

from the bank at this place and left room for a small tributary flowing from the S, Tsing-lutien ho, 20 feet wide and not deep. Between the hills the dark-grey bulk of the mountains was visible in the S. Here the Hwang ho described a curve, open to the N, and flowed in a bed 15—20 feet wide. The mountains of Shansi on the N bank were already of a considerable size, but rather distant. At 21 li we came to Wang ti cheng, a village of 300 houses, and were then again shut into a sunken road for 5 li. The road then debouched into open, undulating country, but there, too, it led along a hollow of such depth that we could see next to nothing. Further on the right there were soft hills with mountains beyond them. Trees that occasionally afforded a little shade, grew along the edges of the high ground on either side of the road. The heat was intense and the dust unbearable. At 30 li we crossed a small river, Shih ehr ho, on which there were some houses and trees. Just beyond the sunken road continued. At 40 li there was a larger village, P'antu cheng, with 300 houses in the valley of a small river of the same name. On the other side of it we entered another sunken road. At 50 li a last narrow gully with the village of Kaupe with 50 houses, broke the monotony of the sunken road for a few minutes.

We heaved a sigh of relief, when at last we abandoned the sunken road and reached Wang hsiang hsien. A small river, Tsingshui ho, runs into the Hwang ho between the town and its W suburb, the latter river flowing majestically in a very wide bed close to the town wall. I was told that the bed of the river was gradually shifting southward. The road was said to have run formerly along the present course of the river. Stone dams have been built at right angles to the river in order to protect the town from floods, or rather, to prevent the river from encroaching further on the bank, as has occurred at intervals of a few years. When the water rises an inch here, it is said to rise 5 at Kai-feng.

This place is insignificant, but a year or two ago some schools were established here, Tchung feng hsiao hsiao tang, Kao teng hsiao hsiao tang and Hsui fan hsiao tang. In the two last the pupils are paid 800 cash a month. The local population complains of the cost of the buildings and is reluctant to send its children there, as they are wanted for getting in the harvest and other work. — At a preliminary subscription of shares for constructing a railway 15,000 taels were subscribed. The shares are 5 dollars each and are repayable in 5 years. The railway scheme does not enjoy goodwill or confidence and reluctance is shown in subscribing for shares. — Orders were issued a year ago to reduce opium growing. The reduction, however, is far greater than prescribed, as the rural population, disturbed by proclamations and rumours, has considerably restricted its opium fields of its own accord. It is stated, however, that about 30 % of the population smoke opium. The mandarin is not a smoker. — The town is supposed to have been founded during the reign of Chow, but was destroyed on several occasions. The population of the town is about 300 tja and of the district about 8,000 tja. The garrison consists of 1 pazung and 3—4 men. The inns are very bad. I secured a comfortable room in a miao N of the town on the Hwang ho, where I took a bath in the presence of a large audience. The bottom of the river was muddy in places, but the current not very strong. The water was horribly dirty. — Maize, cotton, wheat, peas, millet and a little tchumiza and mustard are grown. Average crop 6—7 fold. Agriculture is dependent on rainwater. — Between this place and Tung