

TIBET AND TURKESTAN

CHAPTER I

RUSSIAN TURKESTAN — ACROSS BLACK SANDS — FROM KRASNOVODSK TO ANDIJAN

SERIOUS changes, of international importance, are about to be made in Central Asia, where conditions are known but vaguely, except to certain officials who can speak only in accord with the policies they serve, and to a few travellers. Concerning the actualities in Turkestan and Tibet, there is an English administration point of view—which is loudly proclaimed; a Russian administration point of view—which is imperfectly known to Western Europe; a Chinese administration point of view, which cannot be frankly expressed by the Peking Government; a Tibetan point of view, which is vainly uttered to the unresponsive snows; and an independent point of view, which I endeavour here to set forth. When one observes the activities of three great empires, four great religions, and a dozen races, interacting among conditions whose simplicity permits sharp definition, he may perchance see things that are somewhat hidden in the larger, overwhelming world to which we belong.