

**THE LO-FOU  
MOUNTAINS:  
AN EXCURSION**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649322671

The Lo-Fou Mountains: An Excursion by F. S. A. Bourne

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**F. S. A. BOURNE**

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THE  
"LO-FOU MOUNTAINS,"

An Excursion

BY

F. S. A. BOURNE

H. B. M. VICE CONSUL

CANTON



HONGKONG

PRINTED BY KELLY & WALSH, LIMITED

AND AT

SHANGHAI, SINGAPORE & YOKOHAMA

1893

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Registered in accordance with the provisions of Ordinance No. 10  
of 1888, at the office of the  
*Registrar General, Supreme Court House, Hongkong.*

## CONTENTS.

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I. CANTON TO THE TOP... ..	1
II. PUT-WAN TZE TO SU-LIU KUN... ..	18
III. SU-LIU KUN BY WAY OF CH'UNG-HŪ KUN TO CANTON... ..	31
IV. SECOND TRIP—BY WAY OF TSANG- SHING ... ..	38
APPENDIX A.—Itinerary and Map ... ..	42
" B.—Altitudes ... ..	43
" C.—Latitudes and Longitudes	44
" D.—Plants collected ... ..	45







## THE LO-FOU MOUNTAINS.

### I.—CANTON TO THE TOP.

In 1892, late in August, when heat and dulness have brought European life in Canton to an irreducible ebb, and when the White Man can only curse the fate that transplanted him in a site so hot and crowded as the delta of the Canton River, a restless Irishman was wandering about an office in Shamien, jerking out: "too many sherries last night, my friend; " feel as if I were a compound of ice-cream, " paté and alcohol; we *must* get away from " this place; ever heard of the Lo-fou Moun- " tains; 4,000 feet high, they say, monastery " on the top, tigers, monkeys; let's go there " and get out of the heat."

This happy inspiration led five Britons to make the excursion of which this paper is an account.

The Lo-fou Mountains lie about 60 miles East of Canton and 70 miles as the crow flies North of Hongkong on the confines of three Districts (縣), the South-Eastern part of the range belonging to Pok-lo° (博羅), the Northern part to Tsang shing (增城) and the South-Western to part Tung-kun (東莞).

\* Names of places are transliterated from the local (Cantonese) pronunciation.

At 10 a.m. on the 17th September 1892, our launch towing a small house-boat left the Bund; we steamed past Whainpoa and turned into the East River at 1.30 p.m. The afternoon was very hot—indeed on our return we found that we had passed on the roof of a small launch, protected only by a thin awning, the hottest day of 1892, the maximum temp. of which is given in the Hongkong Returns as 94° Fahr. Before we had been long in the East River we could make out the Lo-fou range to the North. At dusk we ran aground about a mile below Shek-lung (石龍), and it was not till midnight that we were safely anchored off that very dirty and bad-smelling town.

Here we had to turn our backs on the River, and trust ourselves to Chinese roads and our baggage to porters. We had hoped to be off at daylight the next morning; but nothing could be more dismal than our outlook when at last the light broke. The mountains were hidden in mist; all that we could see from our boat was the squalid straggling suburb; there was no sign of the coolies who were to carry our baggage a long day's journey; and at 6 a.m. it was raining and appeared likely to rain all day.

As twenty miles of unknown road stretched between us and our proposed sleeping place, we did not spare our native staff either remonstrances or threats; and after we had

landed some of them in the rain, which seemed to raise them to a just sense of the occasion, the porters came straggling up one by one. Having got through as well as we could the inevitable shouting, bullying, objections to the weight and to the division of the loads, &c., incidental to getting coolies to start on a land journey in China, at about 7.30 a.m. we marched off, skirting the right or North bank of the river, up stream. In less than a mile we turned our backs on the river and went North straight for the mountains.

Before further describing the journey it may be useful to future tourists in these parts to give some account of our equipage. For this stage from Shek-lung to the foot of the mountains two of us took sedan-chairs, which were used occasionally: the other three walked the whole way. Our baggage, including camp-beds, cooking vessels, &c., was carried by ten coolies, being packed as far as possible into the regular baskets, one of which makes one side of a coolie's load. We paid the chair and baggage coolies one dollar each for this day. Afterwards we engaged coolies from stage to stage paying them about 50 cents a day each.

By the time we were well on our way, it had settled down to a heavy rain. We were crossing a rice plain often on narrow mud paths and in a high wind, and our progress was therefore slow. At about 10.30 a.m. we