A 843,787

TRAVELS IN NORTH AND CENTRAL CHINA

Digitized by Google

Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

ARTHUR PROBSTHAIN
Oriental Bookseller
41 Gt. Russell Street
LONDON, W.C. 1

Digitized by Google

Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

JOHN GRANT BIRCH.

Digitized by Google

Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

having a morning ashore, we enjoyed a visit to the botanical gardens, but, on resuming our voyage, sundry misadventures befell us. First a hawser fouled with the propeller, then a fresh monsoon upset the equanimity of some; several times we

A CHINESE BEGGAR.

narrowly escaped collision with erratic steamers, and one night a Sidi boy, killed by falling into the stokehold, was promptly and with little ceremony passed overboard by his companions.

On April 18 we disembarked at Wusung and, going to Shanghai, took passage on board the s.s. *Hsui-chi*, one of the China coast steamers, for

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

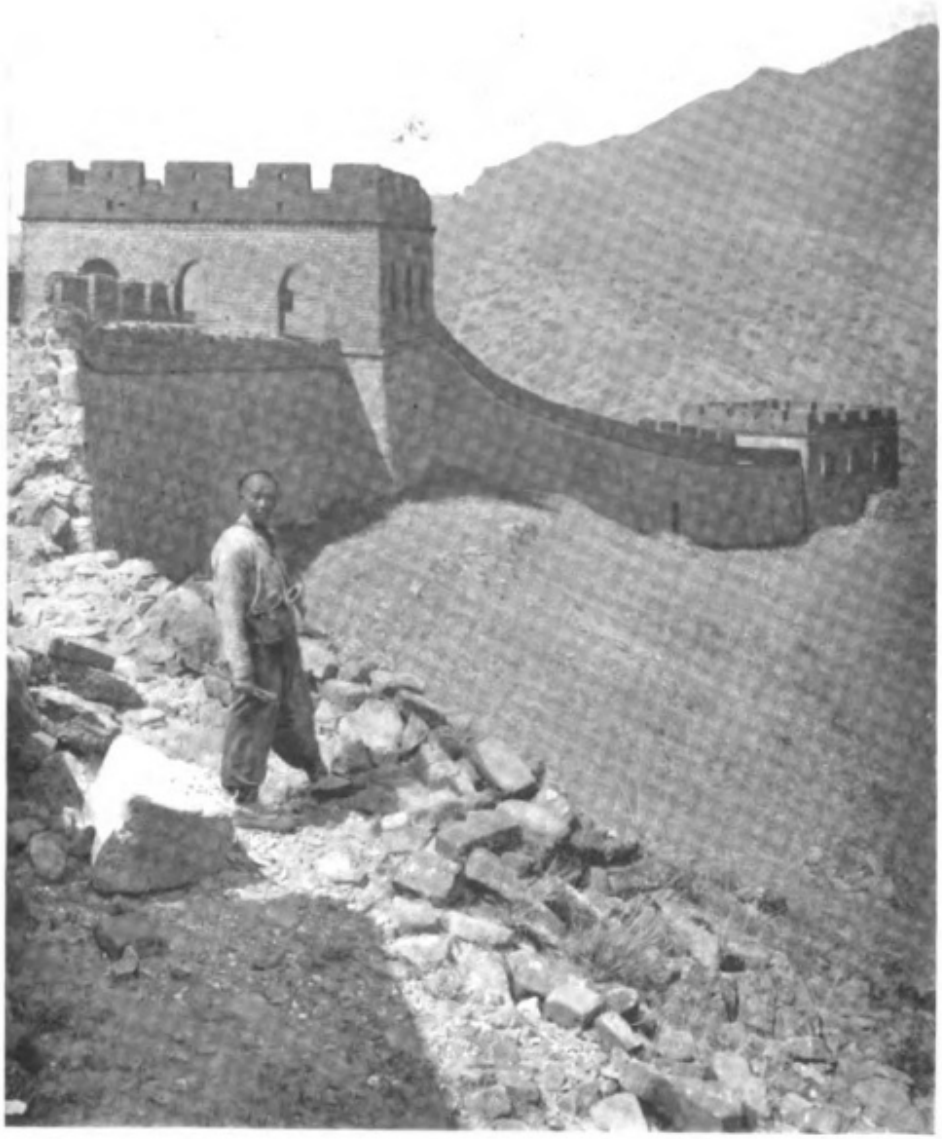
footpaths and no rule of the road. The road itself is a rutted series of mounds and hollows, deep-coated with dust, mud, and all imaginable filth. Legation Street is but little better, though on it stand most of the Legation and other European buildings, among them the comparatively palatial and towering new erection of the Hong-Kong and Shanghai Bank. We put up at the Club, where we

