

These Hu-he were followed by the Kara-Kitai, in the eleventh century; then came the desolation of Jenghiz Khan. He massacred freely, but he and his free-thinking family were a protection against the fanatic proselyting-by-violence of the Mohammedan states on the west of the Alaï Mountains; Islam, however, steadily gained ground throughout Central Asia, and ere many centuries had passed persecution ceased because of a happy uniformity of sentiment.

In the sway of empire hither and thither, Kashgar once, in the fourteenth century, enjoyed the perilous distinction of being the capital of Tughlak Timour. Some regal attention, in the way of bloodshed, it also received from the great Tamerlane. Then, as the centuries rolled by without producing other universal tyrants, the priesthood, the letter-worshipping Khojas from Bokhara's schools, seem to have usurped the State, until, in the seventeenth century, a Kalmuk power northward from Kashgaria entered to control the struggle of priest-ridden factions, and at last, about the time America was preparing to fight for independence, Turkestan sank back into the arms of China, whose battalions had decimated Dzungaria and spared not the resisting zealots of Kashgaria. It seems not improbable that something of protection for the cities remaining in the Kashgar-Khotan district resulted from that desiccation which, by destroying the towns lying nearer to Lob-nor, rendered more difficult the inroads of Mongolian hordes from the north-east. These would be forced to a more northern route for westward migrations, leaving the southern region to a