

# LHASA AND CENTRAL TIBET.

BY

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## LHASA AND CENTRAL TIBET.<sup>a</sup>

BY G. TS. TSYBIKOFF.<sup>b</sup>

After a journey of twenty-two days over the sparsely populated north Tibetan plateau, our caravan of pilgrims camped July 19,<sup>c</sup> 1900, on the banks of the San-chu, at the northern foot of the Bumza Mountain. The caravan had been formed at the Kumbum monastery in Amdo, and started April 24 on the way to Lhasa. There were about 70 persons in the party, almost all of them Amdo and Mongolian Lamas, and were quartered in 17 traveling tents. About 200 mules transported men and baggage.

We here first met inhabitants of Central Tibet. Close to the road was a great black tent in which lived the local soldiery, an advance post on the lookout for foreigners. They had special orders to watch during the present year for P. K. Kosloff's Russian expedition, of which the authorities at Lhasa had received information as early as April.

The guards immediately approached our camp, but seeing that it was an ordinary caravan of pilgrims, the men were soon busied in making trifling exchanges to supply their wants, our men keeping a watchful eye on articles that might readily be stolen. After four short marches from here we reached the Nakchu monastery, the residence of two governors of the local nomads, appointed by the central government of Tibet. One of them belongs to the clergy and is called

<sup>a</sup>Translated from the *Izvestia of the Imperial Russian Geographical Society*, St. Petersburg, vol. xxxix, 1903, part III, pp. 187-218.

<sup>b</sup>"M. Tsybikoff is a Buriat by birth, and a Lamaist by religion, who finished his education at a Russian university, and, after having prepared himself for this journey, went quite openly, like so many other Buriat pilgrims, to Lhasa. There he remained more than twelve months, making an excursion to Tsetang (or Chetang) and visiting some of the most venerated monasteries, after having previously stayed, during his journey to Lhasa, in the Mongol monasteries of Labrang and Kumbum. During his stay at Lhasa he made, moreover, a most valuable collection of books, written by all the most renowned Lama writers during the last nine centuries. This collection represents 319 volumes on philology, medicine, astronomy and astrology, history, geography, and collections of ku-rims (praises, prayers, and incantations, and so on). It has been presented by the Russian Geographical Society to the Academy of Sciences."—*The Geographical Journal*, London, January, 1904.

<sup>c</sup>The dates in this paper are old style, or twelve days behind the Gregorian calendar.

“Khambo,” the other is a civilian, called “Nansal.” They supervise the collection of taxes and decide important matters that arise between the natives; and also control the government stations between Nakchu and Lhasa. It also devolves upon them to stop Europeans bound for Lhasa and immediately to notify the central government about them, as well as about all suspicious persons. I was halted as belonging to the last category, due to the chief of our caravan, who, out of friendship to the Tibetans and possibly to shift responsibility from himself, reported that there were Buriats in the party. Although the Buriats had of late been freely admitted, yet we were each obliged to pay 5 taels (about \$4), which at once excluded us from the suspicious class and opened our way to Lhasa.

The Nakchu monastery serves also as a custom-house. Here all pilgrims are obliged to pay a tax on each tent, the revenue being used for keeping the local pastures in grass. No penalty is imposed upon those who refuse to pay the toll, although an indirect punishment is inflicted by prohibiting the local residents from having anything to do with delinquents.

After losing half a day here, the caravan left the monastery, situated on the left bank of the small river Dre-chu,<sup>a</sup> and 7 miles away approached the left bank of the Nakchu. In the rainy season, when the river runs deep and swift, it is impossible to cross without boats, which evidently the native nomads can not build. Thence the caravan reached the broad Sun-shan Valley, bounded on the north by Mount Samtan Kansar. From this valley, across the low crest of Chog-la, the road enters the Dam Valley, inhabited by descendants of Mongols brought into Tibet by the Khoshot Gushi Khan in the middle of the seventeenth century. They are at present practically assimilated with the Tibetans, although some still use Mongol felt tents, and have not forgotten how to milk the mares and to make kumys. Mongol words have disappeared from their language, except official titles and some special technical terms. The Dam Mongols are subject to the Manchu Amban, who resides at Lhasa. Their occupation is cattle raising.

From Dam across Lani-la, or “double range,” we enter a pass where we come to the first agricultural settlement of Central Tibet. It is more civilized here. The Pondo-chu is crossed by pedestrians over a bridge. In the rainy season baggage is taken across in skin boats, while animals ford the stream. On the right side of this swift river stands the castle Pondo-dzong.

Twenty-seven miles farther on the journey we reached Penbu, or Penyul, one of the most thickly populated regions of Tibet. Caravans have from here a choice of two roads—one, without crossing the ridge, along the right bank of the U-chu, and the other, straight

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<sup>a</sup>Chu = river in Tibetan.

across the high ridge of Go-la. About ten miles from the top of the ridge lies the capital of Tibet, Lhasa, which we entered August 3, 1900, after three month's journey from Kumbum.

Central Tibet—that is, the two provinces of U (Wei) and Tsang—has not been visited by Europeans since 1845, at least the principal part of it, although the literature on Tibet in general has increased every year. No Russian traveler entered the country either before or certainly after the prohibition. But for the last thirty years Tibet has been annually visited by Buriats and Kalmuks, who are Russian subjects. Many of these pilgrims made notes on Tibet, but thus far only the report of Zayaeff (eighteenth century), and the diary of the Kalmuk Baza-bakshi have been published.

It must be borne in mind that having penetrated a forbidden country in the guise of an ordinary pilgrim, obliged to pose before the natives as one in search of salvation in the holy land, and constantly in danger of suspicion as other than a pilgrim, the amount of information gathered under such circumstances could not have been great. I was well aware that several years ago an Indian penetrated Central Tibet and established connections with a certain ecclesiastic in Tashilhunpo, that through this lama's servant he received books at Calcutta, and that both lama and servant were executed at Lhasa for daring to allow the admission of a foreigner.

Tibet is truly a land of mountains, and the natives aptly call it "Snowland." In the region we traversed while in Tibet there are two snow mountains, Samtan-Kansar on the eastern end of the Nyan-chutangla and the crest of Kar-la on the southwestern side of the circular lake, Yamdok. The mountains that did not reach the snow line were nearly all treeless and their tops bare.

The upper lands of the river valleys are narrow and unfit for cultivation, but the middle and lower portions are wider and enable the industrious Tibetans to grow cereal crops. The steep and rocky mountains are the source of many swift streams during the rainy season, but most of them dry out when the rains cease. Many streams and springs, however, collect water at each rainfall in numerous irrigating ditches that keep the water mills busy.

The year may be divided into two seasons, rainy and dry. In 1900 the dry season commenced in Lhasa on September 13, when the last rain of the year fell. October and November were entirely dry. The first snow fell December 7, but melted the next day. It snowed once in January, in February three times, in March four times. The first thunder was heard on March 14, and twice in April. The snow melted in the valleys immediately after falling, but remained for a time on the mountains. The first considerable rain fell on May 5, then on May 7, June 8, July 17, August 13, and twice early in September. These rains were generally late in the evening or at night,

in squalls and large drops, and in May and June were frequently accompanied with hail. The clouds generally moved from west to east.

Temperature observations were recorded at dawn, 1 p. m., and 9 p. m. for two hundred and thirty-five days. The average morning temperature was  $41.45^{\circ}$  F.; 1 p. m.,  $58.33^{\circ}$  F.; 9 p. m.,  $48.65^{\circ}$  F. December was the coldest month, with an average morning temperature of  $18.3^{\circ}$  F.; noon,  $34.5^{\circ}$  F., and evening,  $26.8^{\circ}$  F.; and June was the warmest month, with average morning temperature  $58.6^{\circ}$  F.; noon,  $73^{\circ}$  F., and evening  $63.3^{\circ}$  F. The large rivers are entirely free of ice in winter, but the small ones are covered by a thin crust. The soil freezes only at the surface.

