



Fig. 21. Sails on the Luan-ho

was taking supplies of millet and other grain to T'ANG YÜ-LIN's troops. The sails grew larger, loomed over us, passed like phantoms and disappeared. Here and there one saw villages and lonely little huts on the bank, where wide kao-liang fields extended.

OVER THE PLAIN

The country began to open out. Only to the east-south-east rose a single mountain. We glided past one low headland after the other. These were generally covered with groves of trees. When we approached them we were greeted with the song of crickets, growing louder as we drew near, piercing as we glided past, then diminishing and gradually dying away. At the next headland the same music was repeated. On the outside of the bends the bank was often one and a half meters high and almost sheer, otherwise the gravel and clay banks sloped gently and were flat.

On our right we passed a little green-clad hill, and before us appeared a hog's back of more considerable size. It is called Lung-shan because it is supposed to resemble a dragon in shape, as this monster is generally represented by the Chinese.

To the left one glimpsed a pagoda on a hill-top, followed by woods with millions of singing crickets. In an idyllic little inlet in the right bank we put in for a mid-day rest in the shade of leafy trees, in whose foliage the cicadas plied their indefatigable fiddles. We took photographs of passing boats, sketched and smoked, while the crew bathed, chatted and laughed. The spot was called Shan-tung-chuang.

And so we glided on. On our left we passed a little oblong island of rock. The bank here was eight to ten meters high, and fell sheer down to the river. The little Buddha temple I-chi-miao lies partly on the left and partly on the right bank. The left half with portal lies on the crest of a bun-shaped island in the middle of the river, dividing the latter into two arms. The Luan-ho afterwards becomes very broad, at least three or four hundred meters. In the afternoon we met three more big squadrons of sailing-boats. The sky was clear, but the air filled with a sort of haze; and the boats with their high wings looked magnificent in the hazy, diffuse lighting. They came into view like mystical fairy ships, like tall