

lated throughout the country, and formed part of a general scheme for preparing the people for a change of rulers. The misfortunes which have befallen China since the war broke out, have helped forward the plans of these conspirators by increasing the general discontent, and the prospects of a dynastic change are accordingly still more obvious than they were in May. In these circumstances it is of interest to recall in brief the history of the house which at present rules the teeming millions of the Celestial Empire.

#### A Mixed Race.

"The present occupant of the Chinese throne comes of a race different from those over whom he rules, though allied to it. For two centuries and a half the Manchu dynasty of Tsing has swayed the rod of Empire in China. This long period has not yet brought about the amalgamation of the conquerors and the conquered into one homogeneous people. To-day China presents a spectacle somewhat similar to that which England presented in the twelfth century, when the inhabitants of the island had not yet learned to regard themselves as Englishmen, but as either Normans or Saxons.

"A dual administration of public affairs is the outcome of this anomalous state of things. Thus, all the departments of the Chinese government have at least two heads, one Manchu and one Chinese. The Manchus naturally get the lion's share of the important offices."

The reigning House traces its origin to the Kin Tartars, who wrested the northern part of China in the eleventh century from the House of Sung, but had to flee in the beginning of the next century from the victorious advance of Genghis Khan, and take refuge in the wilds of the Amur. The founder of

the Imperial family, Aisin Ghioro, is said to have been the chief of a nomadic tribe at Otolé, a place situated in a wild region about ninety miles southwest of Ninguta. But little is known about his descendants for several generations, until they migrated southward and established themselves at Hingking, about eighty miles to the east of Moukden. There the ancestors of the present Chinese rulers dwelt for four generations and waxed strong and great.

It was toward the latter part of the sixteenth century that they, under the leadership of Tien-ming, started on their career of conquest.

This warrior became the head of the tribe when he was only twenty-five years old. He was a born leader, able, daring and fertile in expedients. His land was hemmed in on all sides by hostile tribes, but he succeeded in the course of a few years in reducing them all to subjection, and in extending his territory from the Amur on the north to the Yellow Sea on the south, and from the desert of Mongolia on the west to the Pacific Ocean on the east.

#### Picked a Quarrel.

At that time a weak scion of the House of Ming was on the throne of China. The Liao River divided the territories of the Chinese Emperor and the Manchu chieftain. The ambitious Tien-ming found no difficulty in picking a quarrel with his neighbor, and accordingly made repeated incursions into Chinese territory. Shinyang and Liaoyang fell into his hands, after a stubborn defence. Then he removed his capital from Hingking to Shinyang, and changed its name to Moukden. Distracted by internal dissensions the House of Ming was not in a position to offer an effective resistance to the invasions of the Manchus. Inch by inch the Chinese forces

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