The total population of Tibet has been estimated from the fantastic 33,000,000 down to 3,500,000, or even 2,500,000. The most reliable evidence indicates that Central Tibet has not more than about 1,000,000 inhabitants. Reliable statistics of the whole population were not obtainable, but it is certainly not very great, for the many narrow river valleys between high, rocky mountains are unfit for agriculture and could not sustain many inhabitants. Besides, the numerous unmarried ascetic ecclesiastics of both sexes, and epidemics of smallpox and other fatal diseases against which the Tibetans are almost defenseless, not only retard an increase, but would appear to gradually decrease the country's growth. More than 10 per cent of the population of Lhasa and neighboring monasteries died of smallpox in 1900. Further evidence of the limited Tibetan population appears from the fact that only about 20,000 monks from all the monasteries in the vicinity gather at the so-called "great Monlam of Lhasa." This, remember, in the center of Lamaism, where the principal sanctuaries and the higher Tsanite schools are located, which to a considerable extent are supported by the government! The native Tibetans call themselves Bo(d)-pa, and it is also customary to refer to people according to the names of particular regions. Thus the inhabitants of Tsang are called "Tsang-pa," etc. The floating population of the cities is composed of Chinamen, Nepalese, Kashmiris, and Mongols.

Most of the Chinamen, especially the emigrants from Ssü-ch'uan, are employed in the garrison camps of the large cities, while those engaged in commerce transact their small trade with the local inhabitants, principally the women \* \* \* .

The Nepalese and Kashmiris, about equal in numbers, are merchants almost exclusively, though a few of the former are artisans. According to tradition the Nepalese were for a long time the architects of the temples, the sculptors of the Buddha statues, and the ikon painters of Tibet, and they are still the most expert cloth dyers, and are skillful as gold and silver smiths, from small trinkets to the gilt roofs of temples. The Buddhist Nepalese, in distinction from the ruling caste, Gurka, in

their Kingdom, are called Bā(1)-bo. They avoid marriage with Tibetans, for such ties mean death in their native land, and they therefore remain permanently in Tibet. The Kashmiris, on the contrary, always marry Tibetans, whom they first convert to Mohammedanism, and rear their children in that religion.

In administrative matters the Chinamen are responsible directly to the Amban, who resides and officiates at the southwest end of the city, near the ruins of the old city wall. The Nepalese and Kashmiris are subject to their elders, who serve as deputies in affairs before the central government of Tibet, with its jurisdiction. The Mongols, about 1,000 of them, are all monks, and only temporary residents, about 15 per cent of their number changing annually. They are distributed over the various monasteries according to their parishes. The Russian subjects among them in 1900 numbered 47, being Buriat Lamas from the region across the Baikal, with one Kalmuk from the Astrakhan government. They are subject to the monastery regulations.

The social classes are the nobility, the clergy, and the peasantry. The nobility consists of the descendants of former rulers of separate principalities and descendants of the fathers of Dalai Lamas and Panchens, who are invested by the Manchu court with the rank of prince of the fifth degree.

The princes, together with the monasteries and their parishes, are large landowners, and the peasants are serfs to them. The central government, or the Dalai Lama, owns, of course, more land and serfs than the classes named.

There is apparently no distinct military caste. Military service accompanies the privilege of special land grants, but we could not secure detailed information about it.

The houses are of stone or unburnt brick, cemented with clay. Most of those in the villages are one story high, while in the cities they are of two or three stories. The windows are without panes, or hung with cotton curtains, though in winter oiled native paper serves as protection from the cold. Fireplaces are used only for cooking. The houses have no chimneys, the smoke escaping as best it may through doors and windows, except that houses with upper stories have roof openings that somewhat alleviate the smoke nuisance, though equally a discomfort during rain. The principal fuel is dry manure of horned cattle and yaks. The clothing is of special design, made from native cloth in various colors. The poor classes wear white, the cheapest color; the richer people red and dark red, the soldiers dark blue, and yellow is used by higher dignitaries and princes. Women prefer the dark-red cloth. Of course, other colors are also met with. In proportion to their means, the Tibetans dress rather elegantly. Their jewelry is of gold, silver, corals, diamonds, rubies, pearls, turquoise, and other stones.

Tsamba, or roasted barley flour, mixed with either tea or barley wine, is one of the principal foods. The commonest vegetable is the radish. The favorite dish among all classes is "tsamtuk," a soup made by boiling zamba in water and flavored with bits of radish. Tsamtuk is best when made into broth with crushed bones, but it is comparatively expensive, and only the well to do can afford it every day.

The Tibetans are fond of raw meat, and when entertaining they serve meat either raw or not fully cooked. The principal meats are yak, mutton, and pig. Beef is not considered good, and ass and horse meat are not used at all. The poor classes also eat fish. We did not see the Tibetans use fowl as food, although they keep chickens for the eggs. Butter is much used, serving principally to whiten or flavor tea, and melted butter is burned in lamps before the idols. Sour milk, prepared also as thib-sho, is regarded as very noble food, and in poetry indicates something pure white.

Both sexes of all classes are very fond of barley wine, and owing to its cheapness and slight intoxicating properties it constitutes the principal beverage of the poor. The men are heavy smokers of leaf tobacco in pipes, and the monks, while avoiding the pipe, consume no less tobacco in snuff. Because of the high cost of tobacco, and to reduce its strength, the laymen mix it with the leaves of the plant "shol," and the monks use the ashes of ram and goat dung for that purpose.

The principal characteristics of the Central Tibetan may be described as stupidity and flattery, doubtlessly explained by the economic and political conditions of the country. They are also pious through fear of losing the protection of the gods or of angering them. On this account they have frequent sacrifices, bowing and circling before their sanctuaries. They are very impressionable and superstitious, and at each new episode in their lives they seek explanation from Lama seers and prophets, and when sick they prefer to take barley grains blessed by Lamas and prophets, or to have curing prayers read to them, rather than resort to medicine, which, by the way, is less developed in Central Tibet than in Amdo or Mongolia. Despite all, the Tibetans seem to be inclined to joviality, which manifests itself in song and dance during their frequent srees and public holidays.

In their family life polyandry and polygamy exist, and the marriage of several brothers to one woman or of several sisters to one man are regarded as ideal relations. \* \* \* Women enjoy perfect freedom and independence and take an active part in business affairs, often managing extensive enterprises entirely unaided.

Agriculture is the chief occupation of the settled population. Barley is the standard crop, from which tsamba is prepared; then comes wheat, for wheat flour; beans for oil, and peas, used by the poorer



class in form of flour, or crushed for horses, mules, and asses. The field work is done principally by "dzo" (a cross breed of yak and ordinary cattle), yaks, and asses. The principal beasts of burden are the small, hardy asses, and to some extent the ordinary horned cattle. Inhabitants of the highland regions are engaged in cattle raising, breeding yaks, sheep, and some horses. They use yaks for burden, and sheep in some places. The horse and mule are, to a certain extent, a luxury to the Tibetan, and are therefore kept only by the well to do. The native horses and mules are very small and homely, so that the rich people use only those imported from western China. In the stables of the Dalai Lama and Panchen there are blooded horses from India.

Commerce consists in supplying the cities and monasteries with agricultural products in exchange for articles of insignificant local manufacture and foreign import. The excess of domestic products is exported. The Tibetan has very few wants, chiefly limited to necessities, although some inclination toward objects of luxury, expensive ornaments, objects of cult and home adornment may be observed. The standard money is a silver coin valued at about 10 cents.

