



*A steel bridge being built
over the Hwang ho.*

in the Tientsin market. It also seems to be a vital matter that the line should be carried on to its junction with the line from Tientsin to the South. A similar line was proposed from Chen-chow to Tung Kwang, but the concession had not yet been granted. There were said to be large coal deposits in the neighbourhood of Pindin chow. A small line leads to a mine worked by a German-Chinese company and situated in a side-gorge a few km from the railway. It appeared to be among the few that were being worked in an up-to-date fashion. A former German naval officer, who had risen to the rank of admiral in the Chinese service, was managing the company. Small black mounds could be seen on the surrounding slopes, indicating the hollows, in which the local population mined its coal. At Yang sui, a station not far from Pindin chow, there are considerable coal deposits divided into small cubes belonging to a great many small exporters. Yutzu, a station not far from the end of the railway, is also of some importance. Here the arbah road from Si-an-fu joins the railway line, and if the line is continued to the SSE to the bend of the Yellow River, it will undoubtedly start from here. The rich and powerful town Taiku lies 70—80 li to the S, powerful owing to the many millions whose owners come from here and spend some parts of the year here. The traffic is insignificant between Yutzu and Tai-yuan-fu. — The railway gauge is 1 m. According to Lapeyrière's estimate it would cost about 20 million francs to convert the line to the standard gauge. The railway carriages are comfortable and pleasant, the I and II class being decorated with charming views of France. The line is well laid and there is very little shaking.

At 10 p.m. we reached Tai-yuan-fu, the fine little station being built next to its S wall. Lukanin and Hsy met us, having been summoned by the stationmaster, formerly a Parisian bon viveur, who had plenty of time now to brood over the mutability of life among the grey mountains of Shansi and the constant clouds of dust in the intervals between the 2 or 3 trains of the day. Early one morning I called on him, just after the train had