

CHINA. No. 2 (1887).

DESPATCH

FROM

HER MAJESTY'S MINISTER AT PEKING,

FORWARDING A

REPORT

BY

MR. H. E. FULFORD,

STUDENT INTERPRETER IN THE CHINA CONSULAR SERVICE,

OF A

JOURNEY IN MANCHURIA.

Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of Her Majesty.
June 1887.

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D E S P A T C H

Despatch from Her Majesty's Minister at Peking, forwarding a Report by Mr. H. E. Fulford, Student Interpreter in the China Consular Service, of a Journey in Manchuria.

Sir J. Walsham to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received May 16.)

My Lord,

Peking, March 24, 1887.

IN my despatch of the 16th ultimo I reported the return of Mr. Fulford from the journey in Manchuria which he had been authorized to take.

Since his return to Tien-tsin Mr. Fulford has drawn up an interesting Report of his journey, a copy of which I have the honour to inclose to your Lordship. One of the subjects to which Mr. Fulford was invited to pay special attention was the cultivation of native opium, and I have thought it advisable to send an extract of that portion of his Report which contains the result of his investigations in this direction to his Excellency the Viceroy of India.

I have, &c.

(Signed) JOHN WALSHAM.

Inclosure 1.

Report by Mr. Fulford of a Journey in Manchuria, May to December 1886.

General description.

THE journey was divided into two portions, the first through the mountainous district on the borders of Corea, and the second in the more populous country to the north and east of Kirin, and the return route to the port of Newchwang.

Starting from Ying-tzü on the 19th May, we followed the high road to Moukden by cart; passing the walled town of Liao Yang at 80 miles, we arrived at the capital, 120 miles, on the 22nd May.

Moukden transport arrangements.

After a stay of a week in Moukden arranging for transport we left with a train of twenty pack-mules with the intention of reaching Hunchun via the head-waters of the Yaloo River. Some difficulty was felt in providing for the expenses of the party. The trade of the country hinges so much upon Kirin and Ku'an Ch'êng-tsü that money orders could be obtained only on those towns. There was also some trouble in inducing the owners of mules to venture them upon an arduous and uncertain road. They professed themselves willing enough to take us anywhere along their usual tracks, but they objected to pioneering. We appealed to the authorities to assist us, but they showed no intention of doing so, and we finally concluded a bargain with an ex-soldier, who persuaded a relative of his who had some mules to hire them to us in consideration of a large advance. Our baggage, though reduced as much as possible, amounted to some 2,000 catties, such items as a tent (100 lbs.), cartridges (300 catties), and sycee, of which, of course, we had to carry a large supply, serving to swell the total. The pack-mules on level roads bear very heavy burdens. The pack-saddle and frame alone weigh 25 catties, and on these are bound two bundles of native cloth, each weighing some 110 to 120 catties,

a gross weight of perhaps 250 catties. We commenced with eleven packs, but soon found that we must reduce the loads to a maximum of 150 catties for the best mules over the mountain paths we were entering upon. The problem of a non-galling pack-saddle has yet to be solved, and the Chinese mules suffer as much as others in this respect, but with an extra pad here, and a little more cotton wool there, it is wonderful how soon they recover from the nastiest-looking raws. The hardening system to which the natives treat their animals is eminently successful. The pack-frames are not tied on to the saddles, being long legged, and the load well balanced, they fit as it were into a socket, a convenient method for speedy adjustment and removal. We highly approved the arrangement in our daily little accidents in the forests, for when the mules rattled down hills, lay down in bogs, or stampeded through the woods, it was better for all parties to have the packs off as soon as possible. But it was with a painful interest that we had one day to watch our sycee-pack gradually slipping off, and its bearer swimming about in the Yaloo, into which, finding, we presumed, the day rather warm, he had walked of his own accord. Fortunately, the pack did not fall till the mule had again approached the bank, and we were able to recover it.

For the first 90 miles the road ran along the Hung River, a tributary of the Liao, and its tributary the Su-tsü-ho, in an easterly direction. Up to the small walled town of Fu Shun, 30 miles from Moukden, there is good arable land, with the usual crops of millet and beans. The hills are then entered and fertile valleys drained by small streams are traversed.

Road up to
Hsing
Ching.

At 90 miles are situated the Yung-ling, the tombs of some of the ancestors of the present Manchu dynasty. At the foot of the wooded hills on which they stand are the barracks of the guards and the trading town which supplies their wants: it has a population of some 3,000. The old town of Hsing Ching, "Yenden" of the Maps, is some 2 miles from the tombs, and contains the residences of various officials.

The neighbourhood is interesting as the original possession of the ruling family of China. Whether Noorhachu's forefathers came or did not come from the vicinity of Ninguta, there is no authentic evidence to show; but no such place as Odoli, their reputed residence, can be now identified, though marked on Maps as fancy directs between Kirin and Ninguta. But it is certain that Noorhachu himself was born near Hsing Ching, and it was here that he prepared his forces for the attack upon the Chinese rulers of Liao Tung which resulted in the overthrow of the Mings. Sarhon, the site of his most decisive battle, was passed on our road 40 miles west of Hsing Ching.

Imperial
ancestor
Noorhachu.

As a trading centre it is of little importance, for the country on all sides is mountainous, and affords small scope for agricultural development, while search for minerals is strictly forbidden, even more so than in other districts, out of regard for the serenity of the Imperial tombs.

Trade,
Hsing
Ching.

Thirteen miles to the east is the market town of Hsin Min-p'u, which has been formed in the last twelve years. Previous to that time the district was in a very disturbed state, but in 1875 the brigands were finally hunted down. Our ex-soldier had been one of the men employed on this duty, and gave us a graphic description of the manner in which 200 robbers had been hemmed in and shot in the very valley where Hsin Min-p'u now stands. The town, with about 1,000 inhabitants, is increasing rapidly, and does considerable business with the hunters and ginseng-growers of the Shan-a-lin, the "Long White Mountains."

Hsin Min-
p'u.

Proceeding over low ranges, finely wooded, and through narrow valleys, with a sparse population, we reached, at 170 miles from Moukden, the town of T'ung-hwa-hsien, on the Hun Chiang (Tong-kia-oola of the Maps), a large tributary of the Yaloo, flowing nearly due south. This town has been built twelve years, and is the seat of authority as far as the great bend of the Yaloo. It is badly situated for floods, on a tongue of low land round which the river curls; in 1885 a great part of the city walls was washed away. Almost all the buildings within the town are official; the space inclosed is 400 yards square. The few shops it boasts are outside, and do a small business in mountain produce such as deer-

Road to
T'ung-hwa-
hsien.
T'ung-hwa-
hsien.

