

picturesque roofed bridges, such as are common in Szechwan and South China, but which as far as he could recollect did not exist in North China. The path now again ascends steeply, rising to 7150 feet at the Chi-kung Liang.

At Sünyangpa, 90 miles from Sian, he again found soldiers with little discipline. They awoke him early by trying to get into his house, probably with the idea of looting his baggage. But his escort mounted guard and he was left in peace. This house was a regular gambling den. In the evening the soldiers came to play, whilst at midnight his boys were caught gambling with his chair-bearers.

Gambling and opium-smoking are the two chief curses of the Chinese. When the Government a dozen years before set to work to suppress opium, it for once did a good action without getting much credit for it. But since the introduction of the Republic, opium and morphia pills have again made their appearance, and opium-smoking seems to be constantly on the increase.

Leaving Sünyangpa the path again ascends narrow valleys for  $9\frac{1}{2}$  miles to P'ingho-liang, the highest point on this route (8690 feet). Several coffins were passed on the way. They were made of heavy wood and carried by eight men who seemed to sing the whole way. On the top was the usual cock, whose duty it is to let the spirit of the departed know by his crowing where the coffin is, in case he might leave the body and not know where to find it again.

Pereira's escort consisted at this time of one old and two young soldiers. And he remarks that