

roll of paper which the young monk had borrowed to give lustre to his improvised little private chapel. A cursory inspection of the beautifully penned Chinese text showed to Chiang Ssü-yeh that it contained a *ching* or book of the Chinese Buddhist canon. There was no definite indication of age, but both paper and writing looked decidedly old. All further speculation had to be put off until access to the whole hidden library could be secured. It was sufficient encouragement at the time to find its existence confirmed.

On my return in May I found the Tao-shih awaiting me at the site. He looked a very curious figure, extremely shy and nervous. As ignorant of what he was guarding as he was full of fears concerning gods and men, he proved at first a difficult person to handle. The fact of my finding now the narrow opening of the recess completely walled up with brick-work sufficed to warn me that rapid access to the great hoard was not to be hoped for. What my zealous Chinese secretary had ascertained of the priest's peculiar disposition fully supported this apprehension of serious obstacles. The temptation of gain for himself or his shrine through what money I might offer was not by itself likely to overcome his scruples, whether prompted by religious feeling or fear of popular resentment—or perhaps the effects of both. The new statuary and the other additions to the shrine for which he was responsible were coarse and gaudy enough. Yet I could not help being impressed by what the humble monk had accomplished by his single-hearted devotion to his task of religious merit, the restoration of the temple. It was certain from all we saw and heard that out of the charitable gifts he had laboriously been collecting for