Chapter III

T'IEN-T'AI SHAN

Introduction

Eastern China and the four mountains included in this volume became known to the Chinese at a relatively late time. It was not until the fourth century, when the Eastern Chin dynasty made its capital at Chien-yeh (Nanking) that the natural beauty of that region gradually became known.¹

The coming of Buddhism to China and the preference for mountains shown by Buddhist monks in choosing sites for their temples and monasteries, contributed much to the Chinese reverence and love of mountains. The result was that every mountain has its own history, its monasteries, its legends, its patron saints and its associations with distinguished monks and laymen. Some of them will be presented to the reader in the introduction to each of the four diaries in this volume so that he may gain a deeper understanding and greater pleasure from reading Hsu's accounts.

T'ien-t'ai Shan is not as high as stated in local histories, but it is still a great mountain.² Its hills stand scattered over an extensive area, forming several plateaus and broad slopes. Its summit, says Professor Chang Ch'i-yüan 張其昀, is good for horseback riding.³ Other recent visitors have also remarked on the easy climb to the summit. Professor Chang further notes that the slopes and plateaus lend themselves to cultivation, as he found rice terraces at an altitude of over eight hundred feet.⁴ This corroborates Hsu's remark of seeing wheat growing everywhere on the top of the mountain.

Every great mountain in China is known by some sights
considered as unrivalled either in its singularity, dangerousness, grandeur or beauty. T'ien-t'ai Shan's two most celebrated sights are Natural Bridge 石梁 and Jade Terrace and Double Portals 碧玉双关, but Natural Bridge is by far the more famous. It is a perfect blend of the awesome and the picturesque so attractive to Chinese taste. It is a natural rock, thirty feet long, ten feet thick and one foot wide at its broadest and five inches at its narrowest. It spans two overhanging crags where two waterfalls meet to form a larger turbulent one that crashes furiously down. Its description as "dragon shaped" and "turtle backed" refers to its high, narrow, and bulging shape and its cover of the richest and slickest moss. Because it commands a spot of unsurpassed beauty, it is like the devil's temptation, luring the bold and unwary to cross it. Hsu, as can be imagined, crossed it trembling with terror and delight.

T'ien-t'ai Shan owed its discovery to a few illustrious names in Chinese letters and Buddhist thought. Wang Hsi-chih 王羲之, a distinguished member of the great Wang family and recognized by many even today as China's greatest calligrapher, was magistrate of Kuei-chi 會稽 near T'ien-t'ai Shan. Having an apparent interest in the exploration of the region, Wang helped two of his friends discover T'ien-t'ai Shan. One was Chih Tun 支遁 (courtesy name Tao-lin 道林, 314-366), one of the most eminent scholar-monks of his time whose brilliant exposition of Chuang Tzu he admired. The other was Sun Ch'o 孫绰 (320-377), one of Chih Tun's great lay followers for whom Wang Hsi-chih procured the magistracy of Yung-chia 永嘉. Near the end of the fourth century, the monk T'an-yu 塔踄 settled on the mountain and had a monastery built at Red City 赤城, about two miles from the seat of T'ien-t'ai county.

Of the three men, it was Sun Ch'o who first introduced T'ien-t'ai Shan to China's literati in his "Fu on a Visit to T'ien-t'ai" 遊天台賦. In his foreword, he praised the mountain as
being one of the "most divinely graceful mountains. Across the sea, there are Fang-chang and P'eng-lai, on land, there are Ssu-ming and T'ien-t'ai." This fu was chosen by Prince Chao-ming (Hsiao T'ung, 501-531) of Liang for inclusion in his famous Wen Hsuan (Literary Anthology) and became one of the best known fu to generations of scholars. They all knew T'ien-t'ai Shan by name, but its remoteness, its general inaccessibility, and the descriptions of its magnificent beauty and grandeur made it seem a fairy mountain.

From the late sixth century on, the name of T'ien-t'ai began to reverberate with fame throughout the history of Buddhism in China. The Buddhist school called T'ien-t'ai derived its name from the mountain because Chih-i (530-597), regarded by most members of the school as its founder, made it the seat of his religious teaching. Chih-i lived on T'ien-t'ai Shan for twenty-three years and built as many as twelve monasteries.