A CHINESE CROWD.

met old acquaintances. We dined with ——, and, in a long and interesting conversation learned something of the simmering pot of intrigue and aggression which was in progress. I called on the Inspector-General, who was as Chinese as ever, and had much to say against the iniquity of foreign aggressors, though not hopeful for the Chinese themselves.

One day we visited the headquarters of the Roman Catholic Mission, where I resumed my acquaintance

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN



GREAT WALL NEAR NAN-KAU PASS.

Digitized by Google

Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

The walls invariably consist of a long curtain with flanking bastions, and the shape of the city is a square or oblong.

Two or three-storeyed towers surmount the gateways and the angles of the walls. The road runs straight across the town, and often in the centre ornamental "paitans," or wooden arches, span the

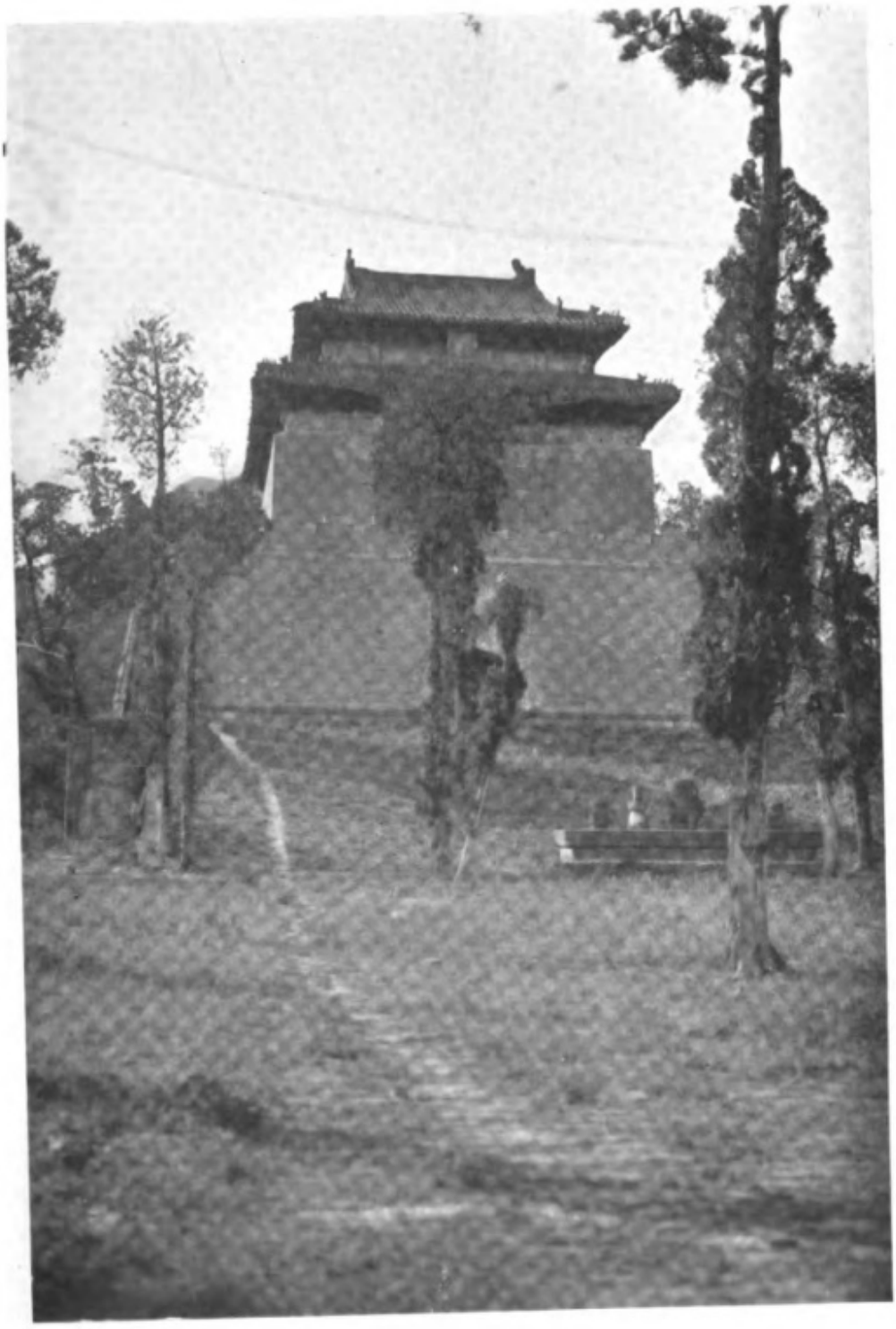
GREAT WALL.

