

rushed precipitately between the mighty blocks. Always one heard at a distance the muffled roar of the next rapids. In the course of the day we passed several other places where masses of rock had tumbled into the stream.

We stayed for an hour at the village Sha-ch'iao («The Bridge of Sand»), where booths and tent-shops were set up on the right bank and where a busy little ferry for passengers, animals, carts and goods plied its trade between the banks. The tributary Sha-ho disembogues into the river from the right at this place. The village impressed one as large and prosperous, and fresh groups of on-lookers came down continually to gape at us. Several boats were moored at the banks, and the ferry plied backwards and forwards unceasingly. The air hummed with the voices of crickets and frogs.

The valley grew wider and wider, and the magnificent scenery of yesterday was left more and more behind. The river became quieter, the rapids less precipitate and less frequent. Turtles lay pondering on stones near the bank, and on either side one saw hills overgrown with trees and bushes.

On the left we passed the village Pei-tuan-ting with its ferrying-place, and a little farther on to the right Nan-tuan-ting. The ferries at both villages were conveying donkeys, peasants, vegetables and other goods across the stream. On the left bank the mountain Ya-kou-shan formed a regular cone with a little temple on the top.

For quite a long distance the river flowed straight S. S. E., finally changing direction to S. S. W., south-east, E. N. E. and east again. The grey houses and walls of a little village nestled in luxuriant vegetation, and at the bank rested an endless line of boats with canopies but no masts.

Meantime, we had got two fresh soldiers. They sat loafing amidships, listening to the voluble LÜ WU — he gabbed away like a gramophone, inspiring a certain admiration in his listeners. One of these was a figure whom I have quite forgotten to introduce. We called him the stowaway. When he was not listening to LÜ WU's endless tales he was reading modern Chinese novels. He had been with us from the outset, and we thought at first that he was the owner of the boat. But afterwards we realized that the boatman had taken him against payment to get a little extra money, although we had hired the boat for ourselves and paid a royal price for it.

The rapids became quieter and quieter. There was no longer any excitement in negotiating them. The river was deep and we no longer ran aground on sand-banks. The oarsmen drudged away at their oars the whole time. They were stark naked and their bodies shone like metal in the sunshine. I sketched them, which aroused great merriment.

At P'o-ch'eng («The Ragged Town») we rested for the midday meal. The crew ate their millet and we accounted for our rissoles. One dishful after the other disappeared in their maws. They had the most wolfish appetites. But then they