



Fig. 20. Stopping at Lung-shan, July 11th

THE LAST DAY ON THE RIVER

The 11th of July was our last day on the Luan-ho. At seven o'clock the temperature was already 26° C., the sky was completely overcast, mist lay over the valley and the air was so damp that everything felt wet, and it was not so easy to get matches to ignite. The river had risen half a foot in the course of the night.

Broadly and majestically the Luan-ho flowed on its way towards the sea, now in a south-south-easterly direction. The speed of the current was diminishing, and our boys were obliged to keep rowing all the time. A light breeze blew from the south. Presently we met a flotilla of twenty-one boats, all having their great square sails up and making a good pace in the breeze. They moved in a long row in one another's wake, and presented a fine view with their dirty white, yellow or brown wings billowed and taut. We brushed past quite close, so that MONTELL was able to expose a couple of plates. I, too, made a couple of hasty sketches. In two minutes they had passed by, so only the most fugitive drawings were possible. On each of the boats one man stood at the helm. The drag-ropes were out, as usual, the wind alone would not have sufficed against the current.

A little while later we saw in the distance down the river a fresh cluster of sails, and another flotilla of twenty boats came to meet us. Like the previous one, it