

## Sketch of History of Turkestan 265

stance, until to-day. This conquest is definitely placed in the first century of our era. It may have been preceded by an intermediate wave of Mongols—the Hueng-nu (Huns) who were the cousins and enemies of the Yue-che. Indeed the earlier movement of the Yue-che was due to the pressure upon them by the Hueng-nu, who were constant disturbers of the peace on China's north-eastern frontier until, shortly before the date last mentioned, they had been worsted by the Emperor's armies and were streaming westward, eventually to work their fatal course across Europe. They moved chiefly along the easier line through Dzungaria, north of Turkestan; but it is not improbable that they sent minor streams southward to infiltrate among the populations which had been vanquished by those whom they themselves had vanquished one or two centuries earlier. Such additions (probably not numerous), to the Tarim people might have disturbed some of its centres, but would not have seriously altered the general racial status. Nor indeed does this status seem to have been largely affected by the advent of the civilised Chinese for whom this distant region was but a military frontier and a tribute-field, not a region of colonisation. Even now, when population density in China proper is much greater than it was two thousand years ago, the number of resident Chinese in Turkestan is small. The principal officials, Manchu-Chinese, bring their families with them and return to their proper homes as do the English from India.

But this laying hold upon a distant province on the other side of the interior desert caused the