

In the interior there was a solemn twilight, which served to increase the air of mystery surrounding the gods. What daylight there was came in through the open doors and filtered through the fretted paper windows. The altar stood out like a platform opposite the entrance. There throned a bronze-gilt figure of the reformer TSONG-KHA-PA, a contemporary of TAMERLANE, together with a number of offering-bowls and symbolic ritual objects. To the east and west, before the soaring columns, were other representatives of the lamaistic pantheon. Most of them had glittering gold aureoles, richly ornamented with flowers, leaves and tendrils. Such is the once most beautiful lama temple in China. There are monasteries and temples in Tibet that are incomparably more imposing, with walls seeming to grow out of the very cliffs whose steps they adorn. Here, however, in Jehol's Potala, beauty-loving architects had expressed an autocrat's whim in a temple with a rare nobility of line and the most masterly proportions. The colours, carvings and patterns roused our enthusiastic admiration. The doors and grille-windows of which the walls are for the most part constituted were painted red, while friezes and brackets glowed with gold and other bright colours. The panels and geometrical patterns on the ceiling glittered with the reddest gold; and their carvings were overwhelmingly rich in detail.

Why had this lovely temple been built in a courtyard surrounded by high walls? The palace-like stone colossus seemed to serve no other purpose than that of hiding the holy of holies from the eyes of the world and emphasizing the mysticism of the Golden Pavilion.

In times gone by the only parts of it which had been visible from the outside were the four small wooden pagodas that were built on top of the walls. But now one had no suspicion of its presence; only the birds of the air could see their reflections in the golden roof.

The courtyard of the Golden Pavilion was so small that we tried in vain to get a photograph of the shrine in its entirety; even in the farthest corners we were too near. When the sun was high the shadows of the projecting roof fell across the outer colonnade; and when the morning star was on the horizon the high surrounding walls threw their dense shadows over everything but the upper roof.

In the year 1793, when the British embassy under Lord MACARTNEY was received at Jehol, the Potala and all the other lama temples shone in splendour, meticulously tended and cared for by monks at the emperor's expense. Then the emperor himself worshipped in the Golden Pavilion. In STAUNTON's description of the embassy, he tells how Lord MACARTNEY was taking a walk in the palace park, when he »met His Imperial Majesty, who stopped to receive the Ambassador's salutations and to tell him that he was going to his devotions in the temple of Poo-tala, that as they did not adore the same gods he would not desire His Ex-