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The following paper was read by the Author:—

BUDDHISM *in the* BRITISH PROVINCES of LITTLE TIBET.

By COLONEL EDWARD PASKE.

Late Deputy-Commissioner of Kangra, Punjab.

A STRANGER to this Institute, and without pretence to having made any anthropological inquiry and research, I feel that some explanation, and indeed apology, is required for my presumption in offering to read a paper this evening.

I happened to show to Major-General Lane Fox, a member of your Council, a short paper I had written on Buddhism in Little Tibet, and he begged me to read it at this Institute. After some hesitation I felt it right to comply, for the reason assigned in the following preface.

“The accompanying paper was written with a desire to assist in making known the labours of earnest-minded and self-denying Missionaries, who are devoting their lives to a good cause in the wild mountainous regions of Little Tibet. Much that is described has come under my personal observation, while on official tours in Lahoul and Spitti in the years 1872, 1873, 1874.

“The paper was only intended for circulation in manuscript among a few friends. I have now placed it at the disposal of the London Association in Aid of the Moravian Missions, having been informed that its publication and more general circulation may possibly awaken and foster an interest in the Mission work.”

For the present occasion, and with reference to the objects of this Institute, I have added some observations descriptive of the people inhabiting the regions of Little Tibet,—their manners and customs, and I have also brought a few curiosities which illustrate the ritual of Buddhism.

I may mention that between the years 1867 and 1875 I held administrative charge of a tract of mountainous country, called the Kangra District, in the Punjab, situated on the outer ranges of the Himalaya Mountains, covering an area of about 12,861 square miles, and containing a population of about 752,500 souls. Included in this district are the outlying subdivisions of Lahoul and Spitti, which form a portion of Little Tibet, and will be the subject of my reading this evening.

I usually visited these subdivisions in the autumn of the year, after the breaking up of the rains, and before the passes, which give access to that part of the country, were closed by the winter snows. My visits were of necessity brief. I had to travel upwards of 200 miles from my head-quarters, making the journey on horseback by regular stages, accompanied by a small portion of my office establishment, and with a sort of flying camp, my ordinary work accumulating the while at head-quarters; and there was always the fear that when once in Lahoul or Spitti, late in the season, a return might be delayed by the falling of heavy snow on the passes. Thus, in these hurried official tours my opportunities for observation were of necessity brief.

It may interest you to be told that on starting from Dhurm-salla, the head-quarters of the district, the traveller proceeds for about 40 miles through what is termed the Kangra Valley, an apt description of which is given in the following lines from the pen of the late Mr. George Barnes, formerly Foreign Secretary to the Government of India.

“I know no spot in the Himalayas which for beauty or grandeur can compete with the Kangra Valley, and those overshadowing hills. No scenery presents such sublime and delightful contrasts. Below lies the plain, a picture of rural loveliness and repose. The surface is covered with the richest cultivation, irrigated by streams which descend from perennial snows, and interspersed with homesteads buried in the midst of groves and fruit-trees. Turning from this scene of peaceful beauty, the stern and majestic hills confront us. Their sides are furrowed with precipitous water-courses: forests of oak clothe their flanks, and higher up give place to gloomy and funereal pines. Above all are wastes of snow or pyramidal masses of granite too perpendicular for the snow to rest upon.”

Scattered through the Kangra Valley lie the numerous Tea

Plantations where during the last 18 years European settlers have been engaged in the cultivation and manufacture of tea, with most successful results.

Leaving the Kangra Valley, the road lies for about 50 miles through a wild and mountainous country, the territory of an independent chief: when, crossing a mountain pass about 10,000 feet above the sea, it enters Kulu, another subdivision of the Kangra District. Beautiful as is the Kangra Valley, so well described by the late Mr. G. Barnes, it is almost surpassed by the scenery in Kulu.

Winding through the Kulu Valley, along the banks of, and up to the source of the Bias River, for a distance of 40 miles, the road approaches the passes which give entrance to the subdivisions of Lahoul and Spitti.

I can conceive few sights more sublime than the view from the edge of the Rotung Pass that leads into Lahoul. You stand about 13,500 feet above the level of the sea; nearly 4,000 feet below lies the narrow valley of the Chundra River, and rising like a wall on the opposite side are mountain ranges towering in peaks from 18 to 20,000 feet high. No trace of verdure—wastes of snow and glacier, masses of rock and granite, too perpendicular for snow to rest upon.

