



Fig. 15. View towards south-east from the Potala

by inquisitive soldiers and down-at-heel lamas. They were delighted to see the temple-buildings gradually appearing upon the paper. The soldiers were as poor as the monks. Their pay was 1.5 taels a month; but during the past six months they had had none at all. It was not their duty to watch us and our doings, and when they had got used to us their interest soon flagged.

Our first visit to the Potala had been fruitful. What I had heard and read of Jehol was far surpassed by the reality. The park with its sighing pine-trees, its gate-houses, pavilions, and *stupas*, the magnificent stone façades, and the noble temple beneath its golden roof were all equally fascinating from whatever point of view one looked at them. From the terraces and platforms on the various hills the view over the valley was marvellous. When we stood on the highest point we saw the scattered buildings and structures in the park far below; and on the yonder side of the Lion Valley appeared the hills over whose ridges, like a grey, curving ribbon, ran the wall of the Summer Palace. To the east-south-east one could see the neighbouring temple-buildings of the Hsin-kung, which we were soon to visit. Wherever one went, whether beneath the gold-shimmering roofs of the temples or under the sighing pine-trees, one was weighed upon by a feeling of sadness at the transitoriness of earthly things. Everywhere was ruin and decay. The small bronze bells hanging down from the upward-curving corners of the roofs seemed to be ringing funeral chimes for a vanished greatness.