The best known was the Monastery of Serene Realm. It was originally named T'ien-t'ai Monastery, but legend has it that Chih-i once heard a voice in his dreams that the completion of the monastery would restore peace to the country and so he changed the name to Serene Realm. According to Li Shu-hua, who visited it in 1936, it is about 400 feet above sea level and commands a wide view of the hills around. It remains to this day the chief monastery on T'ien-t'ai Shan and has been honored by gifts from emperors, including Sui Yang-ti (r. 605-617), the second and last emperor of the Sui dynasty and Chih-i's disciple. Although it was repeatedly destroyed by war and fire, it was always rebuilt. Great damage was done to the buildings in a big storm during the reign of Hung-wu (r. 1368-1398). The Great Hero's Hall was restored in 1570 and again in 1593 and 1601, at the completion of which a complete edition of the Buddhist scriptures was donated by imperial order and housed in a new pavilion. At the time of Hsü's visit, only twenty
years had passed since the restoration so that the monastery must have been in good repair.

Of the eleven other monasteries built by Chih-i, two are of interest because of their close associations with him. His remains are interred in a stone stupa located in the main hall of the Monastery of True Awakening 真覺寺 which was built in 597. Recent travellers to T'ien-t'ai Shan have remarked on the beautiful carving of the stupa and its excellent state of preservation. Of the eleven other monasteries built by Chih-i, two are of interest because of their close associations with him. His remains are interred in a stone stupa located in the main hall of the Monastery of True Awakening 真覺寺 which was built in 597. Recent travellers to T'ien-t'ai Shan have remarked on the beautiful carving of the stupa and its excellent state of preservation. The Kao-ming Monastery 高明寺 contains certain relics of Chih-i, such as a silk kasaya embroidered with a golden dragon, a bronze bowl, palm leaves inscribed with sutras written in Sanskrit, and four chuan of a Dharani sutra. Hsü visited both monasteries and remarked in his diary on his second visit that Kao-ming Monastery had been rebuilt by the monk Wu-liang 無量, but he said nothing about seeing the relics. This is strange because the T'ien-t'ai school enjoyed a period of revival at the time of Hsü's first visit, and the relics, therefore, were probably on display.

Another monk who lived on T'ien-t'ai Shan and was associated with the Monastery of Serene Realm was ～～～, the great T'ang mathematician and geographer. ～～～ originally lived on Sung Shan in Honan. Commissioned by imperial order to prepare a calendar known as the Ta-yen Calendar 大衍曆, he travelled in order to seek advice. When he came to the Monastery of Serene Realm, he heard a monk working the abacus. ～～～ became his disciple and completed his work on the calendar in the monastery.

The Taoists, on the other hand, helped to strengthen T'ien-t'ai Shan's supernatural reputation. In his famous work Pao-p'u-tzu 抱朴子, the celebrated Taoist of the Chin dynasty, Ko Hung 葛洪 (284-362), described the mountain as follows: "Not all mountains are equally suitable for alchemical purposes because they have essences of water and rock, but T'ien-t'ai ...... is inhabited by righteous spirits who help men to work for happiness and it is good for those undergoing training to become immortals."
But, despite occasional prosperity, the Taoists could not match the Buddhists' power and influence. The chief Taoist temple on T'ien-t'ai Shan, T'ung-po tao-kuan 桐柏道觀, had been built in 239 in honor of the immortal prince Wang Tzu-chin 王子晉. It had been the favorite of emperors but had fallen into decay long before Hsu Hsia-k'o's time. 16

We should mention also the legends of the three T'ang monks and of "Liu-Yuan," familiar to the local inhabitants and to readers of poetry and literary miscellanies.

Known as the three hermits of the Monastery of the Serene Realm, the three monks, Feng-kan 豐干, Han-shan 寒山, and Shih-te 拾得, were poets and men of high principles, 17 but their disguise as eccentrics inspired many stories. Feng-kan was said to have vanished first and gone to Wu-t'ai Shan 五台山 in Shansi. Han-shan and Shih-te became identified with two crags where they were said to have retreated to, and eventually people believed that they were reincarnations of the Buddhas Manjusri and Samantabhadra. 18

The legend of "Liu-Yuan" remains to this day one of the most popular fairy tales and the most overworked of literary allusions. It tells the story of two young men, Liu Ch'en 劉晨 and Yuan Chao 阮肇, who in 62 A.D. went to T'ien-t'ai Shan to gather medicinal herbs. They lost their way and soon ran out of food. Walking aimlessly in search for food, they saw peaches tumbling down a clear stream, so they picked them up and ate them. Immediately they felt their bodies lightened and their spirits elated. Peach trees shaded the stream and peach blossom petals floated down the limpid current. They followed it, and they were about to get some water to drink when they saw a cup floating down filled with grains of linseed. Two maidens of divine beauty stood by the stream smiling at them. Thus encouraged, the two men asked for directions. The maidens took them to a house filled with guests and musicians who seemed to be awaiting their arrival. They were
told that they were destined to be married to the two maidens, and a wedding feast was spread out. Among the dishes they ate were linseed and dried goat meat, both of which they found to be exceptionally delicious. They lived happily with the two maidens for about half a year when they became homesick and wished to go home. The maidens did not try to detain them but bade them farewell with music. On coming out they were surprised that they no longer recognized any of the people they met and on reaching home were shocked to find that their relatives were their descendants of the seventh generation. They felt strange and unhappy at home, and after a short stay they left and were never seen again.