“On the slopes of the Western Himalayas in North India, about from 31° to 33° N. lat. and from 76° to 78° E. long. lie Lahoul and Spitti, Tibetan Districts under British rule, which with Zanskar, Ladakh, and Rupchu, situated to the north of Lahoul, and under the rule of the Maharajah of Cashmere, form the provinces of Little Tibet. They border in the east on Chinese Tibet, and in the north on the territory of the Amir of Kashgar. Lahoul and Spitti are entered over mountain passes, varying from 13,000 to 16,000 feet above the level of the sea. The inhabited valleys in those regions are about 11,000 feet above the sea, and the heights of their mountain peaks vary from 15,000 to 22,000.”

Lahoul may be termed a network of mountains, which intersect it in every direction with numerous glaciers; on the western bank of the Chundra rises a peak 21,415 feet above the sea level, to the south of which stretches a vast glacier 12 miles in length, met by another of even greater dimensions. The main elevation of the Lahoul Valley has been computed at 10,535 feet.

In Spitti the mountains are at a higher elevation than in Lahoul, one peak rising to the height of 23,000 feet, and several upwards of 20,000 feet. The main elevation of Spitti has been computed at 12,986 feet.

The country throughout Lahoul and Spitti is rugged and in-

hospitable in the extreme; for six months snow covers the ground, the cold is severe, and the soil yields only one crop in the year.

Buck-wheat and barley are the principal grains produced in the country; these are sown in May and reaped in September. Of vegetables and fruits, there are scarcely any indigenous to the soil; but the Moravian Missionaries have introduced European fruits and vegetables with marked success. The supply of rain throughout the country being so precarious, irrigation is largely resorted to. Capital breeds of ponies are found in both Lahoul and Spitti, hardy sure-footed animals well suited to the country. The "Yak" and the hybrid between the Yak and the cow are universally used alike for the plough and for carrying loads, and their milk is much appreciated as an article of diet. Accustomed to the most bitter cold, the Yak appears to enjoy itself in the most severe weather, finding its own pasture by scraping up the snow in a clever manner. In the winter the animal is often to be seen with icicles several inches in length hanging to its nose, and a foot or so of ice hanging to the hair which falls from its neck and shoulders. Long hairs hang over the Yak's eyes and prevent their freezing. The Yak's tail is of a fine silky wool, and is termed "Choura;" these are largely sold, and set in silver handles, are used by chiefs throughout India in State ceremonies.

The undeveloped mineral wealth of the country is very great. Mines of lead, copper, iron, antimony and probably of silver, exist in different parts. A company was established and capital embarked for working these mines, but owing to the severe nature of the country and climate, the difficulties of access, and a good deal through bad management, the enterprise fell to the ground. The population of Lahoul and Spitti together does not exceed 10,000 souls.

The Lahoules, who are far from being a comely race, represent an admixture of Hindu and Tartar blood, while the Hindu type of features is not unfrequent. More generally oblique eyes, flat faces, and large mouths betray the Mongolian origin. The people of Spitti bear on their faces still stronger proof of Chinese or Mongolian descent, and are generally, both men and women, larger and more strongly built than the Lahoules. In both countries the language is Tibetan, but in Lahoul more frequent intercourse with strangers from Hindustan has led to the introduction of Hindi and Urdu in some parts.

The dress of the men in Lahoul usually consists of loose woollen trousers, grey in colour, with short coat of the same material, and in winter a third woollen blanket, brought round the body and thrown over the shoulder, somewhat after the fashion of a Highlander's plaid; on the head a kind of skull-

cap, with flap to cover the neck and ears; simple straw shoes are usually worn.

In Spitti the costume of the men is somewhat different, being more elaborate and with more prominent and mixed colours. In Spitti also it is the custom to shave the greater part of the head, leaving only a pig-tail which hangs down. A "Chukmuk" or strike-light, and a steel-pipe, specimens of both of which I produce, and also a tobacco pouch, are usually worn in each man's waist-cloth. Men and women alike wear ear-rings and necklaces, usually of turquoise and coral mixed with glass, crystal, and pieces of amber. The specimens of turquoise and amber that you will observe on the table, are some that I purchased in Lahoul: a stone here and a stone there taken by the vender from his own necklace and sold on the spot.

The women in Spitti and in neighbouring provinces wear a very peculiar head-dress, consisting of a broad band of red cloth studded with large turquoise and other stones, and arranged to hang from the brow down the back of the head and neck to the waist, which is called a Pirak. Usually a Pirak forms part of the dowry given to the bride by her parents, and the value of the ornaments varies according to the means and position of the family. The Nono, or chief man in Spitti, when once asked why his grown-up daughter was still unmarried, replied that he had not been able to secure all the ornaments for her Pirak. On one occasion, when resting near a Tartar encampment, I tried to purchase a Pirak from an old Tartar woman, but we could not come to terms about the price. I offered Rs. 100 or £10, while she would take nothing less than Rs. 150, and as the band of the Pirak was very old, greasy, and dirty, I declined the bargain. Subsequently one of the chief men of Lahoul had made for me, at a cost of about £5, the small Pirak I now show you.

