

"Imagine such a scene," says Swinhoe. "The emperor is seated on his ebony throne, attired in a yellow robe wrought over with dragons in gold thread, his head surmounted with a spherical crown of gold and precious stones, with pearl drops suspended round on light gold chains. His eunuchs and ministers, in court costume, are ranged on either side on their knees, and his guard of honor and musicians drawn up in two lines in the court-yard without. The name of the distinguished person to be introduced is called out, and as he approaches the hand strikes up. He draws near the awful throne, and, looking meekly on the ground, drops on his knees before the central steps. He removes his hat from his head, and places it on the throne floor with its peacock feather towards the imperial donor. The emperor moves his hand, and down goes the humble head, and the forehead strikes on the step three times three. The head is then raised, but the eyes are still meekly lowered, as the imperial voice in thrilling accents pronounces the behest of the great master. The voice hushed, down goes the head again and acknowledges the sovereign right, and the privileged individual is allowed to withdraw. The scene described is not imaginary, but warranted by the accounts of natives.

"How different the scene now! The hall filled with crowds of a foreign soldiery, and the throne floor covered with the Celestial emperor's choicest curios, but destined as gifts for two far more worthy monarchs. 'See here,' said General Montauhan, pointing to them. 'I have had a few of the most