Diary of the First Visit

May 19, 1613: We [Hsu, the monk Lotus Boat and servants] left Ning-hai by its west gate. It was a bright cloudless day, one which harmonized our happy mood with the cheerful aspects of the gleaming mountains. Reached Liang-huang Shan after thirty li. News of tigers running rampant and killing several scores of people in a month was heard, so we stopped for the night there.

May 20: Rained in the morning, but we set off. A ride of fifteen li brought us to a fork in the road where we turned our horses towards the west. It gradually cleared up. Ten more li to Pine Gate Hill. The mountain being steep and the road slippery, we alighted from our horses and walked. So far we had passed several hills from Feng-hua to this place, yet we had merely ridden along their base. Now after some bends we were up on a ridge, and here the sunshine lit up the wet mountains. Gurgling springs and dewy hills created many delightful changes. The azaleas, too, were aflame on the green hillsides, so we climbed on forgetting all thoughts of fatigue.
Another 1 li and we had a meal at Chin-chu Temple 筧竹庵. Wheat growing everywhere on top of these hills. The road south of the temple is the highway to Serene Realm. A monk from that monastery, named Cloud Peak 雲華, told us that the way from here to the Natural Bridge is long and dangerous, unfit as a path for carrying luggage. He suggested that we have our luggage brought to Serene Realm to wait for our arrival while we take the way to Natural Bridge with a few essentials. We thought it was the best thing to do, so we ordered the baggage carriers to follow Cloud Peak to Serene Realm.

Lotus Boat and I took the way to Natural Bridge. We walked five 1 li and passed Chin-chu Hill, enjoying as we went along the dwarf pines that cover the hillsides. They have old knotty trunks and lovely green sprays and are the kind of choice pines which we see in pots in Soochow.

Mt'o Temple 砂窟庵 after thirty 1 li. A most desolate spot in the mountains. It has hills all around but for fear of their harboring tigers, all trees and shrubs have been burnt. There is not a sign of human life. Thundering torrents and swift moving winds are the only sights and sounds that greeted us. The temple is half way up the hill and is hidden among many hills. It is a spot convenient both for a meal halt and for spending a night.

May 21: The rain did not stop until lunch time when we started. Waded across the swampy paths and climbed some hills, delighted with the more pleasant appearance of streams and rocks as we advanced. Twenty 1 li and we reached T'ien-feng Monastery 天封寺 at twilight.

After I went to bed my mind was preoccupied with the ascent to the summit the next day. Fine weather would be a lucky omen for our visit, I said to myself, because for the past several days there had been clear evenings but no clear mornings. Near dawn, I heard a voice in my dream shouting that there were bright stars
all over the sky. I became so excited that [I promptly woke up and could not] go back to sleep anymore.

May 22: I got up and was overjoyed to see the glittering sun. We decided to ascend the mountain right away. Reached Hua-ting Temple 華頂庵 21 after several li and T'ai-po Hall 太白堂 22 after three more li. Neither place had anything attractive to recommend itself. Heard of a cave to the left of the temple, so I took a by-path to look for it. After two li, I found a rock boldly rising from below that was delicately shaped and pleasing in color. But when I went near the cave I discovered a monk with unshaven head living in front of it who had blocked its entrance with big boulders to stop the draft. I could not help sighing greatly with regret.

I returned to T'ai-po Hall and followed the path to the summit. Because of the high elevation and strong winds, the crown of the summit had nothing but tall grass covered with a crust of white frost an inch thick. The trees all around the mountainside were similarly encased and afforded a wonderful scene of white jade trees and branches. On the mountainsides wild flowers bloomed in glory, but the crown, restrained by the height and cold, had none. Descended to Hua-ting Temple, passed the small bridge by the pool, passed three more hills, then the stream curved around and the hills came close together to embrace a scene of solemn beauty of trees and rocks. Every turn in this place afforded some fresh delight, much gratifying to my expectations.

