

several beautiful cupolas covered with green-glazed tiles, which glistened in the early morning sun. The monastery is noted for possessing the head of the celebrated warrior Chang-fei, of the third century. It is supposed to be enclosed in a shrine here, and is worshipped, while his body is at Pao-ling-foo, and is also enshrined as a god. The country is becoming daily more interesting and more productive. Here, as in other parts of the province, there are regular market days—every third day.

"The *chai*, or cities of refuge, are very numerous, and some of them most picturesque, perhaps none more so than Shih-pao. There is a small town around this peculiar rock with a large temple facing the river, and behind it is a nineteen-storied wooden tower. It is one of the most striking works of art we have yet seen."

Even in that Far West the opium curse is visible everywhere. Poppy culture is the favourite and most lucrative of all farming operations, and the best of the land is given up to it. "The price of rice has risen one-third within twenty-five years owing to this constant poppy encroachment, and we see the two greatest crops grown in many sections of the province—opium and Indian corn—turned to deleterious uses, namely, smoking and drinking. Very little corn is eaten or fed to stock, so extensively is it distilled into alcohol. The sallow complexion of the people, their emaciated forms and languid movements attract our attention everywhere along the river. I do not see a beautiful face or figure, nor a rosy cheek; a dead leaden colour is on all faces, old and young, male and female. Upon the mountain sides are hundreds of workmen; approach these busy labourers and you will see this death-like pallor on all faces. The climate seems the acme of perfection—a long, pleasant summer, with a cool, agreeable autumn and bracing winter. There is plenty of food, and of excellent quality for China—rice, wheat, millet, peas, beans, corn, oils and fruits of many varieties—all within the reach of the humblest labourer. Yet the pallor of death is everywhere. Not cities alone, but the quiet, out-of-the-way places are all saturated and besmeared with the black paste opium, even to the gods. Oh, seductive viper! Curse of millions! Who shall dare to stand up in the presence of this fast-fading, degenerating people, and say the evil is not wide-spread and fatal?

"The city of Tophet is beautifully situated. The little picturesque mount below the city is one of the most interesting points to travellers in China. It is literally covered to its top—which is about five hundred feet above the river—with large temples and mammoth banyans. More celebrated, however, than its beauty, is the historical notoriety to which it has attained, first