

# Huang Houtzes, the Touaregs of Manchuria, and Their Organization



CHINESE SOLDIERS AT DEPOT.

(Copyright, 1909, by Frank G. Carpenter.) A man who represents a large organization of British and Japanese capitalists. He is opening up a gold region in the Kirin province and has to send his supplies to the mining camps across country. He says he does not start out a cart without such protection, and that in important cases he usually employs one of the brigands to go along in person. He did this with two English mining engineers whom he sent forward last week. Said he: "They might have gotten through all right with the Huang Houtze flags on their carts, but outside the great organization of brigands, there are petty bands of robbers who might attack them. Such men will not dare to touch anyone guarded by a Huang Houtze; for if caught, they would surely be killed by the latter."

**Touaregs of Manchuria.** These guards are a necessity on account of the Huang Houtzes, who form, perhaps the most wonderful organization of brigands ever known. They might be called the Touaregs of Manchuria, for they surpass in number and daring the veiled, camel-mounted bandits of the Sahara. They have rapidly increased since the Boxer uprising and especially since the Japan-Russian war. They now number over 300,000, and their agents are to be found in every city and village. They have a regular toll which they collect on all travelers outside the railroads, and every Chinese passenger who goes over Manchuria on foot, in a cart, or on horseback, must pay tribute to them. They have fixed charges as to goods in transit, and the carts carrying freight are marked with little printed flags with red borders furnished by them. Upon the flags are printed Chinese characters, certifying that the owner has paid his toll, and that the vehicle and drivers are sure to be robbed. Otherwise the man is sure to be robbed and his men may be killed. A few months ago on the same day 100 carts started out from Mukden. Of these all but two had paid their toll and bore Huang Houtze flags. The men and goods in the carts so flagged completed their journey in safety; but the others, who had refused to pay the toll, were attacked by the bandits before they had gone thirteen miles from the city. The goods were stolen and their drivers were killed. During my stay in Mukden, I talked with the agent of a big mining concession,

**Mounted Robbers.** The Huang Houtzes are well mounted. They have Chinese ponies, which can go thirty miles a day without tiring, and can be pushed to twice that. The ponies are never groomed and are exceedingly dirty. The bandits carry nothing with them but their arms, except a long fur coat, which they wear in the winter, and a quilt folded over their saddles. They have modern guns and are armed with revolvers. The majority carry Mauser rifles or big bore Winchester. Some have Russian pistols, and many have Japanese weapons which they have collected from the battlefields or have gotten hold of in some way or other during the war. Their ammunition is of European make and some of them have cartridges of smokeless powder. During the China-Japan war they bought or stole a quantity of rifles from the runaway Chinese soldiers, and got additional arms in 1906, when the arsenals of North China were looted and the arms distributed gratis by the officials. They have captured some guns from the Russians during the last few years and they have altogether a splendid equipment.

**Big Organization.** I am told that these bandits have existed as an organization for ages, but that they have never been so associated together as now. Their resorts have been the mountainous regions of Mongolia and Manchuria, from where they have gone down regularly to prey upon the people of the lowlands. The words Huang Houtze mean red beards. It is said that



COACHMAN MAY BE A BRIGAND IN DISGUISE.

these outlaws sometimes dye their hair and beards red, and that thus decorated their names become synonymous with the devil in the minds of the northern Chinese. I understand that each band has one chief, with several minor chiefs, who form his bodyguard. There are about fifty of these head men in a band, and each has ten or twenty brigands under him, the whole making a gang of 1,000 or more. Such a band will take charge of a certain part of the country, similar bands being located in other regions. The brigands have a system of intercommunication by which they can combine and by which the guarantee of one company is respected by the others. Every band has its secret agents in the locality where it operates. These men know all about the business of the towns and villages. They notify the bandits what cargoes of goods are to be shipped and, as far as possible, the wealth and standing of the shipper. They are said to keep books, including the rolls of the bandits' names and the pay they receive, as well as the profit of each robbery and its disposition.

**Taxing the Villages.** The Huang Houtzes are taxing the villages of Manchuria. The chief of the band holding the right to certain territory keeps track of the wealth of its inhabitants, and he makes almost every man pay for protection from the Huang Houtze raids. Villages are taxed as such, and in these cases the brigands agree to keep off other robbers. They sometimes station guards about the towns, and in case of attack come to the aid of the police. In such places the Huang Houtze agent furnishes the flags to travelers, and this is done likewise in the larger cities.

