

harem surrounded by an army of from eight to ten thousand eunuchs.

There seems little ground for surprise at the Imperial attitude toward the envoys of foreign States when the isolation of the Emperor from his own subjects is borne in mind. When he visits any of the temples or a neighboring palace no one is allowed to be abroad in the streets. All stalls and booths are removed, and the houses are barricaded with mats. It is only in the country, where such precautions are physically impossible, that glimpses of the Emperor may be had as he passes swiftly along in his magnificent sedan.

The Royal Emblem.

So vast, indeed, has been the gulf of separation between the sovereign and his people that many articles have been exclusively associated with the former, and therefore forbidden to the latter, as, for instance, the color yellow, which is exclusively the Imperial emblem.

The *kotow*, or form of worship, is rendered not merely to the person of the sovereign in Peking, but to every form in which he delegates his authority to others. It is well known that the Imperial edict is always received with the nine prostrations and the burning of incense. But it is not so generally understood that an official of even superior rank has to perform the *kotow* on meeting another official who has recently quitted the Imperial presence. Similar obeisances are paid during the week containing his birthday to the Emperor in the Imperial temple to be found in every provincial capital.

The fact that the Emperor's proper name is never mentioned, and that to pronounce it is a criminal offence, shows how exclusive the dynastic policy of the Chinese has always been. On ascending the throne the ruler

takes what is called a "kwoh hao," and by that name he becomes known to his people and to history.

An extraordinary sensation was occasioned some time ago when, during his annual pilgrimage to the Eastern tombs of his ancestors the Emperor not only permitted himself to be seen by the people, but actually stopped and spoke to some abnormally audacious persons who ventured forward to present a petition. Naturally there are Mandarins who look upon such departure from the established order of things with horror. But the young Emperor seemed to be bent according to his lights on ruling in a more liberal spirit than his predecessors, and his former determination to take a direct personal share in the conduct of the war was an indication of his purpose to govern his huge Empire in a fashion more comfortable to modern ideas.

Threatened Uprising.

Despatches from the East in November indicated the probability of an early movement in China against the reigning dynasty. The provinces were described as being in an excited and troubled condition, while the dissatisfaction among the official classes had become acute.

For the first time since the Taeping rebellion, "expulsion of the Manchus" was openly talked of in the tea shops and other resorts of the capital. In ordinary times the average Chinaman would not dare to breathe such things to his nearest friends, but now the topic had become so hackneyed that people everywhere discussed the prospects of upsetting the existing order and driving the Emperor and his court to their original home at Moukden.

The account continues: "A prophecy, moreover, with regard to the speedy downfall of the dynasty, was being secretly circu-