



*Inside the temples in the grottoes at Lung meng*

Early this morning I made a trip to a mountain called »Lung meng (= the dragon's gate)«, 25 li S of the town. The story goes that a child heard a noise in the mountain. In its fright it told its mother who told it to knock on the side of the mountain and call to the author of the noise to come out. The child did so and the mountain divided and its dragon appeared (the Chinese believe that there is a dragon in every mountain range). In any case the mountain is now divided by a broad gorge, at the bottom of which an arm of the Luo ho flows. A ferry connects the two banks. The mountains are not high, but beautiful, parts being steep and the denuded rock appearing everywhere. Small streams rise from some springs and their clear water pours in tiny cascades down the steep rock. Two pretty, diminutive Chinese temples stand at the northern end of the gorge, one a little way up the slope of the E mountain, the other at the foot of the W mountains. The latter looks very pretty with some miniature cascades gushing out of the stone walls of the terrace. In connection with the visit of the Empress during her flight the place was tidied up and made very comfortable. The sides of the mountains contain numerous grottoes of different sizes on either side of the river, from niches so small that they can just hold a Buddha image to arches 12—14 m long and 7—8 m wide. They were all of the same shape as the grotto cells N of Qara Khoja — an arch cut short at the front and back by a smooth wall. The doors were in many cases small and rectangular. Opposite them a large Buddha image was enthroned, in some cases, with a couple of