streets. The road is generally from 6 to 10 feet below the level of the raised path on each side, the frontage of which is occupied by shops, the dwelling houses being on the cross or parallel streets. Outside of Huai-lai a small shallow stream is crossed on the southern side by a ricketty timber bridge, although, a little lower down, a portion of a stone bridge remains unused.

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

INNER GATE, MING TOMB.

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN



PAVILION IN MING TOMB.

Digitized by Google

Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

round. After the midday rest we sent the carts on to Chang-ping-chau direct, while with the donkeys under a broiling afternoon sun, we crossed or skirted the foot-hills in an easterly direction. All these low hills were beautifully cultivated, and when we descended from them to the ravines and spurs on the western side of the plain, at the head of which the Ming tombs lie, we were in a real farming country with pleasant winding paths, substantial farmhouses, tree-shaded villages, well-tilled fields,

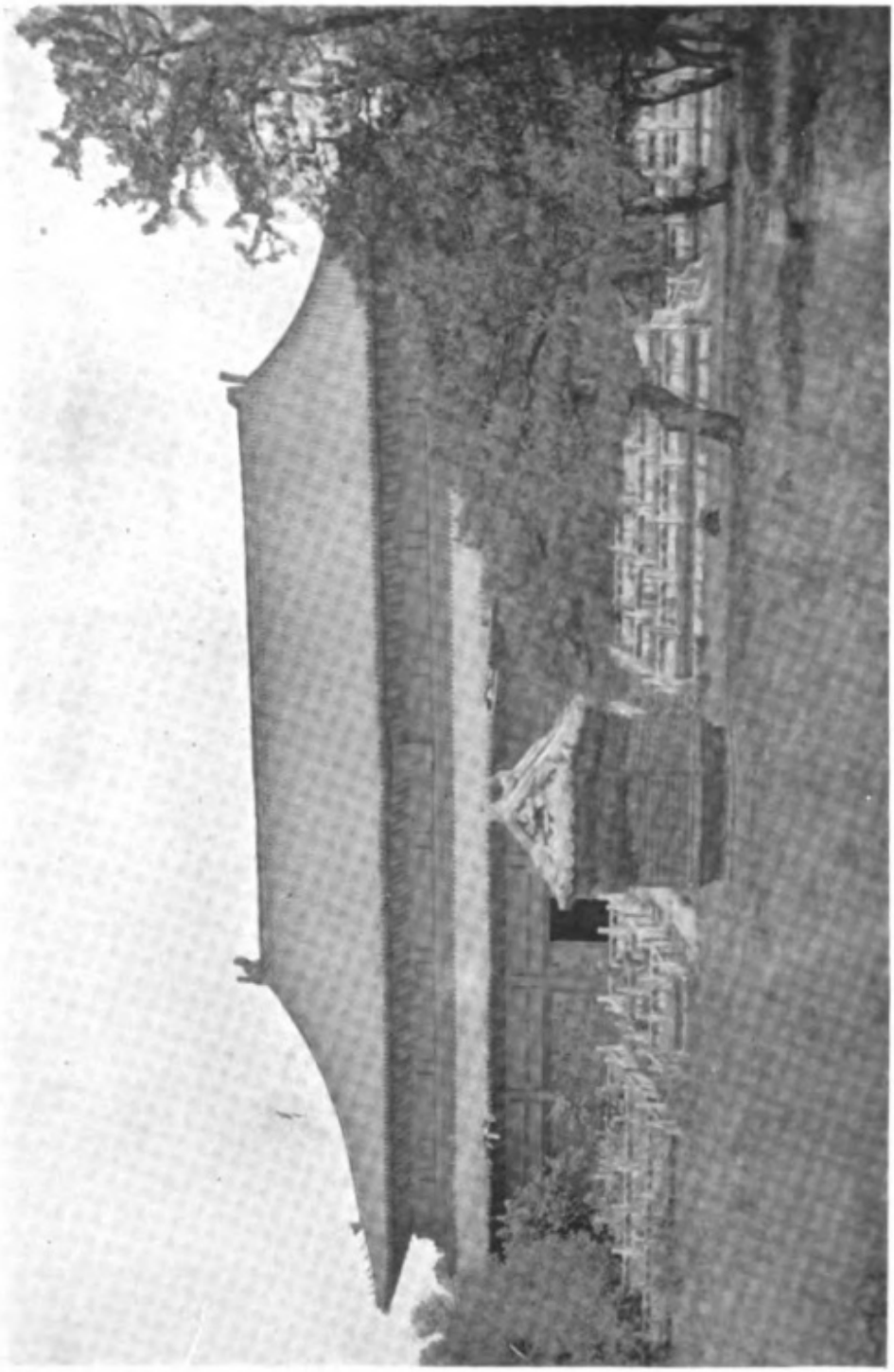
FIGURES IN AVENUE LEADING TO MING TOMBS.

