

poverty. They do not show any inclination, however, to improve their position by work. In order to increase the quantity of grain distributed to them annually the Fantai proposed that a number of men of each tchi should plough up some new land belonging to the State. But they replied proudly that they were born to be warriors, and knew nothing of other occupations than riding and using their bows and arrows — they had no desire to learn anything else. — The regiment they have formed is worse trained than the Chinese regiments and a school established among them seems to be below the level of the corresponding Chinese schools, though rewards in money are given to successful pupils.

In the NW part of the Manchurian town there is a rectangular open space enclosed by a wall, used at present as a drill-ground. It is known as the «Imperial town» and the imperial palaces are said to have stood there formerly. In one corner of it there is a piece of rock raised above some others with a deep impression of an uncommonly large hand on its surface. A legend says that it is the impression of the hand of the Empress Wu heo, the wife of the Emperor Kao Tsong, both buried near Kienchow. Subsequently she usurped the power of her son Chong tsong and ruled for several years with a rod of iron. There is supposed to be a great resemblance between this ambitious woman and the reigning Empress-Dowager.

The present imperial palace, so-called because during his flight in 1900 the Emperor lived there, is nothing more than the fairly big yamen of the former Viceroy of Si-an-fu. It was obviously furnished in a hurry for the august visitor. Since the departure of the Emperor everything has been left as untouched as is possible in China. The bedrooms are sealed up. The rest is neither in good taste nor comfortable, with the exception of an odd woodcarving and a few other things in the same style. Everything is in yellow, the traditional imperial colour, even the pier-glasses are half covered by yellow padded hood-like covers. The only thing of beauty about the palace is a charming little garden. Ancient trees, flowers, rockeries artistically put together of blocks of stones, arched stone bridges, a little pond, lying a few dozen feet down, with stone quays and balustrades and green plants floating on an almost black shiny surface, it all takes up so little space that it could almost be covered by a sheet. Round it there are two or three comfortably furnished elegant pagodas with spacious verandas, from which this treasure can be viewed from different sides.

Among the other sights the so-called «peiling» is worth noting, a collection of monuments of various periods, standing like soldiers in long rows and protected by some primitive wooden sheds built on a plot of grass in the shade of some trees. This collection of a few dozen was recently enriched by the addition of the famous Nestorian stone. The Chinese authorities had it removed to this place from the spot outside the town, where it was discovered. Their reason for doing so is rather curious. A young Dane, v. H., «interprête de S. M. le R. de D.» arrived quite suddenly in Si-an-fu a few months ago in order, according to his own version, to have an exact copy of the famous stone made for some museum. However, the rumour got about, that it was his intention to carry off the genuine stone and leave the copy. This aroused the indignation of the Protestant missionaries and one of them is reported to have said that in any case the stone belonged more to him, who