

new Serbia), that it is quite probable that they might prefer the domination or administration of Italy, in consequence of the very uncertain communications they maintain with their own people on the far side of the mountains. Thus eventually I have come to precisely the same conclusion as that which I was interested to hear to-night expressed by Commander Roncagli.

I will now ask you to join in thanking Commander Roncagli for his admirable lecture, and also Colonel Longmore for the illustrations he has been kind enough to show us. I must also add the name of Mrs. Dickinson Berry, who has kindly lent us some of the slides of Dalmatia which you have seen to-night.

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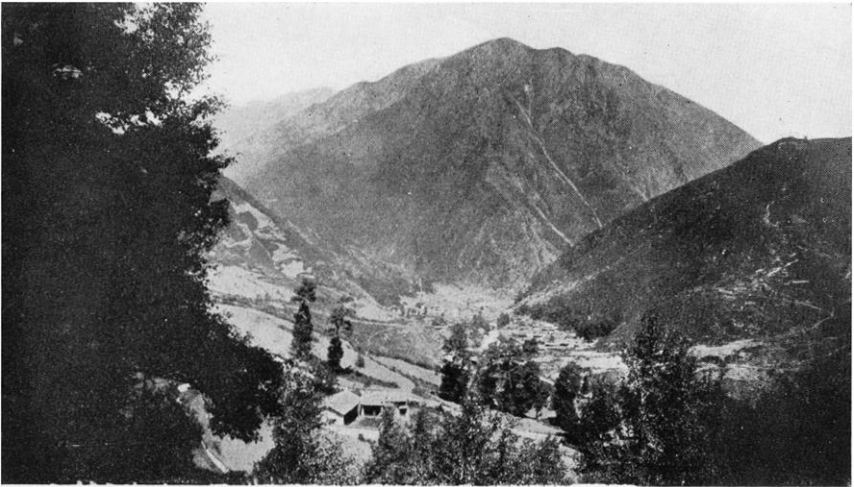
## EASTERN TIBET

Oliver Coales

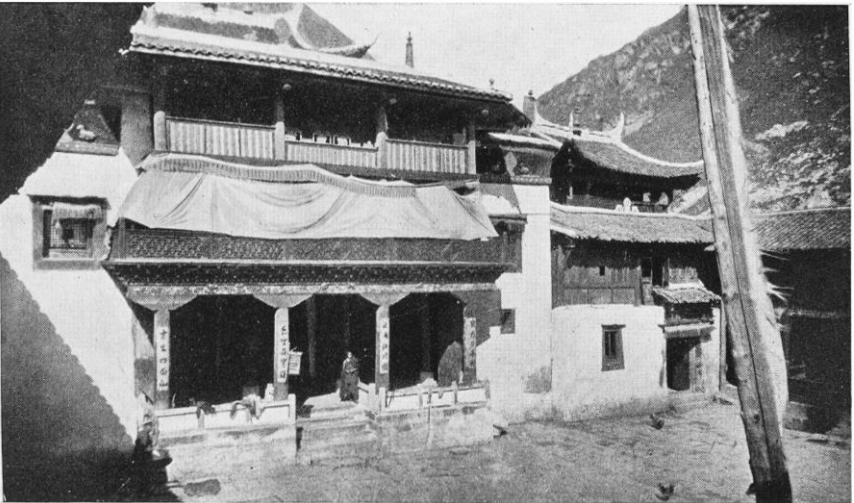
*Read at the Meeting of the Society, 27 January 1919.*

THE secrets of the central part of Tibet, so long the goal of many adventurous explorers, were unveiled by the British expedition to Lhasa in 1904. Lhasa, Shigatse, the seats of the pontiff rulers, and the course of the upper Brahmaputra, have now been laid bare by many books published since then, and by the surveys of British and other travellers. But eastwards of Lhasa and stretching to the Chinese frontier is a country of which we still know little, and where the map-maker is free to use his ingenuity in tracing the course of rivers and fixing the sites of towns. Reasons of policy and the hostile relations between China and Tibet have closed this country to the traveller, and little more is known of it, except for the explorations of Captain Bailey, than at the beginning of the century.