and carefully laid-out orchards. The barley was already coming into ear, the fruit had set on the trees, and the vines were flowering. Soon we spied the first of the yellow-rayed and tree-clad Imperial tombs, shut in at the head of a ravine, while across the plain, to the east, the greater tombs were visible in the distance. We passed the near one, and skirting an outlying spur came on the next two, close together, one of which we inspected. All are of the same character. The number of court-yards varies, as also does the size of the build-

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

PAVILION IN FRONT OF TUMULUS OF YUNG-LO'S TOMB.

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

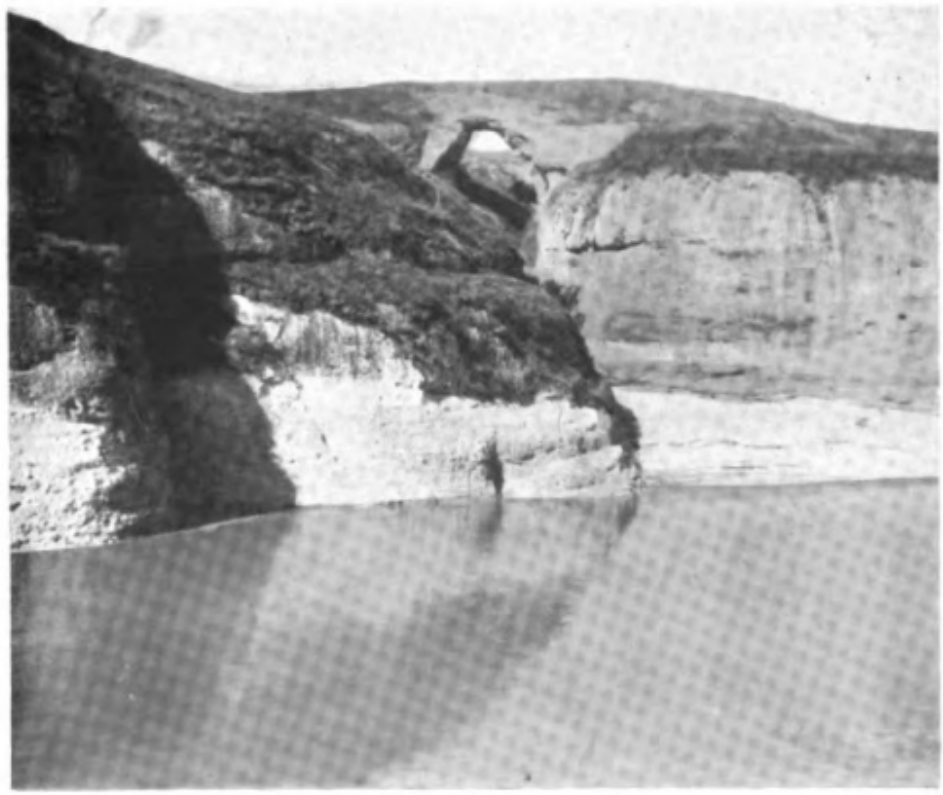


CENTRAL HALL OF YUNG-LO'S TOMB.

Digitized by Google

Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

the German Count with whom I had travelled down the Yangtsze in July. He had recently lost his appointment as Cavalry Instructor to the Viceroy, his place and that of other Germans having been taken by Japs at much lower rates. The Jap was becoming strong in Hankau. The Germans also



NATURAL ARCH, TIGER'S TOOTH GORGE.

were progressing in trade matters, most of the export of hides, hair, and other things known as "the muck and truck trade," being in their hands. There was a German steamer on the river, and one or two others especially built for navigation to Chung-king, were soon to come out. The tea trade was of course in the hands of the Russians, numerous

