

amount to scarcely 200 men. The infantry is principally engaged in farming. Quite 8 months are devoted to ploughing and harvesting, 1 month to celebrating the new year and the remaining 2 to old Chinese drill. There are some young men among the troops, but almost all are addicted to opium smoking. There are a few Mauser rifles with 1 cartridge each, but no repeating rifles and no breech-loading guns. It can scarcely be said that this points to the strategic importance that the Chinese according to Grum-Grzimailo are supposed to attach to Barkul. A road connects this place with Suchow, but it is only used by camel caravans. The reason the Chinese army used it during the revolt instead of the main arbah route over Hami, was that Barkul was still in the hands of the only surviving Chinese garrison. According to the information which I succeeded in obtaining, this road is unsuitable as far as food goes for anything but camels and there is probably no better one, otherwise the few caravans that pass along this route would prefer it. Besides these routes there is a mountain road leading from Shang Laibatchyen over the Dangansogo pass to Lodun and another from Ka-tzu or Chu-chi over the Sã dawan to Djigda and Togucha near Hami. Both are said to be rough and only fit for horsemen and light pack-horses. Taking into consideration these 6 means of communication with Barkul, it is difficult to recognise it as a junction of any importance.

The mineral wealth of the district consists of coal deposits in the mountains 20 li NW of San-tao-Kow, gold in the gorges Tudago, Ehrdago and San-tao-Kow in the same mountains and silver in the neighbourhood of Sun-Shui-tang. Coal was mined formerly in 7 shafts, but the number has now been reduced to 2. The coal is of two qualities, its price being 4 1/2 and 5 lan per 100 djin. 20 and 30,000 djin are mined respectively. Owing to the shortage of labour the shafts are closed except in winter. — Gold is said to have been obtained formerly, but now the Chinese authorities forbid the work. It is said to be the same case with silver. The quantity of grain surrendered annually to the district stores amounts to 3616 tan. The taxes per mou are said to be 7 shin for good land, on which the sowings amount to 10 shin, and 3 1/2 shin for poorer land with about the same sowings. Winter lasts from October to May. Snow occurs even in summer. In the spring there are heavy storms.

*October 20th.* My unbearably cross hostess, placated to some extent by a pair of scissors, a needle and *Ku-shui* thread, mirrors, brooches and some postcards, stood outside her door with her face buried *village.* in her hands as a valedictory gesture, when I set off to-day.

It was a cold day with a strong wind that penetrated our fur coats and felt boots. The road led eastward over the same grassy plain. A mile or two E of the Manchurian fortress lie the ruins of some fairly large fortifications which the jai declared to be the ruins of another Manchurian town or fortress. Far to the N houses could be seen extending from W to E. A mile or two from the ruins we passed a lonely house and immediately after the road crossed a stream lying at no great depth. The bridge was bad. On the right were solitary houses of the villages of Shi tchy and Ta-tien-tzu. 10—10 1/2 miles from the town we reached Shi rinza, a village with an insignificant little miao put up to protect two blocks of stone, one of which was in the shape of a human head and shoulders. The