

occasions. Originally enclosed within walls about three hundred yards square, which are still remaining, it outgrew these, and an outer wall was built all round about a mile square. This also it outgrew, and large numbers of houses have been built beyond the second wall. At the time of my visit, however, the population was falling off, and the place was losing a great deal of its former importance as a depôt of trade with Mongolia. Mr. Clarke said that there were two reasons for this: firstly, because the tea, which used formerly to be brought up from Hankow to this place, and then taken across the Gobi desert to Kiakhta, is now carried by steamers to Tientsin, and thence by Kalgan to Kiakhta and Siberia; and, secondly, because the war in Kashgaria and the Tungan rebellion had almost stopped trade for some years, and it had never since revived.

Kwei-hwa-cheng used originally to be a Mongol town. It is even now included in Mongolia, and there is a Mongol prince resident in the place; but no one would believe that it was not Chinese, for it is occupied almost exclusively by Chinamen, and the Mongols are relegated to the outskirts. There are, however, some fine Buddhist temples and a large number of Mongol lamas in the city. These, Mr. Clarke says, are much less sincere in their Buddhism than the Chinese Buddhist priests. Neither ought, strictly speaking, to eat meat, and the Chinese priests as a rule do not; but the Mongols have more lax ideas, and are not above eating flesh occasionally. The scene in the Mongol bazaar, on the north side of the inner city, is very interesting. Here are seen the weather-beaten, ruddy-faced Mongols from the desert, with their huge foxskin caps and dirty sheepskin coats, coming in to buy a few necessaries, which they are unable, or rather too lazy, to make for themselves, and they bargain at the stalls, with the astute Chinese stall-keepers, for leather boots, whips, pipes, caps, and various other things. And there are the Chinese caravan-men buying up requisites for marching