

Three years ago several schools were opened here, too, 1 tsung and 1 hsi fan hsiao tang. The two former categories are well frequented, but the latter only poorly. The pupils receive no pay for attending school.

Opium growing has been reduced by about 50 %, for fear of high taxes, so it is said. Shops, in which smoking was formerly permitted, are closed. Trade in opium still continues unhampered. — 150,000 taels have been subscribed preliminarily for constructing the railway. The merchants are decidedly in favour of its being built. — Along the distance of 60 li between Wang hsien and Lingpao there are said to be ferries across the Hwang ho at Tatzeying in and Tsu shang (20 li W of Lingpao). — Besides the large arbah road that goes through Lingpao, the latter is said to be connected by a mountain road with Nanyang-fu in the valley of the Pei ho and by another mountain road with Haichow (said to lie on the highway) in Southern Shansi. Trade is local with the surrounding district, but is of some size. — The same plants are grown in the district as at Wang hsien, but more mustard, besides hemp. About 50 % of the fields have artificial irrigation. — Close to the 5th gate of the town there is an old temple dedicated to Confucius, with large, venerable trees. It is supposed to be of the time of the Emperor T'ang. Another, about a li N of the town is also said to be very old and is falling into ruins. On one of the streets there is an unusually beautiful peilu of stone with large, carved figures. It belongs to the early part of the Ming dynasty. — A Hsien is resident in the town. The garrison consists of 1 pazung and 3 or 4 men.

May 22nd. We had scarcely left Lingpao, when we were again in a sunken road with a slight ascent.
Shanchow. After 2 or 3 li the view opened for a short time, but walls of earth soon shut out the landscape again. The plain that was visible was slightly undulating. The mountains of Shansi in the N and those of Tsinshan in the S could be seen far off. — We passed Shih-li-pu, a little village of 3 houses, in an opening of the walls of earth after the road had dipped slightly for several li. A slight rise and fall indicated that the road had cut through a ridge. After 20 li we passed Chuhu cheng with 15 houses. A couple of li further on we were at last released for a considerable time from our prison. The Hwang ho was no longer visible, and judging by a large, steep rise in the N it must have been very distant. Our course was ENE. The plain was tilled. We passed Taying with 700 houses, only some of which were on the road, 25 li from Lingpao and Wei t'ang with 100 houses 10 li beyond. Close to the latter we came to very large hills on the right. Beyond the village the road again diverged from the hills. — 9 li further on we came to a huge crevice in the löss on the left of the road, and after crossing a small branch of it, we reached the village of Chaotuku with 30 houses. From this place the road was again confined between walls of earth that only came to an end about 3 li before Shanchow. This town lies 60 li from Lingpao and is reached after crossing two rivers and leaving behind a suburb situated between them, called Nan kuan. The second river is called Tsing ling tien and is of some size, though there was little water in it just now.

The road took us through the S gate of the town, situated on the very edge of the bank and approached by a stone ascent. The Hwang ho was visible at a distance of 1—2 li. The