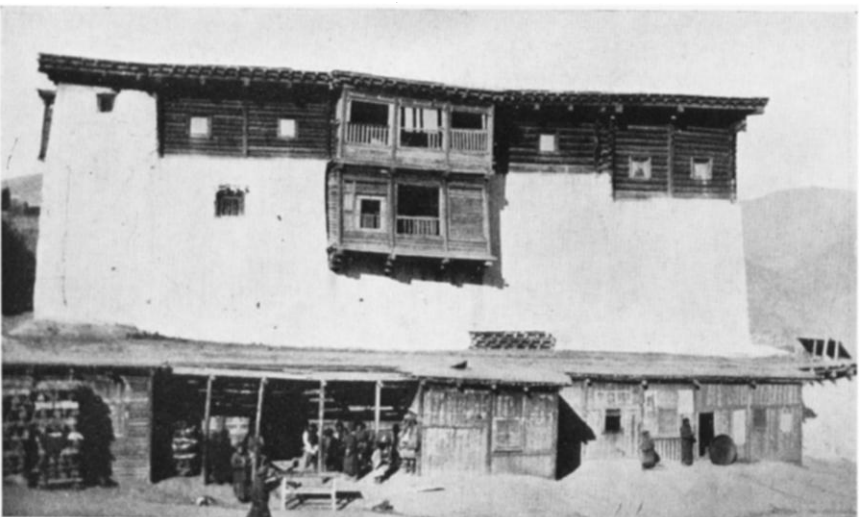
The northern half of Tibet, with which my paper has nothing to do, is, as other travellers have told us, an inhospitable plateau, inhabited only by a few scattered nomads. In the south, where the elevation is less, is the real Tibet, a country of long river valleys that enjoy a genial climate and support a settled population of farmers, and of broad upland pastures and mountain ranges where roaming herdsmen graze their herds and flocks. There are three traditional divisions of Tibet proper : in the west is Tsang, in the centre near Lhasa is U, and in the east is Kham. Of these Kham is the greatest in extent, stretching from the Tanta La, a high pass north-east of Lhasa, to the province of Szechwan in China. It is doubtful if Kham was ever a political division, the name being rather the appellation of a vague stretch of country ; and though some Chinese writers refer to Ch'amdo as if it were the capital, it is probable that it never had a political centre such as Lhasa and Shigatse in the west. In the western part of Kham the upper waters of the Salween and other rivers drain eastwards, and eventually make their way south past the eastern end of the Himalayas. In the east we find the remarkable series of great rivers



