

stiffness of cantonment regularity, and is really thrown with the natives, so that he can see them and they him, the coldness thaws, and the natives see that in reality there is much warmth of heart inside the cold exterior. Offices and regulations are evils which apparently are necessary for effective administration of our civilized type, but if we shut ourselves up too closely behind these barriers, and lose touch with the people, then the Russian consul's fears as to the eventual result of our coldness will undoubtedly be realized.

Of the Chinese, M. Petrovsky held a very poor opinion. He looked upon them with contempt, and had hardly a good word to say for them. Their administration was corrupt, the army badly officered and badly armed, and the empire generally honeycombed with secret societies. M. Petrovsky's practical acquaintance with the Chinese Empire was, however, entirely confined to Kashgar, and he had not been a hundred miles into the country, even into this outlying dependency, much less into China itself. I was surprised, too, to find that neither he nor any of his staff spoke Chinese, though they had been many years in Chinese Turkestan, and that they were dependent for their interpretation upon a Mussulman. Every English consul in China can speak Chinese, he is compelled to pass an examination in it, and even for a temporary stay in Turkestan I had been furnished with a competent English interpreter and a Cantonese clerk. In this important particular of acquiring a knowledge of the language of the people with whom we had to deal, it appeared, therefore, that we took far greater pains than the Russians did.

This is not the only case in which the Russians show themselves careless in learning the language of a country. In Turkestan it is the exception, and not the rule, for a Russian officer to speak the language of the people, and of six Russian officers whom I afterwards met on the Pamirs, only two could speak Turki, though they were permanently quartered in