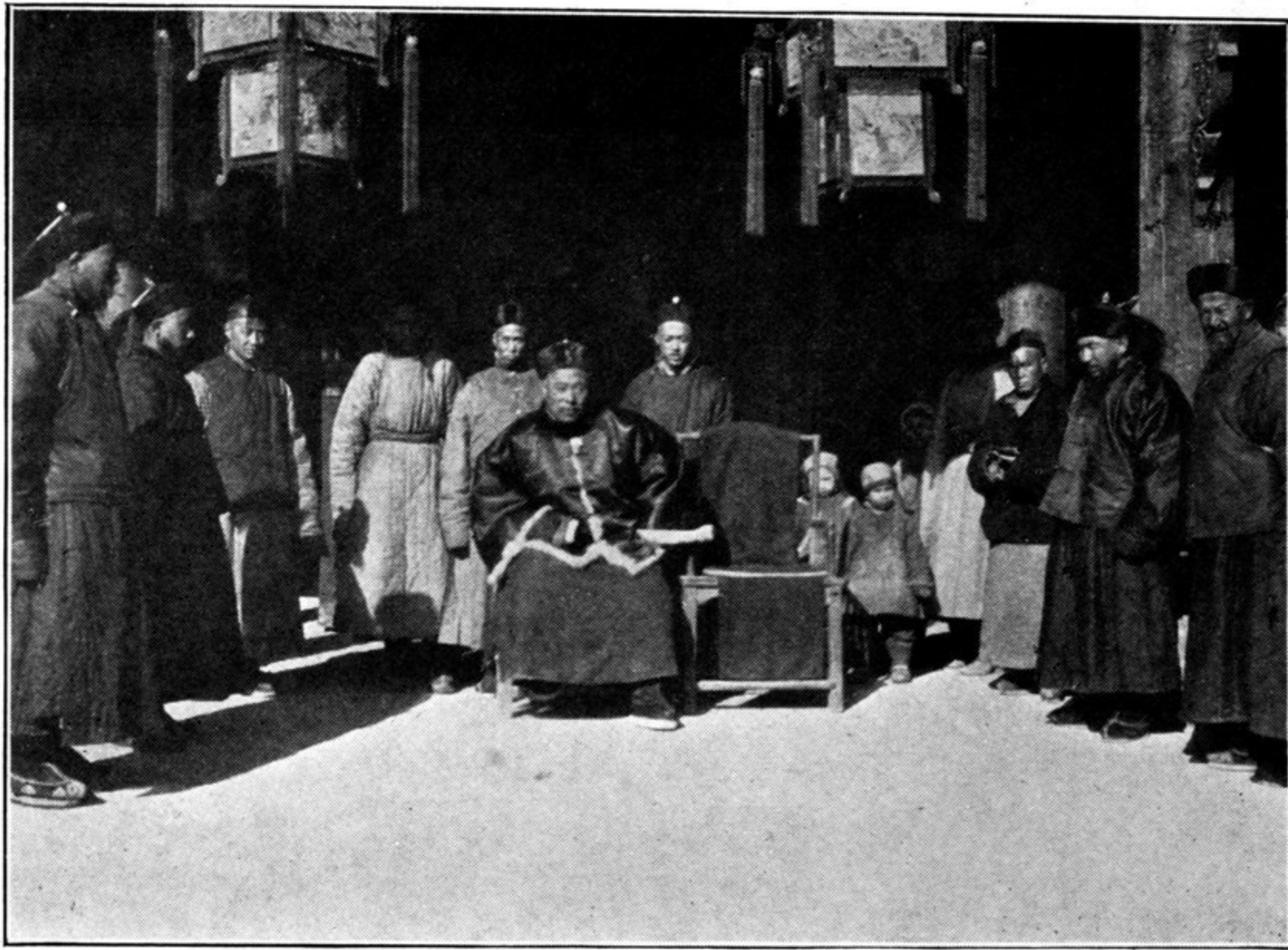


The whole governmental system is rotten to the core, and every official, from the Futai down to the meanest Oan Bashi lives by systematic fraud. The officials are altogether unpaid otherwise than by plunder, but, since their right to "squeeze" is recognised, the amount of their income is limited only by their own discretion and the resources of their districts. Public offices are nearly always sold; justice is sold; the enjoyment of public



THE CHOW-KUAN OF YARKAND.

rights, such as water supply, can be secured only by bribes paid to the officials in charge, and there is no immunity whatever from exorbitant taxation, the proceeds of which go mostly to the private pockets of public officials. Sin-Chiang is a poor province, regarded as a sort of Chinese Siberia, and towards the cost of its administration other provinces of China contribute annually about 200,000 taels, yet the Chinese officials in