

a Chinaman, who spoke Mongol. The Russian spoke to him in Mongol and this was translated to me in Chinese, and I replied in Chinese which the Chinaman rendered into Mongol for the benefit of the Russian. This Russian lived in a Chinese house, in Chinese fashion, but was dressed in European clothes. He sold chiefly cotton goods and ironware, such as pails, basins, knives, etc., but trading was not profitable. There had been five Russian merchants here, but two had gone to Kobdo, and two were engaged in hunting down Chinese mandarins to try and get money which was owing to them.

The next evening I invited the Russian round to my inn to dinner. Conversation was difficult, but we managed to spend a very pleasant evening, and drank to the health of our respective sovereigns. I held up my glass and said "Czar," and we drank together. Then I held it up again and said "Skobelev," and so on through every Russian I had ever heard of. My guest, I am sorry to say, knew very few Englishmen, but he had grasped the fact that we had a Queen, so at five-minute intervals he would drink to her Majesty.