

Our first objective point was a mountain well known in Chinese legends—the Chang-pai-shan, or “Ever-White Mountain.” This fabulous mountain had, it is true, been visited in 1709 by one of those enterprising Jesuit surveyors, who seem to have penetrated everywhere and compiled a map of the Chinese Empire remarkable for its accuracy. But no European had subsequently visited the mountain to corroborate their accounts, and much romantic mystery was still attached to it.

The Ever-White Mountain was reported to be situated in the heart of an immense forest, to be of enormous height (the name itself suggesting a snow-clad peak), and to have an unfathomable lake at its summit. We were accordingly fired with enthusiasm to penetrate its mystery and ascend its summit, and on May 19 we left the treaty port of Newchwang with this object in view.

We now had our first taste of Chinese travel, and it proved on the whole by no means unpleasant. In the first place, the climate was perfect—mild and soft, like an English summer. The country was everywhere richly cultivated, and was dotted over with well-built, pent-roofed