

Preface

believe that Japan would ever invade Manchuria, unless, indeed, she be caught by the madness with which the gods first visit those whom they wish to destroy; but if ever her army did occupy Moukden she would only find another Moscow in the ancient capital of the Manchus, and when all is said and done what would be the use? She could never hope to hold the Liao valley for ever against Russia; Great Britain might just as well try to hold Normandy again against France. . . . The conclusion is that as far as Manchuria is concerned, Russia is even now more or less invulnerable," &c. &c. This was published the year the Russo-Japanese war took place.

Taking heart of grace by the kind reception of my former book on China, I determined to visit Manchuria and Korea, and to try and describe them by pen and brush as I had described the Face of China. My former fellow-traveller was willing and eager to repeat our wanderings, so we set out on February 1st of this year, 1910, via the Trans-Siberian Railway. Much has been written by various travellers about this part of the journey, but the questions that I wanted answered are mostly ignored by them. Baedeker is wholly inadequate. I begin therefore my tale from the point where we crossed the border into Manchuria, so as to give more continuity to the narrative and avoid repetition. On our return journey across Siberia I give details which may possibly be of service to those who intend travelling on that line, and also the general information about the condition of the country at the