie. With regard to this route I was told that the road was much infested by robbers—Lolos and others—and that many of the inn-keepers had entered into a league with them to drug and rob, and, if necessary, murder their visitors. There was only one way to avoid molestation, and that was by the discovery and use of the robbers' password. The utterance of this word on appropriate occasions would not only ensure safety, but would remove all difficulties about transport and supplies. The person (a Chinese in Government employment) who gave me this information, and who may, for all I know, have had personal dealings with the gang, was so obliging as to give me the password itself, which consisted, he said, of the single word *Ku* ("old"). As I did not, after all,

follow this interesting route, and therefore had no opportunity of testing the efficacy of the word, I can only express the hope that the timely information now given will be of service to future travellers.

The Yalung valley is one of the least-known portions of the Chinese empire. In 1895-96 M. Bonin, a French Colonial official, travelled from Tali-fu to Tachienlu by a route which to a certain extent coincided with that taken by myself, and three years later a Swedish missionary, Mr E. Amundsen, travelled in the reverse direction by a road which was evidently almost the same as my own. But no Englishman<sup>1</sup> had traversed the same route before me, and as I had no opportunity of reading the narratives published by either M. Bonin or Mr Amundsen until my return to civilisation, I unfortunately derived no benefit from their previous experience: but their accounts, though interesting, are very meagre in detail and of tantalising brevity.<sup>2</sup> A glance at the map will show that my route lay across the mountains to the south-west of Tachienlu. On crossing the Yalung it enters the Muli or Huang Lama, and thence it crosses the Yunnan frontier a few miles north of Yung-ning-fu. Short as the total distance appears on the map, the series of great mountain ranges over which the road passes makes the journey a long one and arduous. A

<sup>1</sup> Major H. R. Davies, whose admirable survey and exploration work are well known, visited the Muli lamasery before me, but our routes only touched at that point. He has unfortunately published no account of his journey from Mien-ning-hsien to Chung-tien.

<sup>2</sup> For M. Bonin's see the *Bulletin de la Société de Géographie*, 1898, pp. 389 *seq.* For Mr Amundsen's, see the *Geographical Journal* for June and November 1900.

few Yunnanese merchants<sup>1</sup> choose this route to Ssuch'uan in order to avoid the likin-stations in the Chien-ch'ang valley; but the great difficulties of arranging for the safe transport of merchandise over snowy passes and unbridged rivers have given it a bad reputation.

Even at Tachienlu I was unable to gather much information about the country. The king himself appeared to have a very scanty knowledge of the southern part of his own territory. As soon as he and the Chinese prefect heard of my intention—and it was impossible to conceal it from them—the strongest objections were immediately raised. The road was impassable, the mountains were covered with snow that never melted, the lamas were hostile, the whole country was infested with robbers and wild beasts, and I should find neither food nor means of transport. I had already satisfied myself by private enquiry among the Tibetans and some Yunnanese merchants that the route was feasible, and that nothing was to be feared beyond the ordinary difficulties and hardships of travelling in a very wild region sparsely populated. I felt that if the road were safe and easy enough for an occasional trading caravan, it should also be safe and easy enough for an Englishman burdened with little beyond clothes and gun. I therefore declined to put faith in the exaggerated descriptions with which the officials endeavoured to frighten me, and insisted upon the right conferred upon me by my passport to travel where I chose. We exchanged several messages

<sup>1</sup> How few, may be judged from the fact that I met only one caravan in the course of a month's journey.

on the subject, and in personal interviews I made it as clear as possible that none of the difficulties which they had mentioned seemed to me sufficiently imposing to justify me in altering the route on which I had determined. The prefect, however, was particularly strenuous in his efforts to dissuade me from my purpose, and pointed out that he would be powerless to grant me any protection during the journey, and that the risks and dangers would be considerable. I need hardly say that his concern was not for me personally, but was due to his fears of what might happen to himself in the event of my coming to grief. From this point of view his attitude was reasonable enough. The upshot of a long discussion was that the king of Chala and the prefect allowed me to set out on my consenting to sign declarations in English and Chinese to the effect that all responsibility for my safety was to rest with myself. The first of these declarations ran as follows:

“This is to certify that I have been fully informed by the Ming Chêng Ssü (king of Chala) that the road by which I intend to travel from Tachienlu to the borders of Yunnan, *viâ* the southern portions of his territory and the country known as Huang Lama, is beset with great difficulties, and that my journey will be very arduous and possibly dangerous. Having been fully assured of these circumstances, and having nevertheless decided to traverse the country in question, I wish it to be understood that I undertake the journey at my own risk and on my own responsibility, and that the king of Chala

is not to be held responsible for any delay or accident that may occur in the course of such journey so far as it lies within his territory."

This document was handed to Mr Moyes, to be used by him to save the king from blame in the event of an accident. A similar declaration, containing the name of the Chinese prefect instead of that of the king, was handed directly to that official before my departure. I perhaps created an unwise precedent; but as the prefect seemed determined to prevent my departure unless I relieved him of all responsibility, I was left with no option. The British Consular authorities, I knew, would do nothing; they had already declined to countenance my travelling by this route.

The fears of the officials with regard to possible dangers were in some respects justifiable. A great part of the country between the Yalung and the borders of Tibet proper was and is under the direct or indirect control of lamas, who show very little respect for Chinese suzerainty. It was only recently that two French missionaries were cruelly butchered by the lamas somewhere near the Tali-Batang trade route; and a young Scotsman named Forrest, who had been collecting botanical specimens in the same locality, only escaped with his life after being hunted by the lamas with dogs, and suffering extraordinary privations. The country into which my road should lead me after crossing the Yalung was also directly ruled by lamas; and while I was in Tachienlu there were rumours to the effect that the lama-prince of that region, though far from the scene of actual fighting, was not only secretly

supporting the rebels, but had caused the roads in his territory to be torn up and blocked in order to prevent the advance of Chinese reinforcements from Yunnan. The war, indeed, was not progressing altogether favourably for the Chinese. It was whispered that on one occasion a whole regiment had been cut to pieces during a night attack. The Tibetans had eluded the sentries, who were probably asleep, rushed the camp, put out the fires, slaughtered many defenceless soldiers, and then quietly vanished, leaving the Chinese to shoot and stab each other in the extremity of their panic. Other rumours stated that five hundred Chinese troops had joined the Tibetans, and were receiving from them twelve *tiao* (about thirty shillings) a month each—much larger pay than they drew from China; and that the tributary prince of Litang—the state that adjoins Chala on the west—was only waiting to hear of another serious reverse to the Chinese troops before throwing in his lot with the rebels. Probably these rumours were much exaggerated, but they caused much uneasiness to the Chinese of Tachienlu, who for a long time past had been living in constant dread of a massacre. I heard that some time before my arrival the Tibetans were expected to attempt a great *coup* by making a sudden descent on Tachienlu itself, and any Tibetan in the city who was suspected of treasonable dealings with the rebels was imprisoned or closely watched. The principal Chinese merchants sent the bulk of their goods to Wa Ssü Kou or Lu Ting Ch'iao, and were ready to start for the east themselves at the first signs of serious trouble. The worst of the panic

had passed away before my arrival, chiefly owing to the vigour and severity with which the Government was dealing with the insurrection and the large numbers of Chinese soldiers that almost daily passed through Tachienlu on their way to the front.

Whether the prefect was sincere in his apprehensions regarding my safety if I insisted on crossing the wilder parts of the eastern Tibetan states I have no means of knowing; at any rate, he appeared to regard the written declaration already quoted as sufficient to relieve him of all responsibility in the matter; and as soon as that question was settled, both he and the king showed themselves ready to give me every reasonable assistance, and placed no further obstacles in my way. The king deputed a man of his own—a Tibetan who spoke a little Chinese—to act as my guide to the boundary of his territory on the Yalung river, and the prefect and colonel ordered three soldiers to escort me as far as the town of Yung-ning, just within the Yunnan frontier. I had also previously engaged a young man, whose father was a Chinese and his mother a Tibetan from Lhasa, to act as my personal servant, and this youth accompanied me almost as far as the frontier of Upper Burma. As a speaker of both Tibetan and Chinese, he proved a useful member of my party. The king was also obliging enough to accord to me the valuable privilege of *ula*, which would (within his territory) obviate all difficulties about transport. The *ula* was in this instance no hardship for the people, as I undertook to pay more than double the ordinary rates for all animals required for my use.



1.



2.



4.



3.



1. CHINESE HALF-RUPEE AND TIBETAN COINS.
2. REDUCED FACSIMILE OF SILVER PLAQUE WORN BY WOMEN IN THE YALUNG VALLEY.
3. CLAY VOTIVE TABLETS FROM MULL, WITH MINIATURE BUDDHAS.
4. EAR-RING WORN BY MO-SO WOMEN OF YUNG-NING.

[To face p. 152.]



