



Fig. 12. The southern façade of the Potala

as the holy of holies; but now all barriers have been torn down and reverence for sanctity is a thing of the past.

Between scattered buildings, all with blind-windows and built in the Tibetan style, we went up more roughly hewn steps to still higher eminences. Here the path wound between two bigger stone houses, each with five *stupas* on the roof. They had been the dormitories and living-quarters of the eight hundred lamas who in the time of Ch'ien-lung served the Potala. Other buildings had been used for the common-rooms, novices' class-rooms, pilgrims' guest-houses, tea-rooms and kitchens. To a great extent the rule of the monastery had been the same as it is in Tibet and Mongolia. According to Father VAN OBERGEN, there were in 1911 still six hundred lamas; but now there are said to be only a hundred monks at the Potala. We saw only a few; most of them were probably away in the country round about, earning a livelihood by ministering among the Mongols. Those who followed us were shabby and down-at-heel, and lived on the state dole of 1.80 silver dollars a month. How can they live on such a pittance? They can no longer clothe themselves in the prescribed robes of deep red, and no outward sign distinguishes them from ordinary beggars. No one troubles about them now, or offers them a cent towards the upkeep of one of China's most glorious and monumental architectural relics.