
The Kirin-Tunhua Railway and Japanese Expansion: From a Chinese Viewpoint

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and are used as floor boards, roof boards, for making doors and other fittings, etc. The remainder is used for making moulds, various kinds of woodwork, etc. Generally speaking, Benimatsu is a rival of Todomatsu of the genus *Abies* and of Ezomatsu of the genus *Picea*, both of which are produced in Eastern Asia.

"3. As stated above, kedar is limited in the uses to which it is put, and, unlike North American lumber, is not capable of being used for general purposes. Moreover, its imports amount to no more than between 500,000 and 700,000 koku (1 koku equals 120 board feet) a year, viz., only 6% on the total imports of North American lumber. Nor can any future increase be expected in the imports of kedar, when consideration is given to the condition of forests in the place where it is produced and to the uses which are made of this wood. In consequence, cedar is worthy of no particular consideration even from the viewpoint of protecting Japanese forestry.

"4. For the reasons set forth in the foregoing, American lumber is not considered likely to suffer particularly from the importation of kedar. It will have been clearly seen that the tariff in question is not designed to constitute any discrimination against American lumber in respect of kedar, either in form or in fact."

The Kirin-Tunhua Railway and Japanese Expansion

FROM A CHINESE VIEWPOINT

By Ching Shui-kung

(Translated from the Eastern Miscellany)

The Three Eastern Provinces is an integral part of China. Its division into different parts as Northern and Southern Manchuria was not the work of the Chinese but that of foreigners. In consequence of the Russo-Japanese War Manchuria is split into Northern and Southern Manchuria; the point of demarcation is in Changchun; the part north of this town, run through by a branch of the C. E. R., is supposed to be the Russian sphere of influence, that part south of it intersected by the South Manchurian Railway is dominated by Japanese influence. The European and American public has too often heard of North and South Manchuria; hereafter a new term, East Manchuria, will begin to make its impression upon them. Japan has perhaps fully exploited South Manchuria and is now turning her attention to Eastern Manchuria, a designation also coined by the Japanese. As Harbin is a Russian base of operation for Northern Manchuria, Dairen the point d'appui for Japanese intrusion into South Manchuria, Taonam the center of Japanese activities in Eastern Mongolia, so Kirin has been and will be made the ground for further Japanese inroad into Eastern Manchuria. The natural resources, forestry, mines, the fertile soil and the luxuriant vegetation are unknown to the outside world. We Chinese ourselves have left them undeveloped; but the quick eye of the Japanese grasped the potentialities of the region. So the Kirin-Huining railway was projected starting from the capital of Kirin Province, Kirin, to a point in Chosen, Huining, to link with the Chosen system of railways.

The Kirin-Tunhua railway, planned nineteen years ago, 131 kilometers long, open to traffic on the first of October, 1928, is only a section of the Kirin-Huining railway.

ORIGINS OF THE KIRIN-TUNHUA RAILWAY

The 1909 Chientao Treaty besides opening a few places to trade gave the Japanese the right to construct this line. Article six of the Treaty says: "In case of extension of the Kirin-Changchun line to Huining the arrangements and terms shall be similar to those obtaining in the Kirin-Changchun Agreement." The matter was left in abeyance to be again revived in 1918. The chief of the Communications Department signed a preliminary agreement with the Japanese Banks for an advancement of 10,000,000 yen to the Chinese Government which aroused no little opposition from the Chinese people. The Chinese Government dared not venture beyond this: no signature of the draft-treaty took place, but still the Japanese reserved the right to construct the line. In the 14th year of the Republic the question was again brought up culminating in the signing of the Kirin-Tunhua Agreement between M. Yip Kung-cho, the head of the Communications Department, and a representative of the South Manchurian Railway for a loan of 18,000,000 yen to build this line. The agreement was never made public, but people surmised that it had the following provisions:

- (1) The construction of the line to be undertaken by the South Manchurian Railway.
- (2) The survey to commence immediately upon signature, to be completed within two years.
- (3) The Minister of the Communications Department to name the Engineer-in-Chief, the Director of the Railway to have supervisory powers over him.
- (4) The Engineer-in-Chief must be a Japanese subject. His duties and powers are in common with those of the Chinese Director.
- (5) Employment of a Japanese chief accountant until the redemption of the loan.
- (6) The property of the railway, movable and immovable, should be the first mortgage for the loan having precedence over other mortgages.
- (7) The amount advanced is 18,000,000 yen.