The people of Lahoul and Spitti are peaceful and orderly, for the most part engaged in agriculture; they have few handicrafts, and these of the rudest character, except that in Spitti good blacksmith's work is to be obtained. The Lahoules are great traders, importing from Lahoul and Yarkund, wool, borax, sulphur, and churrus (a species of hemp) with other products of those countries, which they exchange for opium, sugar, cotton goods, and other commodities of India, which they purchase in Kulu. Some of these traders are most enterprising and endure great hardships in their perilous journeys over the highest mountain passes. The month of October, when I usually visited Lahoul, was the season for the return of the traders, and on each day's march I would meet droves of laden ponies and mules, and flocks of sheep and goats, each animal laden with a small pack of borax or churrus. Frequently, too, the hill sides, and the

valleys below, wherever fuel, water, and pasture were obtainable, would be dotted over with Lahouli encampments, the tents, generally speaking, being nothing more than blankets spread over with cross poles, with bales of goods heaped up on the exposed side for protection from the wind. Large and powerful sheep-dogs are to be seen in every encampment; these are excellent watch dogs, not only do they keep strangers from the tents, but they protect the flocks from wild animals. These powerful dogs are not slow to attack a leopard or a bear, and as wild beasts always try and seize them by the throat, each dog is protected by a very broad iron collar, heavily spiked with large nails.

Polyandry prevails to a great extent both in Lahoul and Spitti, and once married the wife is the common property of all the brothers, not one of whom can claim the special paternity of any particular child. Polygamy too exists in some localities when men are well to do. Betrothals take place very early in life; the betrothal and marriage ceremonies being most simple, the marriage tie sits lightly and divorces are readily obtained.

As in all countries where Buddhism is rampant, the eldest son succeeds to the property, and all the younger sons become Lamas or priests. But in Lahoul most of the Lamas marry and cultivate lands, and have very little of the monk about them.

“The religion of Lahoul, Spitti and Ladakh is a modified form of Indian Buddhism, introduced into Ladakh about two thousand years ago. It was spread into China at the beginning of the Christian era, and into Great Tibet about the middle of the seventh century. The main difference between this form of Buddhism and Hinduism is, that the Buddhists rejected the whole of the Brahminical system of gods and goddesses, and adhered closely to the spiritual worship of the Vedas. The priesthood among them was not hereditary, but formed a distinct community, recruited from the regular ranks, and supposed to observe a vow of celibacy and to renounce the pleasures of sense.

“Sukhya Muni, the traditional founder of the Buddhist faith, is usually called Sukhya Thubba, or the mighty Sukhya. The Buddhist Triad, called in Sanscrit *Rutna Trayaya*, or the Three Gems, is styled *Kom-chlok Sun*, or the three Supremacies, by the Tibetans, who give the following names to the different members of the Trinity.

“1. Buddha is *Sangya Kon-chok*, or the Supreme Intelligence.

“2. Dharma is *Chhos Kon-chok*, or the Supreme Law.

“3. Sangha is *Gedun Kon-chok*, or the Supreme Congregation.

“In the earlier periods of Buddhism, the worship of the people was confined to the holy triads of Buddha-Dharma and Sangha.

In the present day their worship is equally given to other Buddhas—Padma Pani, Jamsa, and Chanrizak.

“The self-existent Adi Buddha by five spontaneous acts of divine wisdom (*jugán*), and by five exertions of mental reflection (*dhyán*), created the Puncta Dhyani Buddha, or Five Celestial Buddhas. Each of these Buddhas again by the mere exertion of his inherent *jugát* and *dhyán* is said to have created a *Buddhisatwa*. All the above are celestial beings, the spontaneous emanations from the Divinity, who have never been subject to the pains of transmigration. Inferior to these are the created or mortal beings, divided into six classes, named the six advancers or progressers, because their souls progress by transmigration from one state to a better state, until they finally attain absorption into the divine essence, after which they are no longer subject to transmigration. The six classes are ‘Gods,’ ‘Demi-Gods,’ ‘Man,’ ‘Brutes,’ ‘Goblins,’ ‘The Damned.’ It is one of the most essential dogmas of the doctrine of transmigration, that the disembodied soul is incapable of receiving either reward or punishment. Hence the belief in other grades of mortal beings, both superior and inferior to man. The good man after death is supposed to be raised to the dignity of a demi-god, while the bad man is degraded to be in the state of a brute; a rise or fall in consequence of works done in a former state. This transmigration is the punishment of sin, and only by a total expiation thereof can the soul cease to be re-born. The process of transmigration is gradual, going on through an infinite succession of time, inasmuch as the soul must pass through all the lower stages, and thus gradually expiate its sins, before it can reach the more exalted state, and attain its final resting-place. What each new phase of life will be, is determined by the state in which a man last died. The moral law of Buddha prescribes a life high and pure, a constant straining after perfection, in order to secure that blissful state of rest which is the only emancipation from a state of eternal transmigration.

