

money, may always hope to prove successful even in a most unjust cause. The powerful Prince Kin has already pleaded his cause before the Throne, and if this has not been crowned with success on this occasion, it is impossible to tell, what forces will be set in motion next to save this highly placed and, above all, frightfully wealthy rogue.

A Taotai and an Ehrfu, i.e. a fu of the second class, are resident in Kweihwa ting. The district of the former embraces the following 7 ting: Fu ming fu (Kweihwa ting), Feng chen, Nin yuan, Saratsi, Wu yuan (near Bautu) (Bautu itself is included in Saratsi), Yu chuan (SW of Kweihwa ting, near Tokoto tua cheng) and Chentung ting (in Chia hoti in the possessions of the Djungar wang) already referred to.

The town has the following schools:

1 tsung hsiao tang, 3 masters, 70 pupils — 1 liang teng hsiao hsiao tang; 1 kao teng hsiao hsiao tang, 2 masters, 80 pupils; 1 chu teng hsiao hsiao tang; 1 ming yang hsiao hsiao tang.

An attempt to confine the sale of opium to a shop run by the authorities has been abandoned and the sale of opium is now permitted as before in private shops, but the sale of accessories for smoking is forbidden. About a dozen large shops sell opium. There are no smoking dens. — The proportion of smokers is said not to exceed 20—30 %. — There is a private home in the town for curing smokers, started by a Chinese. Proclamations have been issued that the growing of opium is to cease entirely in the course of 10 years (i.e., now only 7) and that the fields are to be reduced annually by 1/10. This is not controlled, however. Owing to bad harvests opium growing has been voluntarily restricted here, too, to some extent. The high taxes on opium growing have, no doubt, contributed towards this to no small degree. — 1,200 cash are levied per mou with rainwater culture, 3 taels per mou with irrigation canals, payable in copper or at an exchange rate fixed more or less arbitrarily by the mandarin.

There does not seem to be much faith here in the construction of a railway to Sinkiang in consequence of the great distance and the lack of funds. On the other hand there is talk of prolonging the Pu chow—Tatung fu line to Kweihwa ting and possibly further to Ning-sia-fu. It is said that in any case the line will be built from Tatung to Kalgan. However, no more than 10,000 taels are said to have been subscribed here for accomplishing the scheme, whereas at Taiku a single merchant sacrificed 100,000. It is quite right to use the word »sacrificed», for there is so much distrust of the officials that the inhabitants scarcely believe that the railway will ever be built and therefore regard a subscription for railway shares not merely as money paid, but as money lost.

With regard to means of communication in general, they are numerous and embrace in a wide semicircle practically all places in Northern China and Mongolia from Uliassutai in the N to Lanchow in the SW. The greater part of these routes cross desert areas, where they are sometimes deprived of water for 1 or 2 days and generally have only a limited supply of coarse grass. They can therefore only be traversed by camel caravans. I have not yet been able to study the resources of the different roads in detail. Judging by the quantity of large arbahs, covered with felt, which stand outside my window and go backwards and forwards from here to various places, especially Kucheng, many of them are apparently level and suitable for wheeled traffic. An arbah to Kucheng with two camels costs 70—100 taels.