Twenty li to Upper Fang-kuang Monastery 上方廣寺 and Natural Bridge. 23 Worshipped Buddha at T'an-hua Pavilion 塔花亭 24 but had not enough time to enjoy the flying cataract. Went down to Lower Fang-kuang Monastery and viewed the Natural Bridge and the cataract from below. Both appeared as if they were up in the sky. We heard that Pearl Curtain 珠簾 at Broken Bridge 断橋 is even more beautiful, and the monk said that we could still make a trip and return if we started after our meal,
so we crossed the Immortals' Ferry Bridge and went along the back side of the mountain, crossed one hill, walked into the stone gorge for eight or nine li, and had a view of the waterfall. It tumbles down from Stone Gate and makes three breaks. The upper one is the Broken Bridge where two rocks meet obliquely and the water lashes into a foaming mist between them before it falls down into a tarn. The middle break comes where two rocks face each other like a door and tighten the water which roars impetuously in between. The lower break has a fairly wide opening and the water spreads itself as it comes down slantingly from the glen. Each of the three breaks hangs several dozen feet high and each is perfect in its own way. Only, as we came down the steps, the depths in the bends were hidden by curves and we could not get a full view of them as we would have liked. Another li to Pearl Curtain where the fall is very broad and the water streams down freely and smoothly. I jumped into the bushes, climbed up the trees and the crags in delight, but Lotus Boat could not follow me. We did not return until dusk had descended on all four sides.

On our way back we stopped again at the Immortals' Ferry Bridge, charmed by the Natural Bridge which lay like a rainbow while the cataracts spat out flakes like drifting snow. We lingered and could not tear ourselves away to go to bed.

May 23: Fine day, the mountain looked like one sweep of blue. Anxious to get on our way, we did not wait for breakfast but set off at once for T'an-hua Pavilion by way of the Immortals' Ferry Bridge. The Natural Bridge is just outside of the Pavilion. It is over a foot wide and thirty feet long and is suspended over the chasm between two hills. The two cataracts that come from the left of the pavilion meet at the bridge and fall down a thousand feet with a deafening noise like the roaring thunder of a river that has broken its dams. I walked on the bridge and looked down into the fathomless tarn below, a spine-chilling sight.
A huge rock cut the road to the front of the mountain at the end of the Natural Bridge. I returned, passed T'ian-hua Pavilion and Upper Fang-kuang Monastery, followed the stream in front of it and came back to the big rock where I sat down to enjoy the Natural Bridge, but the monk hastened me to breakfast and so I went to eat.

After breakfast, I walked fifteen li to Ten Thousand Year Monastery 萬年寺 and climbed up to the Pavilion of Buddhist Canons 藏經閣 which has two storeys and contains a complete edition of the Northern and Southern Buddhist canons. Both in front and back of the pavilion stand many aged firs with trunks which it takes three men's outstretched arms to girdle. Up in the trees storks make their nests and send out their clear ringing calls around the quiet mountains.

My intention this day was to go to T'ung-po Monastery to seek Jade Terrace and Double Portals, but the path was hard to find, and instead we planned to go to Serene Realm which is forty li from Ten Thousand Year Monastery. On our way we passed Dragon King's Hall 龍王堂. Each time we descended a hill I thought we had reached level ground, but after descending several times and finding that we were still going down, I realized that the height of the summit is indeed not far from the sky.

Reached Serene Realm at dusk. Cloud Peak hastened out to receive us and we were all as happy at the meeting as if we had been old friends. I consulted him about the itinerary, and he suggested that the best places to see were the two crags which, although far away, could be reached by horses. After the two crags we could walk to Peach Source 桃源 and on to T'ung-po. This itinerary would include every place.

May 24: Signs of rain in the morning, but ignored them and took the road to Cold Crag 寒巖 and Bright Crag 明巖 by the west door of the monastery where we hired horses. When they came, the rain also started. Rode fifty li to Pu-t'ou 步頭, the rain
stopped and we discharged the horses. Walked two Ⅱ and found ourselves in the mountain which unfolded a very pleasant scene of winding hills and waters, beautiful trees and quaint rocks. A stream from Tung-yang 東陽, as big as the Ts'ao-o River 曹娥江, rushes on very rapidly. The water being knee-deep, we looked around for a ferry but could not find any, so we crossed on the servants' backs. Soon we came to a gorge which took us nearly a whole hour to get across. Then three more Ⅱ and Bright Crag which used to be the retreat of Han-shan and Shih-te. Here the two mountains come close together and form a pass called in the local history Eight Inch Pass 八寸關. Inside the pass wall-like cliffs stand all around. In the rear lies a cave which is several dozens of feet deep and large enough to accommodate several hundred people. Outside the cave two crags rise from midway up on its left. On the right side a rock, shaped like a bamboo sprout, rears its head. It reaches up to the same height as the crag with only a thread-like gap in between. Green pines and purple flowers spring up in luxuriant growth here, quite different from the left crag. [Presumably the left crag is barren.]