“Formerly the Great Abbots or High Priests were elected by the Priests. Now, however, there is a system of supposed perpetual incarnation. Every successor of the Grand Lama is regarded as an incarnation of the great deity, and as the throne in course of time becomes vacant, on each occasion it is the object of the priesthood to find an infant supposed to possess distinguishing divine marks, and to consecrate him as the Great Lama. The present two great spiritual successions are the Dalai Lama, or High Priest of Lhasa, and the Panchen Rimpoches of Teshu Lampi. The Dalai Lama is called Gyalba Rimpoche, ‘the Gem of Majesty,’ and the Tashi Lama, ‘the Gem of Learning.’ A priest or monk is styled ‘Lama,’ and a nun ‘Ani.’ High as is the standard of morality prescribed for every follower of Buddha, that of the Lamas or Priests is more rigid still. They may have but one meal a day, wear a dress of rags sewn together by themselves, and are bound by a vow of celibacy and poverty. During part of the year they must live in the open air, spreading their

carpet under the shadow of a tree, and there sitting immovably in contemplation, or meditating on their own sins, not allowing themselves to lie down even in sleep. In practice, however, the standard of morality is sadly low; some of the Lamas marry, too many lead grossly immoral lives, and most of them take to their calling mainly as a means of living easily at the expense of the people. Among the Buddhists there are different sects, the two chief of which are the Red Sect and the Yellow Sect, distinguished by the colour of their dress. A remarkable feature in Buddhism is the resemblance of some portion of their ritual to that of the Roman Catholics. The first Roman Catholic Missionaries who penetrated into Tibet were amazed at finding rites and ceremonies similar to some of those of their own Church—chanted litanies, the use of incense, processions carrying banners, confession, adoration of relics, ringing of a small bell during service, priestly robes and shaven crowns, monastic celibacy, ascetic separation from the world, orders of monks and nuns, working out life-long penances, ritualistic altars with images, the use of rosaries, long strings of black beads told while muttering.

“During his last journey in Lahoul, the writer secured specimens of the chief ritualistic instruments of the Buddhists, viz.—The Bell, the Sceptre or Thunderbolt, and the Prayer Cylinder, and they deserve some description.

“1. The Bell is called *Drilbu*, and is used in the performance of daily services. In paintings of the great Lama it is usually represented in the hand, or on the throne by the side of the great priest. The bell purchased by the writer was obtained from a monastery in Ladakh, was originally brought from Lhasa, and is believed to be about 300 years old. The bell is of well-sounding metal, on the upper part are syllables said to represent the notes of the bell, and inside are the monosyllabic interjections ‘Aum! Ah! Han!’ The handle has a representation of the sceptre.

“2. The *Dorgé*, sceptre or thunderbolt, is a holy instrument, said to have fallen from heaven, and to have alighted in a monastery at Lhasa, where the original is still retained. It is called in Tibetan ‘*sera-pun-dze*’; an annual festival has been established in its honour, and is one of the principal religious fêtes. An imitation of the Sceptre is carried about by the Lamas or Priests, and is used in subduing evil spirits. These imitations are of copper or other metal, about four inches in length.

“3. The Prayer Cylinder, called ‘*Mani Chhos Kor*,’ is a metal cylinder, with the axis prolonged below to form a handle. The cylinder is filled with rolls of printed prayers and charms which revolve as the instrument turns, each revolution of a prayer being equivalent to its recitation. The formula usually inscribed on the rolls is ‘*Aum mani padmi hun*,’ an invocation ‘To the Jewel on the Lotus,’ in reference to the Lotus throne, that is to say the pattern symbolical of the Lotus or water lily, with which Buddha’s thron is always adorned; ‘Aum’ or ‘Om’ is equivalent to the Hebrew

'Jah,' the holiest and most glorious title of the Almighty; 'Mani,' the jewel of Buddha's titles; padmi is the Lotus; Hun, or Hoong, is equivalent to Amen. The prayer-cylinders vary in size from little hand-mills, as large as a policeman's rattle, to huge things ten and twelve feet in diameter. In the monasteries there are rows of cylinders set up along the walls, and so arranged that the passer-by can set them all revolving at once by drawing his hand along them as he passes. The Buddhists trace back the prayer-cylinder for at least 1400 years, and believe it to have originated from the notion that it is an act of merit, and a cure of sin, to be ever reciting portions of the sacred writings of Buddha; but as so many could not read, it was deemed sufficient to turn over the rolled manuscript. It is iniquitous to turn the prayer-cylinder the wrong way.