## CHAPTER X

### TACHIENLU TO PA-U-RONG, YALUNG RIVER

I SET out from Tachienlu on 15th April. My caravan consisted of three mules to carry my baggage and silver<sup>1</sup> (very light loads which in level country might have been carried by a single mule), two riding mules for myself and my servant, and four for my escort. Half a mile

<sup>1</sup> The complications and variations in currency and money values constitute one of the greatest vexations to a European traveller in China. As is well known, the ordinary medium of exchange in China for small purchases is the "cash" (*t'ung ch'ien*) of which about 1,000 (sometimes more and sometimes less) are equivalent to a dollar (Mex). In larger transactions silver sycee or "broken" silver is used, in which case payments are made by weight and according to the "touch" or fineness of the silver. The ingots are cut up by the use of sycee-shears into small or large portions as required. The larger ingots—which in Ssuch'uan are generally of the approximate value of ten taels each (equivalent to nearly two pounds)—usually bear the guarantee "chops" of bankers and large merchants. In the west of Ssuch'uan the Indian rupee became many years ago a well-known and much appreciated coin, and very largely took the place of broken silver. Its convenient size and shape specially commended it to the Chinese and Tibetan merchants who had trade relations with Burma, Tibet and India: and as its exchange-value in and about Tachienlu was in excess of its face-value many Yunnanese merchants used to bring mule-loads of rupees to that city from Tali-fu, thereby making a very considerable profit. The coin was generally known as the *lama-t'ou* or Lama's Head—Queen Victoria's head being supposed to be that of a lama—and also as *yang ch'ien* or "foreign money," the same term that is often applied in other parts of China to the Mexican and British dollars. Recently the provincial Government prohibited the circulation of Indian rupees in Ssuch'uan, and began to issue a

beyond the city I crossed the stone bridge known locally as the Gate of Tibet, close under the walls of a gloomy lamasery, and entered the long defile that leads into the heart of the great mountains. The road gradually rose to a height of about 2,250 feet above Tachienlu, and at the hamlet of Chê-to—about 10,650 feet above sea-level, and about 40 *li* from Tachienlu—I found a haven for the night in a ruinous hut.

As far as Chê-to my route followed the Litang-Batang road that leads into Tibet proper, and I met several yak caravans bringing goods to Tachienlu. Outside my quarters at Chê-to hung a proclamation in Chinese and Tibetan informing the people that the insurrection of the I-jên (barbarians) gave all good men a favourable opportunity for proving their loyalty to Govern-

similar coin of its own at the Mint in Ch'êng-tu. The new coin is almost exactly equivalent in value to the Indian rupee, and resembles it in size and appearance: but it bears the head of the emperor of China instead of that of the emperor of India. It is interesting as being the first Chinese coin, so far as I am aware, to bear the sovereign's head. Probably had it borne no head at all it would have been regarded with suspicion and dislike by those who had for years been accustomed to the Indian rupee. One of the Ssuch'uanese coins (a half-rupee) is illustrated in the text, along with the obverse and reverse of a Tibetan coin also in common use about Tachienlu and western Ssuch'uan. I found the new Ssuch'uan rupee was accepted fairly willingly by the people between Tachienlu and Pa-U-Rong, less willingly by those of the Muli country. South of Yung-ning I again had recourse to broken silver; but west of Tali-fu the Indian rupee is generally accepted, and at the town of Hsia Kuan, near Tali-fu, Indian rupees can be bought in any quantity by travellers and merchants bound for Burma. The Indian rupee is now a rare coin in Ssuch'uan, but sometimes it is treated like broken silver, being cut into pieces and sold by weight. I have in my possession several mutilated rupees which were weighed out to me as small change. The late queen-empress's head has been treated with small respect by the silver-merchants.



“THE GATE OF TIBET.”

[To face p. 154.]



ment by ready compliance with the regulations about *ula*; but the dead bodies of no less than four yaks lying by the road-side between Tachienlu and Chê-to offered a grim comment on the results of those regulations.

At Chê-to my road left the caravan-route and led into a wild region where during a day's march I passed only one lonely house, near which we encountered the only representative of the local population—a sad-faced old woman sitting astride a mottled yak. The day's journey (the second stage from Tachienlu) was long and arduous. The road from Chê-to rose steadily, but not steeply, through a confined valley, following the left bank of a stream. About midday we were picking our way laboriously through deep snow, and early in the afternoon we reached the summit of the pass of Chê Ri La, 17,400 feet above the sea-level.<sup>1</sup> The pass is a double one, the two summits being divided by a long valley which appears to have been at one time the bed of a glacier.<sup>2</sup> High as we were, there were peaks in the north-east that still towered several thousand feet above us, and to the south and south-west we saw nothing but a vast ocean of billowy mountains with innumerable trough-like valleys. The descent was a difficult one on account of the snow, which was almost too deep for our

<sup>1</sup> See Note 23 (p. 428).

<sup>2</sup> It has been pointed out by Griesbach that the central Himalayan glaciers are receding, and once extended much lower than at present. Apparently the same is the case in the "Himālayas" of Tibetan Ssuch'uan. I saw few living glaciers; but in many ravines there were evident traces of lateral and terminal moraines.

mules, one of which fell never to rise again. A fertile valley opened before us as we descended, and we soon struck the right bank of a stream flowing down from the snows of the range we had just crossed. A beautiful forest of firs covered the slopes on the eastern side. About 8,000 feet below the summit we came upon the first signs of human habitation—a herd of yak. Five *li* further we came to a few cultivated fields and a large two-storied house, which proved to be the beginning of the straggling hamlet of A Te, where we spent the night. In this valley the high peaks are all hidden, and though its elevation is about 18,000 feet the gently-sloping hills are well forested. Here for the first time I caught sight of the great white pheasant known as the machi.<sup>1</sup>

This day's march was a fair sample of our daily toil for the next few weeks. It was a continuous march up and down the snowy or forest-clad slopes of the loftiest mountains in China; and no doubt the journey would have been monotonous and arduous enough had it not been for the magnificence of the ever-changing scenery. The food which I shared with my followers was of the roughest and plainest. We lived almost entirely on *tsamba*—parched barley-meal, mixed with yak butter and the peculiar concoction which the Tibetans believe to be tea, and kneaded by one's own fingers into a thick paste. Occasionally—for I had to be very sparing

<sup>1</sup> This I take to be the *crossoptilon Tibetanum*. It is quite unknown in-China proper.



of my cartridges—I contributed a pheasant to the table, and in two or three places we were able to buy goats. The goats trotted along with our caravan until we were hard up for food, and then they trotted no longer. White pigeons were numerous in the deeper valleys. Villages were very few—we seldom passed more than two in a day, and sometimes none at all, and as a rule they were nothing but the sorriest hamlets. We were generally able, however, to arrange our stages in such a way that we could spend the night under cover. We had no tent, and the nights were always too bitterly cold for sleeping out of doors. I was clothed in thick Peking furs, and wore boots lined with sheep-skin. During the day I wore smoked glasses to protect my eyes from snow-blindness. A couple of extra pairs I lent to two of my escort, and the rest wore the yak-hair eye-shade which the Tibetans call *mig-ra*. We found the villagers friendly and hospitable, and we never had any difficulty in getting accommodation when we came to a hamlet; and as we paid well for all supplies—a matter which sometimes caused evident surprise—we were always given the best that the village could produce or could spare. I did not meet a single Chinese between Chê-to and Li-chiang in Yunnan<sup>1</sup>—a journey that occupied about a month—and the Chinese language was entirely unknown.

Tibetan houses are gloomy stone buildings with small windows, and the rooms are both dark and

<sup>1</sup> See Note 24 (p. 428).

dirty. I was sometimes grateful to the darkness for concealing some of the dirt, but my sense of smell unfortunately remained painfully acute. The windows are necessarily small, as paper is too scarce to be used as a protection against the wind, and glass is of course unknown. The apparent size of the houses is deceptive. A building that presents the outward appearance of a substantial two- or three-storied dwelling-house with many rooms, shrinks into a dismal and draughty collection of stables, courtyards, and dungeon-like living-rooms, when one gets inside. As often as not, the greater part of the ground-floor is used as a cattle-shed, and off this a short passage leads into the family common-room. The upstairs rooms—reached by clambering up a block of wood, with carved notches to serve as steps—are generally only granaries and barns, full of beasts that crawl and bite. In some cases I was provided with the luxury of a room to myself; but more often I had to share the living-room with men, women, children, and disagreeable animals that love the night. My slumbers would certainly have been unpleasantly disturbed if I had been less worn out at the end of each day's journey. There are no fire-places or chimneys. The fire is kindled in the middle of the room, and the smoke escapes by the door and windows or through holes in the wall, but much of it does not escape at all, and the effect is trying to the eyes; while the black streaky soot, that clings to the walls and hangs on spiders' webs dangling from the roof, adds to the general effect of gloom and discomfort.

On arriving at our destination each night, we all crowded round the fire and consumed our *tsamba*, while our hostess exercised a pair of muscular arms in vigorously stirring up our tea and butter in a big wooden churn,<sup>1</sup> whence she ladled it out into a big pot, from which each of us poured what he wanted into his own bowl. Tibetan tea—made of the twigs of the tea-plant, and its coarsest leaves—has been much maligned: I always found it drinkable if one added plenty of butter and forgot it was meant to be tea. If as tea it is horrible, as a soup it is almost agreeable. The yak-butter, taken by itself, is insipid and unpleasant; but the Tibetans can make a kind of cream-cheese out of it, and I found this fairly good when I could get nothing better. Conversation with my kind hosts was apt to be stilted, even with the assistance of my semi-Tibetan boy. Fortunately my bull-terrier formed a topic of never-failing interest. His three simple tricks had delighted the genial monks of Mount Omei and the village children of central Ssuch'uan, and indeed his mere appearance—so different from that of Chinese dogs—had filled them with wonder; but when the simple herdsmen of the Yalung valley saw the strange foreign beast lying down at the word of command, or sitting on his hind legs and balancing a lump of *tsamba* on the end of his nose, the prevailing feeling seemed to be something not very far removed from religious awe.

