

four 1—2 fathoms wide. We went on eastward rather closer to the S mountains, while the river approached the N mountains considerably and could be seen now and then flowing at a distance of $1/3$ — $2/3$ of a mile from the road. The valley is $1\ 1/2$ —2 miles wide, densely populated and cultivated and covered with leaf-trees and fruit-trees. The long slopes of the mountains, cut up into terraces, are cultivated almost to their summits. Some villages were visible on the slopes, and higher up a wall of one or two deserted fortresses. The road was good and perfectly passable for arbahs. For the greater part it runs in the shade of two rows of leaf-trees. A couple of river beds from the S, dry at present — tributaries of the Sei ho — crossed the road. The sowings had shot up considerably, being several inches in height on some fields. The mustard was in bloom and all the trees were green. The road ran through a number of villages, two of which were large, though there were only a few houses on the road itself. We reached Mapochuan, a village of 800—1,000 houses about 14 miles from the town. Its bazaar street with its white sunshades ran along our road for about $2/3$ of a mile. It was seething with people and animals. To the E of it the road became deserted. We met no more of the mules, horses and donkeys laden with charcoal, pieces of wood, small planks and baskets, that had filled the road almost uninterruptedly between the last village and the town. 3 miles from the village we came to the sandy bank of the Wei ho, a short distance below its tributary Njuthu ho, which comes from Tsingshui. The Sei ho had united with it without my noticing it from the road. The river is 200—250 fathoms wide at this place and its depth was up to our knees. It flows quietly and its bottom consists of loose sand in some places. There were two big ferries, built with low sides and with bows and stern sharply inclined upwards. They were worked by a crowd of more or less naked individuals who either ran about in the water, shoving barges with loud cries or stood on the vessel with long poles in their hands. To reach the ferry you have to climb on to the back of one of these men, who carry you with ease. The crossing took about an hour.

The village of Shuitang Ching, where we spent the night, is about $2/3$ of a mile from the landing place. The distance covered was 15—16 miles. Shuitang Ching and its surroundings consist of 1,200 tja. The livestock consists of 250 head of cattle, 100 horses, 550 mules, 450 donkeys and 1,000 sheep. — Hemp, gaolyan, wheat, peas, beans, maize, opium, millet, tchumiza, mustard, potatoes, rice and some cotton are grown. Average crop 4—5 fold. Cultivation is done with rainwater. — Easterly storms occur in the 2nd month, but not always. — Rain is rare between the 2nd—10th months. — Snow between the middle of the 10th and the middle of the 2nd month, but it melts in 2 or 3 days.

April 17th. We proceeded along the foot of the mountains that rise just outside the village in the N. *Tsingshui.* In company with them the road describes a curve, open to the S, for about $2\ 1/2$ miles. The ground fell away on the right and occasionally we caught a glimpse in the distance of the brown surface of the Wei ho. From there the course was NE and ENE. With a couple of intervals, during which the road runs for some time on a level, we rode up a slope, fairly steep in places, wedged between two rivers — on the right the Wei ho, flowing east between mountains, and on the left another river, flowing in another valley to the S