The unequal distribution of wealth and the subservience of poverty to wealth are conspicuous. There is such little commerce that labor is very cheap, the most expert weaver of native cloth receiving about 8 cents and board per day, while an unskilled woman or man laborer earns only 2 or 3 cents. The highest salary is paid to the Lamas, the prayer readers, who receive 10 cents a day for incessant reading. A house servant almost never receives pay beyond food and meager clothes. \* \* \*

I will now describe the more or less prominent cities and monasteries visited in Central Tibet. Chief of all, of course, is the capital, Lhasa, sometimes called "Kadan" in literature, but both names have almost the same meaning—"the land of gods," or "full of gods." Its origin dates from the time of Khan Srongzang-Gambo, who lived in the seventh century, A. D. It is said that this khan had among his wives one Nepalese and one Chinese queen, each of whom brought along a statue of the Buddha Sakyamuni, to whose worship temples were erected in Lhasa, and he settled on Mount Marbo-ri, where the palace of the Dalai Lama now stands. Lhasa is situated on a broad plain, bordered on one side by the river U-chu and on the other by high hills. If we disregard the Potala, or palace of the Dalai Lama, the city is nearly round, with a diameter of about a mile. But the numerous orchards in the southern and western parts, the proximity of the Potala with the adjacent medical college, the court of Datsag-hutuktu, and the summer residence of the Dalai Lama led to the belief that it was about 25 miles in circumference. As a matter of fact, the circular road along which the pious make their marches on

foot or in prostrate bows is about 8 miles long. When these bows are faithfully performed the circle is completed in two days, making about 3,000 bows a day.

The orchards and trees in the outskirts of the city are admired by the natives, and give the place a very beautiful appearance, especially in the spring and summer, when the gilt roofs of the two principal temples glisten in the sun and the white walls of the many-storied buildings shine among the green tops of the trees. But the delight of the distant view at once vanishes upon entering the city with its crooked and dirty streets. \* \* \*

A temple in which there is a large statue of Buddha marks the center of the city. The building is 140 feet square, three stories high, with four gilt roofs of Chinese design. The entrance gate faces the north. Each floor of the temple, with its blind external walls, is divided into numerous artificially lighted rooms, wherein stand various statues of Buddha. In the middle room on the east side stands the principal object of worship, Buddha Sakyamuni, under a sumptuous canopy. This bronze statue differs from the usual representations of the Indian sage in its head and chest ornaments of wrought gold set with precious stones, with a predominance of turquoise prepared and placed upon it by the famous founder of yellow-hat teachings, Tsongkapa. The face of the statue ever since the days of that same Tsongkapa has been kept painted by devout worshipers with gold powder dissolved in liquid glue. Upon long tables before the god, melted butter, offered by the worshipers, ever burns in golden lamps. Two other statues in the temple command almost equal respect—the 11-faced bodisattva Avalokiteshvara, of which the Dalai Lamas are regarded as incarnations, and the statue Pal-Lhamo, the protectress of women. \* \* \* Under the latter statue barley wine is being incessantly sprinkled and grains are freely scattered. Abundance of food and snug hiding places in the folds of the clothing of the statue have attracted numerous mice, that are here considered holy. \* \* \*

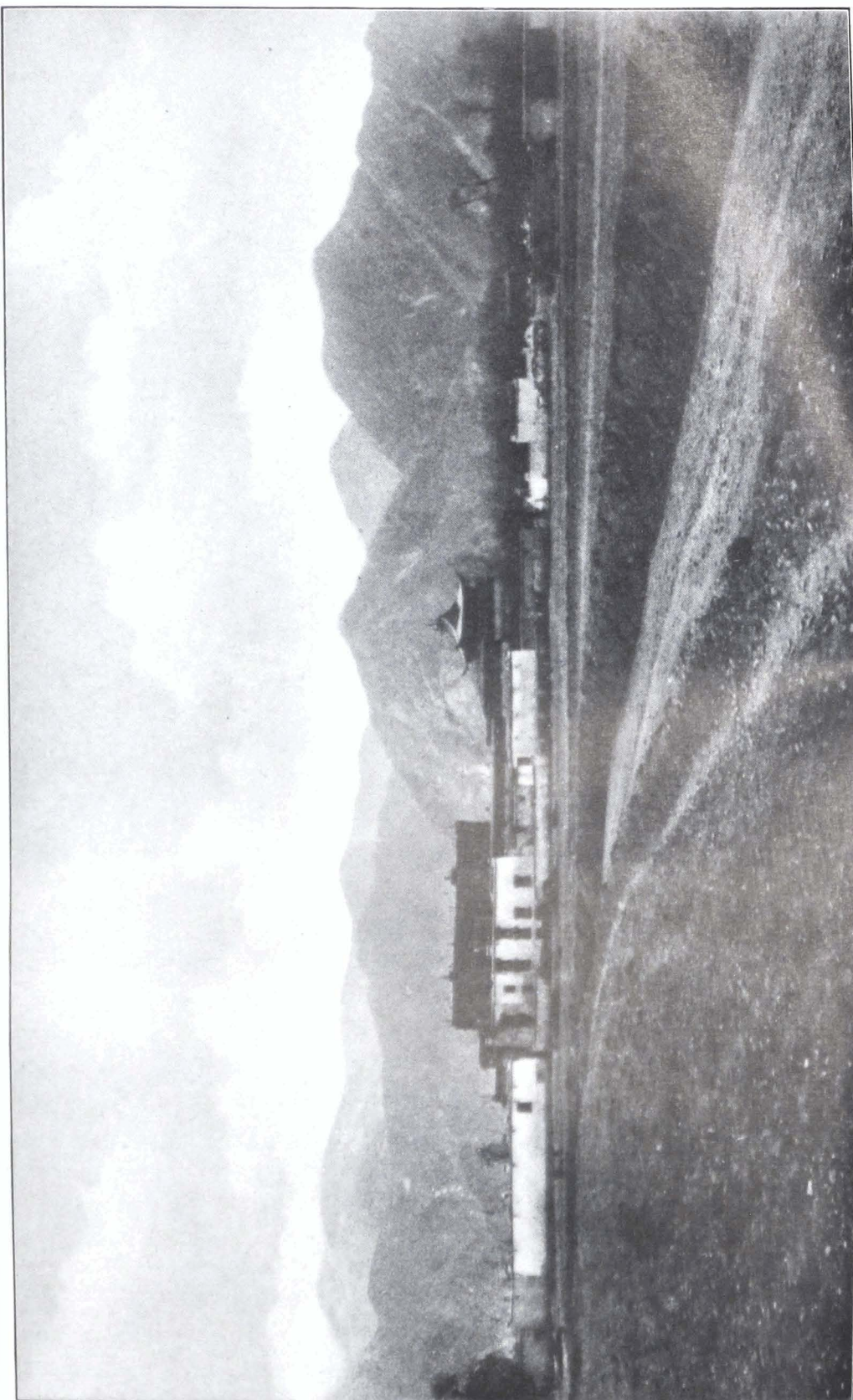
Besides the principal court of the temple there are two additional courts, in which the gatherings of the clergy of the neighboring monasteries are held.

Another small statue of Buddha stands in a temple in the northern part of the city and is called "Jovo-ramoche," but both temple and statue are inferior in proportions and ornaments to the main temple, and there is a noticeable difference in the reverence of the worshipers.

Within the city limits of Lhasa there are four courts or quarters of eminent Hutuktu incarnates, who were once Tibetan khans. They are the best buildings in the city, and as each has a certain number of pupils of the Lamas they are really small monasteries. Then, each



LHASA, GENERAL VIEW FROM THE EAST.



LHASA, FROM THE NORTH.

of the eminent incarnates has his own inherited house. All other buildings belong either to the central government, or to the various communities of the neighboring monasteries. Buildings owned by private individuals are few and are mainly in the outskirts of the city.