"A peculiar custom of the Buddhists is the erection of stone-dykes or walls, several feet high, at the entrance of towns and villages and in main lines of road. Upon these dykes the people heap slabs of slate or stone, on which are inscribed certain 'Mun-tras' or prayers, the usual one being the invocation. 'Aum mani padmi hun.' These slabs are votive offerings from all classes for the attainment of some particular objects. Does a childless man want a son, a merchant about to travel hope for a safe return, or a husbandman look for a good harvest, or a shepherd for the safety of his flock in the winter, each goes to the Lama or priest, purchases a slab on which the priest carves the prayer, and it is then deposited on the village mani or dyke. In depositing a slab, it is necessary always to move to the right; to go round the left of the dyke is almost as unlucky as to turn the cylinder the wrong way. These manis or dykes, on which numberless slabs have been heaped, always attract the eye on approaching a village. In Ladakh there are two manis measuring upwards of 800 paces in length.

"It is customary also among the Buddhists for the Lama to keep small wooden printing-blocks, engraved with some prayer, from which the prayers are printed on little flags or pieces of coarse cloth. These flags are sold by the priests to travellers and others going on journeys and expeditions, and they are deposited on cairns or on projecting rocks on high mountain passes,—the higher the mountain the nearer to heaven, and the more desirable the position. On one occasion, when crossing a mountain pass in Lahoul about 15,000 feet above the sea, the writer observed a rag fastened on a stick stuck on the top of a cairn on the highest accessible point on the pass; he secured it with much difficulty, and found it was a prayer-flag.

"In noticing the Tibetan printing-block, it is desirable to mention that printing has long been known and practised in Tibet, but only by engraved stereotype wooden blocks, and not by movable type. New works are rarely undertaken, but the printing of their standard religious treatise is still carried on by the Tibetans with the same old blocks that were in use upwards of 100 years ago. The great mass of printing is chiefly confined to the production of the innu-

merable quantity of prayers and mystical formulas that are required by the people.

“The Tibetans reckon time by cycles of twelve years, each cycle being named after a particular animal. Long rolls of paper are made into calendars, with woodcuts representing the animals after which each cycle is named. The rolls are placed in brass cylindrical boxes, and are worn as amulets by traders and travellers.

“The Lamas or priests are so much venerated by the Buddhists that on the death of any noted Lama his body is burnt, and the ashes mixed with clay, are worked up into small medallion figures, and preserved with much care. These figures are called ‘Tsha’ or image, and in the temple of every house there is a small room or cupboard, called the Tshakhanga or image room, set apart for the reception of these medallions. In one temple a traveller saw about one hundred cubic feet of space filled with them.

“The Monastic system is of very ancient date among the Buddhists in Tibet. The monastery is termed ‘Gonpa,’ or solitary place, because monasteries were originally built according to the directions of the founders of the creed, far from the bustle and disturbing influences of cities; convents are only separate monasteries, walled off from the rest of the buildings. While these monastic institutions are supposed to afford a refuge from the sinfulness of the world, with such retirement as might help to a life of celestial meditation, there is too much reason to suppose that they are hot-beds of vice of every description.

“The monastery at Kyelang in Lahoul has quite the character of a ‘solitary place;’ it stands on the projecting spur of the mountain side, distant from all other habitations, at an elevation of upwards of 12,000 feet above the level of the sea, and is approached by a steep and difficult path. The deep ravines and glacial beds that are observed in the neighbourhood add to the wild grandeur of the scenery. At some seasons the approach is even dangerous, and in the spring of 1874 a monk and a nun were buried in an avalanche, while wending their way up the path. The building itself is of considerable extent with a flat roof ornamented with flags; its outer walls are plastered with mud and whitewashed, having strong projecting verandahs. In the interior are galleries, along the walls of which are arranged numerous praying wheels, a lofty apartment used as a kitchen, a library full of collections of holy books wrapped up in silk, and numerous banners, masks, drums, trumpets, cymbals, bells, mitres, staves ornamented by the trident, and many other things used on festive occasions. Near the library is the great hall in which are the statues of Buddha and his disciples; some made of wood and clay are more than life-size, and other smaller ones are of metal, all decked out in robes of different colours. Numbers of brass and silver oil-lamps are placed before the images, and near receptacles for offerings of all kinds. The walls of the entrance gallery and of the great hall are ornamented with decorative paintings representing subjects from Buddhist mythology, some of them very well coloured, and showing considerable artistic skill.