Went out of the Eight Inch Pass and went up another crag to its left. It looked like a narrow gap when we viewed it from below, but when we reached its top we found it to be bright and wide enough to hold several hundred men. There is a well called the Immortals' Well 仙人井. It is shallow but never dry. Outside the crag stands a peculiar looking rock which is several dozens of feet in height, with a forked top looking like two men standing up there. The monks pointed to it and said that it was Han-shan and Shih-te.

After a meal in the monastery the clouds scattered and dispersed. A new moon appeared in the sky, flooding the rocky walls with its pure beams as we lingered on top of the crag.

May 25: Left the monastery early in the morning; a six or seven Ⅱ's walk brought us to Cold Crag. Here shattered rocks
rise like a jagged wall. We looked up and saw many caves. One of them is midway up the crag. It is eighty steps wide and over a hundred steps deep, and it is bright, flat and wide. Climbing up by the narrow cleft on the right, we found in the yawning cave two rocks seemingly facing each other and shrugging their shoulders. Unconnected at the bottom but joined at the top, they are called Magpie Bridge 鵲橋. The beauty of this place matches that of Natural Bridge at Upper Fang-kuang [Monastery]; it only lacks the perpendicular fall of the cataracts.

Returned for meal at the monastery, found a ferry to cross the stream and walked along the foot of the mountain. It is a range of precipitous walls and jagged crags, while sprawling over it are overhanging trees and weeds most of which are hai-t'ang 海棠 [begonias] and purple magnolias. As we walked on, their glowing reflections kept lighting up the stream and everywhere a breeze wafted the sweet odor of orchids and other aromatic plants.

Then we reached a turn in the mountain [path] where stone walls rise straight from the gorge which is flooded by a rapid current so that there is no path along its sides and the way is made by notches in the walls. In crossing it, my whole soul shuddered as we pressed our bodies to the stone walls and moved our feet from notch to notch which held only half a foot.

Fifteen li after Cold Crag was Pu-t'ou where we took a small path to Peach Source. A monastery, named Guard the Nation 護國寺, used to stand there but it no longer exists, and even the natives knew nothing about it. We followed Cloud Peak in and out along winding paths until the sun had set and still found no place to put up for the night. We inquired for the way to P'ing-t'ou Lake 坪頭潭 and found that it was only twenty li from Pu-t'ou but now, having taken [a different] path, it would be over thirty li. Peach Source is indeed a place for people to get lost in.
May 26: Started from P'ing-t'ou Lake. Walked along winding paths for over thirty li. Crossed the stream and entered the mountain. After another four or five li, the opening between the mountains grew narrower. There is a building called Peach Blossom Vale 桃花坞. We followed a deep crystal-like tarn into which a cataract falls from above. This is Ringing Jade Gorge 玉京涧. It follows the meanderings of the mountain and we followed it. The hills on both sides are naked skeletons of rocks, some heaped up and some having trees growing out from them, all delightful to the eye. Its beauty may be rated between Cold Crag and Bright Crag.

Found no path at the end of the gorge, for here a torrent crashes down from the mountain glen with a terrible force. We returned to the building for a meal, then walked southeast along the valley, passed two hills but found no one who could answer our inquiry about the Jade Terrace and Double Portals. After several more li, we heard that it is up on top of the mountain, so Cloud Peak and I climbed up and finally gained the top. Looking down we saw perpendicular green cliffs standing around as they do at Peach Source, only these are loftier. The rift in the middle of the summit is what is called Double Portals while what is rounded in by the two gates is the Terrace, joined to Double Portals on one side and falling off perpendicular cliffs on the other three. I was opposite the Portals and could not go up because it was too late. Nevertheless, I had already had a complete view of the place. We descended, returned to Serene Realm from Red City, a distance of thirty li.

May 27: Left Serene Realm, walked five li from the back of the mountain. Mounted Red City whose crown is enclosed by a rampart resembling a city wall from afar. The color of its rocks is a pale red. The crags are covered by disorderly dwellings of monks and whatever natural beauty there might have been has been swept away by them. Places called Jade Capital Cave 玉京洞,
Gold Coin Pool and Well for Washing Intestines are all uninteresting.

Diary of the Second Visit

May 2, 1632: We rode from Ning-hai on horseback for forty-five li and spent the night at Ch'a-lu-k'ou. Fifteen li southeast from this place is Shang-chou-î which is on the way to T'ai-chun. Ten li southwest is Pine Gate Hill on the way to T'ien-t'ai.