TACHIENLU FROM THE SOUTH-WEST

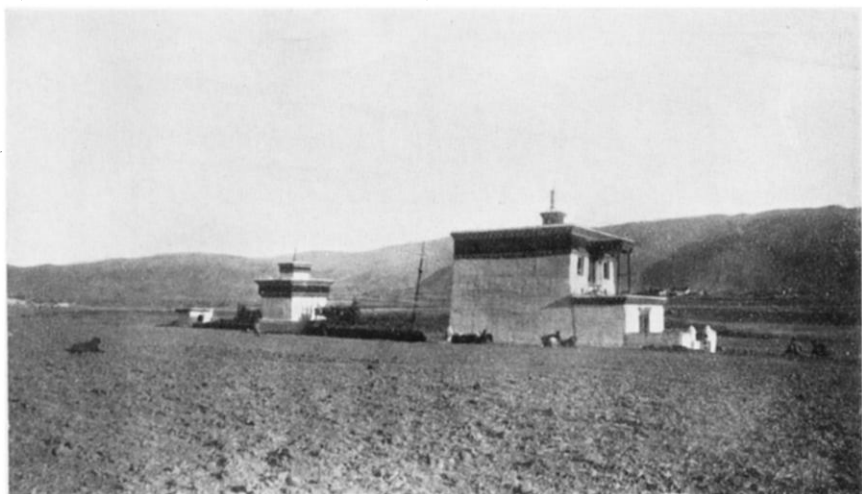


MONASTERY AT TACHIENLU

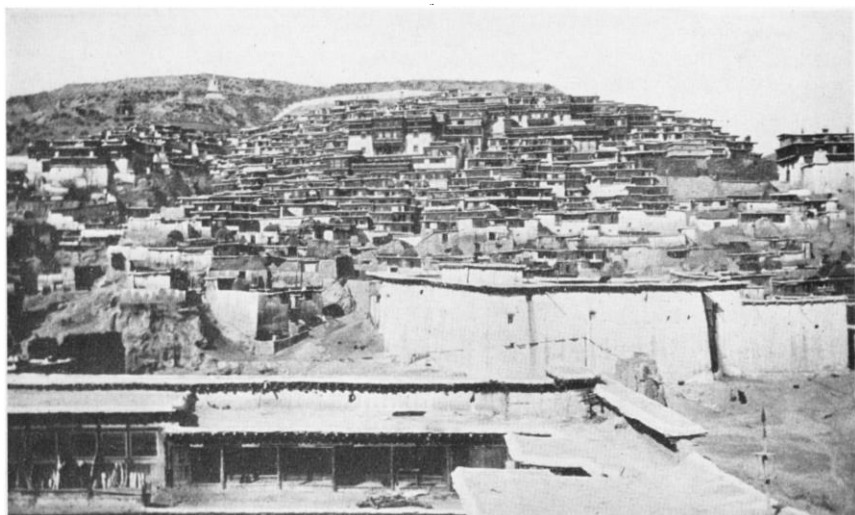


PALACE OF DRANGO

*Phot. by L. M. King*

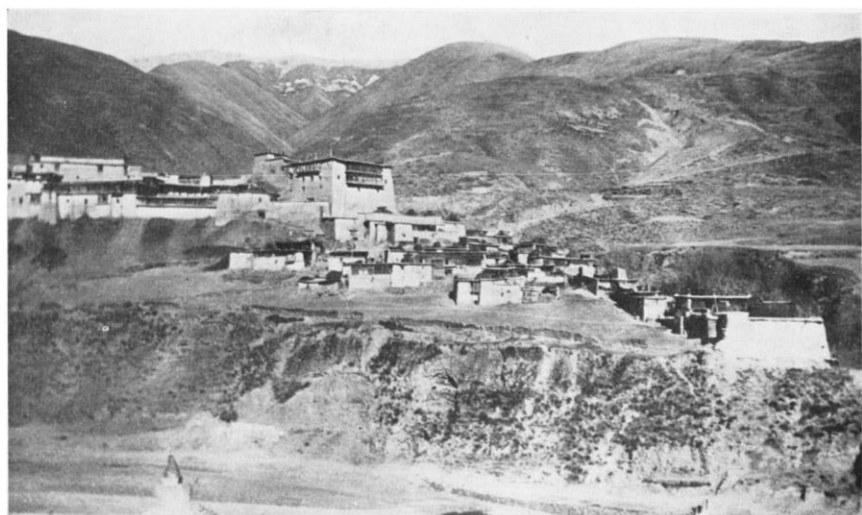


ROADSIDE TEMPLE AND MANI IN RONGPATSA



MONASTERY OF KANDZE

*Phot. by L. M. King*



PALACE AND VILLAGE OF DRIO (CHUWO) *Phot. by L. M. King*

flowing from north to south in parallel valleys, well known on maps of Asia.

The general elevation of Kham is well over 11,000 feet above sea-level, though the river valleys descend as low as 8000 feet. In the parts east of the Mekong, which are those known to me, there are no mountains rivalling the Himalayas, but many of the ranges intersecting the plateau rise to between 18,000 and 20,000 feet or more and the passes crossing them vary from 13,000 to 16,000 feet. The people of Kham are a comparatively pure race of Tibetans and show few marks of the occasional intermingling of Mongols and Chinese who have invaded the country. It is remarkable that the immigrants of these two races seem quite unable to preserve their national characteristics after the second generation, and we find that the people of Gyade in the north-west who claim to be of Chinese or Mongol stock are quite indistinguishable from Tibetans in appearance and language. It is true that in the south there are some aboriginal races, such as the Moso and Lissu, but they hardly count among the people of Kham. The language spoken throughout Kham is a purer Tibetan than the Lhasa dialect and has a large number of archaisms in pronunciation and vocabulary.

