

were almost all found at T. vi. b, enlighten us even less about the subjects dealt with.¹⁵ One of them, No. 206, however, is of interest because it conveys a response direct from the Emperor to some report submitted probably by the Tun-huang authorities. 'The imperial decree is: "Approved."' The formula is the traditional one of the imperial *chancellerie* in Han times. But, considering that the writing material used is a common slip of tamarisk wood, it seems to me far more likely to be a copy made at Tun-huang than an original document from the capital.

SECTION V.—OFFICERS AND SOLDIERS OF THE LIMES

In our synopsis of the documents illustrating the organization and routine of the Tun-huang Limes it will be convenient to start from those in which we find references to the higher administrative divisions and authorities; for in their case we can utilize also the data that M. Chavannes has rendered accessible from historical records of the Han period. The mention which No. 450 from the site of T. xv. a makes of a high dignitary, apparently controlling at the time of Wang Mang the four commands from Tun-huang to Liang-chou, is too fragmentary to permit of any closer determination of his position in the official hierarchy. The same applies to the order addressed in No. 424 'to those who administer the command of Chiu-ch'üan (Su-chou)'. But there can be no doubt that the 'governor', *t'ai-shou* 太守, of the Tun-huang command whom several documents mention was the chief local authority charged with the administration of the westernmost portion of the Limes.¹ Next to the governor ranked apparently his assistants, whom several documents refer to under the title of *chang-shih* 長史, as attested by the Former Han Annals.²

Within the command of the governor of Tun-huang we find the administration of different sections of the Limes entrusted to 'military commandants', *tu-wei* 都尉, in exact conformity with the organization which the Former Han Annals indicate.³ That one of these sections, or *pu* 部, was that of the Yü-mên barrier is quite certain from the several documents which mention the 'military commandant, *tu-wei*, of Yü-mên'.⁴ Besides him we find references to the '*tu-wei* of Tun-huang'⁵ and to the '*tu-wei* of Yi-ho', a section which is elsewhere referred to as the 'Yi-ho barrier'.⁶ We have already seen that this Yi-ho section of the Limes, repeatedly mentioned in documents from T. xxvii, must be located to the north-east of the Tun-huang oasis.⁷ In *Doc.* No. 136 we have an order issued by a certain officer who was the assistant *ch'êng* 丞 of a *chang-shih* under the Tun-huang governor, notifying his own appointment as 'military commandant' (*tu-wei*)

Higher
authorities
of Limes.

Governor of
Tun-huang
command.

Com-
mandants
of Limes
sections.

¹⁵ No. 230, a mere 'shaving' and incomplete, mentions 'the vast Western regions'. No. 205, incompletely preserved, acknowledges the receipt of an imperial edict addressed apparently to a certain functionary, while in Nos. 136, 138-43, 291, 450 the reference is merely in the shape of a fixed formula enjoining 'compliance with the text of the imperial edict'.

¹ Cf. *Doc.* Nos. 136, 201, 497. Nos. 140, 375, 428 may also be safely assumed to refer to the governor of Tun-huang, though they do not specifically name his command.

We have already met with the 'governor of the Chiu-ch'üan (Su-chou) command' in the imperial edict, *Doc.* No. 60, concerning the establishment of an agricultural colony; see above, p. 740.

² Cf. *Doc.* Nos. 136, with M. Chavannes' note, 367, 497; also No. 428. It is interesting that in Chin times the title '*chang-shih* of the Western countries' apparently denotes the

highest Chinese political representative maintained in the Tārim Basin; see above, pp. 408 sq., and *Doc.* Nos. 751, 752, 885 from Lou-lan.

In what relation the governor stood to the civil subdivisions of Tun-huang, of which the sub-prefecture of *Lung-lo* is repeatedly mentioned (Nos. 378, 415, 488, 540), I am unable to examine.

³ Cf. M. Chavannes' full explanation, *Documents*, p. 131. The sections are designated as *pu* 部 in the Annals.

⁴ Cf. *Doc.* Nos. 137, 305, 381, 428, 451, 483.

⁵ See *Doc.* No. 341.

⁶ Cf. *Doc.* Nos. 61, 567. M. Chavannes in his note on the first document shows that the *Ch'ien Han shu* specifies the *Yi-ho tu-wei* as a military commandant charged particularly with the organization of military colonies and as resident in the fort of K'un-lun, a locality mentioned also in No. 61.

⁷ Cf. above, p. 596.