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

at the present limit of steam navigation, and above it river traffic is slow, costly and dangerous.

Mr. Wong, the Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank

HILLS BELOW ICHANG.

agent, a Chinaman educated in the States, living in a foreign house in foreign style and speaking English well, at once undertook to charter a junk or

KWATZU AT CUSTOMS JETTY, ICHANG.

"kwat-zu" for us, and that evening one dropped down to the Customs jetty for inspection. It was a good-sized craft, with a flat deck (raiseable boards) forward; behind the mast a long deck-house,

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

berries, and the leaf, which resembled that of the poplar, was of a lovely rich scarlet. Ferns were very plentiful and varied, including several of our commoner greenhouse kinds. The views of the long deep gorge, with its numerous cliff faces, were superb, with the higher ranges behind, and the warm autumn browns and reds on the foliage.

FISHING BOAT, ICHANG GORGE.

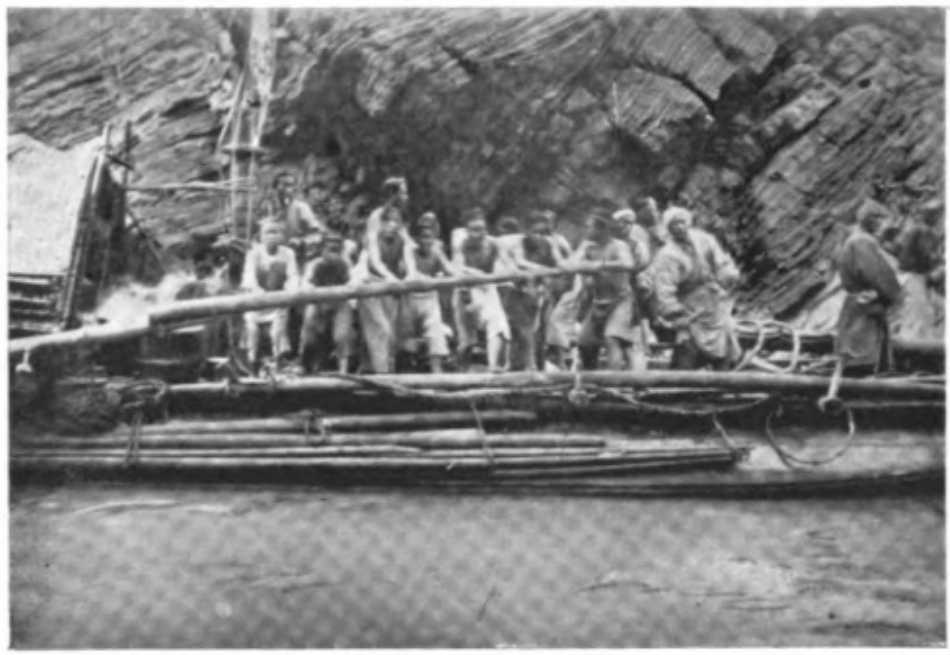
When we had breathed ourselves sufficiently we descended the steep hill to the river ; but the bank was of the roughest, the inclination of the rock ledges being down and across stream, so that we were mounting up to drop down every few yards, and it was half-past-six when we rejoined the red-boat as she was mooring alongside at Ping-shan-pa. The distance travelled that day was 30 li (10 miles).