The history of Kham is meagre, and names occurring in the earlier Chinese accounts are now almost impossible to identify. Its modern history begins with the Manchu conquest of Tibet in the early part of the eighteenth century. At that time Kham was a congeries of lay and lama states which came under the domination of the Chinese Emperor at the same time as did the Dalai Lama. In the final settlement by which the Manchus confirmed the Dalai Lama in his supremacy over Tibet, the politic emperors resorted to a scheme of buffer states to protect the western frontier of China. The parts of Kham west of the Salween, with the exception of some districts administered by the Chinese Ambans, were given to the Dalai Lama. Three lama princes, who ruled along the course of the Mekong at Riwoch'e, Ch'amdo, and Draya, became direct feudatories of the Emperor, receiving seals and patents of office from him, but acknowledging more or less in spiritual matters the primacy of the Dalai Lama. One is reminded of the status of the former Prince Bishops of the Holy Roman Empire. Further south the district of Markham was given to the Dalai Lama. In the east the boundary of the Chinese province of Szechwan was brought, first to the line of the Yalung, and then to the watershed west of the Dre Ch'u or Yangtze Kiang. The Tibetan chiefs, who numbered about thirty-five, were confirmed in their fiefs and made subject to the Viceroy of the province. The more important were the Kings of Chala and Dege, the Debas of Batang and Litang, and the Horpa princes. The political system thus set up continued unchanged, with the exception that the Dalai Lama acquired Nyarong in the nineteenth century, until a few years ago.

Towards the end of the nineteenth century, owing to the decay of the

empire, Chinese control over Tibet gradually weakened, with the result that the Dalai Lama and the other native chiefs became practically independent. The prospect of losing even the vague suzerainty over Tibet that remained to it began to alarm the Chinese Government, which now decided to embark upon a forward policy. As a preliminary it was necessary to reduce to obedience the chiefs of Eastern Kham who openly derided Chinese authority. A pretext was given when one of the Chinese Ambans on his way to Lhasa was murdered near Batang with the connivance of the lamas of the monastery there. An able and energetic general named Chao Erh-feng was sent with a force of modern drilled troops to put down the rising. He carried out his orders successfully, but not without great difficulty, especially in the capture of the important monastery of Sampiling, which was only reduced after several months' siege. Chao's severity in the burning of this monastery and that of Batang, and in executing many of the lamas, was much criticized at the time.

He next turned his attention to the kingdom of Dege, where two brothers were struggling for the throne. He advanced along the north road, settled the dispute in Dege, and, on the pretext that the people of Nyarong were being oppressed by the Dalai Lama's governors, invaded that country and drove them out. The intentions of the Chinese Government now began to unfold themselves. It proceeded to reassert Chinese authority in Tibet and reduce the Dalai Lama to a mere religious pontiff. With this objective an army was despatched to Lhasa, and Chao Erh-feng went on with his troops to clear the way in advance. A few small battles in which the Tibetans were worsted enabled Chao to conquer the country as far as the Tanta La north-east of Lhasa. The army destined for the capital then made its way thither without further opposition, only to find that the Dalai Lama had fled to India.

