



*Four Kirghiz at
Khui-yu-an-tchen.*

even that only as long as it is to their advantage. Just as Mr Macartney's work at Kashgar consists in a great measure in extending the powerful protection of Great Britain to a band of Hindu bloodsuckers and usurers, it is the thankless task of the Russian consul at Qulja to protect the interests of thoroughly discreditable persons in innumerable financial and criminal encounters between Chinese and Russian subjects, merely to maintain Russian prestige. The humanity of the Russian laws in comparison with the Chinese must convert this powerful protection into a crying injustice in the eyes of the local population. In serious cases, in which a man's guilt is proved according to Chinese ideas and he might, perhaps, be condemned to have a hand cut off or the sinews of his legs severed, he can be released by a Russian court for want of evidence and appear again a week or two later to resume operations in the excellent market of Qulja. A Russian subject may enlist as a soldier in a Chinese detachment and attempt the life of an officer. By Chinese law he is sentenced to be strangled, but if he is able to inform the Russian aksakal that he is a Russian subject, the Russian consul demands his extradition, and in Russia he probably receives no sentence, and so on. The mandarins are still extremely obliging and pay great consideration to the wishes of the Russian authorities. The fact that the outcome of the late unhappy war has not, as far as Russia is concerned, affected relations with the Chinese authorities is greatly due to the ability and position of the man who represents Russia's interests here. On a fleeting visit one is struck by the very distinct antagonism towards all that is Russian among the population, especially the Chinese (true Chinese, Manchurians, Sibos and Solons). Chinese officials speak of the weakness of the position in Russia and appear to be comparatively well informed of conditions there. The local people go much further and one hears talk of China's preparing to recover from Russia those districts that formerly belonged to China, that the Russians should be driven back across the Amur, that their privileged position in Western China should be abolished etc. In fact, you hear