

the Min-Kiang from Ch'êng-tu fu. (1) The distance from Siu-chau to Ch'êng-tu by land travelling is just about 12 days, and the road is along a river. (2) In approaching "Fungul" from the south Polo met with a good many towns and villages. This would be the case along either of the navigable rivers that join the Yang-tzŭ below Siu-chau (or along that which joins above Siu-chau, mentioned further on). (3) The large trade in silk up and down the river is a characteristic that could only apply to the Yang-tzŭ.

These reasons are very strong; though some little doubt must subsist until we can explain the name (Fungul, or Sinugul) as applicable to Siu-chau.* And assuming Siu-chau to be the city we must needs carry the position of *Coloman* considerably further north than Lo-ping, and must presume the interval between *Anin* and *Coloman* to be greatly understated, through clerical or other error. With these assumptions we should place Polo's *Coloman* in the vicinity of Wei-ning, one of the localities of Kolo tribes.

From a position near Wei-ning it would be quite possible to reach Siu-chau in 12 days, making use of the facilities afforded by one or other of the partially navigable rivers to which allusion has just been made.

"That one," says M. Garnier in a letter, "which enters the Kiang a little above Siu-chau-fu, the River of *Lowatong*, which was descended by our party, has a branch to the eastward which is navigable up to about the latitude of Chao-tong. Is not this probably Marco Polo's route? It is to this day a line much frequented, and one on which great works have been executed; among others two iron suspension bridges, works truly gigantic for the country in which we find them."



Iron Suspension Bridge at Lowatong. (From Garnier.)

An extract from a Chinese Itinerary of this route, which M. Garnier has since communicated to me, shows that at a point 4 days from Wei-ning the traveller may embark and continue his voyage to any point on the great Kiang.

We are obliged, indeed, to give up the attempt to keep to a line of communicating rivers throughout the whole 24 days. Nor do I see how it is possible to adhere to that condition literally without taking more material liberties with the text.

* Cuiju might be read *Ciuju*—representing *Siuchau*, but the difficulty about Fungul would remain.