

The Yutai hsien area is in reality not a valley, but a depression between two or more mountains. The town and the surrounding villages lie on the slopes. In the NE the landscape is of the same character; in the NE, however, (250°) a level, cultivated plain is disclosed, going in a southerly direction, from the luxuriant verdure of which large villages with white houses and dark-coloured trees protrude like huge bouquets. To the E of the plain fresh chains of mountains rise one above the other.

The descent was short and not steep. After 12 li Nantaising with 300 houses. After 20 li on the other side of the plain Sutzu fu with 400. Immediately beyond the ascent of another hill began. We reached the Laokuli pass after 22 li. Barometer No. 1 639.8. For a considerable time we now remained at about the same level, shut in occasionally for a short distance by walls of earth. Mostly, however, the road was open. At 25 li Tsu chia tsuang with 70—80 houses. After 28 li Lungwang tha with 50—60 houses between two hills. Further to the SE and S we could see a larger chain of mountains of a darker colour than the surrounding hills. It was often intersected by valleys that formed a chain of mountains separated from each other. Grass was visible in folds of the earth in the higher parts of the slopes. After 30 li Hanling-tzu with 32 houses. E of it we ascended another height, Thu tsunli. Barometer No. 1 636.7. A long and at times steep descent led us into another valley. From the heights there was an excellent view of yet another valley in the E. From the W, N, ENE and S large gorges opened up, each with a broad, stony river bed that ran together into 2 large, stony arms and disappeared in the S and SW among the mountains enclosing the valley.

During the descent we went along a sunken road occasionally, at other times long distances were paved with stones. After 40 li Katatasen with 50—60 houses. At 41 li Tutsung with 300 houses at the junction of two stony river beds coming from the W and N. Both were dry at present. I was not able to ascertain their names. They are called either the western and northern river or after the village, where they form a junction. They were said to run into the Kutu ho which flows past Taichow. — Sinchuang with 100 houses and Nanthuthu with 30—40 at 45 and 50 li, the latter on the broad, stony bed of the Liu jun ho. This is one of those we saw from the hills and is said to flow to the south until it joins the Liu wang ho which in turn supplies its waters to the Kutu ho. It would, perhaps, be more correct to say that it supplies stones and not water, for the bed of the Liu jun ho is bone-dry and is said to be so all the year round.

For the rest of the day the road continued along the bed of the latter river. After 51 li we passed a little temple, Yutai su, on the river, dedicated to the god of rain (Lung wang). It was said to have been built in the time of the Emperor Chow, but looks strikingly new after recent repairs. It was raining at the moment, but man is never satisfied. The god must go out to pray for more rain. He had just been placed in his comfortable palanquin, surrounded by a dozen children and tatterdemalions carrying banners that were black with age and dirt. Their ragged clothes formed a curious contrast to the gilded chair and the unusually clean courtyard of the little temple. They hurried off to the sounds of two whining clarinettes and a couple of brass cymbals, just as I produced my camera. On the opposite bank, at some distance, a high tower in many storeys was visible, surrounded by