These stipulations are in common with similar agreements entered into between China and other foreign countries.

Before the tidings of the signature reached the general public work was commenced on the spot. That the agreement had not received the assent of the Cabinet was made the pretext for declaring it null and void by a mandate of the Chief Executive dated the 12th of January, the 15th year of the Chinese Republic. At that time Peking orders were flouted by those then in power in Manchuria. Work went on more expeditiously; the Director of the Kirin-Changchun Railway was made concurrently Director of the line in question.

The work on the line, encountering many forests, rivers and mountains on the way, was rather difficult. The Sungari River bridge is 1456 meters long, and there were three tunnels to be pierced, all told

3,300 meters long. The actual cost, 24,000,000 yen, exceeded the preliminary estimate of 18,000,000 yen.

ITS POTENTIALITIES

The Japanese have exploited South Manchuria for more than twenty years, no more than 185,000 Japanese have emigrated thither—a small figure when compared with her annual million population-increase. The region east of Kirin, or as the Japanese style it, Eastern Manchuria, has been open to foreign trade and settlement for more than twenty years: yet only a paltry number of Japanese are found there; while fifty times more Chosenese went there for the cultivation of rice. In face of such striking facts Japanese statesmen have been bewildered and are endeavoring to find out the reasons. They, however, came to the conclusion that the produce of the region having no easy outlet to the sea was not worth the while for the Japanese to exploit. Hence the *raison d'être* of the construction of the line. The writer of this article ascribes the small number of Japanese colonists to the Japanese tenacious love for his own soil, to his slight resistance to diseases, to his idiosyncrasies unassimilable to, or by, other peoples, to the rigour of the Manchurian winter and to the sporadic attacks of the *hunchutzes*.¹

Besides this delicate attention on the part of Japanese statesmen to the material well-being of their fellow countrymen there is another reason that prompts the Japanese to lay this line, namely, the desire to draw traffic away from the Chinese Eastern Railway. So far produce in Northern Manchuria goes by the Chinese Eastern to Vladivostok; that of Southern Manchuria is carried by the line of the same name to Dairen. By the time when the Kirin-Huining railway will have been completed the Chinese Eastern will be divested of much of its traffic for the produce can take a shorter route to the sea. The Chinese writer predicts that it might cause an open breach between Japan and Russia.

Thirdly and lastly the Kirin-Huining railway, or a section of it, the Kirin-Tunhua railway, having much in common with the Antung-Mukden railway enabling Japanese troops to concentrate in the heart of Manchuria in a short time in case of war between Japan and any European or American Power, is essentially a strategic line. In case of a blockade of the Islands, thereby threatening the supply of provisions to her population, she could close the Tsushima Straits and transport food and raw materials without outside interference through the Japan Sea, which is virtually a Japanese lake. Transportation by the South Manchurian railway then would be a devious route, exposing her navy to attacks by any naval power. The enclosed Japan Sea frees her from all such worries. Her navy mustered there would be invulnerable. Then with the strength of this line her continental dream will be realized, for she could pour troops into Northern Manchuria at a moment's notice. It will not be uninteresting to recall that the right of building the Antung-Mukden railway, having the same significance as the line in question, was ceded to Japan only after the threat of force; the Manchu regime thought too much was at stake in the cession of the line and they were undoubtedly in the right.

¹ Chinese colloquial for "bandits."