In the gorge the temperature was from 10° to

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

penetrate woollen clothes and scarify the skin. We saw no game, but magnificent scenery—a row of great jagged mountain tops overlooking the gorge, and the still bigger ranges of the next gorge barring the western skies.

Below us the air resounded with the harsh chorus of the trackers on the upward-bound junks and of



WORKING THE SIDE YULOS OF LARGE JUNK.

the oarsmen on those going down. Junks go down with their masts un-stepped and with great numbers of trackers on board, working the long "yulos" or sculling sweeps, as well as the side oars, which are mere narrow pieces of wood worked on a crutch by men standing and looking forward, a mere dip in the water and out again. Besides the rudder the junks have a long bow sweep, a small tree, laid in the longitudinal axis of the boat, with which the

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

from a rocky eminence. One or two men are placed intermediately to clear the line off the rocks, while the main gang fasten themselves to the end by short hand lines, each of which can be rapidly attached to or detached from the line by means of a round iron or wood toggle and loop, the other

TRACKERS GETTING A LINE ROUND A BIGHT.

end being attached to a broad piece of webbing which passes over one shoulder and under the other. The boat end of the line is fastened to a sort of horizontal bollard which traverses the deck at the bow, or to the one by the mast, and, attached to the tow-line by a large toggle, is another rope, the end of which is led over the top of the mast to the tiller, so that the steersman by pulling it can lift

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

the rock point and rapid below. Spread out on the adjacent shore to dry was the cargo of cotton

JUNK BEING HAULED UP RAPID.

of a wrecked junk which was lying alongside the island, and just before we tied up for the night we

FISHERMAN AT ROCK POINT.

passed another which also had come to grief. Immediately after tiffin we negotiated the worst

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

—as, when the road is difficult, the li becomes short and rather a measure of time than of distance.

After breakfast, November 26, we landed on the left bank under the picturesque village below which we had anchored. The view was magnificent. Behind us was the river making its way to the ranges of the Ichang gorge, in front the cliff faces dropping

PATH IN PADDY FIELDS.

plumb into the water, and, towering above them, huge mountain masses, so steep and high that they shut out half the sky; on their summits powdery snow lay in places and a cool breeze was beginning to blow up-river, driving vaporous mists over the ravines and crests. I estimated the height at from 5,000 to 6,000 feet but Matheson put it at half this and Grant midway between. The mountains, rising sheer before us, no doubt looked higher than

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

on board, and then, with the aid of the strong breeze, sailed across the stream, the junk tumbling about a little in the strong chow-chow water. It was prettily done, and we came into a strong back-water on the other side just as we seemed to be rushing on the rocks. The rapids are not turbulent broken water and waves, but long rapid glides, with swirling whirlpools and eddies. So far we saw nothing difficult of navigation for a powerful

ICHANG GORGE, RED-BOAT AND JUNK PASSING.

steamer of light draft, but possibly at lower water the difficulty may be greater.

Soon after 4 p.m. we went ashore on the left bank and walked along pretty paths on the mountain side till we came abreast of Kwei, where a great uptilted reef runs across the river, which has cut itself a passage through it. Above it are good bays on either side. We crossed in the red-boat to the opposite shore, where from the top of the rocks we watched our bark essay the channel. In mid-stream she struck an up-swirl and canted over so that we thought the mast and sail had come down,

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

PAGODA AND TOWN OF HSIN-TAN.

