



*The guard in the Tifanguan's courtyard on the occasion of the Taotai's visit.*

had been arranged for the general's personal pleasure. At this distance everyone scored hits except one of the civil mandarins, who made three vain attempts. Even in shooting Chinese etiquette is not forgotten. Three old colonels, of 50 or 60, advanced, carrying their rifles over their shoulders and with a tired gait, owing to opium smoking or age, formed up in line and bowed simultaneously, the fingers of their right hands touching the ground. The Djentai rose and so did all the other mandarins, whereupon the old fellows jogged along to the firing line. After they had fired, the ceremony was repeated and was gone through by each group of marksmen. I made the same kind of bows to the excellent general which amused the mandarins very much. Feeling awkward at always having to walk in front of the venerable Taotai, I tried to get out of it in the garden by climbing over a ditch next to a small bridge. Without a moment's hesitation the old man, helped by a servant, followed in my footsteps across the ditch, avoiding the bridge and followed by the whole crowd of mandarins. When the shooting was over, the target was examined and all the hits were found correctly marked by inserted pegs. The shots, however, were very scattered on the target which was the height of a man.

On returning to the court containing the theatre, over which an awning of blue cloth had been drawn, we were invited to table. Each name is called in a loud voice by a servant, while the host murmurs a few words with an affable smile and places a glass of steaming Chinese wine and two chopsticks in front of the guest, after having raised both objects ceremoniously to his brow. When he has finished and the servant is ready to serve him, the same ceremony is performed by the guest of honour and I did it faithfully with the exception of the words. Then the guests approach the host and make the Chinese obeisance, to which he replies, after which the company take their seats. Immediately after, the official hats are exchanged for ordinary Chinese silk caps. The dishes on this occasion