Every valley seemed to have a dialect of its

<sup>1</sup> The Tibetan *ja-ndong*.

own, and occasionally my servant found it hard to make himself understood. As none of my hosts appeared to have heard of England, it was difficult to satisfy their curiosity about myself, and I fear they often failed to understand what I meant by saying that my country was outside the Chinese empire, and that it had an emperor all to itself. On the whole, I was far less troubled by the inquisitiveness and curiosity of the people than in China proper: and, indeed, I was glad to find that the three soldiers who formed my Chinese escort were often regarded with greater curiosity than I was myself. The children appeared to look upon us as a new kind of wild beast, and I fear we often unwittingly brought tears to their eyes. Our mules were changed, under the rules of the *ula* system, at nearly every village. A riding-mule was generally procurable for myself, though as a rule I performed at least half the day's journey on foot. When mules were unobtainable we employed yaks, and if yaks were not to be had my baggage was carried by Tibetan men, and still more frequently by women. This last circumstance was a source of great gratification to my three soldiers, who hardly knew more Tibetan than I did myself, but were never at a loss in exchanging lively banter with the damsels who accompanied us. Once or twice I was seized with the unworthy suspicion that the village patriarchs were careful to entrust us with only the least attractive of their women-folk: otherwise, I was at a loss to account for the circumstance that whereas every Tibetan village possessed several good-looking

girls, the women who carried our baggage were almost invariably plain.

The people of eastern Tibet are totally unlike the Chinese in appearance, though the extraordinary mixture of races produces a large variety of types. As a rule, the men are tall, very well made, with well-marked features, noses of European shape, and eyelids that are often quite free from the peculiarity which produces in many Eastern races the well-known appearance of an obliquity of the eyes. As specimens of vigorous, stalwart manhood they are much more noteworthy than the people of Lhasa and Central Tibet. They are born mountaineers and have healthy, well-bronzed faces. Sometimes, indeed, they are as dark in complexion as the Burmese.<sup>1</sup> They wear goat-skin or yak-skin clothes, and well-lined leather boots, reaching nearly to their knees, that protect their feet from snow and frost-bite. Most of them are attired in a garment that might be regarded as the prototype of the Scots kilt. The women wear skirts, and, as their feet are of course unbound, they do not walk with the mincing gait of the lily-footed lady of China. I have been told by persons who take an interest in the human form that the average woman of Chinese Tibet is decidedly handsome. It is unfortunate that she does not often wash her face. She is certainly more genial and vivacious than the quiet and timid Chinese woman. She climbs mountains as nimbly as her husband, and the loads she carries are just as heavy; nor does she hesitate to join

<sup>1</sup> See Note 25 (p. 428).

in amiable conversation with her husband's male friends when she meets them on the road.

Marco Polo, who only touched the fringe of the Tibetan countries, describes in his naïve way some of the peculiar social customs of the people of those lands "as a good story to tell, and to show what a fine country that is for young fellows to go to";<sup>1</sup> and a much later traveller — Cooper — amusingly describes how he unexpectedly found that he had gone through a ceremony of marriage with a Tibetan damsel when he innocently thought that he was merely having a picnic under a grove of walnut trees.<sup>2</sup> No such hymeneal experience fell to my lot, though walnut trees were common enough in the deep valleys. Nor am I able to endorse Marco Polo's somewhat hasty criticism that the Tibetans are "an evil generation, holding it no sin to rob and maltreat: in fact they are the greatest brigands on earth." I took no special care of my money and baggage, yet I never met a robber, and never—so far as I am aware—lost even a handful of *tsamba*. "These people of Tibet are an ill-conditioned race. They have mastiff dogs as big as donkeys." This further remark of Messer Marco's is nearer the truth if we take "ill-conditioned" to mean "unclean," and allow for a considerable exaggeration about the size of the dogs. No Tibetan household is complete without one or two of those uncouth animals. The breed has changed since Marco's day, for the

<sup>1</sup> Yule's *Marco Polo* (Cordier's edition), vol. ii. p. 45.

<sup>2</sup> *Travels of a Pioneer of Commerce*.

dogs are not mastiffs (though these are still well known throughout Tibet proper), but a large long-haired dog that somewhat resembles a collie. They are exceedingly savage towards strangers and of great value as watch-dogs. Their physical strength is enormous. The usual custom is to allow them to go loose at night and to chain them up in the yard or in front of the house during the day, the theory apparently being that any one who wanders out of doors after nightfall must be a knave, and deserves any ill-fate that may befall him. Their bark is most peculiar: not sharp and crisp like that of most European dogs, but with a sepulchral and "far-away" sound as if each dog kept his own ghost in his stomach and it was only the ghost that barked.

The villages are surrounded by fields which—considering the great elevation of even the deepest valleys—are wonderfully productive. In many cases, where the valleys are very narrow, the cultivated land has all been reclaimed from virgin forest. Up to 10,000 feet, and in some places at greater elevations, there is a good deal of wheat and maize; in sheltered valleys, buckwheat, oats, beans, peas and barley are cultivated with considerable success up to over 13,000 feet. The mountain flora surprised me immensely by its richness and variety. Wild-flowers—many of them quite unknown to England and perhaps to Europe—grew luxuriantly in the deep ravines into which we dipped between the parallel ranges, and the mountain slopes up to 14,000 feet at least were generally covered with immense primeval forests

of pine and fir. In the great forests the pine was the first to die out on the higher levels; the fir asserted itself to 2,000 or 3,000 feet higher, and the hardiest of all was the tree-rhododendron, which I have seen growing at a greater height than 16,000 feet. There is some variation in the line of perpetual snow on the different ranges and even on the two sides of the same range; on an average it was not below 16,500 feet, though there were several passes at a lower elevation on which I was told the snow only disappeared for two or three months in the summer.<sup>1</sup> Next to the pines and firs the commonest trees are other coniferæ such as the spruce and juniper, and evergreens such as the yew and cypress. Among deciduous trees the poplar,<sup>2</sup> horse-chestnut and wild cherry are common at heights varying from 8,000 to 12,000 feet. The Chinese oak (*quercus sinensis*), which has evergreen leaves, is also to be met with very frequently. Besides the rhododendron there are many hardy shrubs to be found at elevations almost as great, such as brambles, *aucuba*, the viburnum, artemisia, a kind of hydrangea, the clematis, and wild-gooseberry. The wild-flowers are naturally not numerous on the summits of the lofty ranges, but in the neighbourhood of the banks of the Yalung and other rivers and in the warmer valleys I found innumerable flowering plants to which, had I been

<sup>1</sup> It is now well known that in parts of the Himālayas which form the watershed of the great Indian rivers the line of perpetual snow is as high as 18,000 or even 20,000 feet.

<sup>2</sup> There is a fine poplar grove close to Tachienlu, fringing the "royal" parade-ground. Sarat Chandra Das (*Journey to Lhasa and Central Tibet*) mentions a poplar at Lhasa which is supposed by the Tibetans to have sprung from the hair of the Buddha.



a botanical expert, I should have been glad to put names, but which were, after all, quite as beautiful nameless. The familiar plants included wild roses, edelweiss, gentian, spiræa, and several varieties—some almost certainly unknown to botanists—of the primula.

Had my principal object in visiting these remote mountains been to study their fauna or to shoot big game, I should no doubt have been amply rewarded for my toil; but, as it was, I cannot say much of the country from a sportsman's point of view, for I carried no rifle, and shot only to supply the needs of my frugal table. Most of the wild animals kept well out of my way, and I did not go in search of them. The musk-deer and horned stags are common denizens of the mountains, and there are also the wolf, fox, antelope, bear, panther,<sup>1</sup> wild ass, wild goat and wild sheep. Sometimes, when camping in the forest—which we had to do several times after crossing the Yalung—my followers insisted upon keeping up a big fire all night, and begged me to discharge my gun once at least to frighten away the beasts of prey. This precaution was judged necessary on account of the mules, which on such occasions were turned loose to find their own fodder. Instinct apparently prevented them from wandering far from the camp, for we never had the least difficulty about catching them in the morning.

The heights of the passes which we crossed varied between 12,000 and 17,500 feet, and some of them were above the line of perpetual snow.

<sup>1</sup> The *felis fontanieri*, besides other members of the Cat tribe.

The climbing was sometimes very steep work, but it never became really difficult except on the few occasions when we experienced high winds and snow-storms. The cold was then so intense that the thickest furs did not afford adequate protection. The rarefied air made rapid motion impossible, and prevented one from getting warm through exercise. The mules stopped to recover breath at intervals of a hundred yards, and though I never suffered from the least trace of mountain-sickness I often found walking strangely laborious. We made slow progress, of course, sometimes not more than 10 or 12 miles in a day, but nearly every stage took us from dawn to sunset to accomplish. The tops of the passes were generally sharp ridges, in some cases culminating in a sheer wall of frozen snow and ice through which my men had to dig out a path for the mules and for ourselves. Stone cairns (*lab ch'a*) surmounted by sticks and rags crown the summit of every pass; they were always greeted by my men with shouts of joy, and sometimes they added a stone to the cairn or tied an extra bit of rag to one of the protruding sticks.<sup>1</sup> But

<sup>1</sup> Customs of this kind seem to exist or to have existed all over the world. For Tibet, see Sarat Chandra Das's *Journey to Lhasa and Central Tibet*, and several recent works. Frazer, in the *Golden Bough* (2nd edn. vol. iii. pp. 4-6), has an interesting note in which he mentions the same or similar customs in the Solomon and Banks Islands, Nicaragua, Guatemala, Central and South Africa, Bolivia, Burma and Korea. He says: "The act is not a religious rite, for the thing thrown on the heap is not an offering to spiritual powers, and the words which accompany the act are not a prayer. It is nothing but a magical ceremony for getting rid of fatigue, which the simple savage fancies he can embody in a stick, leaf, or stone, and so cast it from him." Gipsies have a custom of leaving heaps of stones and

the steep descents were sometimes quite as arduous and dangerous as the upward climbs, especially when it was necessary—owing to the excessive steepness—to descend in zig-zags, or when a miniature avalanche tore down in our direction bringing stones and boulders in its frozen clutches.

