



*View of the entrance gate to  
Chia-yu-kuan from the SW.*

sarais, in which you are accommodated, lie in the suburb at the foot of the E wall of the fortress. The Chinese say that a feeling of joy possesses travellers, when they enter Kouli by these 5 gates from the west, but that they shed bitter tears, if they are forced to travel the same route in the opposite direction.

We were housed in a comparatively good sarai, in the yard of which the NE bastion of the fortress, crowned with a clay tower with formidable embrasures for guns, rises towards the sky. Long before we had arrived, Hashim was standing and murmuring »Allah« in front of the pot, in which the pälaw was bubbling. A fire was made in the cubbyhole, rugs and blankets were unloaded from the horses, for the arbahs were not expected till the next day, the horses being tired after the journey from Chih-chin-hsia to Hui-hui-pao. The monotonous drawn-out notes of the evening tattoo resounded clearly from the small garrison of the fortress. These were followed by gunfire warning all honest folk to hasten home, and then I heard the Chinese Empire being locked up securely behind five massive iron gates, and there we all were safe and sound under lock and key.

Owing to the late arrival of the arbahs I was obliged to halt for a day. The fortress is built on the E slope of a terrace-shaped gravel hill, 1 1/2—2 miles in width, intersected by many clefts in a NE direction. On the E there is a large plain. Close to the fortress there are a few isolated houses with trees and in the far distance a dark line that is pointed out as the Suchow oasis. Chia-yu-kuan is supposed to have been built in the time of the Emperor Ming 400—500 years ago. The fortress walls are well built and kept in good repair, but apart from them and their graceful pagodas there is not much to see. There are a couple of old temples of the same date as the town just outside the wall. One of them, erected in honour of the god of war (Kuan shyn ti Chin), stands next to the E wall.

*November 30th.  
Chia-yu-kuan.*