### CHAPTER IV.

#### PEKING TO KWEI-HWA-CHENG.

PAGE

Arrival of Colonel Bell—Preparations for an overland journey to India—Our different routes—Fascination of planning a journey—Start from Peking—My servant—Liu-san—The Great Wall at Kalgan—American medical mission—Views on opium-smoking—M. Ivanoff—A Chinese ex-naval officer—Chinese ignorance of geography—Agreements with carters—In the valley of the Yang-ho—The winds from the Mongolian plateau—Formation of cart-roads in the loess—Mules—We enter the "Land of Gog and Magog"—On the Mongolian plain—Yurts—Kindliness of the Mongols—Partridges—Chinese supplanting Mongols—Rapid changes of temperature—Arrival at Kwei-hwa-cheng—The China inland mission—Their system and hardships—How Chinese troops are levied—Mr. Clarke—Kwei-hwa-cheng—Its diminishing trade—Its temples—Mongol bazaar—Caravan-men—Preparations for crossing the Gobi Desert—Finding an auspicious date—My equipment

58

### CHAPTER V.

### ACROSS THE GOBI DESERT.

My company—The guide—His extraordinary memory for wells—Ma-te-la—We start-The In-shan Mountains-Mongolian pastures-Encroachments of Chinese and Russians-Messrs. Collins & Co. of Tientsin-The Mongolian camel-Warnings of robbers-Liu-san and his revolver-Deer and the mode of killing them-Mongol temples-Aggressive ravens-Approaching the Sheitung-ula Mountains-A local tradition-The Ho-lai-liu stream-Deceptive distances—The heart of the Gobi Desert—Monotonous marches— Characteristics of the desert-Temperature and winds-Extracts from diary -Wild ponies-Elm trees-The Galpin Gobi-Hurricane and darkness-Partridges-The Hurku Hills-Bortson well-On Prjevalsky's track-A trading caravan-Uses of a Mongol boot-Valuable gifts-Mongol customs—A dust-storm—Curious sandhills—Their origin—Wind-formed sand-Mr. Barosakhai-The mountain system-Preparing for attack-A glass of sherry-Man-chin-tol-A "general hit out"-Slow progress-Glimpses of snow-Wild camels-Wild mules-The Altai Mountains-Refractory camels-Ma-te-la bolts home-A strange sunset-Mongol agriculture-Ula-Khutun-Origin of sloping gravel plains-Ovis argali-A glimpse of the Tian-shan—Desert of Zungaria—Ovis poli horns—Difficulties of Chinese language—A period of depression—A scorching wind—We enter Turkestan--Its inhabitants-Turki women--We cross the Tian-shan Mountains-An oasis-Last stage of desert journey-Arrival at Hami

78

## CHAPTER VI.

# THROUGH TURKESTAN TO YARKAND.

Inquiries for Colonel Bell—Bazaar at Hami—A Russian merchant—I hire carts
—A satisfactory arrangement—Start from Hami—A poor inn—Eurh-pu—
The desert again—Tombs of mandarins—A dreary land—A cart as a bedroom—Chinese soldiers and their ways—"The great English nation"