The late Director-General of River Conservancy, Lin Chien-t'ing, was a successful candidate in the Provincial Examination of the year Wu-chen [1808], when I was appointed one of the examiners. Now, three years after his decease, his sons Ch'ung-shih and Ch'ung-hou have commissioned the manuscript of his work Hung-hsueh yin-yuan t'u-chi to be carved on woodblocks for publication, and have asked me to write a preface.

The work is a narrative of his lifetime's travels. In Mao's Commentary on the Book of Odes we read: That man who, having climbed a mountain, can compose poems to describe the scene and to express his feelings withal; that man who, having travelled among mountains and rivers, can describe them and narrate the legends and histories connected with them; that man has a truly edifying voice and is worthy to be a high official. From ancient times, distinguished scholars have written down accounts of their official travels, to the benefit of later ages. Examples of this are the Record of Riding on a Phoenix and the Record of the Ships of Wu by Fan Shih-hu, and Travels in Szechwan by Lu Wu-kuan, both of the Sung dynasty; while in the present dynasty there have been the Narrative of Journeys by an Imperial Delegate by Wang Yu-yang and the Sung-ting hsing-chi by Kao Tan-jen. As to writings with illustrations and maps there have been the Embassy to Korea in the Reign of Hsuan-bo by Hsu Ching and the Chang-an Illustrated Gazetteer by Li Hao-wen. These works follow varying plans, yet all are recorded in the bibliographies of the dynastic histories and have thereby achieved immortality.

Chien-t'ing was widely read and proficient in composition; he passed the highest state examinations in the prime of his youth, served in the central government and thence was sent out to fill various responsible posts in different parts of the Empire. In this work, he has given a comprehensive narrative based on his extensive studies into local characteristics, picturesque locations and antiquities, legends and relics, climate, fauna, folklore and folkways, river conservancy and hydraulic problems. His own learning and
official achievements have thereby been demonstrated. But in its general plan the work is an autobiographical record of his travels, and is more or less similar to the various works of Fan Ch'eng-ta and Lu Yu, while in its provision of illustrations Chien-t'ing is a successor to Hsu Ching and Li Hao-wen.

During the latter days of his life, he lived in retirement at home, keeping his gate closed and neglecting to sweep the pathway, but constantly revising and touching up this work. Certainly he identified himself with Tsung Shao-wei; he kept his thoughts pure and meditated on the Tao, revisiting these haunts from the comfort of his couch. We are thereby enabled to picture, exactly as they were, those moments of leisure in the midst of official splendour: the elegant outpourings of the muse, the skilful games of pitch-pot, the exquisite refinement that informed his life.

Written in the eighth month, autumn, the twenty-ninth year of the Reign of Tao-kuang [1849],

by P'an Shih-en of Soochow

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1 (H) (1770-1854), prominent official of the Chia-ch'ing and Tao-kuang reigns, rose to be a Grand Secretary and Grand Councillor of State (1834-49).
2 (Ed) In most cases I have preserved the official titles used by Yang Tsung-han in his manuscript.
3 (YTH) Originally the name of a mountain in Kirin, Manchuria, here referring to the whole of Manchuria. For details of the career of Lin Chien-t'ing (Lin-ch'ing) see above, n.3.
4 (H) Ch'ung-shih (1820-76) and Ch'ung-hou (1826-93) were both prominent officials during the latter half of the nineteenth century.
5 (Ed) This is only one of seven prefaces to the first volume. Among the others who contributed prefaces were the well-known figures Juan Yuan (1764-1849) and Chi Chiu-yen (1793-1866).
6 (YTH) The quotation is from Mao's commentary on Ode No 50.
7 (YTH) Fan Ch'eng-ta 范成大 (1126-93), Southern Sung poet and official.
8 (YTH) Lu Yu 陸游 (1125-1210), generally acknowledged as the pre-eminent and most influential poet of the Southern Sung dynasty.
9 (H) Wang Shih-ch'en 王士禆 (1634-1711), eminent poet and official from Shantung. He was sent by the K'ang-hsi Emperor to Kwangtung to offer sacrifices to the Spirit of the South Seas in 1685.
10 (H) Kao Shih-ch'i 高士奇 (1645-1703). The work in question concerns a journey to Jehol in the company of the K'ang-hsi Emperor in 1681.
11 (Balasz & Hervouet) Hsu Ching (1091-1153) wrote and presented this work to the emperor in 1124, the year following his return from Korea.
12 (Ed) Biography in Yuan Shih, chuan 183.
13 (YTH) Tsung Ping 宗炳 (375-443) lived in the Tsin dynasty. He was a famous traveller in his prime and a philosopher-hermit in his latter days. He painted the scenes of his former travels. Giles, Biographical Dictionary: "I can no longer see the hills; I must visit them in imagination from my couch."
14 (YTH) It is a happy coincidence that the Chinese word Tao 道 both literally and figuratively means the same as hodos, via and 'way' in the three Indo-European languages.
15 (YTH) Tou-hu 投壺, the throwing of a bamboo arrow into a standing vase containing sand, was a classical sport of great elegance played at inter-state, state and aristocratic meetings and dinner parties. It was first recorded in the Tao Chuan, the 12th year of Chao Kung.
The Author’s Own Inscription

The wise find joy in rivers,
The humane in mountains;
Motion and stillness
Are the impulses of Heaven. 16
That I, a creature of folly,
Should have lived among them
Was due to my Liege’s grace
And the merits of my ancestors 17;
These granted me
A providential enjoyment
Of mountains and rivers.

Respectfully executed by Wang Ying-fu  ᵃʳᵗ
An Encomium, by Ko Tsai

Behold the Star of Letters, Star of Blessing!
Gaining his laurels at a tender age,
He passed from grove of Hanlin Academe to halls of state;
Then with emblem of office
Was sent to govern two prefectures;
With coach and cap, toured his domain.
His compositions were a torch illuminating his path in life,
His administration a pattern for future ages.
He ascended famous mountains, sailed great rivers,
His steps traversed the land.
Splendour shone in his writings,
Brilliance blazed in his painting;
His was the deportment of a true scholar,
The elegant bearing of a gentleman;
How fortunate am I (and how unworthy)
To have counted among my acquaintance
Such a paragon!

Figure 12
The Encomium in the calligraphy of Ko Tsai