

The waters were of a deep clear blue, ever changing in intensity of colour, and situated here at the very summit of a mountain, and held in on every side by frowning precipices, this lake was unique in character as well as position. We tried to descend to its brim, but could find no way down the cliffs ; so, after boiling a thermometer to ascertain the altitude, I set out to ascend the highest of the rocky peaks which formed a fringe around it. The climb was a stiff one, and the risk of crashing down with one of the rocks into the deep lake almost directly beneath me not always remote ; but at length each successive rocky obstacle had been negotiated, and I succeeded in reaching the summit—the very top of the Ever-White Mountain—and from there looked out over a billowy expanse of forest-clad hills stretching away on every side, as far as the eye could reach ; on the one side over Manchuria, and on the other over Corea ; nothing but forest, except where the lake below me lay like a sapphire in a setting of rock, and it was only by this and by occasional glints of the river that the vast expanse of green was broken.