Take, for instance, Newchwang, which is the chief seaport of Manchuria. It has a Huang Houtze agent who has a regular office where anyone may go and buy the right to travel over the country. It is only recently that it has been necessary for foreigners to have such protection, but now all people going alone will do well to get Huang Houtze flags. Just the other day a young woman, an English girl, who was going across the country in a cart, was swooped down upon by a band of fifteen

mounted Huang Houtzes. They robbed her of all her belongings, including even her shoes and stockings, leaving her barefooted and bareheaded by the roadside. She had only \$40.

**Railroad Holdups.** In the last few months the Huang Houtzes have held up several trains on the Transiberian railroad and especially on that branch of it which comes down through Manchuria. I talked last night with a man who was on a train stopped near Harbin. This is one of the biggest cities of northern Manchuria, a large military post, and surrounded with Russian soldiers. Nevertheless, the Huang Houtzes had arranged to ditch the cars and rob the passengers. They had twisted the rails just above an embankment about twenty feet high and were waiting on the hills nearby for the express to come. In the meantime the patrolman had discovered the injury done to the track. He fired three shots, and thus warned the engineer so that the train was stopped within about fifty feet of where the rails were broken. Upon the cars was a large guard of Cossacks, who made a demonstration. This frightened the bandits and they remained on a neighboring hill while the train stopped. They watched the railroad men, guarded by the Cossacks, relay the tracks, and fired a parting volley at them as the train pulled away.

**Huang Houtzes and Sepoys.** These bandits will have to be controlled by the Chinese. Neither the Japanese nor the Russians will permit a continuation of the attacks upon their trains. As it is now, there seems to be a combination between the Chinese troops and Chinese officials and Huang Houtzes. It is even said that some of the policemen of the villages are themselves Huang Houtzes, and that the officials of the larger cities are in alliance with them. Every few months some soldiers are sent out to pull them down. They come back, bringing the heads of what they say were Huang Houtzes, but which, it is generally believed, are the heads of coolies, whom they have killed, instead. These brigands are very daring. They do not seem afraid of death and they will fight when attacked. It was just after the boxer trouble that 1,400 of them came down through the great wall and advanced toward the railway. The Chinese asked for

help; and some British officers and a company of East Indian troops were sent against them. This company was the Fourth Punjab Infantry. It found the brigands in a town about ten miles from the railway, and fired upon them. They returned the fire; and at the first volley Major Browning, who was in command, was killed and Lieutenant Stirling was wounded. Several of the Sepoys were also killed. The firing became general and a retreat was ordered. The East Indians, who were on foot, were pursued by the Huang Houtzes on horseback and they had great trouble in getting back to the railroad. The next day a company of 100 from the same infantry regiment went out with 300 Japanese soldiers and attacked the brigands. They found them in the same village, and it took four hours of heavy fighting to drive them out. In these two engagements the Huang Houtzes lost more than 500 men, or about one-fifth of their whole number.

**Spies and Signal Fires.** On my way from Mukden to Shan-hai-Kwan I saw fires blazing on the mountains. They were of a peculiar shape, forming a ring like a horseshoe, and I was told that they might possibly be the signal fires of the Huang Houtzes. These men have the same telegraph system that once prevailed in Korea. They communicate intelligence by fires built on the hills. By the number and shape of such fires they tell their fellows what they are doing and within a short time are able to send word from one part of Manchuria to the other. Many of their signal lights are made of wooden pegs, which are hollowed out at the top and filled with a composition. Half way down each peg there is a hole to which a fuse is attached. When this is lit the composition blazes up, giving a very bright, round light, which lasts several seconds. One such flash means one thing, two another and three another, the number of flashes indicating the message. The Huang Houtzes have their spies all over the country, and that even in the magistracy's office. Your coachman may be a brigand in disguise. You are not sure as to your fellow passengers, and the native who says he is not afraid and boasts of his immunity from the Huang Houtzes is pretty sure to be robbed.