The roof of the hall is supported by massive beams garnished with belts, swords, yaks' tails, huge and terrible masks, and all sorts of odds and ends. On one side of the apartment is a huge praying-wheel about ten feet in height and five feet in diameter, and on each revolution of the same a bell is struck. A dim subdued light prevails throughout this chamber, which exaggerates the ghastly hideousness of the huge figures, and gives the appearance of a chamber of horrors. Outside the main building are rows of cells occupied by the monks and nuns."

At this monastery I met a Lama who had travelled in China, and had then just returned from Llassa. This priest was a painter, and I found him engaged on a large picture, representing the triumph of Buddhism, for the gallery of the monastery. On receiving a suitable present he executed for me the small copy of the picture which I now show you. The principal figure in the picture is "Padmer Sambhana," also called by various other names, an historical personage chiefly instrumental in establishing a modified form of Buddhism in Bhutur, Sikkim, Lahoul, and Ladakh. He is seated on a Lotus which grows out of a lake with its leaves turned upwards; gold-fish swim in the lake and water-fowls are above; deer, antelope, and a unicorn are on pasture grounds around the lake. He carries a trident with three heads as a sign of his perfection, and representing the Buddhist Triad; in his hand he holds the vial of life, and the sun and moon on his mitre mean that he shines with heavenly brightness. The figure above his head is the personification of eternal life. In the left corner below is represented the same Padmer Sambhana in his ferocious aspect, the figure on the right being the chief of the feminine demons of the air, carrying the trident. Both are punishers of those who try to destroy the religion of Buddha; the figure under the foot of the one on the right is a mortal undergoing punishment: the beads worn as a necklace or rosary by the figure on the left are of those who have been punished for their sins. In the corners above are the pictures of two holy Lamas, that on the left, the first great Lama of Bhatua, that on the right representing the grand Lama of Tunsikai, who died about 24 years ago. The Hungarian traveller Osono de Koros studied the Tibetan language in his monastery, preparing afterwards a very useful dictionary of that language.

"The monastery at Kee in Spiti is larger than that at Kyelang, with more extensive chapels, store-houses and dormitories. It has the appearance of a hill-fort crowning an eminence.

"In the different monasteries large and varied assortments of costumes are kept for use in the spirit-dances and other religious performances. In the richer monasteries in Tibet Proper there are extensive wardrobes of great value, and the monks in their per-

formances change their costumes very frequently and with great rapidity.”

On the occasion of my last visit to Kyelang, the monks gave me a performance of their spirit-dance on a plot of level ground outside the monastery. The Abbot in full canonicals, with a scroll of parchment, supposed to be covered with sacred music, attended by musicians with large trumpets, cymbals, and other instruments, took his position on the ground, and when the musicians were playing their loudest, suddenly from a side door of the monastery there rushed out 30 or 40 monks, attired in the most grotesque and startling costumes, their heads covered with large and well-executed masks, representing the heads of wild animals, serpents, and demons; these all danced in a most wild and excited manner, making hideous noises, and every now and then rushing into the monastery to don costumes still more grotesque. These figures are supposed to represent the demons of the air, who torment the souls of the wicked undergoing the process of transmigration. This entertainment, held on a wild lonely spot, on the mountain side, upwards of 12,000 feet above the sea, the light of the torches exaggerating the hideousness of the figures, formed one of the most startling spectacles I have ever witnessed.

The spirit dances cause great terror among the ignorant and superstitious people of the country, and form a means by which the Lamas exercise their hold upon their minds.

“The present observations on Buddhism, its ritual and customs in Northern India, can very appropriately be closed with a brief notice of the history and operations of the Moravian missionaries, who are doing good work among the Buddhist tribes in the Tibetan districts of Northern India.