All these buildings are under the control of the palace of the Dalai Lama, Potala, about two-thirds of a mile west of the city, and built upon a rocky height. The foundation of the palace, tradition says, was laid by the above-named Srongzang Khan during the seventh century, but it was remodeled, with the addition of the main central portion, called "Pobrang-marpo" (the red palace), during the life, and even after the death, of the fifth eminent Dalai Lama. It is evident that the palace and additions were planned to serve as a means of defense, and from this point of view Potala looms up as one of the old castles, of which many ruins abound in Tibet, and in the sad fate of which Potala played the preeminent rôle by subjecting them to itself.

The palace is about 1,400 feet long and about 70 feet high in front. The front and two sides are surrounded by a wall, the rear portion extending into the hill. In the construction of this palace the Tibetans displayed their highest architectural skill. Here are found the most precious treasures of Tibet, including the golden sepulchre of the fifth Dalai Lama, which is about 28 feet high. The treasures and apartments of the Dalai Lama are in the central portion of the temple palace, which is painted a tawny color and known as the "red palace"—Pobrang-marpo. The remainder of the building serves as quarters for various attendants or followers of the Dalai Lama, including a community of 500 monks, the so-called "Namgyaltsan," whose duty it is to pray for the welfare and long life of the Dalai Lama.

Near the hill are the mint, the house for the Dalai Lama's subjects, the prison, and other structures. Upon the continuation of this hill stands the convent Mänbo-datsang, where 60 monks devote themselves to the study of medicine at the expense of the Dalai Lama. A little farther north is the idol temple of the Chinese Buddhists, and at the northwest foot of the hill is the palace of the fifth eminent hutuktu Kundu-ling, and about two-thirds of a mile west of the latter is the summer palace of the Dalai Lama.

There are in Lhasa two temples where mysticism is taught, with an attendance of 1,200 men.

The civilian population of Lhasa scarcely exceeds 10,000 persons, about two-thirds of them women, although the number may seem greater on account of the proximity of two large monasteries, the many transient visitors, and the gatherings of worshipers from lamaite countries. As the political and religious center of Tibet, its sanctuaries an attraction for numerous worshipers, Lhasa becomes an

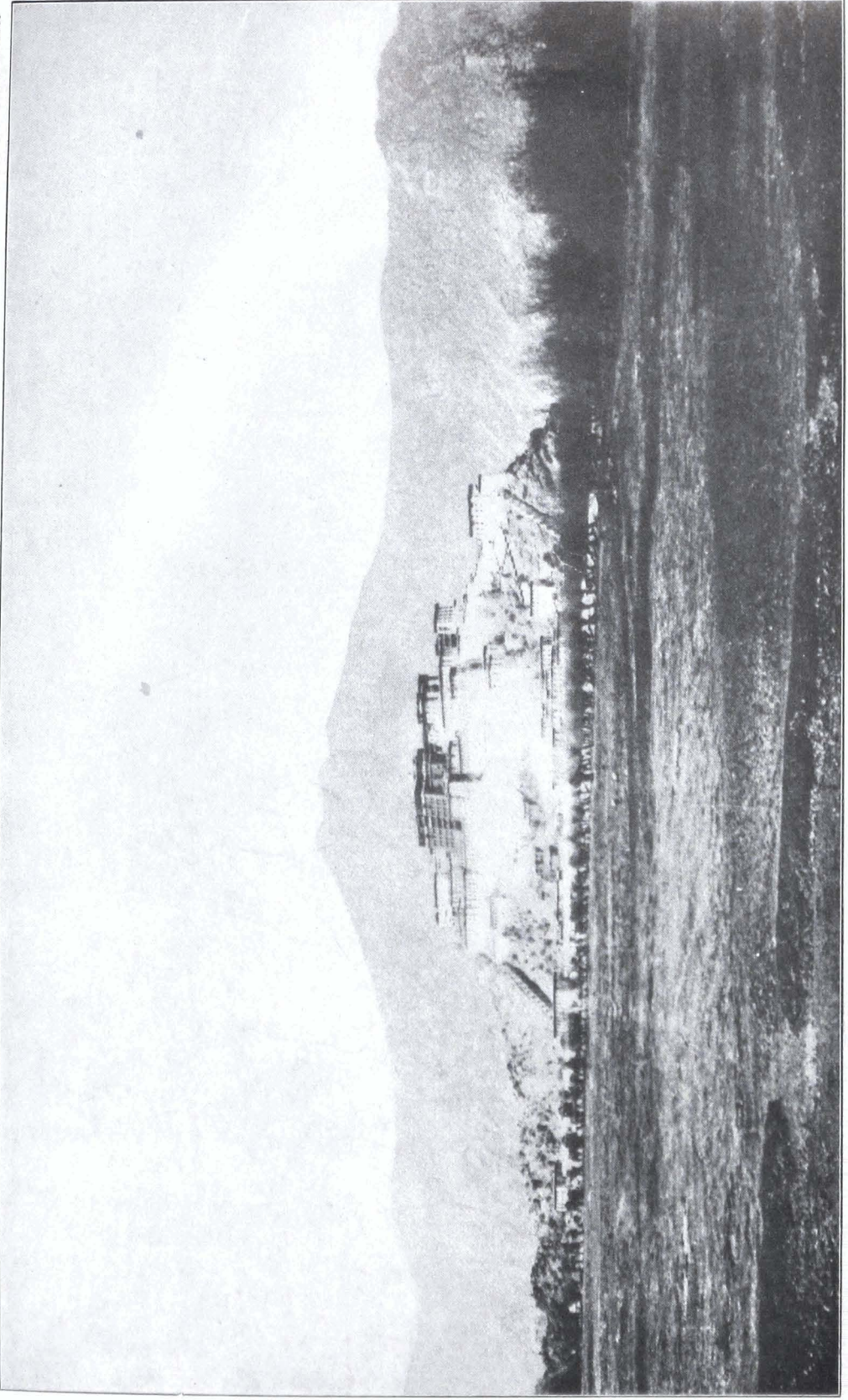
important business place, as well as the connecting link in the commerce between India and northern Tibet and China with the East.

The market place is located around the central or temple section, where all the ground floors of buildings and open spaces in the streets are occupied by stores and small exhibits of merchandise. Women are preeminently the sales people, although in the stores of the Kashmiris and Nepalese men do the selling.

About the town stand the principal monasteries of Tibet, Sera, Brebung, and Galdan, known under the common name *Serbre yesum*. Brebung, the largest, is about 7 miles northwest of Lhasa; next comes Sera, about 2 miles north of the city, and last, Galdan, about 20 miles distant to the left of the river U-chu, on the incline of the steep mountain Brog-ri. They belong to one ruling sect of Tsongkapa and were organized during his lifetime, at the beginning of the fifteenth century. The Dalai Lama is regarded as the head of them all. There are 15,000 to 16,000 monks in all, of which 8,000 to 8,500 are in Brebung, 5,000 in Sera, and 2,000 to 2,500 in Galdan. In the Galdan monastery there is a vice-Tsongkapa, under the name, the "Galdan golden throne," a position established immediately after the death of the organizer, at the suggestion of his pupils and disciples. In olden times that office was filled by the choice of the Galdan monks, but on account of the confusion that followed elections the present method of installation was instituted, and the position is now filled in six-year terms by two Lamas, or, more correctly, wandering ecclesiastics, "Chzhuds," in the order of their service in the higher positions of their temple. The present incumbent is the eighty-fifth superior since Tsongkapa, or the eighty-sixth superior of Galdan, counting the reformer as the first.

Each of the monasteries has its laws and its own land, and they are thus independent of one another. The Brebung monastery is the most influential, because of its wealth and numbers, which are both the cause and the effect. Much of this superiority is also due to the fact that Brebung monks were elevated to Dalai Lamas, to whose lot it soon fell to be at the head of the spiritual and civil government of Central Tibet. The lamaistic monasteries are now not so much places of refuge for ascetics, as schools for the clergy, beginning with the alphabet and reaching to the highest theological knowledge.

