

Our plans had now shaped themselves into a journey round Manchuria. It was a country of many interests, and it was but little known. It was the cradle of the present ruling dynasty of China; and the few travellers who had been there had described its lovely scenery, its noble rivers, its fertility and natural resources, and the healthiness of its climate. Reading all this in the heat of India, we were fascinated by it; and as its proximity to Russian territory on the one hand and Japan on the other gave it military and political interests also, we felt that time spent in such a country would not be wasted.

On March 19, 1886, we left Calcutta, and in due course found ourselves at Newchwang, the treaty port of Manchuria. This was to be the base of operations, and we were fortunate enough to be joined here by Mr. H. Fulford, of the Chinese Consular Service, an officer who spoke Chinese thoroughly well, knew all the customs of the country, and was able to give us that assistance which as strangers in the land we so much needed. It is not, however, my intention to give a full detailed account of our journey in Manchuria, for that has already been done by Mr. James, in his book, "The Long White Mountain," in which will be found not only a description of our travels, but a fund of information about the history, the religion, and the customs of the people. I shall merely supplement his work with a few of the impressions which were left upon myself.

Our first objective point was a mountain well known in Chinese legends—the Chang-pai-shan, or "Ever-White Mountain." This fabulous mountain had, it is true, been visited in 1709 by one of those enterprising Jesuit surveyors, who seem to have pushed their way everywhere, and compiled a wonderfully accurate map of the Chinese empire. But no European had subsequently visited the mountain to corroborate their accounts, and much romantic mystery still attached itself