

and add to the beauty of the whole. And, looking closer, we found ferns of the most delicate tracery, deep blue gentians, golden buttercups, azaleas, orchids, and numbers of other flowers of every type of beauty, all in their freshest summer bloom.

The following day we visited some springs which form one of the sources of the Sungari, and on the next we ascended the mountain itself. The trees became fewer and fewer, and we emerged on to open slopes covered with long grass and dwarf azaleas, heather, yellow poppies, and gentians. Except the steepness there was no difficulty in the ascent, and we made for a saddle between two rugged peaks which crowned the mountain. We pressed eagerly on to reach this point, as from it we hoped to look out beyond, far away over Corea on the opposite side. At last we reached the saddle, and then, instead of the long succession of alternate hills and valleys we had made up our minds we should see unfolded before us, we looked down in astonishment on a beautiful lake in a setting of weird, fantastic cliffs lying directly at our feet.

We were, in fact, on an extinct volcano.