It is true that the public school begins the instruction in religion, but the elementaries as well as the domestic occupations of adults are taught by private teachers chosen by the pupil. Nevertheless, every one, be he a boy five or six years old or a mature and even old person, is regarded as a member of the congregation and receives maintenance by becoming subject to the monastery laws. The principal subject taught is theological philosophy, which consists of five



LHASA. MOUNT MAR-BO-RI, AND THE PALACE OF THE DALAI-LAMA.



LHASA. POTALA, THE PALACE OF THE DALAI-LAMA FROM THE SOUTH.



sections of dogma, compiled by Indian pundits and translated into Tibetan. After the Tsongkapa reform, commentaries were made by various learned men upon those sections, which, according to the Lamas, do not differ in substance, all the commentaries adhering to the general idea of the teachings of the famous reformer. In the monasteries mentioned religion is taught from commentaries of six scholars in seven editions, each of which has a separate faculty. Three of these are Brebung and two each in Sera and Galdan.

Beside these religious faculties the first two monasteries have a faculty called "Agpa," to perform the mystic rites and to pray for the welfare of the monastery. The clergy is very unevenly divided in the various faculties. In Brebung, for instance, there are 5,000 men in one faculty and only 600 in the other.

It must be admitted that the monastic communities seem more concerned in securing "daily bread" than in the education of their members. Honors and degrees are conferred only upon those who endow the community in some practical manner. High positions, too, are encumbered with an obligation to distribute gifts among the members of the community. The principal source of endowments comes from the incarnates; that is, the incarnates of the soul of some predecessor. Whosoever soul he may incarnate, he is recognized in the community as such only after he has distributed a certain amount of money and food. On the other hand, howsoever learned a monk may be, he receives the degree only after he has made endowments. Consequently charity and scholarship are measured by the amount of gifts to the monastery communities.

Each monastery has some special characteristic. Thus Brebung is famous for its prophets, Sera for its cells for the ascetics, and Galdan for various old curios.

The cult of the prophets or oracles is in its turn based upon the cult of the so-called "Choichong," or the guardians of learning. Judging by historical tradition it may be presumed that Buddhism, introduced into Tibet in the seventh century A. D., could not be rapidly developed because of difficulty in conquering the native gravitation toward their former deities, to which the people were accustomed and which were dear to them because they were their own creation. Besides, the sorcerers or priests were no doubt defenders of the old cult. On the other hand, however, Buddhism was protected by the rulers of Tibet and was bound to spread, and in the hard struggle popular superstition was granted some concessions. This compromise between Buddhism and sorcery was made, we are told, by a preacher of the ninth century, Padma-Sambava. He compelled the former local spirits to swear that henceforth they would defend Buddhist learning only, for which they were promised honors, rendered in the form of sacrifice of wine, barley seeds, etc. The highest of these spirits, which were

imported from India, are called "Idma," while those of lower rank are called simply "Choichong," or "Choisrung." The Choichong speak with the lips of the prophets whom they inspire. Only Choichong of lower degrees thus descend to prophets. As protectors and defenders of the faith the people imagine them to be horrible monsters in warriors' outfit. On this account the prophet, before the descent of "Choichong" upon him, dons a helmet and arms himself with spear, sword, or bows and arrows. The sense of the descent is contained in the fact that the spirit guardian of learning becomes incarnated in the chosen prophet for the sake of the living beings. Of such spirit guardians there are many, and the prophets are correspondingly numerous. The superior among them is the one confirmed by the Chinese Government—the Prophet Nai-chung-Choichong, whose gold-crowned temple and church suite is in the shady garden southeast of the monastery of Brebung. He is appealed to for prophecies, not only by ordinary mortals, but by all the higher clergy, including the Dalai Lama. Their mutual relation is as follows: Lama is "the abode of learning," and Choichong, its "guardian," having sworn to defend the religion vigilantly, will be honored of all for it. The Lama, therefore, honors—that is, brings sacrifices to—the Choichong, and the latter forestalls all that threatens the religion and the Lama, its representative. They constitute a check on each other and are allies at the same time. In this rôle of defenders of the faith the Choichong—or, more correctly, their prophets—wield a powerful influence over all classes. Their power is so great that even the Dalai Lama and the highest Hutuktu must reckon with them; they endeavor to incline all toward themselves. \* \* \*

The "ritods," who are particularly numerous at Sera, are ascetic monks, who have retired from the world and buried themselves in meditation, which is regarded as one of the six means of attaining holiness—its origin based on Gautama's abdication of kingly luxuries in search of truth. The later ascetics choose obscure nooks in dense forests or dark caves in the rocks as places for meditation. More recently they have concerned themselves not only about their own attainment of holiness, but about the good of others, and their peaceful existence became distracted by the care of enlightening fellow-men. The silence of the cell for solitary meditations was broken by the cries of those hungry for knowledge, and to the lot of the ascetics fell the new care of their spiritual and material satisfaction. Then the idea of worldly vanity and comfortable quarters enticed the ascetics, and the cells were converted into comfortable dwellings, with quarters for pupils. The ascetic was thus transformed into the full master and ruler of his servants. Later on, with the appearance of the incarnates, the ritods become the inheritable property of the incarnates of the organizer, and several are transformed into separate monasteries.



FIG. 1.—LHASA. POTALA, FROM THE WEST-NORTHWEST.

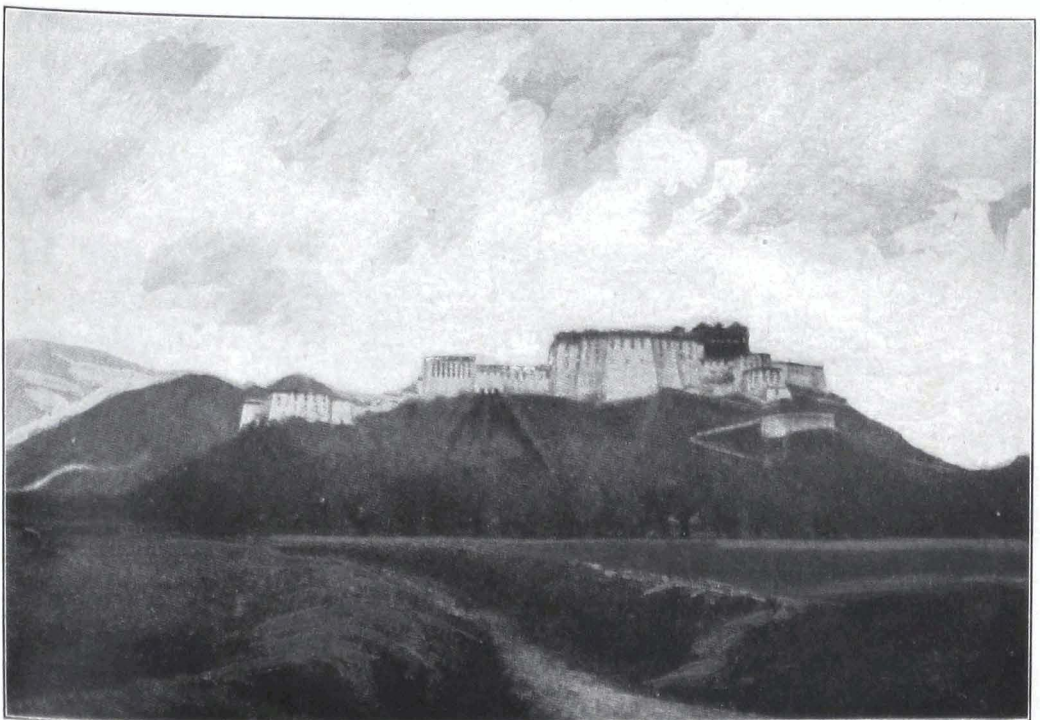
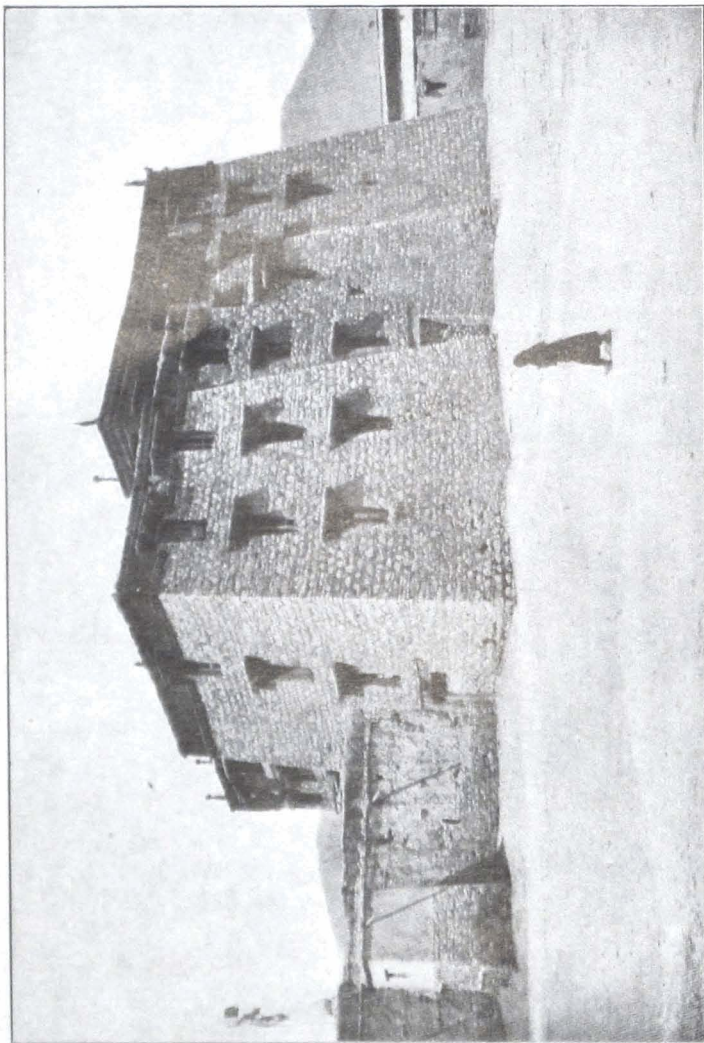


