



*Grinding and cleaning corn
in the village of Tsha-pu
in the neighbourhood
of Yutai Shan.*

ENE—WSW direction. After 17 li the village of Hsing wan with 100 houses. There was a striking difference between the two banks of the river. In contrast to the left bank, the right bank was stony, in parts very high and very slightly cultivated. After 20 li the village of Kantai with 100 houses. Just beyond it there was a sunken road that led us through a long eminence of coarse sand and stone running parallel to the mountains and river. It ended in a stony river bed that came from the mountains and ran southward. The road led us up this in a northerly direction. Appreciable hills extended on either side, their nearest slopes being cultivated and forming terraces. Soon the road turned NE. — After 37 li Liudiaku, with 5 or 6 houses, on a slope of the mountains. From this place the course of the road was NNW and the ground ascended more and more steeply. The bottom of the gorge was nothing but stones that became larger, the higher we climbed. A small water-channel flowed between the stones. On either side of the narrow valley we had already seen for some time steep mountains, in which granite alternated here and there with a grassy fold. A couple of small herds of goats were grazing high up on the slopes.

We met a considerable number of Mongols in the gorge, travelling, in small groups either on foot or on horseback with their savings, to the Dalai Lama. Here in the wild gorge, without the crowd of blue-clad Chinese, at Yutai Shan, you have the impression of being once more among nomads. The golden-yellow dress of the lamas, red and dirty grey of the men and blue of the women, looked picturesque against the grey rock of the mountains. Their horses were small, but broad, deep-chested and, above all, surefooted. — The road was very rough. It crept along ledges, for long distances on the slippery wall of rock, the surface of which was at times quite level, at others very uneven. It is hard to say which was preferable. In many places the road was very steep.