

A number of the officials are themselves opium smokers.

There was an Italian bishop and a fine cathedral at Han-chung. The only British were Mr. Easton, who had been there forty years, and his wife. He belonged to the China Inland Mission.

More evidence of the lawless state of the country was afforded by the request of the officials that Pereira should proceed by the small southern road instead of by the big western road. They declared that the Red Lantern Society held part of the latter. This society held other parts as well. They were remnants of the old Boxers and proclaimed themselves invulnerable. They wore red sashes and carried long swords.

And it was not only the brigands who caused trouble to Pereira. Through the soldiers commandeering mules he could get no mules. The soldiers give the muleteers enough money to buy food each day. But often when they have done with the mules they keep them and give the muleteers nothing for them. The soldiers also took things without paying for them, or would only pay what they liked, and if the shopkeeper objected they would give him a blow or threaten him with a knife. They also cut down the trees without paying for them.