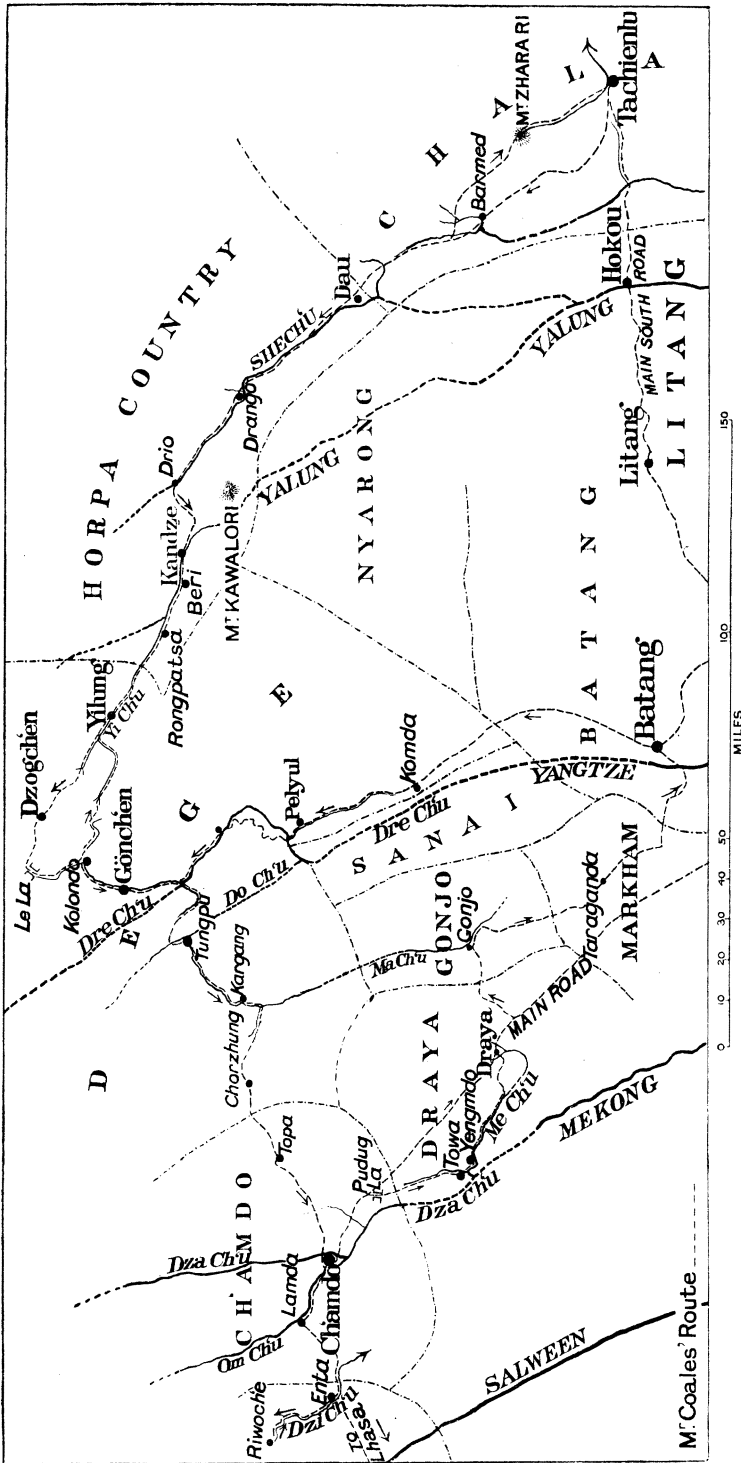
Chao now elaborated a scheme of resuscitating Kham as a Chinese province under the name of Hsi Kang. The country was to be divided up into circuits and districts under a Chinese Governor whose headquarters were to be at Batang. Fortune however decreed otherwise. In the autumn of 1911, just when the last steps were to be taken, the Chinese revolution broke out, and Chao, who a few months before had been elevated to the Governor-Generalship of Szechwan, fell one of the first victims to the insurgents. Profiting by the disturbances in China the Dalai Lama returned to Lhasa, where the Chinese army, cut off from all succour, quickly capitulated. A general revolt broke out in Kham, and all the parts west of the Salween fell into Tibetan hands. Draya also was captured, but Ch'ando held out and was eventually relieved. The Chinese gradually recovered themselves, the insurgents in the east were suppressed, and Draya was recaptured. Fighting went on for some years, but the Dalai Lama was unable to establish himself beyond the Mekong, which, up to the time of my visit, remained the frontier between the opposing forces. At the instance of the British Government active