May 3: We crossed Shui-mu Stream, ascended Pine Gate Hill and passed Wang-ai Shan, a total distance of thirty li. Had a meal at the temple on Chin-chu Hill which is on the border of Ning-hai and T'ien-t'ai. Crossed over the mountain ridge for thirty li in perfectly silent wilderness. Even the Mi-t'o Temple of earlier days is now lying in ruins. We descended a hill and found a country house in the mountain wilderness. Made tea and drank it while sitting on rocks. After ten more li crossing another hill, we reached T'ien-feng Monastery. T'ien-feng is at the foot of Hua-ting Peak and is the most sequestered spot on T'ien-t'ai.

We discharged our horses. The monk Wu-yû took us up to Hua-ting Monastery. Spent the night in Ching-yin's room. The moon was bright and guided me on the way up. It was still three li to the summit. I headed in the wrong direction and mounted Ocean-Viewing Pinnacle of the peak to the east. It was after I had turned west that I found the path to the summit. By the time I returned to the monastery it was already past the first night watch.

May 4: The fifth watch. I took advantage of the moonlight and ascended the summit to watch the sunrise. My clothes and shoes got soaking wet, so I returned to the monastery and dried
them. Crossed over a hill to the right of the temple, going down in a southerly direction for ten li and reached Watershed Hill 分水嶺. The river west of the hill flows out to Natural Bridge, the one east of it goes out by T'ien-feng. Followed the stream and turned north. The water and rocks sheltered a quiet scene. Another ten li, I passed Upper Fang-kuang Monastery and reached T'an-hua Pavilion. Looking at the strangely beautiful Natural Bridge, I felt as if I was seeing it for the first time.

May 5: We left by way of Watershed Hill and headed south for ten li to Ch'a Hill 朝嶺 which is very high. It and Hua-ting mark the division between the northern and southern portions of the T'ien-t'ai Shan area. Turned west to Dragon King Hall where several trails meet. Turned south and walked ten li to Han-feng Ch'ueh 寒風閣 and, after another ten li, to Yin-ti Hill 銀地嶺 where the ruins of the stupa of Chih-che 智者 are located. Found Great Mercy Monastery 大悲寺 to its left. A rock by the side used to be the Pai-ching T'ai fo of Chih-che. The monk Heng-ju 恒如 cooked for us.

We then divided our luggage and went by way of the Monastery of Serene Realm. Reaching the city, Chung-chao and I went east to Kao-ming Monastery. It had been rebuilt by Master Wu-liang 無量. A quiet stream flows on its right, and on its banks are such scenic spots as Yuan-t'ung Tung 圓通洞, Sung-feng Ko 松風閣 and Ling-hsiang Yen 靈響岩.

May 6: Chung-chao stayed at Yuan-t'ung Tung while a monk took me to explore the wonders of Rock Bamboo Sprout Peak 石笋峰. We descended eastward and reached Lo Stream 螺溪. Pursued it northward between sharp and closely pressed rocky cliffs. Jets of water splashed from treetops. Walked along on stones in the water for seven li and then the mountain turned and the stream dropped. We were already at the foot of Rocky Bamboo Sprout Peak. As we looked up, we could not see the peak as it was hidden by the cliff
on the right. Descended by the cleft alongside the cliff and reached the top of Bamboo Sprout. There we saw a rock rising from the creek. The stream turned into a waterfall as it fell and pounded the base of the rock. Water and rocks made this spot a place of great beauty.

As we turned north following the stream, the cliffs on both sides became steeper at their base and waters were running into a pool called Snail Tarn 蜗螺師潭. Grasping the vines by the cliff, I peered in from the cleft of the rock and saw that the stone walls in the grotto branched out into four directions like a crossroad. Water filled the inside so that it was impossible to discern [the grotto's] edges. Atop two crags in the innermost corner was a horizontal rock like a natural bridge. Behind it, a waterfall as high as Natural Bridge, cascaded into the tarn. Cliff ranges folded all around but they could only be viewed from a distance. They were higher than those at Natural Bridge.

Heard that Immortal's Shoe was above it and to the left of Cold Wind Gap which could be reached by crossing the hill. But sudden rain prevented us from going. Returned and rested at Sung-feng Ko.