“In 1853 two of the Moravian brethren were commissioned to proceed through Western Tibet to Mongolia, but failed to make their way through Russia and the Kirghese steppe, having been refused the needful passports by the Russian Government. They then took the route through India and journeyed through Lahoul and Ladakh to the border of Chinese Tibet, where their further progress was stopped by the authorities. Returning for a time to British India, they made another advance to Ladakh, but were prevented settling there by the ruler of the country, the Maharajah of Cashmere. Finally, the missionaries decided to settle in the British Tibetan province of Lahoul, conterminous with Ladakh, and they selected as their place of residence the village of Kyelang, at an elevation of between 10,000 and 11,000 feet above the sea. At once they entered into intercourse with the people, acquired a knowledge of their language, and engaged in itinerating through the province.

“In 1857 the two brethren, Heyde and Pagell, were joined by a

third missionary, Brother Jaeschke, who rendered good service in translating the Scriptures into Tibetan. Two years later they established a lithographic printing-press on the Mission premises, from which they have issued translations of the Holy Scriptures and of useful religious and educational works. Books and tracts from this press have been very freely circulated in all the adjacent provinces where the Tibetan language is used, and have proved the means of doing much good.

“Some idea can be formed of the remoteness and isolation of the position occupied by these missionaries, when it is mentioned that the Tibetan village of Kyelang is situated nearly forty miles in the interior of Lahoul, the most remote province of the North-east frontier of British India, and bordering on the provinces of Zanskar, Ladakh and Rupchu. To enter Lahoul it is necessary to cross two or three mountain passes, the last and highest being the Rotang Pass, about 15,000 feet above the sea—a pass closed by the winter snows from November till May, so that for more than five months in the year the missionaries have no communication whatever with the outer world. Owing to the severity of the climate, and the heavy falls of snow in Lahoul, they are sometimes shut up in their houses for two and three weeks together. This isolation is much felt, especially during the severe winter weather, and two or three graves in the little grave-yard below the Mission garden tell that some members of the Mission family have ended their days in that distant and remote valley.

“When on an official tour in Lahoul in the autumn of 1874, the writer of these observations spent some days at the Mission Station of Kyelang, where he was most hospitably entertained by the brethren Heyde and Redslob and their wives, and where every opportunity was afforded him of examining the Mission work. While he saw many gratifying proofs of the good that is being done, he had abundant evidence of the honest labours, earnest zeal and great worth of the missionaries themselves. The Station is a most interesting little settlement. The premises include a large well-built substantial house in which, besides the accommodation for the missionaries and their families, there is a large room set apart for use as a chapel, and a guest-room for travellers and visitors, who are always welcomed. There are out-buildings appropriated for the schools, the lithographic press work, for dispensing medicines, for stores and other purposes, and around these buildings are well-kept gardens and orchards. Through the instrumentality of the authorities the missionaries have lately secured a tract of waste land, about 200 acres in extent, on the mountain side several hundred feet above the station, where they are establishing a farm, and have already brought a considerable extent of land under cultivation. But here they have many difficulties to contend against; their lands are at a level of 12,000 feet above the sea, and for irrigation purposes they have had to carry a watercourse for upwards of two miles from a distant glacier. The farming operations, as they are extended, will give industrial occupation to the

natives around, and the produce will form a valuable addition to the present scant grain and grass supply of the valley, and will in time facilitate the furnishing of supplies for traders and travellers.

“A second Moravian Mission Station in charge of Brother Pagell was established some years ago in the Tibetan village of Poo, in Upper Kunawur, close to the border of the Chinese Tibetan province of Tsotso, and distant twelve days’ journey from Kyelang. This station the writer was not able to visit, but similar good work is being done here, as at Kyelang. An interesting account of the Poo Mission is to be found in a work entitled “The Abode of Snow,” by A. Wilson, recently published in *Blackwood’s Edinburgh Magazine*.

“The Moravian missionaries contemplate an advance farther north, and hope to establish a station at Leh, the capital of Ladakh, so soon as the objections of the Maharajah of Cashmere can be overcome, and his permission obtained for the commencement of a Christian Mission in that part of his territories. For their missionary purposes no better position could be occupied. Leh is a considerable town, with a large Buddhist monastery in its immediate neighbourhood; it is the centre or meeting point of four lines of traffic, and is on the high road between Cashmere and Lhasa, the great seat of Buddhism in Tibet. Even in their comparatively remote station at Kyelang the missionaries have from time to time collected valuable information regarding the affairs of countries of central Asia, including Ladakh, Kashghar, Mongolia, Chinese Tibet, and Tibet Proper. Advanced to Leh, they would be in a position to add greatly to their stores of information and knowledge of those countries.