FIG. 2.—LHASA. POTALA, FROM THE NORTH-NORTHEAST.

Smithsonian Report, 1903. — 1 sybikoff.

PLATE VI.



LHASA. GADAN KANSAR. THE PALACE OF THE OLD KING OF TIBET.

However, the people still revere the ritods, and the tombstones of some of them are coveted last resting places for the dead; upon them the corpses are cut up for the distribution of the flesh and bones among the griffin-vultures.

The relic curios, in which Galdan is rich, show us to what an extent the famous Tsongkapa took possession of the minds of his followers. His successor after his death sought memorials of the existence of the dear teacher, not content with his works. He did not believe that a teacher could pass away leaving no footprints, and search was made for these everywhere about the monastery he established—where he passed his last years. His searches did not end in failure, and in various groves and among the rocks he saw traces of the wonder of the teacher, and explained them by one or another incident in his biography, and, conversely, with his biography explained those traces. Frequently meditating about his idolized teacher, he drew and chiseled his image upon rocks, and the images of the Buddhas, his protectors. In course of time all these signs and statues made by the closest of pupils of Tsongkapa under the known influence of superstition began to be taken for wonderful relics and each worshiper began to venerate them.

It is characteristic that such relics are being discovered up to the present time. Thus the present Dalai Lama obtained from a rock a treasure, consisting of a hat and other articles, ascribed to Tsongkapa. He deposited the treasure in a special chest and placed it for safe-keeping at the sarcophagus of Tsongkapa and on its place erected a monument.

We will now briefly describe the other prominent monasteries and cities we visited. They are Tashilhunpo, and the cities of Shigatsze, Gyantsze, Samyé, and Tsetang.

The monastery of Tashilhunpo is about 170 miles west of Lhasa, to the right of the river Brahmaputra, on the south side of a mountain peak that forms an arm between that river and its tributary, the Nyangchu, and was established in 1447 by a pupil of Tsongkapa, Gedun-dru, who is regarded as the first incarnation of the Dalai Lama. There are about 3,000 monks within this place, divided into three religious and one mystical faculties. The head of the monastery is the incarnation of "Panchen erdeni," who maintains the monks there. Five stone idols and gilt roofs in Chinese style constitute the ornaments of the monastery.

About two-thirds of a mile northeast of Tashilhunpo, upon a separate rock, stands the castle Shigatsze, at the foot of which grew up a city of the same name, with a population of scarcely above 6,000 or 7,000. Here are stationed small Chinese and native garrisons. The castle itself is well known from the fact that during the conquest of Tibet in the middle of the seventeenth century by the Mongol

Gushi-khan it served as the residence of the governor of Tibet, Tszangbo, who, after a long resistance, was conquered and killed. The castle is now in a semideserted condition, and prisoners sentenced to die are thrown from its roof to the rock below.

About 50 miles from Shigatsze, in the valley of the Nyangchu, lies one of the old cities of Tibet, Gyantsze, which is a very convenient place on the commercial road to India from Lhasa and Shigatsze. From the religious standpoint it is famous for its great religious structure, Cho(d) den-gomang, five stories high, with many rooms and various objects of interest, especially ancient statues of Buddha. Commercially the city is known for the manufacture of rugs and cloths.

Up to the recent past the Tibetans made rugs of only one-colored wool in narrow strips, but now they weave, according to Chinese samples, continuous rugs with designs, which are much inferior in elegance to the Chinese, but in firmness much superior to them, as they are made of pure wool. We must assume that rug manufacture in Tibet could be considerably developed on account of the cheapness of labor and of sheep's wool.

The monastery of Samyé is on the left bank of the river Brahmaputra, about 65 miles southeast of Lhasa. It is the oldest of Tibetan monasteries, having been established at the beginning of the ninth century A. D. by the famous preacher of Buddhism in Tibet, Padma Sambava, and the Khan Tirsong-detszan. Its conspicuous feature is a five-story temple, a mixture of Tibetan and Indian architecture. The latter is evident by the fact that the top story is without columns, a feature so prominent in Tibetan style. This monastery, with its 300 monks, is maintained at the expense of the Dalai Lama treasury, and the idols are distinguished for their comparative cleanliness and care in the make-up.

About 20 miles east of Samyé, on the right bank of the river Brahmaputra, at the mouth of the fruit-producing valley Yarlung, lies the city of Tsetang (or Chetang), famed for the production of cloths, knitting, and the yellow monk hats. According to tradition, the first ruler of Tibet, Niatri-tszangbo, was found in the vicinity of this city and set upon the throne. The place occupies a favorable point on the road from Bhutan to Lhasa, as it enters the valley of the river Tszang. On the border of Bhutan lies the city of Tszona, where there is a market each spring that attracts many merchants from Lhasa.

Passing now to the government of Central Tibet, the dependence upon China is made evident by the Peking Court appointment of a Manchu resident to manage the higher government. At the head of the local self-government stands the Dalai Lama as the spiritual and secular head of Central Tibet.