Digitized by Google

Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

chrysanthemums and michaelmas daisies were common all the way from Ichang.

It was a rough day for the trackers, the current being strong, and despite a fair light wind it took them till two o'clock to get up to the foot of the celebrated Yeh-tan rapid. Their path lay over

BRIQUETTE FACTORY.

rough stone and shingle, or along ledges high up on the cliffs, or over steps 10 or 12 inches wide roughly hewn in the face of the hill. The plaited bamboo tracking line with its rough edges often caught on the rocks, and two or three men were constantly employed in clearing it. Bare-footed, they had to climb almost vertical slopes, and sometimes to wade or swim out in the river.

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Below the Yeh-tan rapid the stream was very swift for a mile or two, the angle of the water-glide being quite perceptible. This rapid, notorious for its danger, was now at its best. A month before, when the water was at its highest, it was only possible to haul one junk a day through it.

In the bay on the left bank, just under the village, was a large fleet of junks, moored in the order of their arrival and waiting their turn to ascend the rapid.

LARGE JUNK WITH MAST DOWN.

As we passed we saw a large junk careened for repairs to her bottom, and a little further on, drying on the beach, the cargo of another which had been wrecked. Owing to our official escort we were privileged to go right to the head, had we chosen to do so, but we took our place behind three other boats which were waiting. We moored at the narrowest point, where the stream was ascertained by Matheson to be 175 yards wide, with a current running at about 10 knots as far as one could tell, so that the channel would be difficult for a steamer.

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

LARGE JUNK AT HEAD OF YEH-TAN RAPID.

Digitized by Google

Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

resembling broom. The cultivated patches contained sweet potatoes now being harvested, and the *débris* of the maize crop with winter wheat, some well up, and a pea just breaking into lilac flowers. There were a good many low-growing acacias of a flowering type, with the empty pods still hanging.

ROCKY FORESHORE AT NIU-KAU RAPID.

Each cottage had its orange and pummelow trees, the great pale-yellow globes of the latter contrasting with the dark green foliage. The beautiful poplar bearing the white berries which are boiled down for their wax, was also cultivated, but this tree grows wild on the hill-sides in a more shrubby form and lends much colour to the landscape, the tints changing through bronze-green into pale yellow

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

a source of much interest and curiosity, boots in particular. To look through a binocular or the ground glass of a camera was a great treat, and provoked much exclamation and comment. Distance, about 80 li.

On November 29 we negotiated the small but

COTTAGE ON RIVER BANK, NIU-KAU RAPID.

awkward Mu-chu rapid, at the head of which is a powerful backwater of eddying whirlpools, causing the surface to resemble an assemblage of hillocks and hollows. The wind dropped and the men had a day of continuous rowing and tracking, the tracking being for the most part over the steep sides and faces of jagged rocks, composed of uptilted beds of hard, dark, sedimentary deposit.

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

diminution of breadth at the bow, the place where the pilot takes his stand and gives his commands.