But, on the whole, I found the difficulties of this almost unknown route by no means so serious as I had been led to expect. I never for a moment regretted that I had so obstinately declined to be guided by the timid officials at Tachienlu, and never found myself without a good reserve of strength and energy at the end of every day's march. I should be indeed sorry if my description of the route should deter others from undertaking the same journey. Granted health, strength, a first-rate digestion, and an average fund of cheerfulness, there is no reason whatever why any of my readers who longs to behold Nature in her supreme glory should not forthwith pack up his hand-bag—he should take little else—and follow in my steps with a light heart. Would that I could bear him company: for the spirits of the mountain and the forest never cease, in hours of solitude, to haunt the mind of him who has known them once and learned something of their spell.

bits of stick at cross-roads, to guide members of their band who have fallen behind. I do not propose to argue from this fact that the gipsy race was originally a Tibetan tribe, in spite of the facts that both gipsies and Tibetans love a wandering life, and that the gipsies of Persia and the Tibetans use almost the same word for "tent," which is *guri* in Persia and *gur* (ཁུར་) in Tibet.

The reader who does not propose to undertake any such expedition may be recommended to glance but lightly at many of the pages that follow. The details of my daily march through the mountains of Chinese Tibet to the borders of Yunnan will hardly be of interest to any but those who are themselves travellers or are contemplating a journey of a similar kind.

My route from Tachienlu to the frontier of Yunnan may be divided for descriptive purposes into three sections: the first, from Tachienlu to the village of Pa-U-Rong, on the banks of the Yalung or Nya Ch'u, occupying eleven days; the second, from the west bank of the Yalung to the lamasery of Muli, seven days; and the third, from Muli to Yung-ning in north-western Yunnan, three days.

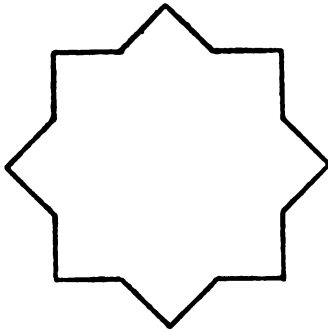
Of the first section, the two first stages from Tachienlu have already been described. On the third day from Tachienlu (17th April), my road led in a most tortuous manner through three long valleys, fairly well populated and sprinkled with villages. The first village, about 3 miles from A Te, is Du Sz Drung, situated at the point where the road emerges from the first and turns into the second valley—the direction as far as Du Sz Drung being south-west, and thereafter almost due west. Opposite the next village of Dza Ri K'u is a conspicuous conical hill; a little further on the valley (lying N.N.E. and W.S.W.) becomes very much broader, and is dotted with several isolated houses and a village named Ring I Drung. Here we changed *ula*. Immediately

afterwards, we struck off to the south into the third valley, keeping to the left bank of a stream named the Dja Ki Ch'u. In the villages of these valleys I observed several cases of goitre, a complaint which is common in the highlands of Ssuch'uan and the lofty tableland of Yunnan. Curious octagonal stone towers, now seen for the first time, are a conspicuous feature in the landscape of both these valleys. The towers which are described by Gill<sup>1</sup> as existing further north in the country explored by him are evidently of the same pattern. Baber, who knew of them only from Gill's account, has made the following observations on the subject. "What the use of these buildings may have been is unknown, but the presumption is that they were watch-towers; for the present purpose it is enough to know that they are universally said to have been erected by the Menia, and that there is nothing resembling them west of the Yalung on the main road."<sup>2</sup> My own observation corroborates the information given to Baber. I passed a large number of the towers, but none further west than Ri Wa, which was still five days' journey from the Yalung by my route. All were built on the same plan, and have eight corners, as shown in the ground plan on the following page. That they were used as watch-towers and beacon-stations is highly probable, for they are generally placed in positions from which the watchers would have an uninterrupted view up and down the valleys; but as I observed

<sup>1</sup> *River of Golden Sand*, vol. ii. p. 136.

<sup>2</sup> *Royal Geographical Society's Supplementary Papers*, vol. i. p. 96.

several of them close together, when one would have been sufficient according to the watch-tower theory, it is probable that they must have been used also as fortresses. At the advance of an enemy the tribesmen very likely drove their cattle and other animals into the large room on the ground floor,<sup>1</sup> and used the upper stories



discharged from the roof and from the narrow holes that served also as windows: just as was the case with the old peel-towers of the Scottish border. I explored several of the towers, but found no inscriptions. They are nearly all in a dilapidated

condition, but some have been kept in good preservation and are used as granaries and store-houses. In one case at least the tower has been made to serve as the wing of a modern house of the ordinary Tibetan type, and the interior has been partially reconstructed.

Two or three miles of easy riding through the third valley brought us to a curious wooden bridge by which we crossed the Dja Ki Ch'u, which, having been joined by several tributaries at the intersection of the valleys, was now a fairly large river. It joins the Yalung, but its

<sup>1</sup> Sometimes, however, the door is several feet above the level of the ground, so that ladders of some kind must have been used for entrance and exit.



**OCTAGONAL TOWER AT RI WA.**

*[To face p. 170.]*





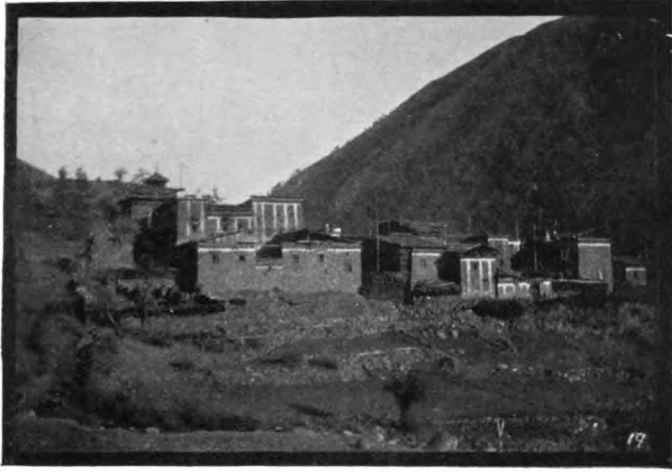
valley is apparently impracticable for travellers, for our road soon left its banks. We had changed *ula* for the second time at Ring I Drung,<sup>1</sup> and we did so again at a place called Ba Lu, where there is a single hut. At last, after a march of about 16 miles for the day, we put up at a solitary house named P'un Bu Shi. The valley here lies N.N.E. and S.S.W. Just beyond our quarters, on the left bank of the river, a small tributary descended from a valley, containing some houses, in the south-east. Leaving this valley on our left we continued the next day to keep to the valley of the Dja Ki Ch'u, which, however, twice changes its name during the day's march. We soon passed a conspicuous ruined tower a couple of hundred feet above the road on our (the right) bank of the river. The lofty mountains were all invisible, and the hills that bounded our valley were smooth and low, with plenty of pasturage and a fair amount of forestation. In one small area I noticed sheep, goats, yak, ponies and pigs all pasturing together, and all apparently on the most amiable terms with one another.

A second tower, higher up than the first, stands about 2 *li* beyond the latter. About a mile beyond this the valley narrows to a gorge, where cultivation ceases. The name of the river at this point was given to me as A-mi-chi-ts'a, which is also apparently a name of the people who inhabit the westerly end of the valley. In

<sup>1</sup> The word *Drung* or *Dr'ong* (ཁྲུང་) is the Tibetan word for Village.

the gorge the lower slopes were well wooded, but a good deal of tree-felling was going on. The abundance of timber makes the people wasteful, for they selected their trees with an obvious disregard of their age or condition. For about 20 *li* we went through the forest by a winding path and then crossed the river by a well-made wooden bridge of the same peculiar construction as that crossed on the previous day. This brought us to the left bank of the river, which in this locality is known as the Li Ch'u. Very soon afterwards, emerging from the gorge, we came to a solitary house at the entrance to a valley which lies approximately south-east and north-west. We took our frugal midday meal of *tsamba* in the cottage, then, leaving the Li Ch'u, which we never saw again, we proceeded in a south-easterly direction up the new valley, down which flows a rather large stream, the Tsa Ch'u. A rough road wound in and out amid well-wooded and picturesque scenery for a distance of about 5 miles, till we found ourselves opposite a large house on an eminence overlooking our valley, and at the entrance to another valley lying in a south-westerly direction. The house we found to be the residence of a *t'u pai hu*, or sub-chief, who received us very cheerfully and provided us with comfortable quarters for the night.

For two days our route had been an easy one, lying as it did through a series of river-valleys. The next day our toils began again. We left the hospitable headman's house on a brilliantly



HOUSE OF T'U PAI HU.



THE AUTHOR'S CARAVAN.

[To face p. 172.]



fine but cold morning. There had been hard frost during the night, and the still waters were coated with ice when we started. Proceeding up the new valley towards the south, we gradually ascended for a few miles till we reached a beautiful level glade from which we had a fine view of dense pine forests that covered the hills on both sides almost to their summits. Another short climb brought us to a point from which we began the ascent of the pass of Tan Ga La.<sup>1</sup> We changed *ula* at the hamlet of Sho Ti Ba Dze at its foot. After another 3 miles or so the hills began to close us in on every side and the ascent began to be steep. The mountain is wooded up to the summit of the pass (15,000 feet), which we reached about mid-day. The descent began at once and abruptly, and was at first very steep. We descended about 3,000 feet into a wooded gorge where machi and other game-fowl abound. We then entered a valley of which the direction (E.N.E. and W.S.W.) was at right angles to that through which we had descended. A large brook flowed through it in a westerly direction, and, rather to my surprise, our road led us along its right bank towards the east. A walk of half a mile brought us to the hamlet of Tu or Lu Li, where we spent the night. I found lodging in a barn. The people seemed more afraid of us than was usually the case, and did not greet us with open arms; but they made up for their cold reception

<sup>1</sup> *La* is the Tibetan word for a Mountain Pass. *Ri*, which often occurs in the names of villages and passes, means Mountain, and *Rong* Valley.

of us by increased friendliness later on. The valley is broad and fertile enough for cultivation. As usual, the principal grain is the Tibetan barley (Chinese *ch'ing k'o*), from which *tsamba* is made. The dialect spoken differed considerably from that we had heard spoken in the morning only a few miles away. The valleys in this wild region are so sharply separated one from another that their inhabitants must always have formed more or less isolated communities; thus the rapid changes of dialect are not surprising.

