

In the coal-fields of Hu-nan "the mines are chiefly opened where the rivers intersect the inclined strata of the coal-measures and allow the coal-beds to be attacked by the miner immediately at their out-croppings."

At the highest point of the Great Kiang, reached by Sarel and Blakiston, they found mines on the cliffs over the river, from which the coal was sent down by long bamboo cables, the loaded baskets drawing up the empty ones.

[Many coal-fields have been explored since; one of the most important is the coal-field of the Yun-nan province; the finest deposits are perhaps those found in the bend of the Kiang; coal is found also at Mong-Tzū, Lin-ngan, etc.; this rich coal region has been explored in 1898 by the French engineer A. Leclère. (See *Congrès int. Géog.*, Paris, 1900, pp. 178-184.)—H. C.]

In various parts of China, as in Che-kiang, Sze-ch'wan, and at Peking, they form powdered coal, mixed with mud, into bricks, somewhat like our "patent fuel." This practice is noticed by Ibn Batuta, as well as the use of coal in making porcelain, though this he seems to have misunderstood. Rashiduddin also mentions the use of coal in China. It was in use, according to citations of Pauthier's, before the Christian era. It is a popular belief in China, that every provincial capital is bound to be established over a coal-field, so as to have a provision in case of siege. It is said that during the British siege of Canton mines were opened to the north of the city.

(*The Distribution of Coal in China*, by Baron Richthofen, in *Ocean Highways*, N.S., I. 311; *Macgowan in Ch. Repos.* xix. 385-387; *Blakiston*, 133, 265; *Mid. Kingdom*, I. 73, 78; *Amyot*, xi. 334; *Cathay*, 261, 478, 482; *Notes by Rev. A. Williamson in J. N. Ch. Br. R. A. S.*, December, 1867; *Hedde and Rondot*, p. 63.)

Æneas Sylvius relates as a miracle that took place before his eyes in Scotland, that poor and almost naked beggars, when *stones* were given them as alms at the church doors, went away quite delighted; for stones of that kind were imbued either with brimstone or with some oily matter, so that they could be burnt instead of wood, of which the country was destitute. (Quoted by *Jos. Robertson, Statuta Eccles. Scotie*. I. xciii.)

CHAPTER XXXI.

HOW THE GREAT KAN CAUSES STORES OF CORN TO BE MADE, TO HELP HIS PEOPLE WITHAL IN TIME OF DEARTH.

You must know that when the Emperor sees that corn is cheap and abundant, he buys up large quantities, and has it stored in all his provinces in great granaries, where it is so well looked after that it will keep for three or four years.¹

And this applies, let me tell you, to all kinds of corn, whether wheat, barley, millet, rice, panic, or what not, and when there is any scarcity of a particular kind of corn, he causes that to be issued. And if the price of