May 8: Reached the seat of T'ien-t'ali county. Walked north for seven li to the foot of Red City. We gazed at the glowing walls, with temples on their tops, standing among rich green colors and mountain haze. Up one li to Central Crag where a Buddhist hut had been recently repaired, very different from its earlier dilapidated appearance. As we were anxious to get to Jade Terrace and Double Portals, we had no time to spare to climb the crag but went west and crossed a hill. Took a path for seven li to Falling Horse Bridge 落馬橋, then another fifteen li northwest to the left side of Waterfall Mountain 瀑布山. Ascended it and walked five li to T'ung-po Shan 椿柏山. Crossed its summit northward and found a glen surrounded by hills as if it were a world by
itself. T'ung-po Monastery was in the center with only the central hall remaining. The two stone statues of Po-i 伯夷 and Shu-ch'i 釗齊 were in a room on the right. Their carving showed great age. It must be pre-T'ang work. The Taoists have long since left the place. When the farmers saw us they stopped their tilling and talked to us. We hired one of them as a guide. Went west for three li, crossed two small hills and went down folds of crags and up to Jade Terrace. A protruding peak overlooks a deep ravine and is surrounded on three sides by dangerous crags. A stream to the right of a crag, coming from the maze of mountains in the northwest, pounds its base. It is Thousand Foot Crag 百丈崖. The water moves on to the foot of Jade Terrace where it becomes a quiet pool of indigo blue. It is called Thousand Foot Dragon Tarn 百丈龍潭. In front of the peak rises another crag like a pillar as high as the others surrounding it. It is Jade Terrace. Thousand Foot Crag is at its back and Double Portals in front. Beyond them but unconnected, surrounding crags form an outer ring. A climber has to descend along waterfalls coming from the northern hill, cross a ridge in the gap and climb again by pulling himself up from tree to tree. All the while [the climber has to contend with] sharp rocks and loose sand which offer hardly any room for his feet to step on. Descended from the edge of the Terrace to the south and came to an abruptly rising rock. It is curved like the Immortals' Shrine 仙人坐 there.

The beauty of Jade Terrace lies in its being located in an isolated ravine and surrounded by green hills. Double Portals are part of an outside ring surrounding it, so that one cannot ascend [Jade Terrace] without climbing down again to the bottom of the creek. I recalled that twenty years ago I had come here with Cloud Peak from Peach Source by way of a stream. We had not been able to explore its recesses. It was only now that I could gaze down from the edge of the crag and see it in its full dimension.
Had a meal at T'ung-po Monastery. Went south along a path, crossed a stream and after ten li reached the official road to Kuan Ling 關嶺 of T'ien-t'ai. Took a small path heading south and walked for ten li in a cleft. A peak rises to its left like a heavenly pillar and, asking [someone], I learned its name to be Ch'ing-shan Cho 青山出. Followed the stream coming from the south for ten li and turned in at an inn at P'ing-t'ou Lake 坪頂潭.

Between May 9 and June 3, Hsu Hsia-k'o and his party undertook the first part of their second visit to Yen-tang Shan and then returned to explore the sights on the west side of T'ien-t'ai Shan. As explained in the introduction to Yen-tang Shan (Chapter IV), the diary covering that trip is no longer extant.

June 4: Walked southwest from P'ing-t'ou Lake for eight li to the Ch'en's 陳氏 of Chiang-ssu 江司. Crossed the stream and followed its left bank. After another eight li, we turned south into the mountains. Crossed two small hills and after six li came suddenly upon high rocky crags amidst a network of streams. The southern one was Cold Crag and the eastern one Bright Crag. Dispatched a boy ahead of us to prepare our meal at Bright Crag Monastery while we headed south for Cold Crag. Overhanging crags were ranged impressively along the left side of the path. At one place there is a yawning cave and [a rock like] a crouching rabbit, complete with mouth and ears, in front of it. To the right side of the path is Big Stream with a rock looking like a canopy jutting out amidst its swirling waters. I wondered what it was. When I got to the monastery and asked the monk, I learned that I had seen Magic Mushroom Rock 靈芝石 of Dragon Beard Grotto 龍鬚洞. Cold Crag is in the rear of the monastery. It is quite impressive in its openness and loftiness, but it cannot be said to be delicately shaped.

Came out by way of an upper bridge on the right side of the grotto. Took the old path for one li and entered Dragon Beard
Grotto on the right. The path was choked with thickets and thorns. Ascended one li. It was like climbing to the nine heavens. The grotto is round, lofty, and open. A rock leans obliquely outside the mouth, looking somewhat similar to Natural Bridge of Yen-tang. A spring races down from the top of the ridge, exactly in the same way as Precious Crown in Banana Cave. Went down the mountain and returned to the head of the old path. Followed the small stream east and turned south into Bright Crag Monastery. It is on top of the crag and surrounded on all four sides by other crags except for one fissure in the east called Eight Inch Pass. More than one delicately shaped cave are to be found at the back of the monastery. A "rock bamboo shoot" rises to the right of the cave. It is not as tall and massive as that at Spiritual Crag of Yen-tang but rather is a miniature version.