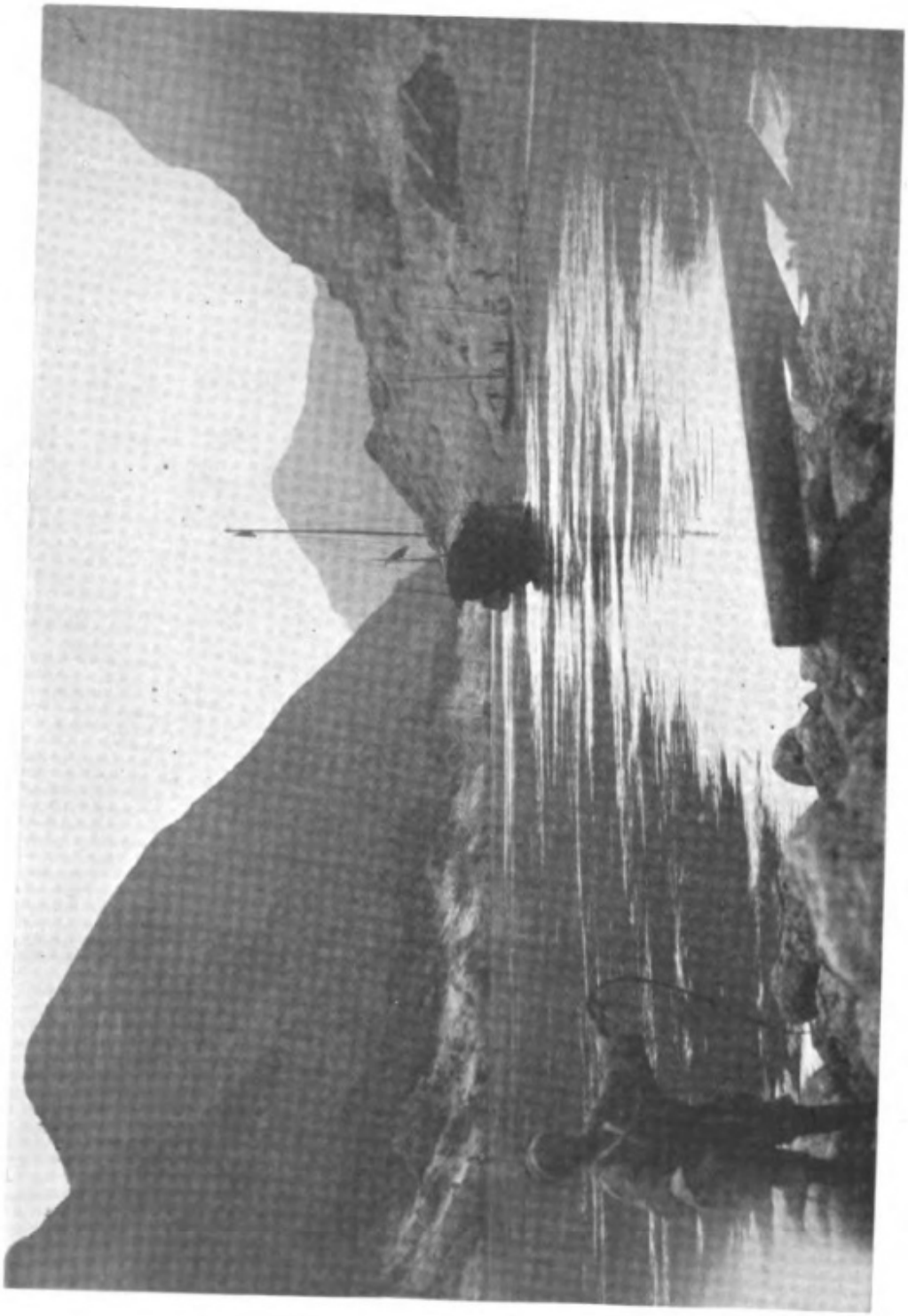
From a very pretty village I walked a short way up one side of a beautiful gorge, but in returning to the boat I had to descend the face of three vertical cliffs by slippery worn steps, hanging on the while

TRACKERS ON A ROCK, WU-SHAN GORGE.

to iron chains or bamboo ropes provided for the purpose. We tied up for the night a mile or so above Fu-li-chi, having done only about 30 li.

On November 30, St. Andrew's day, at nine o'clock in the morning, we reached the land "flowing with milk and honey,"—the wealthy province of Szechwan, which here marches with the Hu-peh Province. A large white stone with a character

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN



GORGE AT TOP OF RAPID FU-LI-CHI.

Digitized by Google

Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

general erosive action, and must cause a great undercutting of the mountain sides—which in many places appear very rotten. The formation of numerous overhanging caves at the water line is proof of such destruction.

Our walk lasted till one o'clock, when we reached the village of Ching-shih-tung, at the junction of a

STRIATION ON CLIFF FACE.

large side-gorge. Here the river bends abruptly to the north through scenes of remarkable beauty. We were becoming quite sated with the grandeur of gorges, but certainly the scenery of the upper Yangtsze may rank with the finest in the world.

From the point last named, there being no wind, progress was only possible by rowing, as the cliffs were impracticable for tracking, and we made very slow way against the current. Downward-bound

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

VIEW UP WU-SHAN GORGE.

Digitized by Google

Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN