

talk with him. He was an Afghan merchant, he said, and the men of this house were Andijani merchants. He had travelled through a great part of India, and knew Bombay, Calcutta, Delhi, Lahore, and all the cities of the Punjab.

He asked me if Peking was as big a town as Calcutta. I said, "No, nothing like so big." He was struck at this, and told the Andijanians of it. He then asked if I had seen the Katai-Badshah (the Chinese emperor) at Ba-jing (Peking). I said, "No." He then asked me how many Englishmen there were at Peking, and if they were merchants. I said we had an Elchi there, like the Russians, and the French, and other European nations. Peking is so distant that these Central Asiatic merchants do not visit it, and the only accounts they probably have of it are from the Chinese, who exaggerate to any extent the greatness of the capital of China and its emperor. I asked the merchant about the trade of the place, and he said silk was the only thing produced. These Andijani merchants spin the silk from the cocoons, but the Chinese manufacture it. After a time some tea was brought us. I asked if it was Indian or Chinese. They said it was Chinese, but Indian was to be bought in the town.

The Andijanians were tall, handsome-looking men, dressed in long robes of cotton print, and wearing high black leather boots with high heels—exactly the same as the Cossacks wear, but the bottom part was not attached to the upper. It was a slipper which they kicked off before stepping on to the carpet, leaving the long boot still on, but with a soft, flexible foot.

After tea I again went to the Turk city to have a look at the shops. The chief—in fact, almost the only—articles sold here are cotton fabrics, principally chintz. Some of them were remarkably pretty, with patterns of flowers, and others handkerchiefs of many colours, arranged together in patterns very tastefully.