**Pirates of Manchuria.** These same men carry on piracy along



GROUP OF MANCHURIAN POSSIBLE BRIGANDS.

the coast. They go out in junks, pretending to be merchants, and later put in at little-known harbors to take on their fellows. They have captured sailing junks and the smaller trading craft of the Chinese. Their sphere of operation has been the Gulf of Pechili and the coasts of Manchuria and northern Korea. If they are chased by the men-of-war they sail up into the rivers, where the water is so shallow that large vessels cannot follow. Some years since a Japanese gunboat captured two of these pirate junks and found more than \$300,000 worth of silver in them. The pirates frequently appear near Newchwang, lying in wait for the junks as they come out of the river and making each junk pay toll. They sometimes leave their junks and pillage the villages on shore.

**Brigands of Kirin.** One of the chief seats of brigandage is the province of Kirin, which lies north of here. It is a rich territory, three times as big as the state of Indiana, having altogether a population of about 6,000,000. Its capital is Kirin, a town of about 100,000 people. There are many mountains in that region, which are infested with Huang Houtzes. They are well-mounted and well-armed, and they collect a heavy toll on the big cart traffic which is always moving between the capital and Kwan-Cheng-Tau, the nearest station on the South Manchurian railroad. Not only here, but in the other provinces, insurance companies have been established to protect trade by bringing the brigands. Each of these companies has its flag, which is usually of a triangular shape. This takes the place of the Huang Houtze flag, and if the Huang Houtzes have been properly paid it is respected. Otherwise not. The insurance companies send armed guards along with their carts, but it is an open secret that it is the money which they pay the brigands, and not their guards, that affords them protection.

During a visit that I made to the penitentiary in Mukden I asked the director if he had any Huang Houtzes among his convicts. He replied that he had and that he would point out one in the next ward we entered. He did so. The man's head had a pigtail as black as that of the ordinary Chinese and there was nothing to distinguish him from the others in the shop where he worked. I afterwards photographed two Huang Houtzes between the guards in the yard of the prison.

**Wiping Out the Brigands.** The authorities say that the time has come now when these brigands must be exterminated. Their raids have attracted the attention of outside nations, and the reform movement which is going on here demands that trade be freed from their taxes. It is only an account of the duties having been comparatively light that an outcry has not arisen long before this. The administration of Mukden, the capital of Manchuria, is one of the most progressive of the Chinese empire, and the army connected with it is especially well drilled. The country could be policed as far as the main trade routes are concerned, and this will probably be done within a short time. If the government once puts its foot down and insists that the Huang Houtzes be destroyed, an end will soon be made to these raids and the brigands, with the exception of those in the mountainous district, will disappear. During my stay in Korea the military officials told me that their chief trouble is not with the insurgents, but with some Korean brigands who are much like the Huang Houtzes. They have their homes in the mountains and sail out to prey upon the villages. These Korean brigands are supposed to number 15,000; and they have one chief who is practically the head of the whole. The Japanese soldiers are policing the mountainous districts, and they are killing these brigands wherever they find them. A similar policy is bound to be instituted in Manchuria. The Chinese government is now sending emigrants into the country north of Mukden, and it expects to open up much of its rich government land to settlement. Mining concessions have been granted to foreigners, and the Japanese are insisting that the country be made peaceful. Above this and more important than all, is the very general desire on the part of the men who are running the Chinese government to introduce western methods and the new civilization, so that, altogether, it would seem that the Huang Houtze, powerful as he is today, is doomed to soon disappear.

FRANK G. CARPENTER.

## Dead Old Orchard Made New and Fruitful Through Proper Attention

AND around Omaha is capable of producing apples of as fine quality as can be grown anywhere. This is abundantly demonstrated in the Park View orchard, at Fort Calhoun, Washington county, sixteen miles north of Omaha. The Park View orchard is a resuscitated orchard of twenty-two acres, owned by I. S. Sibley, of Omaha, who bought it three years ago as a summer home. The trees of the orchard had up to this time been permitted to struggle along as best they could, and the entire orchard was in a dilapidated condition generally. Many of the trees were broken down, and but few of them bore any fruit at all, and that of a scrawny, stunted variety.



"MAID OF THE ORCHARD."

Mr. Sibley, being of a practical turn of mind and a knowledge of fruit capabilities, saw at once that the location of the orchard was an ideal one, with east, west and north slope and that the trouble with the trees did not lie so much with generic barrenness as with neglect. Mr. Sibley went to work at once to have the trees trimmed up, the decayed trees removed and to give the orchard a chance. The orchard responded at once. The trees began to brighten up. The process of spraying was adopted and the first year of Mr. Sibley's ownership of the orchard, from a product of practically nothing for some years previous, about thirty bushels of excellent apples were produced; but the chief feature was the brightening up of the trees and their manifest willingness to respond to care.

