

The traffic in this winter season was immense. I counted in a single day's march over eight hundred carts, all heavily laden and drawn by teams of at least two and many of them nine animals, ponies or mules. A main road in Manchuria in the winter is a busy scene, and these strings of carts rolling along on the frosty morning, with the jingling bells of the teams, and the drivers shouting at their animals, were signs of animation which we had hardly expected to see after our first experience on the heavy, muddy roads in the summer. The inns were numerous and crowded, and as a string of carts passed by each, men would come running out, proclaiming the advantages of their particular hostelry, and trying to persuade the carters to come in. Then, when the carts stopped, the inn men would bustle about, fetching grain and fodder for the animals and food for the men, and there was as much life and activity as in a country town in England on market day. I remarked, too, how very well the carters fed their animals. These Manchurian, or rather Mongolian, ponies and mules are never allowed blankets or clothing of any description, and stand out quite bare all