“The lofty spirit of self-abnegation with which the Moravian missionaries have laboured for so many years in their remote settlements on the Northern frontiers of British India, can best be understood and appreciated by those who have visited their station. Far removed from civilized life, themselves simple, frugal, and self-denying, they spend their days in labouring hard for the spiritual and moral good of the simple Tartar people around them. Much they have endured with the most exemplary patience, and much they have overcome. Nor is the Mission work of the Moravians in Northern India to be judged only by the number of the converts; their labours are varied and extensive; they have conducted considerable educational operations; their linguistic work has been valuable; they have scattered Christian publications all over the Tibetan speaking countries; in their printing-presses and agricultural operations they afford industrial occupation to a considerable number of the natives of the valley; with the limited means at their disposal they do all in their power to ameliorate the condition of the sick and the poor; and by their active energy and general high standard of life afford the best example to all around them.”

DISCUSSION.

Lieut.-Col. GODWIN AUSTEN remarked: The paper we have heard this evening contains much that is of great interest to myself, from having spent three summers in Ladakh and Zaskar to the North, and I can testify to the magnificence of the scenery with the grand glaciers that run down from the higher parts of the ranges, separating the above districts from Kulu, &c.

I found also that the women of Ladakh have a very great objection to parting with the head ornament called "*kükül*" in Ladakh. Nor is this unnatural; the stones sewn upon the strips of red cloth are difficult to collect and are heirlooms handed down from mother to daughters, as the gift of friends; the intrinsic value may not be much in our eyes, but even our own womenkind would strongly object to sell ornaments off their persons, and the Ladakhi women resent such offers in the same way.

Placing flags or little pieces of rag on cairns upon the mountain passes is to be seen throughout the Himalayas of Ladakh to Bhutan, they are not always printed as in the example shown this evening, but red, blue or black, and white pieces are sometimes seen significant of the Trinity: 1, Gamiang; 2, Chokdor; and 3, Chandrazik; emanations from Sakhya Thuba; this custom is I think a remnant of a very ancient primeval belief, as it is to be seen in the Naga Hills (connected with gods of streams, hills, &c.)

An excellent account, and the best I know, of these people and of their religion and customs, is to be found in General Cunningham's "*Ladakh and Surrounding Countries.*" Hodgson, who was a long time in Nipal, has written much on same subject in the "*Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal.*"

I must differ with the author of the paper as to the exceeding bad characters of the Bhuddist Priests,* and with all those who are so ready to make out that they are so immoral. I saw much of them, knew many intimately, often put up in the monasteries, and had good and better opportunities than most men of judging, and I really do not consider them very different from the same class in many European countries; there is the same proportion of bad, but a great number of steady, good, hard-working men engaged in their religious duties and, a great deal of their time, in the education of the youth of the country.† Many are well read, clever men (educated in Llassa), clever draftsmen, painting on cloth and decorating the walls of the religious buildings, and I have had them come to me to learn perspective.

Mr. HYDE CLARKE said that while Buddhism was, as stated by

* "Hot beds of vice" was the term used with regard to the monasteries,—I think a missionary point of view.

† The number who can read and write are in excess of what might have been found in many parts of England a few years ago, and none of them are so brutalised as specimens in this country and this city.

the author, a reform of the older Indian mythology, yet several of the practices described belonged to the infancy of prehistoric mythology, whilst others illustrated the local modifications to which Buddhism in common with all religions was subject by the influences of the various regions in which it was adopted. Col. Paske had been engaged in the administration of some of the most interesting provinces on the frontiers of India, and none the less interesting because they belonged to those he called Hill regions, in which new English communities were being slowly and surely built up.

Mr. HOLT would be glad if Col. Paske would tell the meeting whether a Buddhist faced in any particular direction while turning the prayer drum, and if the revolutions round the circles were not always made from east to west. He would also like to know if the Buddhists had not, like ourselves, four festivals corresponding with the winter and summer solstices and the spring and autumn equinoxes. He asked this because he had always been accustomed to associate Buddhists with solar worship, and what Col. Paske said tended much to confirm that impression.

The Rev. WYATT EDGELL observed that if primogeniture was general and all the young children became Lamas, the number of these must be very great; that such is the case however appears from the account of two travellers whose camel drivers were Lamas.

MR. HYDE CLARKE exhibited a carved stone object, which was stated to have been received from Central America.

The following paper was read by the Director.

NOTES *on the* PIOJES *of the* PUTUMAYO. By ALFRED SIMSON, ESQ.

THE chief tribe of Indians inhabiting the borders of the Upper Putumayo seems to have no special appellation, but a portion of it—that least known—whose component members dwell principally on the banks of the branch river Cocaya goes by the name of *Macaguajes*, and is claimed as part of their own people by the others whose customs and mode of life have become somewhat modified by frequent contact with civilization.

A tribe of Indians occupying the middle and lower Aguarico