

Three ways in

Where to start, depending on why you picked the book up — with Gould's own chapter numbers, so it works with any edition of the 1886 text.

If you came for the Chinese material

The Chinese Dragon, which is the best chapter and stands on its own. Gould reads the *Shan Hai King*, the *Yih King* and the *'Rh Ya* as sources with dates and reliability, which almost nobody writing in English about myth was doing in 1886. Keep the Sources and Authorities list open.

If you want to watch a scientist be wrong carefully

The Dragon, from the beginning, with the Register of Claims beside it. The argument is disciplined, the premises are largely true, and the conclusion is false. Working out exactly where it fails is more instructive than being told.

If you have twenty minutes

The Japanese Dragon, which is short, and then the Register of Claims. Between them they give you the shape of the book and the measure of it.

The three chapters, and how long each is

VI · The Dragon

13,583 words

VII · The Chinese Dragon

6,523 words

VIII · The Japanese Dragon

2,464 words