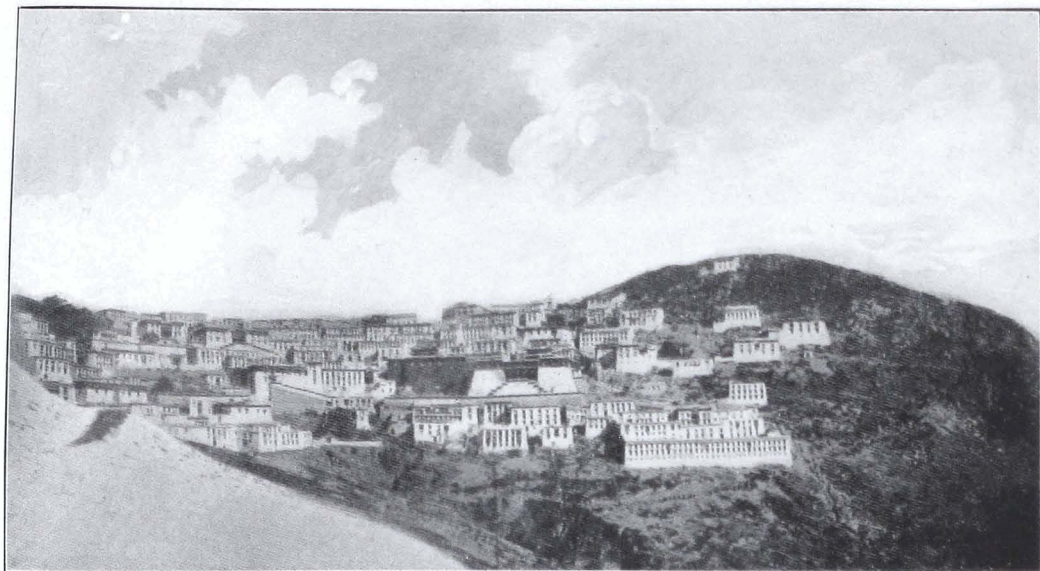


FIG. 1.—THE MONASTERY GALDAGN IN TIBET.



FIG. 2.—THE MONASTERY TASHI-LHUMPO IN TIBET.





The Dalai Lamas attained their spiritual importance at the time of the Lama Gedun-Gyamtsö, the superior of the Brebung monastery, who lived from 1475 to 1542. He was the superior simultaneously of the two monasteries Brebung and Sera, and during his life acquired such fame that he began to be regarded as the incarnation of his countryman, the famous organizer of the monastery of Tashilhunpo, Gedun-dru. But the custom of finding incarnates in youths begins after his death, and one officer of the castle proclaimed his son as this prophet's incarnation. This is evidently the first instance of the proclamation of an incarnate, and when he succeeded to the rights of his predecessor it was his fortune, worshiped almost from the cradle, to be invited by the Mongol, Altan-Khan, who gave him the title "Vajra-dara dalai-lama," which was sanctioned by the "Ming" Emperor of China. The significance of the Dalai Lama in Tibet, however, was at first not very great, which explains the recognition of the son of a Mongol prince as the fourth incarnate, who, it is true, was killed in the twenty-eighth year of his life in Tibet. The Mongols claim that the Tibetans killed him out of race hatred, and that they even cut him open as the Mongols kill sheep. His successor, Ag-vang lo-sang-Gyamtsö, now called simply "Na-va-chenbo"—that is, the Fifth, the great—succeeded in acquiring the secular power, which at first was still only nominal. This Dalai Lama, in combination with the first "banichen," did not hesitate to invite Mongol arms to his country in order to conquer the detestable secular governors. Although they succeeded in accomplishing it, Tibetan affairs began to be interfered with either by Mongol princes, or those recognizing the superiority of the Manchu dynasty, or those who struggled for independence. After the death of the fifth Dalai Lama, for a period of forty years, the Dalai Lamas became the pretense of political intrigue of various power lovers until a series of historical events destroyed the power in Tibet of the Mongol and native princes, and until finally in the year 1751 the Dalai Lama was accorded the dominating power in matters religious and secular. The election of the Dalai Lama, up to the year 1822, the year of the election of the tenth incarnate, was based upon the prophecies of the highest Lamas and decision of the prophets, which is equivalent to an election by influential persons. But when the tenth incarnate was elected the system of the Emperor Tsien-lung, the casting of the vote by means of the so-called "serbum," or "the golden urn," was first applied. In this system the names of three candidates, determined by the former arrangement, are written upon separate tickets and placed in the golden urn. This urn is set before the statue of Jovo-Sakyamuni, and services are held there by deputies from the monasteries, praying for a righteous election. It is then carried over to Potala, to the palace of the Dalai Lama, and

there in front of a board upon which the Emperor's name is inscribed, in the presence of the highest authorities of Tibet and a deputation from the principal monasteries, the Manchu Amban, by means of two chopsticks, draws out one of the tickets. He whose name is written upon the ticket is placed upon the Dalai Lama throne. The election is confirmed by imperial decree, and the fortunate or unfortunate youngster is brought into the place with great honors. From this time on he is accorded appropriate honors and worshipers flock to him. In his youth he is taught reading and writing under the guidance of a special teacher—ioiu-tszini—selected from among the most learned famous Lamas. Then he is given a purely religious education, following the above-mentioned five sections with all their seven commentaries. For practical disputes one learned Lama is detailed from each of the theological faculties of the three principal monasteries. These instructors are called Tszang-skab-khanpo. Our Buriat countryman, Agvan Dorchzheyev, was one of these with the present Dalai Lama.

After finishing the course of instruction he receives the highest degree in theology in the same manner as the other Lamas, but, of course, with a more liberal distribution of money to the monasteries and more careful questions on the part of the learned Lamas who dispute with him and who are appointed in advance. After this, when 21 to 22 years old, the Dalai Lama enters the ripe and independent existence. Since 1806 five Dalai Lamas have reigned. The present incumbent, the thirteenth, Tubdan-Gyamtso, was born in 1876, so that now he is 27 years old. About six or seven years ago he had a struggle with his regent, most famous of Tibetan hutuktu, "Demo," and came out victor, which no doubt saved him from the fate of his four predecessors, who perished at various ages, frequently the result of violence inflicted by regents or representatives of other parties that were striving to remain longer close to the "power." The present Dalai Lama accused Demo of organizing plots against his life, confiscated his immense wealth, and placed him under a rigid home arrest in a separate room, where Demo was discovered suffocated one beautiful morning in the autumn of 1900. The Dalai Lama assumed the head rule of Tibet, and one of his conspicuous acts is the abolition of capital punishment, which was practiced extensively by the regents. It seems in general that he is very energetic, and inclined to be a good man, with considerable love for knowledge.

The second person of the lamaist hierarchy is the Panchen-Erdeni, who lives in a monastery in the province of Tashilhunpo Tsang. The first Panchen-Erdeni was the Lama Lobzang Choigyi-Gyaltzan, who was born in 1570. This earnest Lama was the instructor of the fourth and fifth Dalai Lamas, when he played an important rôle in political affairs, which served to enhance the power of the Dalai Lama. The official title, Panchen-Erdeni, and the imperial diploma and seal was

granted only the third Panchen, Pande-yéshé, in 1870 at an audience at Peking. At present the sixth incarnate lives; he was born in 1882, and is therefore 20 years old.

The Panchen is next to the Dalai Lama in official capacity, but in the supervision of the lamaists he is considerably above him, because of his holiness. Especially is he regarded as the future king of the holy world "Shambala," in which he will be the principal leader.

It is customary to call the Dalai Lama also "Chyab-gong than-chäd-mkhen-pa" (the omniscient—the object of faith), but the Tibetan applies this name to every eminent Lama incarnate he respects, since the charm of the Dalai Lama, as a holy individual, is less effective upon the religious feeling simply because of his distance than that of a Lama more easily approached, to whom he can appeal more often with inquiries relative to his religious requirements. The Dalai Lama, therefore, is known at places distant from Lhasa only as the principal ruler of Tibet, while the religious sentiment of the laymen is directed toward their patron, regardless of the sect to which he belongs.

