

after passing for some five miles over a well-cultivated plain, began to ascend the great buttress range on to the Mongolian plateau. This range, called the In-shan, is, as it were, a support to the highlands of Mongolia, and forms the step up on to them. Crossing these mountains the following day, we afterwards entered an undulating hilly country, inhabited principally by Chinese. Villages were numerous, cart-tracks led in every direction, and the valleys were well cultivated. There were also large meadows of good grass, where immense flocks of sheep were feeding; but I was astonished to see that, although we were now in Mongolia, the largest and best flocks were tended by and belonged to Chinese, who have completely ousted the Mongols in the very thing which, above all, ought to be their speciality. It is really a fact that the Chinese come all the way from the province of Shantung to these Mongolian pasture-lands to fatten sheep for the Peking market. Here is another instance of the manner in which the pushing and industrious Chinaman is forcing his way, and gradually driving back the less persevering inhabitants of the country on which he encroaches; and it seems probable that the Chinese from the south, and the Russians from the north, will, in course of time, gradually force the poor Mongols into the depth of the desert.

Seeing all these flocks of sheep, it occurred to me that it might be worth while for some of our merchants to set up a wool-trade. There is a large amount of excellent grazing ground in Southern Mongolia, and it would only be a question whether the cost of carriage to Tientsin would make it possible to compete with the Australian.

Messrs. G. W. Collins and Co., of Tientsin, have already set up a trade in camels' wool, which they obtain from this part of Mongolia through their agent who lives at Kwei-hwacheng. A beautifully soft warm cloth is made from this camel-wool, than which nothing could be better for wear in winter.