

XIII. T H E E N D

BY RAIL TO NANKING

On the evening of February 12th we travelled eastward on the Lung-hai Railway, arriving the next morning in T'ung-kuan. We soon had the mighty Huang-ho on our left, shimmering and blue. It was quite free of ice and enclosed by hills. Sometimes the track ran quite near the river-bank; sometimes we were passing through cultivated fields and villages.

We heard afterwards that only a few minutes after we had left T'ung-kuan the station-house was attacked by a band of fifteen to twenty bandits. They had driven the station staff at the point of the revolver into a little room, while they robbed the tills of a matter of 20,000 dollars.

We rushed through a whole series of tunnels, several of them of considerable length. In places we passed loess regions of the same kind as between Lanchow and Sian.

It was on this railway journey that we heard of an action in the British-Chinese press that was to have certain consequences after our arrival in Nanking. In *The North China Daily News* for February 9th there was an article against me and the expedition in which the writer declared that our long stay in Sinkiang was to be explained by the fact that we were actually engaged in archaeological work, and that we were now on the way to Peking with our finds.

YEW, KUNG and CHEN immediately set about writing an article, which they duly signed, giving a month to month account of our experiences and giving the lie to these accusations. Their article was sent to five newspapers. The suspicions of the Chinese archaeologists thus followed us right up to the end.

In Chengchow, where the Lung-hai line is crossed by the Peking—Hankow Railway, we took leave of five of our servants, who continued northwards to Peking en route for their homes. YEW had written out cheques for the wages due to them. They were also given hard cash for their tickets as well as generous bonuses for good and faithful service. T'SERAT gave a little speech in his own and his comrades' names, thanking me for everything and begging me not to