

regular intervals. A great difference in the level of the surface can be seen with the naked eye between the ground close to the river beyond the embankment and the considerably lower plain to the N of it.

Between 5 and 6 o'clock the train stopped at Chantufu, where passengers, with their luggage, both hand and heavy, had to find rooms for the night in order to continue the journey at 7 next morning. — The walls of the town stand about $\frac{2}{3}$ of a mile E of the station, a couple of towers protruding beyond them. At the invitation of one of the French railway agents I spent the night in one of a row of small houses put up for the railway staff close to the line. I did not visit the town, but took a refreshing bathe in a little river not far off.

A musical and dramatic entertainment was arranged for me in the evening, the performers being agents and contractors of the railway, Frenchmen, Spaniards and Italians. The only people who did not perform were a small M-me Chrysantème, a broad-shouldered and coarsely built Japanese lady, a Chinese officer, whose spirits seemed to rise as rapidly as those of the noisy company, and myself.

June 7th. Unaccustomed to such excesses, I spent a disturbed night and was only half-rested
Tai-yuan-fu. when I had to rejoin the train at 5 a.m. The journey was monotonous, though the landscape was slightly enlivened by the mountains of Shansi running on the left of the line at a considerable distance. The rough and steep outlines of the mountains indicated that the soft earth of the hills had given way to granite. At a little after 11 we reached Chen-chow, where the narrow-gauge railway of Tai-yuan-fu started. Both stations lie close together and I continued my journey already at 1 o'clock. The fare for the journey of not quite 300 km is 15 dollars I class and 3.90 III class. Luggage is charged 2.50 dollars per pickul. The cost of building the line was so heavy that it was necessary to raise the usual fares. After travelling across the plain for about an hour we entered the mountains. The line keeps on curving, often very sharply, and leads over a great many bridges and viaducts as it winds through the mountains that grow higher and wilder. The first part of the journey is along the narrow valley of the Tsi ping ho that gradually ascends to the highest point of the day, the watershed between the rivers of Chihli and the Feng ho system. The highest altitude (1074 m according to the railway surveyors) is reached between the stations Kin shui (150 $\frac{1}{2}$ km) and Chow yang hsien (160 km). Further west there is a gradual descent.

We were now following the valley of the Chow chiao ho. Owing to the kindness of the second engineer of the line, Mr J. de Lapeyrière, I was able to enjoy the beautiful and wild scenery from his private carriage, which was coupled on to the end of the train. He described the building of the railway in an interesting way with many details. One could scarcely help being impressed by the difficulties that had been overcome, the excellent solution of the problems being especially worthy of admiration. We passed no less than 18 or 19 tunnels, all blasted in the rock. The largest number was between Chengkia lungti (92 km) and Luan Lion (110 km). The cost of construction came to 180—200,000 francs per km. The earnings, chiefly based on coal exports, do not seem to fulfil the expectations of the company, at any rate so far. Transport is so expensive that the coal cannot compete