Starting at daylight next morning a few hundred yards' walk brought us to the end of the cultivated part of the valley. We followed the right bank of a stream, the road gradually turning S.S.E. We then crossed to the left bank by a wooden bridge. After proceeding for 8 miles through a gorge we entered a plain several miles broad, and the road turned due south. Half a mile's further walk brought us through the hamlet of Dro Dze Drung (or San Chia-tzū) to that of Na K'i (or Hsia Ch'êng-tzū), where we changed *ula*. On the hillside on the right of the road I noticed some small caves. They are artificial, but bear no resemblance to those of the Min river, and are said to be used as herdsmen's shelters. Near these two villages are clusters of prayer-flags marking the site of a graveyard. The people of this region frequently—as already mentioned<sup>1</sup>—dispose of their dead by cremation. The scenery now becomes much wilder and the forest almost

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 143.



**A RUSTIC BRIDGE.**

*[To face p. 174.]*





ceases, giving place to rugged rock. After going S.S.W. for 2 miles, we reached the village of Dra Shê, where we again changed *ula*. This village is very poor and semi-ruinous. The longest obo or *mani-dong*<sup>1</sup> I had yet seen lay between the villages of Na K'i and Dra Shê. Another mile or so brought us to the dilapidated hamlet of Ri Wa (Chinese Wu Chia-tzŭ<sup>2</sup>), where I saw the last of the octagonal towers.<sup>3</sup> Soon afterwards we reached the end of our stage at a hamlet of three houses named Ko Ri Drung (Chinese Chung Ku). The stage was a short one, but I learned that no shelter was to be obtained further on. This I ascertained to be the case next morning, when we commenced the ascent of the great pass of Dji Dju La. Our path, lying S.S.W., climbed the right bank of a stream by the side of a gaunt and jagged range of precipitous mountains. The only vegetation consisted of a few stunted trees near our path, and not a shrub was visible on the black flanks and snow-crowned summits of the hills. But as we ascended the lower slopes of the pass, the path wound into one ravine after another, and in their sheltered depths I noticed large numbers of coniferous trees and rhododendrons. The

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 145.

<sup>2</sup> Many of the villages between Tachienlu and Yung-ning have been given Chinese names by the Yunnanese, who occasionally send merchandise by this route. The Chinese name, as a rule, has no connection with the Tibetan or Man-tzŭ name. *Wu Chia-tzŭ*, for instance, means a "Village of Five Families"; *San Chia-tzŭ* a "Village of Three Families."

<sup>3</sup> See illustration of this tower, which is a fair sample of the rest, to face p. 171.

last few hundred feet of the pass were deep in snow, and along the ridge of the summit (at a height of about 17,500 feet) we were faced by a pointed wall of ice. From Ko Ri Drung to the summit—a climb that kept us busily occupied for the greater part of the day—there is no house and no cultivation. From the pass there was a grand view of snowy summits on both sides, and I was told by our yak-drivers that the pass itself is never free from snow. An icy west wind met us as we reached the top: so cold that it seemed as though it must have swept over all the frozen mountain-tops of eastern Tibet. The first part of the descent is steep. Lower down it becomes easier, and for about 10 miles we went south and south-west through a forest of firs. The weather changed for the worse as we descended, and for four hours we had to grope our way through a blinding snow-storm. After a very arduous day's march of over twelve hours' duration we were glad to find a resting-place at last in the comparatively large village of Dur (Chinese Hei Lao), where I found roomy but draughty quarters in the house of a sub-chief or *t'u pai hu*, who had gone to Tachienlu. I was told by his wife, who entertained us, that he had gone to prosecute a lawsuit which had already been dragging on for two generations.

The upland valley in which this village lies is known as Dji Dju Rong. Part of it, if I mistake not, is the bed of an extinct glacier. It was still snowing when we set out next morning. For about 8 miles we retraced our steps of the





**TIBETANS OF WESTERN SSUCH'UAN.**



**MOUNTAIN SCENERY NEAR SIN GO LA.**

*[To face p. 177.]*

previous day, then crossed and left the stream that comes down from the Dji Dju La range and found ourselves in a beautiful open glade. It is a small flat plain, affording good pasture-land for a herd of yaks, and surrounded on all sides by forests and enormous mountains. It contains three log-cabins. From here our road lay W.S.W., and we struck up into the mountains again to the pass known as Wu Shu (or Shih) La. The forest accompanied us nearly all the way to the summit, the height of which is about 15,500 feet. The ascent is steep at first, then very gradual, and finally steep again near the top. The forest met us again on the other side, and through it we descended to the village of Wu Shu. The stage was a short one, probably not more than 11 miles. The scenery about Wu Shu is extremely beautiful. Close by the village are the remains of a ruin on a mound. It may have been an octagonal tower but it was impossible to identify it as such.

The ground was covered with snow and it was still snowing heavily when we started next day (28rd April) on what proved to be on the whole the severest day's march which I experienced throughout the whole of my long journey. We began a stiff climb almost immediately, and going south and south-west reached the summit of the first pass (Sin Go La), after a straight pull of about 5 miles. The elevation was about 15,000 feet. Before we reached the top the snow ceased to fall, and the weather for the rest of the day was brilliantly fine. From the summit we had a glorious view of lofty peaks towering far above

M

the highest limit of the thick forests. We descended about 2,000 feet into a shallow ravine, from the further side of which we mounted about 8,000 feet to the second pass, Nai Yu La, about 16,000 feet. On the further side of this pass we descended very gradually to a confined valley, where we crossed a frozen brook and started to climb a third pass, Hlan Go La, the height of which is about 17,200 feet. This was the longest and most arduous climb of all.

I observed that on the sloping sides of the ravines dividing these three ranges hundreds of acres of forest-land had been cruelly devastated by fire. During my journey from Tachienlu to Yunnan nothing puzzled me more than the extraordinary frequency of the forest fires, which must have destroyed many thousands of acres of magnificent timber. The natives say they are caused by careless travellers, who leave the glowing embers of their camp fires to be scattered by the wind; but, as many of the fires commence and burn themselves out in pathless regions where neither natives nor travellers ever set foot, the explanation was obviously unsatisfactory. Serious as the fires are, the forests have to contend with an enemy even more dangerous. No traveller in this region can fail to notice the pale green moss that swathes itself round the trunks and branches of firs and pines, and hangs in graceful festoons from tree to tree. This is the parasitic lichen known to botanists as *usnea barbata*, and popularly as the "fairies' scarf," which dooms any tree once caught in its pendulous net to gradual decay

and ignominious death. In many places I saw hundreds of fine trees — the parasite attacks young trees as well as old — stark and dead, stripped of their bark, as if they had been struck by lightning, but still draped with the vampire-like lichen that had sucked them dry. It seems to spread rapidly from one tree to another; its streamers are sometimes several yards long, and in a dense forest it only requires a moderate breeze to blow the loose end of a streamer from a tree that is already dying to its still vigorous neighbour; and so the disease spreads. Apparently the only way to protect the forests would be to cut a "fire-belt" round every group of trees that had been attacked, and so isolate it from the rest. But forestry is an unknown science in the Chinese empire, and the Government does not seem to realise the value of its neglected forests. For want of a better explanation of the forest fires I hazard the suggestion that they may be caused spontaneously by friction between the dry branches of adjoining trees that have been killed by the "fairies' scarf."

The descent from the pass of Hlan Go La into the ravine below was steep and long. A large level plain occurs during the descent, and it is after traversing it that the descent becomes steepest. We found shelter for the night, after a very arduous march, in Gur Dja (Chinese Yin Cho), a hamlet of log-huts. Clearances have been made in the valley just below (for the hamlet is perched on the side of a ravine); and there are a few fields of barley and buckwheat.

Next day we again retraced our steps to a distance of 2 or 3 miles. Then we crossed the ravine and commenced a climb on the opposite side. As usual our climb lay at first through forest, then we plunged into the snow, and found it deeper and more troublesome than on any of the other passes. At about 16,500 feet we reached the summit of the pass known as Ri Go La. The descent was sudden and steep, not without its exciting moments, and we lost a mule. We proceeded downwards in a southerly and south-westerly direction and re-entered the forest. Thence we descended several thousand feet into a deep ravine. By the afternoon we had left the snows behind us and entered into a region characterised by a luxuriance of vegetation that was almost tropical. Among other plants and grasses there were great clusters of bamboo—fragile and feathery, and so thin that it could be bent between two fingers. It was also pleasant to come upon beautiful beds of primroses and flowering shrubs. As we neared the end of the stage we met with a light shower of rain—a sure sign that we were at a comparatively low elevation and drawing near the valley of the Yalung. The village of Pei T'ai, where we spent the night, lay at an elevation of about 10,000 feet. Just before reaching it we had a short climb of 800 or 1,000 feet over the small pass of Pu Ti La, which gave us no trouble. The village of Pei T'ai is the proud possessor of three gilded pinnacles which adorn the roof of a miniature lamasery. The



headman's house, in which I was entertained, almost adjoins it.

The next day's march was the last stage to the Yalung. We began by descending a rough path from the eminence which is crowned by the village. Our road then led up and down the south side of a deep ravine, with many tortuous windings. The path—such as it was—had in some places been torn away by recent landslips. Wild-flowers and wild fruit-trees were in blossom, and the young vegetation was delightfully fresh and green. Squirrels were common, and we caught sight of some beautiful long-tailed green parrots. A steep path led us down to a confined valley named Lan Yi Pa, and outside its solitary hut we stopped for our midday meal. The woman of the house, with a nose quick to scent the proximity of untold wealth, hastened to offer me, on bended knee, a present of three eggs. From here the road led steeply to the crest of a hill, and after turning several corners we found ourselves in full view of the noble waters of the Yalung.