After our meal, we rode on the old path for thirty li and returned to P'ing-t'ou Lake. Then north for twenty-five li to San-mao where we crossed Big Stream which flows from Kuan Hill to the west. Five li farther north, we crossed two mountain torrents, reached the foot of North Mountain and spent the night at Guard the Nation Monastery.

June 5: Early in the morning, we hurried to Peach Source, two li east of Guard the Nation Monastery and only eight li west of T'ung-po. Yesterday, when I visited T'ung-po, I [decided to save Peach Source] for my return trip to Ten Thousand Monastery today. Therefore, I had gone to Cold Crag and Bright Crag instead. When I reached Guard the Nation, I learned that if I went to Ten Thousand by way of New Stream to the west, I could also include the sights of Nine-li Pit. With this purpose in mind, we went today to Peach Source from where we walked into [the mountains] about one li from the mouth of the stream to Golden Bridge Tarn. As we went up, two mountains came close together and layers of verdant walls and vaulting crags
wound along a stream in between. I followed it. After three
turns, I came to the end of the stream. A waterfall of several
dozens of feet was pouring into it from the left crag.

When I had come to the foot of the waterfall on my first vis-
it, the path ended here and I could not go up. I had viewed the
vaulting crag to the north. Clusters of hills stood gracefully on
both sides of the stream. The reflections of the green hills in
the rushing current had made it hard for me to pull myself away.
This time I found a rocky path through the thickets on the right
side of the crag. I had no time to call Chung-chao and, pushing
the thickets aside, climbed up in the rain. At the end of the
rocky steps, more rocks were piled up on the left side of the
crag. I climbed over them and found myself above the waterfall.
I went all the way to the foot of the northern crag and came to
the end of the steps. Two falls came down the crag, one to the
right and the other to the left. Looking to the left crag far
away, I saw some more steps, so I took them. There had once been
a bridge made of loose rocks over the left waterfall but it was
now broken and there was no way to cross it.

The upper reaches of the waterfall are between the walls in
the northeast, the fissure being just a thread and allowing one
to enter by walking in the water. Its beauty did not seem to
equal the fall of the right crag, so I returned to the big rocks
and went up northwest. Reached the bottom of the gorge and dis-
covered a steep tarn. The walls [of the gorge] drop vertically
to the bottom [of the tarn] making it impossible to climb. All
I could do was to look to the west of the pool and feast my eyes
upon rows of rocky chasms and layers of waterfalls. The latter
come from the indistinct vaporuous depths to the northwest and
splash helter-skelter from the crags' ledges down steep walls.
Reflected by the glowing light of the mountains, the rocks seemed
to have come to life and be ready to fly away.

After a while, I returned from the waterfalls to find
Chung-chao who had lost his way and was sitting there alone enjoying the waterfalls [from afar]. We went back to Guard the Nation together. Heard that there was a shortcut to Merciful Cloud and T'ung-yuan Monasteries and to Ten Thousand by way of the mouth of the stream at Peach Blossom. But we also heard that New Stream was more beautiful, so, after a meal, we went that way. Walked west for four li and turned north to a stream which we followed for three li and gradually turned east to Nine-li Pit. At the end of the pit a waterfall bursts out from the eastern crag while above it a jumbled heap of inaccessible peaks rises sharply. Climbed up by skirting the western crag and came out on its north side. When I turned around I saw the back of the waterfall with a stone gate straddling it and a dragon tarn in the middle.

After walking northeast for several more li and crossing a hill, I came suddenly to an extensive plain and found Ten Thousand Year Monastery surrounded by five hills. It was thirty li to Guard the Nation [Monastery]. Ten Thousand Year is in the western part of T'ien-t'ai and opposite T'ien-feng. Natural Bridge is between them. There are many old cedars in the monastery.

Had a meal there. Then on to the northwest for three li after having crossed the high hill behind the monastery. We climbed the edge of another hill and, turning west and walking ten li, we reached T'eng-k'ung Mountain. Descended for three li to the foot of Ku-niu Hill. Crossed three more small hills going west and after a total of seventeen li reached Hui-hsu. The main road came from the south and I could see T'ien-mu Mountain there, but I had already crossed [the road] and thought that Hui-hsu was on level ground. After three more li to the northwest, we saw a stream gradually forming. Followed it for five li. Spent the night at Pan-chu Inn.