



Mural paintings in a temple at Tun-huang, representing various subjects with red-bearded and hairy Linguanje or Lin laoje as the leading actor and carried out at the time the temple was built in the 9th year of the reign of the Emperor Kienlung.

have some historical foundation. At the bottom of the lake of Barkul there is said to lie a block of stone that fell from the surrounding mountains; it is alleged to bear an inscription, and is supposed to rise from the waves now and again and reveal itself to some astonished mortal.

A picturesque old temple, dedicated to the red-bearded and red-haired god Linguanje or Lin laoje, stands close to the ruins of the fortress wall. It is supposed to have been built in the 9th year of the reign of Kienlung and has interesting old mural paintings with a good deal of gilt.

The principal occupation in the oasis is agriculture. Wheat, peas, millet, tchumiza, various oil plants and opium (the opium growing covers about $\frac{1}{3}$ of the whole field area) are grown chiefly, but also gaolyan, hemp and cotton on a smaller scale. The average yield is 7—8 fold. Grain is sold to Suchow, Kanchow, sometimes to Ansi and to the Mongols in the mountains to the S. Peas are bought at Ansi and opium is consumed in large quantities on the spot and is an important article of export to Urumchi, Lop Nor and Suchow. Cattlefarming is not carried on, probably owing to the restricted area. On each farm, however, there are at least 1 horse, 2 oxen and 2 donkeys. The average number of animals may be calculated, without fear of exaggeration, at 2, 3 and 3 respectively. There are only small numbers of sheep and goats. The average prices are: for a sheep 1 lan, for a first-class ram 1.8 to 2 lan, for an ordinary ram 1.4 lan, for an ox 1 to 1.8 lan, for a horse 20—30 lan and for a camel 50—80 lan. — Not more than 1 tou per mou is sown. 1 tan 7 tou per 50 mou is paid in tax and 7 fyn of straw for each mou. The total amount of taxation for the district is supposed to amount to 3,700 tan.

The largest business in Tun-huang is owned by the same Ilkhamsjanoff at Urumchi, whose agent I saw at Hami. Here the business was started not quite a year ago. The branch is managed by Ahmidsjan Askarbajeff, an enterprising Russian Sart who managed the branch of the business in Lanchow for three years, where he learnt to speak Chinese fluently