

hundred and thirty inmates, who were supposed to receive each a coat and a pair of trousers annually, and about 50 lbs. of Indian corn per month. Whether they received anything approaching that quantity I doubt, for I never saw so many people together whose faces so plainly told of destitution and hunger, or whose condition seemed so wretched with rags and dirt and vermin. The paupers supplement the Government contribution by begging or even stealing, often quite openly, food, fuel, and anything else they can lay hands on.

The natives of Sin-Chiang have a great respect for Europeans, variously known as Ferengi (Franks), Sahibs, and Urusse (Russians), crediting them indiscriminately with wonderful medical skill. If a European modestly and truthfully disclaims all knowledge of the healing art, or asserts that he has no medicine, he is regarded not as unskilful, but as unwilling to exercise his skill. Ordinary ailments are affections of the lungs and of the eyes, leprosy, tumours in women, and goitre in some districts; but far more common than these is venereal disease, affecting, though not with great virulence, more than nine-tenths of the population. Notwithstanding the variety of their ailments, they classify them simply as hot and cold, and confidently expect relief in their affliction from any stray Sahib who comes their way. The only form of religion among the natives is Mohammedanism, but most of the professed followers of the prophet are very slack in observing his precepts. Wine and spirits are freely consumed, and morality can scarcely be said to exist.

A noticeable feature of the country is the system of irrigation. In the plains of the southern portion of the province rain rarely falls, but the oases are intersected with canals and watercourses fed from rivers flowing from snow-clad mountains. The curse of maladminis-