The teachings of Tsongkapa now reign supreme in Central Tibet, but after the struggle during the first period of their introduction they are now entirely reconciled and to a certain extent are indifferent toward other sects. The contemporary lamaist in general and the Tibetan in particular regard the objects of faith of the various sects with exactly the same reverence. Even the central government of Tibet, with the Dalai Lama at its head, frequently bows before the representatives of the old red-hat sect (the yellow-hat sect predominates now). The laity does this, of course, out of ignorance and superstition, but such explanation does not apply to the higher representatives of the yellow-hats, who are guided by Tsongkapa's way of looking at the world and possess a knowledge of the difference in the views of other sects. We believe that the conduct of these men toward other sects is inspired by political motives, the desire to satisfy the superstitious requirements of the populace, and to be vindicated in case of popular suffering and unfortunate political events.

The central government of the land is in the hands of a council presided over by the Dalai Lama, called "deva-dzung." The principals in this council are four "kalons," or dignitaries, appointed by the Chinese Emperor, and their meetings are held in a special office—"kashag," or executive house. They are appointed from prominent aristocratic families, three of them civilians, the fourth a clergyman. For the local administration governors are sent from the "deva-dzung," usually two in number with equal powers—one a clergyman, the other a civilian. Districts are frequently leased, the lessee ruling according to established custom, being obliged to pay into the treasury a certain sum of money or to pay in kind. Usually these lessees are members

of the higher administration, and they send their own representatives into the districts.

Of late the central government has apparently begun to strive to accumulate land, for which purpose it takes away strips of land from the monasteries under various pretenses or makes purchases on installment from the annual income.

The affairs of Tibet in general are ruled by the hereditary aristocracy, whether it be the son who inherits his father's rights or the incarnate who inherits the rights of his predecessor. As the born aristocracy lives in strict isolation, not mingling with the common people, the central government, despite its deliberative character, may be called an aristocratic oligarchy.

We stated that the Dalai Lama is the head of the central government. The question arises, Who takes his place in the interim between his death and the election of a new incarnate and until the latter becomes eligible? This question arose for the first time in 1757, after the death of the seventh Dalai Lama, and was solved by the appointment of a regent by the Chinese Emperor under the official name "the director of the Dalai Lama's treasury," with the title "nomun-khan." In writing, the Tibetans refer to him as "the Khan's viceroy" and in their daily conversation simply "the Tibetan khan." The first man appointed to the regency was the very eminent hutuktu "Demo," after whom other hutuktu were appointed.

The tribunal and, in general, all administrative affairs are based on bribery, court examinations, on torture by means of lashes and similar methods, cauterization by means of burning sealing wax being regarded as the most severe. The punishments are execution by drowning, imprisonment, banishment with giving away into slavery, blinding, amputation of the fingers, lifelong fetters and foot stock, and lashes.

The permanent army, maintained by the treasury, consists of 4,000 men. Its armament consists of spears, matchlock guns, and bows. For the protection of the body they have a helmet ornamented with feathers, a small plaited shield, and some wear armor. They are officered by "daipons," appointed from the higher aristocracy. The soldiers usually live in their homes in the villages and only periodically gather at posts, where they are inspected and taught to fire blank charges, and the use of the bows. The army is divided into cavalry and infantry. Despite the tendency of the Tibetans in the eastern provinces to indulge in pillage and highway robbery, the central Tibetan dislikes to make war; he is much more peace loving and more inclined toward peaceful labors, on account of which he regards military duty as superfluous and interfering with domestic pursuits. One frequently sees soldiers on the way from an inspection spin wool, stitch shoes, turn a prayer wheel, or repeat their chaplet.

Speaking about the East Tibetan robber tribes, we must say they try to prey upon the goods of others without bloodshed, threatening only the cowards. As soon as they see that the intended victims are determined to show serious resistance, they escape to their quarters. If one band of robbers strips a victim of everything, another band will clothe him and supply him with food.

The monasteries are governed by their own laws, administered by their own elders, the highest of which in the principal monasteries are appointed by the Dalai Lama. Discipline and the whole régime is based on "the fear of the governors." This fear must be manifested even on the street; a monk must not show himself before them on the street. When, on very exceptional occasions, he does meet them, he must lie down, wrap his head in his hood, and lie motionless as if dead. Justice is also based principally on bribery, and the punishment is banishment from the monastery with a fine of money and lashes. The material condition of plain monks in Tibet is so bad that the convicted always prefers the punishment of the lash to fines.

The foreign relations of Tibet are conducted with British India through Bhutan; with Kashmir through Ladak, and directly with Nepal, China, and Mongolia.

Tibet imports from India, English materials, principally cheap cloths, enameled vessels, teapots, plates, and cups; objects of luxury, as coral, amber, brocade; medicine and dye stuffs; and various English trinkets, such as mirrors, beads, jars, matches, penknives, etc. All these articles are imported by native Bhutanese, Nepalese, Kashmiri, and Chinese merchants. In general, the Tibetans are of late becoming more and more fond of English products; the English rupees, too, are beginning to compete with the local coinage. The things exported to India are yak tails, sheeps' wool, borax, salt, silver and gold, yaks to a certain extent, and horses and mules brought over from northern China.

From China the Tibetans import tea, which they love so well, china-ware, cotton and silk fabrics. From northern China, mules and horses are imported, and, to a limited extent, breeding asses.

For use by the Chinese, Tibet exports little, and the considerable amount of native manufactured articles, together with those imported from India, that are exported there go to satisfy the demands of the Mongol lamaists.

The articles exported are various objects of cult, as small statues, painted images, religious books, and prints made from carved wooden blocks, incense candles, ribbons, peacock feathers, leaf-shaped seeds "tsampaka," and similar articles that bring high prices only because of the piety of the Mongol lamaist and his reverence for holy things from Tibet. The more famous the person that produces these articles

the more eagerly they are purchased and the higher is the price paid. But Tibet also has a trade in cloths, in knit goods, and in the yellow hats of the ecclesiastics, and this class of traffic, which depends upon the religious sentiment of the purchasers, as is the case with presents to Tibetan lamas, attains a considerable sum annually. The commerce in ordinary merchandise, however, scarcely exceeds \$60,000.

Since objects of cult are exported to Mongolia and since only the treasuries of incarnates and monasteries possess capital, the commercial caravans are fitted out exclusively by the treasuries of the Dalai Lama or other rich incarnates and by monastery communities. The responsible officers of the caravans are called "tsonpons." The "tsonpons" sent out by the Dalai Lama must double the original capital in three years' time, which capital is estimated at a very inflated appraisal of the goods. Each succeeding "tsonpon" is the auditor of his predecessor—that is, he sees that the contract is fulfilled.

Here and there the merchants in Mongolia, besides their commercial operations, make collections of contributions for one or another enterprise of a monastery or an incarnate. If we add to this those immense sums that are being collected by famous and infamous lamas, whether they be invited to Mongolia or are there of their own accord, we can safely say that Mongolia to a considerable degree enriches Tibet.

Up to a very recent period there were no relations between Tibet and Russia, although Buriats, who are Russian subjects, have for a long time made secret pilgrimages to Tibet, fearing oppression from the Russian administration, and entered Tibet under the assumed name of "Khalkhas" Mongols, fearing exclusion as foreigners. About fifteen years ago "Khalkhas" and Buriats belonging to one community in Brebung quarreled for some reason, and the former called the latter "Oros," or Russians. The matter reached the highest authorities, and, thanks to the able management of the affair by the Buriat lamas, it was established that, although the Buriats are Russian subjects, they are followers of the yellow-hat religion. The Khalkhas who raised the matter, having lost the trial, was obliged to leave the monastery, and the others received warning that they would be fined 5 lans (about \$4) every time they call the Buriats "Oros." Russia can hardly hope to obtain a profitable market for her goods in Tibet, but it will pay her to establish relations with Tibet because it is the center of lamaism, to which are chained the thoughts of contemporary Mongols, of whom there are about half a million, under the names of Buriats and Kalmuks, who are Russian subjects.