

*July 27.*—Started at 1.25 a.m., the carter distinguished himself again by getting the cart into a deep rut, although the Turk whom we had brought with us had pointed it out to him. He is the worst carter in Asia. The Turk then took the matter into his own hands, turning the carter out of the cart with ignominy. A good deal of knack is required in driving these teams. We have two mules and one pony abreast in front, and one pony in the shafts. The difficulty is to get them all to start together. Whipping is no good; the only way is by shouting. A good carter works himself up, and then gives a peculiar whoop, which sends all the mules into their collars. They are not good at it here, but in Manchuria, where the roads are so bad, they are first-rate, and will get a team of nine animals to work like one.

The road now passed through a country broken up into hillocks, and eleven miles from Sho-shok it entered a range of hills running in a north-and-south direction, and followed the bank of a river which cuts its way through the hills. Three and a half miles further a custom-house and the ruins of a fort are passed, which occupy the narrow space between the river on one side and precipitous hills on the other. The valley bottom varies in width from two hundred yards to a quarter of a mile. The river is rapid, and of some length. It is from thirty to forty yards broad, flowing over a pebbly bed. The roadway has been made along the base of the hills, large masses of stone and boulder having been cleared away for the purpose.

We passed the flourishing little village of Kholga two and a half miles from the custom-house, on the opposite bank of the river. Here there was a steep ascent of three hundred yards, to cross a projecting spur. The descent on the opposite side was easy. Another spur, less steep, was crossed a mile and a half further on, and then we descended gradually to Korlia. The view of Korlia from the hill was very pretty. The whole plain