

laughter, and made the young girls look at their faces in it, telling them they need not be proud of their good looks, as that was what they were really like.

It was a pleasure to be among these jolly, round-faced, ruddy-cheeked Mongols, after living amongst the unhealthy-looking Chinese of the country through which we had lately been travelling, who showed little friendliness or good-humour, and who always seemed to cause a bad taste in the mouth. These first Mongols happened to be an unusually attractive lot. They were, of course, better off than those whom I afterwards met with far away in the desert, and this perhaps accounted for their ever-cheery manner, which left such an agreeable impression on me.

Another attraction of this first day in Mongolia was the milk and cream—thick and rich as one would get anywhere; and here, again, was a pleasing contrast to China, where, as I have said, the cows are never milked, and none is therefore procurable.

Altogether this was one of those bright days which throw all the hardships of travel far away into the shade, and make the traveller feel that