

conscious and in a very innocent manner persuaded the officer that she had been imposed upon, and that she was sorry she had given him so much trouble.

The boat with its precious cargo floated down the river all that night, requiring no exertion from Chang, who sat silently watching at the prow, while his young wife slept in the cabin. When the grey of early morning peeped over the distant mountains, Chang still sat there, and the boat was still rapidly carried onwards by the current.

Soon after daylight they entered the main river, the Yang-si-te-Keang, and their passage then became more dangerous, requiring considerable management and exertion from the boatman. Before the sun was well up, they had joined crowds of boats, and had ceased to be singular, for they were in company with persons who lived wholly upon the river, but who had been engaged in taking westward the usual tribute of salt and rice to his imperial majesty's treasury.

To one of the boatmen he sold a jewel, and from another he purchased some food with the coin. Thus they floated onwards for several days towards the sea, but having at length approached a place where the Mandarins were accustomed to examine all boats outward bound, Chang moved his floating home beside an island in the broad river. It was but a small piece of ground, covered with reeds—but here the young pair resolved to settle down, and spend their days in peace.

The jewels were sold in the neighbouring towns, in such manner as not to excite suspicion, and with the funds thus procured, the persevering