



*Children outside the school
in the yamen of the Fuguan
of Yarkand.*

seem to have secured them their rank. They gamble with their men and do not seem to be much superior to them. They said that they had rifles of a modern pattern for 7 and 12 cartridges and that the soldiers practised target shooting with them once a month.

A school for Sart boys is maintained in the governor's yamen and I visited it by permission of the mandarin. The lads looked healthy and pleasant and above all well washed, as they sat in fours in front of their small brown-painted tables, and learnt Chinese characters aloud. They were all dressed in black Chinese satin jackets with small metal buttons and round black skull-caps with the traditional plaited knob on the crown of the head. The masters were two young Sarts in Chinese dress. The only serious subject is Chinese, writing and speaking, although they are also supposed to learn Turki. Tuition is free of charge and the time for completing the curriculum is indefinite. The boys can study Chinese characters for 16 years and still have enough left to learn to last for the rest of their lives, if not more, said one of the masters. The pupils I saw were mostly lads under the age of 10, but one part of the school is said to be housed in the town, where there are alleged to be older pupils. The mandarin, who loves to spend his leisure in visiting the school, usually distributes generous tips and it is a whim of his to give the youngsters Chinese clothes. He said that he considered it unnecessary to waste time in school on other subjects than Chinese characters. Anyone who has learned them can study any subject he chooses on his own.

My farewell visit this morning to the courteous mandarin was not long, as I had such a number of things to attend to in the course of the day. He treated me to a large number of dainty cakes and a delicious jelly, the colour of milk, cut into small cubes and floating in warm water flavoured with almonds and sugar. With fatherly solicitude he enquired about my health, how I had succeeded in purchasing an arbah, whether I had bought mules etc. His amiability even went so far as to ask, if I did not require some money for continuing my journey. When I thanked him and laughingly declined his offer, he begged