When we reached a projecting corner of the road at a spot called Hsin Yi La, I was requested by the *ula* people to fire a shot from my gun in the direction of the village of Pa-U-Rong, which now lay at our feet and was in full view. This I did, on learning that it was a custom with which all travellers approaching Pa-U-Rong were expected to comply. The village, with its comparatively rich fields, has often been the prey of mountain robbers, and any travellers who approach

without giving a warning signal are presumed to be coming with no good intent, and may find all the inhabitants of the valley fully clad in the panoply of war, ready to give them a hostile reception. From the spot where I fired the warning gun the road again descended steeply, but after crossing a deep gully we found ourselves in the large village of Pa-U-Rong, and were received by the people with friendly faces.

The valley slopes gradually towards the river, and, though it is of small area, it is thoroughly well cultivated with wheat, barley and other grain, and several kinds of vegetables. The actual banks of the river are very steep, and on them there is no cultivation. The level of Pa-U-Rong is about 7,700 feet, and the river, which has a considerable rise and fall, is on an average about 200 feet lower. The village—with two or three scattered suburbs in other parts of the valley—contains a population of perhaps two thousand, and was the largest and most prosperous centre of population we had come across since leaving Tachienlu.

We had now descended, for the time being, from the icy heights of the Chinese Alps, and were in a region of green vegetation and tranquil beauty. But the snowy peaks and passes were still in full view, and amid the rich scenery that now surrounded me it was the wild splendour of the mountains, and the snow, and the dark primeval forests that haunted me still. The scenery through which I had passed was not of the kind that could be looked at, admired and

then forgotten. The purple crags and jewelled peaks rising in sombre majesty from the white slopes of the sun-lit snow-fields were sights upon which one might gaze from dawn till dark and ever find new treasures of beauty, and which, when the eye had once seen, the mind could never forget. Surely our great prose-poet—never more full of enthusiasm and spiritual insight than when describing the glories of his beloved Alps—spoke with truth when he told us that in the whole range of inorganic nature there could perhaps be found no object “more perfectly beautiful than a fresh, deep snow-drift, seen under warm light.”<sup>1</sup> But, as Ruskin well knew, it is the dark setting of rock and crag that lends so rare a beauty to wide stretches of untrodden snow. The wild and desolate aspects of nature have indeed a charm that is different in kind from that which belongs to sylvan or merely “pretty” scenery, for they touch profounder depths in our nature than can be reached by the faery beauty of dale and wood and running water. The feelings they excite can only be compared to the deepest religious emotions of which our nature is capable. “Surely, if beauty be an object of worship,” said Tyndall, “those glorious mountains, with rounded shoulders of the purest white—snow-crested and star-gemmed—were well calculated to excite sentiments of adoration.”<sup>2</sup> Thus it is that in the

<sup>1</sup> *Modern Painters*, I. II. chap. iv. p. 2.

<sup>2</sup> See John Tyndall's description of his ascent of the Finsteraarhorn (*Glaciers of the Alps*).

presence of Nature's holiest shrines it is generally best to be alone. If we have companions, all we ask of them at such times is that they should be silent. The wonders of mountain and snow, ocean and sky, need not the explanatory or descriptive notes of any commentator when we have the reality before our own eyes. The man to whose deeper nature they do not at once appeal will not learn their secrets any the better for listening to the ecstatic ejaculations of the noisy friend who is for ever at his elbow telling him how lovely are those purple mountains, or how rich the colours of that splendid sunset. It is better to acquire the reputation of being insensible to all beauty than to force oneself to listen patiently and respond cheerfully to such well-meant chatter. The feelings that such aspects of Nature produce within us are not feelings that any man has ever yet learned to put into words. Speech, after all, can only interpret the thoughts that lie on the surface of our natures; the deeper thoughts and the nobler emotions elude the grasp of mere human language. The mystic well knows, and the poet well knows, that their sublimest visions cannot be adequately rendered, even by the use of the most splendid imagery and allegory, in the terms of written or spoken language. And similarly it is known to every lover of Nature, though he be no poet, that the deepest mysteries of Nature's loveliness are only revealed to him who possesses, in the unsounded depths of his own soul, the key that can unlock them. And what he has

learned he can no more communicate to others than a Saint Teresa or a Saint Ignatius can describe in fitting words the visions that were shown to them in their mystic trances. Each of us, after all, must act as the pilot of his own soul in its solitary voyage through the unknown. The loneliness of the individual human soul is one of the saddest facts of human experience, but there are divine moments in the lives at least of some of us when by the contemplation of the supremely beautiful in Nature or in Art, or by the stirring of some profound emotion, we feel that our loneliness is a mere appearance that will pass away: moments in which we feel that we are in communion and fellowship with the perfect beauty and white truth that lie beyond the fleeting shadowland in which we daily move. And though our splendid visions may not be always present to fill us with rapture, we feel that the spiritual wisdom they have given us can at all times be drawn upon to help and guide us through the darker hours of our lonely daily life.

## CHAPTER XI

### PA-U-RONG TO MULI

THE Yalung river forms the western frontier of the dominions of the king of Chala. Across the river lies the country generally known as Huang Lama, which is governed by its own lama-prince. The guide whom the king had deputed to accompany me thus far, and who had proved himself a sturdy, honest fellow, had now to return to Tachienlu, leaving me to the care of the three Chinese soldiers who had been instructed to follow me all the way to the borders of the province of Yunnan. Before leaving me, the king's man was obliging enough to cross the river in order to explain to the people of the other side that I was a harmless traveller and deserving of their assistance. This was a necessary precaution, for the *ula* privilege had been extended to me only as far as the king of Chala's frontier.<sup>1</sup>

The king's brother had told me in Tachienlu that on the banks of the Yalung I should find a colony of "White-bone" Lolos. The Lolos—to whom I have already referred—were once a powerful non-Chinese race inhabiting a great part

<sup>1</sup> See Note 26 (p. 429).

of southern Ssuch'uan and the greater part of Yunnan. A large remnant of them still maintains its independence in the mountainous country between the Chien-ch'ang valley and the Upper Yangtse. The so-called *Hei-Ku-t'ou* or "Black-bones," are the aristocrats of the race, the *Pai-Ku-t'ou* or "White-bones" the "tame" ones, who do what they are told by any one who has authority over them, whether of their own race or not. The Lolos are an interesting people from the European point of view on account of their obstinate self-reliance, their dislike for the Chinese, and their mysterious history. The 12,000 square miles or so of mountain-land which still belong to them comprise one of the least-known corners of the Chinese empire;<sup>1</sup> but this is only owing to the jealousy of the Chinese, who object to Europeans going where they cannot and dare not go themselves. A well-conducted European able to satisfy his hosts that he had no hostile intentions would probably be well received in Lolo-land, for the people seem to be as hospitable as those of Laos and the Shan States, with whom, indeed, it is just possible that they are ethnologically connected. The European students of their language could be numbered on the fingers of one hand, and no one has yet given a comprehensive account of it. It is evident from Paul Vial's little hand-book<sup>2</sup>—which deals with some of the Lolo tribes of Yunnan—that there are several dialects, which probably represent several

<sup>1</sup> See Note 27 (p. 429).

<sup>2</sup> *Les Lolos*, by M. Paul Vial, Catholic missionary (Shanghai, 1898).

broad tribal cleavages. It is doubtful, indeed, whether many of the Yunnan Lolos would be able to carry on an intelligent conversation with the independent Lolos of the Ta Liang Shan.<sup>1</sup> During the day's holiday which I gave my men at Pa-U-Rong—for I remained there two nights—I made enquiries about the isolated Lolo colonists of whom I had heard, and discovered that the information given me was accurate. I had great difficulty in persuading one of them to come to me and tell me something of their history; and the one who finally accepted the bribe which I held out was not a brilliant specimen of the attractive race to which he belonged. He was afflicted with deafness, stupidity and extreme nervousness, had no knowledge of Chinese, and was only partially acquainted with the local dialect of Tibetan. I managed, however, to take down a small vocabulary from him<sup>2</sup> and extracted hesitating answers to a few of my questions. In Pa-U-Rong and its suburb villages there are some twenty-three families of Lolos. They came from the independent Lolo country, east of Yüeh-hsi, about the year 1850, the migration being due to a tribal feud. They were well received by the local *t'u pai hu*, and lands were allotted to them for which they pay an annual rent. In or about the year 1864 they addressed a petition to the king of Chala in which they begged to be enrolled among his subjects. The answer to this petition

<sup>1</sup> See chap. xv. below, on the ethnology of the Lolos and other border tribes.

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix A.





A HALT ON THE ROAD TO MULLI.

[To face p. 188.]



was favourable, and they have since been treated with every kindness, for which they are grateful. They use the Tibetan alphabet in transcribing their language,<sup>1</sup> but only a few of them can read and write. They call themselves *Dru*, which has the meaning of "comrades." They worship a deity called Ba Le Nim Bu and another called San To. The latter is supposed to reside on the top of one of the high mountains overlooking Pa-U-Rong on the north-east. They neither bury nor burn their dead: they tie a white veil over the dead man's face, swathe him in a shroud, and throw him into the Yalung. The poorest among them go barefooted and scarify the soles of their feet with a hot iron in order to make them hard. When the head of a family dies his property goes to his eldest son; if there is no son the widow adopts a boy, who then takes the family surname and succeeds to the property—much as is done in China. If there is no heir, the property goes to the lamas, in accordance with Tibetan custom.

