



*The Taotai, Djentai,  
Tifanguan and the author  
in Aqsu.*

to use old muzzle-loaders in shooting. In spite of constant demands he could not obtain cartridges in sufficient quantities from Urumchi for his magazine rifles. The reason was the shortage of cartridges in the province of Sinkiang. The army's magazine rifles consisted chiefly of Winchesters (9 cartridges), of which there were 115,000 bought through the Djentai at 10 lan each with cartridge pouches and belts. Mausers  $7\frac{1}{8}$ 4 were far more scarce. He preferred the latter.

When I arrived at his yamen at 11.30, I was received by a large company with the Taotai and the Wu (the inspecting mandarin, a man of 32) at their head. In one of the pavilions in the outer courtyard of the yamen some Chinese musicians were performing on their clarinette-like instruments. Their tones took me back to the summer of 1905 which I spent with my regiment in the neighbourhood of Tchendziantun (in Manchuria) with Chinese funereal music as our daily fare. In the next courtyard there was a guard of honour of about twenty men with three trumpeters and an officer on the right flank. Just beyond the middle gate the Djentai awaited me, arrayed in his official garb. He led me across the large inner courtyard, where receptions are usually held, to another on the right which also had its characteristic Chinese official hall with a throne-like sofa and stiff, straight armchairs in the background. Facing this hall, the front wall of which, made of boards, had been removed, there was a platform raised on piles which served as a stage. You find this in all Chinese yamens and courtyards of temples. A large number of mandarins were collected in the hall. Here I had the pleasure of pressing the hand, or rather hands, of the amiable old Taotai and making the acquaintance of the higher local officials, both civil and military. As a mandarin's whole staff wears the traditional mandarin's hat with a red silk fringe and a long peacock's feather protruding at the neck, you are at a loss to know whom you should greet of the dozens of men you meet at such a ceremony, all in