

I conceive Sinju to be the city which was then called CHÊN-CHAU, but now I-CHING HIEN,* and which stands on the Kiang as near as may be 15 miles from Yang-chau. It is indeed south-west instead of south-east, but those who have noted the style of Polo's orientation will not attach much importance to this. I-ching hien is still the great port of the Yang-chau salt manufacture, for export by the Kiang and its branches to the interior provinces. It communicates with the Grand Canal by two branch canals. Admiral Collinson, in 1842, remarked the great numbers of vessels lying in the creek off I-ching. (See note 1 to ch. lxviii. above; and *J. R. G. S.* XVII. 139.)

[“We anchored at a place near the town of *Y-ching-hien*, distinguished by a pagoda. The most remarkable objects that struck us here were some enormously large salt-junks of a very singular shape, approaching to a crescent, with sterns at least thirty feet above the water, and bows that were two-thirds of that height. They had ‘bright sides,’ that is, were varnished over the natural wood without painting, a very common style in China.” (*Davis, Sketches*, II. p. 13.)—H. C.]

NOTE 2.—The river is, of course, the Great Kiang or Yang-tzü Kiang (already spoken of in ch. xlv. as the *Kiansui*), which Polo was justified in calling the greatest river in the world, whilst the New World was yet hidden. The breadth seems to be a good deal exaggerated, the length not at all. His expressions about it were perhaps accompanied by a mental reference to the term *Dalai*, “The Sea,” which the Mongols appear to have given the river. (See *Fr. Odoric*, p. 121.) The Chinese have a popular saying, “*Hai vu ping, Kiang vu ti*,” “Boundless is the Ocean, bottomless the Kiang!”

NOTE 3.—“The assertion that there is a greater amount of tonnage belonging to the Chinese than to all other nations combined, does not appear overcharged to those who have seen the swarms of boats on their rivers, though it might not be found strictly true.” (*Mid. Kingd.* II. 398.) Barrow's picture of the life, traffic, and population on the Kiang, excepting as to specific numbers, quite bears out Marco's account. This part of China suffered so long from the wars of the T'ai-P'ing rebellion that to travellers it has presented thirty years ago an aspect sadly belying its old fame. Such havoc is not readily repaired in a few years, nor in a few centuries, but prosperity is reviving, and European navigation is making an important figure on the Kiang.

[From the *Returns of Trade for the Year 1900* of the Imperial Maritime Customs of China, we take the following figures regarding the navigation on the Kiang. Steamers entered inwards and cleared outwards, under General Regulations at *Chung-King*: 1; 331 tons; sailing vessels, 2681; 84,862 tons, of which Chinese, 816; 27,684 tons. At *Ichang*: 314; 231,000 tons, of which Chinese, 118; 66,944 tons; sailing vessels, all Chinese, 5139; 163,320 tons. At *Shasi*: 606; 453,818 tons, of which Chinese, 606; 453,818 tons; no sailing vessels. At *Yochow*: 650; 299,962 tons, of which Chinese, 458; 148,112 tons; no sailing vessels; under Inland Steam Navigation Rules, 280 Chinese vessels, 20,958 tons. At *Hankow*: under General Regulation, Steamers, 2314; 2,101,555 tons, of which Chinese, 758; 462,424 tons; sailing vessels, 1137; 166,118 tons, of which Chinese, 1129; 163,724 tons; under Inland Steam Navigation Rules, 1682 Chinese vessels, 31,173 tons. At *Kiu-Kiang*: under General Regulation, Steamers, 2916; 3,393,514 tons, of which Chinese, 478; 697,468 tons; sailing vessels, 163; 29,996 tons, of which Chinese, 160; 27,797 tons; under Inland Steam Navigation Rules, 798 Chinese vessels; 21,670 tons. At *Wu-hu*: under General Regulation, Steamers, 3395; 3,713,172 tons, of which Chinese, 540; 678,362 tons; sailing vessels, 356; 48,299 tons, of which Chinese, 355; 47,848 tons; under Inland Steam Navigation Rules, 286 Chinese vessels; 4272 tons. At *Nanking*: under General Regulation, Steamers, 1672; 1,138,726 tons, of which Chinese, 970; 713,232 tons; sailing vessels, 290; 36,873 tons, of which Chinese, 281; 34,985 tons; under Inland Steam Navigation Rules, 30 Chinese vessels; 810 tons. At *Chinkiang*:

* See *Gaubil*, p. 93, note 4; *Biot*, p. 275 [and *Playfair's Dict.*, p. 393].