The work of restoring the orchard was necessarily one of patience and persistence and the following year the trees began showing a renewed energy, recovering from the severe trimming of the previous year made necessary by the decayed and broken limbs, and while the product of the orchard was not large, yet double the amount of fruit, all of a superior quality, was harvested in 1908.

Spraying was resorted to again during that year with most encouraging results. The trees all showed vigorous, thrifty life and were getting themselves in readiness for a bumper crop in 1909.

Frank Koslowky, a practical orchard man, was put in charge of the orchard last year, and given carte blanche to see what he could do. He is an ardent believer in the efficacy of spraying and every tree in the orchard was given its spray bath when needed. The bloom of the present spring showed that the orchard was bent on making a record, just simply to demonstrate that eastern Nebraska can do as much in the big red apple line as any other locality on earth if given half a chance. The location of the orchard and the vigor of the resuscitated trees reduced the likelihood of winter killing to a minimum and the fruit began forming with a remark-

able uniformity throughout the orchard. Spraying was again resumed and the result is now manifest in the perfected and perfecting fruit and the production of over 2,000 bushels of late summer and early fall apples, to say nothing of the winter varieties.

The varieties of apples in the Sibley orchard include all those best adapted to this latitude and include the Duchess, Red Astrakhan, Wealthy, Winesap, Genet, Jonathan, Ben Davis and a few other varieties of summer and early fall apples, with a few Russets, Crabs and Greenings and others of the winter varieties.

Just at this time the orchard is a marvel of beauty. The trees look like monstrous bouquets of flowers with their burdens of fruit of red, purple and yellow among the rich healthy green of the leaves. The long aisles of fruit laden trees are veritable fairy bowers and the fragrance of the ripening fruit adds to the beauty of the scene. So heavily burdened are the trees with fruit that the limbs are fairly bent to the ground. Braces have had to be put under the heavier laden limbs and with the continued growth of the apples these braces are bent under the weight of the fruit. In spite of the care to preserve the trees, many of the large limbs have

broken down under their fruit loads.

As an example of the prolificness of the trees, 400 bushels of apples have been gathered from sixteen trees this far this season, not including the windfalls. This picking season is now at its height, under Mr. Koslowky's superintendence. Then boys are almost constantly employed in the work. The apples are picked direct from the trees, tall ladders being utilized for the work. The apples are all selected and are carefully barreled in the orchard and hauled direct to the railroad station. Most of the product has thus far been shipped to a commission house at Blair and thence to Minnesota and northern Iowa points. The average product per tree is about twenty-five bushels, though some of them will produce even a greater quantity. The windfalls will be fed to the hogs, though some of the better specimens will be made into cider and vinegar.

A noticeable thing in connection with this orchard is the absence of low grade, stunted or wormy apples. Over thirty trees were examined in various parts of the orchard and not a bad apple could be discerned on the trees. All of them bore the appearance of perfect development.

The trees all have a healthy appearance, few or no dead or dying branches or leaves

being manifest. Most of them are of the maximum bearing age, some being twelve or fifteen years old. There is a noticeable absence of gnarled or misshapen trees, neither is there any evidence of attempt to preserve only the most symmetrical trees. The real secret of the healthy appearance of the orchard and its fruitfulness is the intelligent system of cultivation and spraying that has been carried on. The trees were sprayed four times this year.

It is simply an illustration that the Nebraska orchards are readily responsive to care, and that as fine a quality of fruit can be produced from Nebraska orchards as anywhere in the country. The flavor of the fruit from this particular orchard surpasses any of the irrigated products. The apples are almost universally sym-

metrical, plump and juicy, and have every indication of long keeping qualities.

Incidentally, Mr. Sibley has had blackberry, raspberry and gooseberry patches planted in parts of the orchard where the old trees were grubbed out. Eighty crates of raspberries have been taken from that patch this year, as well as many crates of gooseberries and a considerable quantity of blackberries. The production of the smaller fruits has been a secondary consideration in view of the greater work in caring for the orchard.

That fruit growing can be made a success in Nebraska is pretty well shown in this instance, where a small orchard of but twenty-two acres can be made to produce 2,000 bushels of marketable apples in one season.



HOW THE TREES IN THE SIBLEY ORCHARD BEAR.



PACKING APPLES IN THE SIBLEY ORCHARD.