

brigands in the Pa-mei, but they were "friendly" brigands and not likely to trouble Pereira.

The postal arrangements at Yen-ching were of a primitive description. The postmaster was a Tibetan. Pereira found him in bed in a small dark evil-smelling room. He sat up half naked in bed to register the letters and Père Gorè did the stamping, while a number of dirty children clustered round the door.

The salt pans were visited on September 13. There is a very steep descent of 1367 feet to the Mekong river bank. The salt on the west bank is reddish. The pans consist of small mud squares on logs supported on piles. The brine is poured on to these and the water evaporates in the wind and sun. The wells, which were now in the rainy season below the level of the river, could not for the time being be used.

Dr. Thompson was taken ill at Yakalo and feared he was being attacked by cholera. However, he recovered and was able to continue the journey.

But the country ahead was very unsettled. While they were actually at Yakalo a band of the Nanka Lama's had raided a village near Tsong-en on the road Pereira would be taking to Batang. On the other hand, the Markham Ti-jei, in reply to a letter which Pereira had written him, had asked Pereira to meet him at Lhandum, just over the border near Pa-mu-tang.

So on September 15 Pereira set out on his next main stage—to Batang; and he had now to get back from the valley of the Mekong to the valley of the Yangtze. After descending the