The statement regarding the deity on the mountain-top is interesting as showing that when the Lolos migrate they take their gods with them and give them a new residence in a locality convenient for acts of worship. It seems to be an established fact that the Lolos have never been converted to Buddhism. Mount Omei is to them a sacred mountain, but it is to worship gods of their own and not Buddhas or Bodhisattvas that they go thither on pilgrim-

<sup>1</sup> There is, however, a system of written characters peculiar to the Lolos. It appears to be unknown among these colonists.

age.<sup>1</sup> Considering their fondness for mountains as religious centres, it does not seem rash to hazard the prophecy that when their country has been explored the highest point of the 'Ta Liang Shan will be found to be the Olympus of their gods. The little colony of emigrants has no doubt been obliged to conform to most of the social customs of those among whom they live, and this is sufficient to explain why among them the lamas are regarded as *ultimus haeres* of their property. As time goes on it is probable that their descendants will gradually forget their own language and the history of their race.

An old man — not a Lolo — who said his name was Shou Ji Tseri, paid me a visit in order to tell me that he was a Roman Catholic. He had been converted by a French missionary in Tachienlu over twenty years before, and though he had long since migrated to Pa-U-Rong, he and his family had remained steadfast in the faith. He assured me that he was not persecuted, and suffered no social disabilities through being a Christian.

The landlord of my house was the *t'u pai hu*,<sup>2</sup> and he was evidently a devout Buddhist, or rather lamaist. The room in which I was quartered was a kind of private chapel, containing a small library of Tibetan books grimy with age. More numerous than the books were bundles of charms supposed to ward off disease and ill-fortune. They consisted of small stiff cards, not unlike playing-cards in size

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 55.

<sup>2</sup> See Note 28 (p. 429).

and appearance, covered with writing on one side, and crudely-painted pictures of horses and other animals on the other.

On the eve of my departure from Pa-U-Rong I gave my returning guide a letter in which I informed the king of my safe arrival at the limits of his territory. The lack of startling adventures was perhaps a little disconcerting after all that I had been told of the perils of the way, but I was glad to know that I had not contributed to the collapse of that amiable monarch's already rather insecure throne.

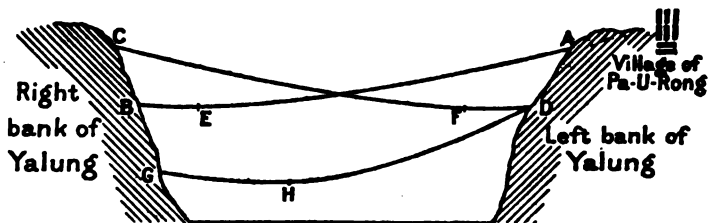
I made my exit from the kingdom of Chala by the undignified expedient of sliding down a rope. The Yalung<sup>1</sup> is one of the greatest tributaries of the Yangtse, but it is full of rapids and cascades, and is unnavigable. At Pa-U-Rong it is about 70 or 80 yards broad, and the current is very swift and strong. I heard that till recently it could at the season of slack water be crossed by a raft;<sup>2</sup> but at the time of my visit there was no raft or boat of any kind on the river (the last one had been wrecked and lost), and a single stout cable of twisted bamboo, stretched from bank to bank, afforded the only means of crossing. The frontispiece to this book, which reproduces a photograph taken by myself, shows one of my followers in the act of making the passage. Bridges of this kind are common in Tibet, and in the Himālayan gorges, but it is not often that the stream to be crossed

<sup>1</sup> See Note 29 (p. 430).

<sup>2</sup> Mr Amundsen states that he crossed by a raft made of two pieces of timber, with a plank in the middle to stand on.—(*Geographical Journal*, vol. xv. p. 621).

is so wide as the Yalung. The main roads—such as the highroad from Tachienlu to Lhasa—are generally provided with good bridges or ferries; and, as a rule, it is only when travelling by the “small roads” and by-ways of Tibet that one is compelled to cross rivers and gorges by single ropes. The abbé Huc admits that in the course of his long journey to Lhasa and back he never ventured on bridges of this kind, though he frequently saw them. Captain Gill<sup>1</sup> remarks that “this is a method of crossing a river that must require a considerable amount of nerve”; but he too, apparently, evaded the necessity of putting the matter to personal test. In my case there was no possibility of evasion.

The first view of this primitive substitute for a bridge certainly does not inspire one with confidence. There is one rope for crossing from the left to the right bank, and another—some 80 yards off—for the reverse proceeding. The banks on either side are high and steep, and each rope-end is firmly bound round an immovable rock or boulder. The arrangement is shown in the accompanying diagram.



<sup>1</sup> In Captain Gill's *The River of Golden Sand* (John Murray), p. 121, where there is a good illustration of the single-rope bridges.

On crossing from the left bank (Pa-U-Rong side) one starts at the point A, reaching the right bank at the point B. Crossing in the opposite direction one starts at C, reaching the left bank at D. The points A and C are about 120 feet above the level of the water. B and D are about 40 feet lower. The native of the district, when about to cross the river, places a semicircular piece of tough wood, with two grooves for the fingers, on the bamboo rope, clutches it with both hands and lets himself go. He is not tied to the movable cylinder or to the rope, and he has nothing to sit on. He simply holds on with his hands, his legs hanging in the air. He descends with terrific speed to the point where the rope sags or hangs lowest (the points E and F); and having safely arrived there, he is only a few yards from the further bank, and quickly hauls himself along the remaining distance. In this manner the crossing is only a matter of a few exhilarating seconds. With us, however, the operation was a longer one. Unfortunately, the proper rope for leaving the left bank was old, and had been condemned as unsafe; all my party, therefore, were obliged to use the rope that was only intended for crossing in the opposite direction. The rope - end at the point C, however, had been temporarily brought down to the point G, as it would otherwise have been necessary for us to haul ourselves along nearly the whole length of the rope in an ascending direction, which would have been a task requiring great strength and endurance. Even as it was, instead of a rapid rush through the air

N

across almost the whole width of the river, the weight of our bodies only took us about two-thirds of the total distance, and from that point we had to proceed by throwing our legs over the rope and pulling ourselves upwards inch by inch, hand over hand. The work was exceedingly laborious. All my party went across in this manner one by one, starting at D and arriving at G. The point H represents the place at which we had to commence hauling. In view of the fact that we were all novices at rope-climbing, each of us submitted, before starting, to having a leather thong tied under the arms, and made fast to the sliding cylinder, so that if loss of nerve or other cause had made us let go we should not have fallen into the river, but hung limply on the rope until rescued. There was, therefore, no actual danger provided that nothing gave way. In some places where these primitive bridges are in use, passengers are provided with a swinging rope - seat which hangs from the cylinder. This, of course, must relieve the strain on hands and arms very considerably. But we were furnished with no such luxury. My dog Jim was sent across by himself, his body being firmly tied up with strips of cloth suspended from the cylinder, from which the unhappy beast hung like a squirming fish at the end of a line. When he reached the point at which upward hauling became necessary, one of the natives—who seemed to delight in performing acrobatic feats above the swirling waters of the Yalung—clambered along from the right bank with an extra rope and tied it round him. He did this while he



was hanging upside down with his legs round the rope-bridge. The loose end of the spare rope he took back with him to the right bank, and the dog was safely pulled by several willing hands along the remaining distance. My baggage was sent across in the same manner. I found the experience interesting and somewhat exciting. The whole village turned out to watch us cross the river, and I must confess that when I was being trussed up with the leather thong my feelings were perhaps only comparable to those of a condemned criminal who is being pinioned before execution. A fall into the river would mean almost certain death. The water seethes and bubbles in innumerable whirlpools, and is nearly as cold as ice, for it largely consists of frozen snow.

I never heard the Yalung given that name by the natives. The word is a Chinese approximation to the Tibetan Nya Rong ("Valley of the Nya"). The Tibetans all know the river as the Nya Ch'u or Nya river; but the Chinese, so far as my experience goes, never give it any other name than *Kin* [*Chin*] *Ho*, which means "Gold River,"—so that "Yalung" is really only a book-word. The number of rivers in western China, of which the word "Gold" forms part of the Chinese name, might almost fill a page. The Ta Tu river above Wa Ssu Kou<sup>1</sup> is the Chin Ch'uan ("Gold Stream"), the Yangtse for hundreds of miles of its course is the Chin Sha Chiang [*Kin* Sha Kiang], or "River of Golden Sand," and many streams of less importance bear similar names. The reason

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 128.

of the popularity of the name is not far to seek, for gold in larger or smaller quantities is well known to exist in nearly all the rivers that take their rise in eastern and northern Tibet, and the Tibetans—especially the lamas—derive therefrom a very considerable profit.

Baber pointed out that the upper Yangtse, from its junction with the Yalung to about P'ing-shan (above the mouth of the Min), is "never called locally by any other name than *Kin- [Chin-] Ho*, or 'Gold River.'" M. Cordier, in quoting this passage in his sumptuous edition of Marco Polo's travels,<sup>1</sup> says that he imagines Baber to have made a slight mistake in saying that this part of the great river is named a *ho*, and that the word actually used is probably *kiang*. As both words mean "river" the point is of small importance, but as a matter of fact Baber is perfectly right. Not only is the Yangtse from the mouth of the Min to the mouth of the Yalung called the Kin [Chin] Ho, as Baber said, but it seems obvious that the natives regard the Yalung as the main upper stream of the same river, just as they regard the Min as the main upper stream of the Yangtse hundreds of miles lower down.<sup>2</sup> Baber was no doubt unaware that the Yalung was known as the Kin Ho, or he would have seen why it is that its junction with what we know as the Yangtse effects a change in the name of the latter.

In official publications, however, the local names are disregarded. In such works the

<sup>1</sup> Yule's *Marco Polo*, edited by Cordier. [London: John Murray.] See vol. ii. p. 67.

<sup>2</sup> See above, pp. 43-44.

