



*The sleeping Buddha with some  
gods above him and the standing  
god Tiu tcho niang niang  
in the oldest temple  
of Kanchow.*

The »Sju lei fo» temple is said to have been built in the time of the Emperor T'ang. The missionaries assured me that it was older than the town itself. A very badly preserved memorial stone belongs to the time of the Emperor Wang li. The outer wall of the main building is embellished with a couple of large bas-reliefs executed in tiles baked in artistic shapes and then put together. Their dull colours and gilding make them beautiful. Near the N gate there is a large temple, though of more recent date. There is a lama temple close to the SW corner, where both Chinese and Tanguts serve as lamas.

The other buildings in the town are quite undistinguished; large, gnarled trees here and there improve the look of the place. There are a great number of shops. Their total is given as 2,355 and I am inclined to consider this correct, for the main streets form an uninterrupted bazaar of more or less well stocked shops. Very small suburbs have grown up outside the four gates, the one in the N being at some distance from the wall. They are said to contain another 132 shops. About 50 are said to possess a working capital of over 5,000 lan and 11 over 10,000. There are branches of two Chinese banking houses, but no restaurants. On the other hand there are innumerable undertakers who hammer, plane and work away as if they expected an epidemic. A Tchantu from Khotan sells Russian cotton goods to the value of 70—80,000 lan annually according to his own statement. Goods are reported to be imported from Peiping to the value of 1,500,000 lan a year and are distributed to places in the neighbourhood. Oil, brandy, rice and lapsha are exported to Mongolia, to the north and east. Grain is only sold in very small quantities. Wool from the mountains in the south is not sold to Kanchow, but is bought on the spot by agents of business houses in Eastern China or in Nabo, a little place in an ESE or SE direction. It is said that about 2,000,000 djin of wool are exported annually in this way and a con-