Yangtse is given one name from its entrance into Ssuch'uan down to Hsü-chou-fu, where it comes to an untimely end by entering the Min:<sup>1</sup> and that one name is the Chin Sha Chiang.<sup>2</sup> As regards its Tibetan course, the Chinese geographical authorities attempt after their usual cumbrous fashion to give the sounds of the various Tibetan names—they write of the *Mu-lu-ssü-wu-su* for instance—but they recognise it as the same river. In explanation of the local idea that the Yalung is the principal stream it may be mentioned that at the point of junction the Yalung has the appearance of being larger than the Yangtse.<sup>3</sup>

We did not proceed far on our journey during the day on which we accomplished the feat of crossing the Yalung. We clambered up the steep slope to a height of about 1,500 feet and remained for the night in the poor hamlet of Dju Mu. We were still well within sight of Pa-U-Rong, having travelled only about 12 *li*. A change of language or dialect perplexed my servant as soon as we had crossed the river, and though it is rash to generalise from the appearance of the inhabitants of a few isolated villages, there seemed to be racial changes as well. The Tibetan-Man-tzŭ population of the kingdom of Chala seems to give place to a race-group which might be described as Tibetan-Mo-so. The men are shorter than those of the eastern watershed of the Yalung, the women

<sup>1</sup> 流入岷江. Similarly we read of the Han River (which flows into the Yangtse at Hankow) *joining the Min* (合岷江).

<sup>2</sup> See Note 30 (p. 430).

<sup>3</sup> This is on Mr Amundsen's authority. See *Geographical Journal*, Nov. 1900, p. 534.

plainer and stouter and of heavier build. There is no great change in the dress of the men, but the women—perhaps recognising their deficiency of personal attractiveness—show an exaggerated fondness for jewellery and trinkets, which make a ceaseless jingle as they walk. Many of the people—men as well as women—wear large earrings consisting of plain circles of silver, from which, in the case of girls, are suspended long strings of coloured beads. On both sides of the Yalung—but not far from its banks on either side—the women also wear curious silver plates or plaques which are fastened to their hair. Unmarried girls wear one and married women two of these ornaments. Some of the plaques—which vary in size from about 5 inches to more than a foot in diameter—are adorned with dainty filigree work, which would do credit to the silversmiths of any country, but the majority are simple and of rude workmanship, such as the specimen which with difficulty I succeeded in purchasing.<sup>1</sup> In the middle of each plaque is a silver tube containing some red substance that from a distance looks like dark coral. These little plates are regarded as ornaments, but they are also charms to ward off a certain dread disease. From a description of the ailment it would appear to be something like bubonic plague. I saw no cases of it, but I was told that it devastates the valley of the Yalung every autumn, and kills every one who does not wear a charm. It is curious to note that nearly

<sup>1</sup> See illustration, p. 152 (No. 2). The plaques may also be seen on the women's heads, p. 188.

all the great trough-like river-valleys of south-western China have acquired a similar reputation of extreme unhealthiness. The Red River of Tongking and Yunnan is so much dreaded by the Chinese on account of its deadly fevers that nothing will induce them to spend a night on its banks.<sup>1</sup> The Salwen, the valley of which forms a yawning chasm from north to south of the Yunnan plateau, has an even worse reputation, as is well known to all who have travelled from Tali-fu to Bhamo.<sup>2</sup> Charms against disease are worn by the men of the Yalung valley as well as by the women, but they do not take the same form. The men and boys carry a small charm-box (*ga-u*<sup>3</sup>) hung round their necks like a locket by a string or chain, and in the box they place little amulets<sup>4</sup> which they have received from the lamas. The efficacy of the charms is supposed to be impaired if they are removed from the person or put into the hands of a stranger, so it is not often that one has an opportunity of close examination.

<sup>1</sup> I travelled up the valley of this river in 1902, and heard much of its deadliness. Rocher, in his excellent history of Yunnan, remarks that the only people who could live on the banks of the Red River with comparative immunity were some indigenous non-Chinese tribes and Cantonese merchants. As regards the Cantonese, the jealous Yunnanese supposed that their immunity was derived from the fact that they possessed a sovereign remedy for the disease, but kept the secret of it to themselves so that they alone should obtain the benefit. Some of the Yunnanese told Rocher that they would go into battle rather than brave a visit to the banks of the Red River.—(*La Province Chinoise du Yunnan*, vol. i. pp. 229, 230, and 286.)

<sup>2</sup> See below, pp. 305 *seq.*

<sup>3</sup> གཤུ་

<sup>4</sup> Tibetan brTen (བརྟེན་) pronounced *ten*, or Srung-ba (སྲུང་བ་) pronounced *sung-wa*, the original meaning of which is simply "protection."

The next day (28th April) we travelled a very short distance—about 6 miles. The path wound round the edge of a defile and up the mountain side west and south-west through a pine forest. We halted at a place called Tê Ben, a single house belonging to a headman, situated near the edge of a bluff that commanded a fine view of the Yalung valley, now far below us. Difficulties about transport prevented our making a longer stage. Next day, these difficulties having been overcome, our path led us over innumerable undulations, in the course of which we gradually ascended another 2,000 feet. At the hamlet of Pa Sung, which we reached during the morning, there were no animals to be hired, and our baggage was carried for the rest of the day's march by three women and a yak. One of my Chinese escort—not in love with his mountaineering experiences—was much perturbed at the discovery that he was expected to walk, and made himself so disagreeable to the villagers that they had to bribe him to calmness by making him a present of a live fowl. He accepted the fowl, and made one of the village damsels carry it for him. This incident was not discovered by me until our arrival at our destination that night, when I punished my soldier for the impropriety of his conduct by paying for the fowl and eating it myself. The yak caused us some trouble by losing itself in the forest while we were having our midday *tsamba*. It was finally discovered by its driver—a very little boy—and brought back by him triumphantly at the end of a rope. The incident

pleasantly recalled to my memory the only poem in the English language, so far as I am aware, which sings the exclusive praises of the yak, an animal which, however useful to man, is indeed hardly of the kind that would naturally inspire a poet to a lyrical outburst.<sup>1</sup> Tibetan and Man-tzū children seem to be able to manage the clumsy beast with the same ease and dexterity as are shown by Chinese children in controlling the cumbrous movements of the water-buffalo; and the European who may prod a yak without the least effect in accelerating its motion, and whose mere proximity often rouses the water-buffalo to dangerous fury, can have nothing but jealous admiration for the Oriental child whose lightest touch reduces one or the other to complete docility.

From the hamlet of Pa Sung we dropped down to a deep ravine at the bottom of which is a sparkling mountain stream spanned by a rustic bridge. The ravine was full of wild-flowers—pink, red, purple and white in a setting of rich green. I noticed also that ivy—not so common a sight in the Far East as in England—clambered in great profusion round the trunks of trees and over a small obo; and some exquisite ferns, including maiden-hair, covered the steep banks of the stream and fringed our path. After climbing up the further side of the ravine our path again wound up and along the mountain-side, and brought us finally to the hamlet of Ten Ba K'a, where we

<sup>1</sup> The reader will not, I hope, require to be reminded of "The Bad Child's Book of Beasts," in which the poem to which I refer finds an honourable place.

lodged in the local chief's house. Our host was a fine-looking man, whose long black hair hanging down on each side of his face gave him an appearance of ferocity that was belied by the gentleness of his manners. I was accommodated in the family chapel—a large room on the first floor. Close by was a small lamasery. The village is situated at the head of a small valley which runs north-east and south-west, and from it we had a magnificent view of the snowy mountains we had left behind us on the other side of the Yalung. The valley itself—when one looks down upon it from above—is of very peculiar formation, being split up by a series of clearly-defined ridges. I could see nothing to indicate that they were glacier moraines. Next morning we climbed one of the ridges that lies immediately behind the village, and from its summit we descended into a thickly-wooded ravine, bounded on the left by lofty and picturesque cliffs. After descending a thousand feet or more we emerged from the ravine into a small partially-cultivated valley containing a village. After leaving this village, where we took our midday rest, we began a long and rather wearisome up-hill climb past a plantation of birches and through a thin forest. From the top of the pass we made a gradual descent through similar country, and struck into the valley of a large stream—the Dja Ch'u—issuing, apparently, from some high snowy peaks visible in the distance.<sup>1</sup> This river accompanied us from

<sup>1</sup> It would appear from the recent Indian Survey map prepared by Major H. R. Davies, that this must be the Litang River, and therefore starts its course much further north.





**MOUNTAIN AND VALLEY ON THE ROAD TO MILL.**

*[To face p. 202.]*



this point practically all the way to Muli. Our path led us hundreds of feet above the river's left bank, and brought us to our night's lodging in a solitary house. Other scattered houses were visible some distance off, and I was told that they all bear the collective name of Hu Dra. Our hostess brought me as a present the best Tibetan cheese I had tasted.

The next day, 1st May, we left our quarters at Hu Dra just as the sun rose, on a beautiful fresh morning that reminded one almost too vividly of early summer in England. Even the cuckoo was not wanting. The road led us at first in a south-easterly direction high above the left bank of the Dja Ch'u for about 8 miles, then turned with that river into a valley running south-west. A mile or so beyond the bend I observed a village on the right bank, but we kept to the left, still high above the river. Nearly opposite that village we came to a couple of tumbledown huts. While we were resting here, two of my soldiers took the opportunity to disgrace May Day by indulging in a violent quarrel. For the sake of cacophony I had previously given one of these men the unmelodious name of Bloggins, owing to the singular irregularity of his features. Certainly no one could have mistaken him for a reincarnation of Plato's Charmides. To the other, for a different reason, I had given the surname of Hoggins. Before I could learn the cause of the dispute and settle it by friendly arbitration, Hoggins drew his sword and began laying it about him in a manner suggestive of slaughter

Asia B I 1



3 2044 072 261 043