fighting ceased in 1914, and a conference of British, Chinese, and Tibetan delegates was convened at Simla. Though a convention was drafted, the Chinese Government at the last moment refused to ratify it, with the result that the attempt to make peace failed, and ever since relations between China and Tibet have been hostile. No active movement was made on either side until the winter of last year, when the Dalai Lama's forces, again taking advantage of China's troubles, attacked along the line of the Mekong, captured Ch'amdo and Draya, and now hold all the country west of the Yangtze.

The frontier town of Tachienlu, where I was stationed for nearly two years, is the gateway through which the teas and silks of Western China enter Tibet. Here, in a narrow ravine hemmed in by steep mountains whose summits are clothed with glaciers, converge the two highways which unite Lhasa with China, the official highway through Batang, and the caravan road through Jyekundo. The town has often been described by travellers, and I need say little about it. Once it was the capital of a Tibetan kingdom called Chala, also known as Minyag. The last king was deposed, but still resides in the town, where he leads a precarious existence, alternately oppressed and patronized by the Chinese officials. He is a shifty character whose continual intrigues bring just suspicion upon him. His subjects, whose property and womenfolk he took at will, hated him and do not regret his deposition. His figure is like a woman's, which used to puzzle me, till I found he wore a large Tibetan kau or charm-box on his chest beneath his clothes. When chaffed about it he would laugh, but nevertheless fully believed it protected him from an untimely death.

Tachienlu has a mixed Chinese and Tibetan population engrossed in the caravan trade which takes the teas and silks of Western China to Tibet. The streets resemble those of a Chinese town, but the lama monasteries and the inns where the native traders lodge provide a Tibetan element.

I had long wished to travel further into Tibet, but was prevented for nearly a year by the continued opposition of the Chinese officials. At length in December 1916 a change of governors gave me the opportunity. My object was to travel along the north road as far as possible and endeavour to reach Ch'amdo and Draya, places which had not been visited by foreigners for many years. The first official barrier broken down, I had no further difficulty, and not only reached Chamdo but went some days' journey beyond. I was able to make a compass traverse of the greater part of the route, which includes some hitherto unmapped roads, and to take several observations for latitude. I had with me a Tibetan interpreter, an invaluable man, three Chinese servants, and one Tibetan. My caravan consisted of seven ponies and mules of my own, and about fifteen other animals, mules or yaks, hired from stage to stage. As companion for part of the way I had Mr. Clements of the China Inland Mission at Tachienlu.



Sketch-map to illustrate Mr. Coales' journey from Tachienlu to Ch'ampo. A more complete map based on his observations will be published in a later number of the 'Journal.'

It was a raw misty day with snow falling gently when we set out from Tachienlu on December 2. We considered ourselves rather unfortunate, because the weather in winter is expected to be fine, the roads dry, and the passes free of snow. After a steady climb of 15 miles over a slushy and stony road we arrived late in the evening at the Cheto resthouse. On the next day the weather had not improved, and to add to our difficulties the Tibetan drivers had deserted, being kind enough, however, to leave their animals for us to load. We managed to start off at daybreak to ascend the last part of the Cheto pass. The fairly well-graded road made by the Chinese some ten years before had fallen into complete disrepair, and was most tiring to the animals. On the way up one catches a glimpse of the magnificent peaks and glaciers to the south-east of Tachienlu, the highest summits of which rise to over 17,000 feet.

The Cheto Pass, the gateway to Tibet almost always crossed by travellers from the east, is 13,500 feet above sea-level and 5000 feet above Tachienlu. The Tibetans call it by the curious name of Gyu La \* or Pass of the Entrails, from a hunting story of one of the kings of Minyag. He is said to have wounded a deer in the bowels and to have followed it to the neighbourhood of Tachienlu, where a mountain spirit appeared to him and pointed the place out as the site of the future capital.

Just below the pass we parted from the Batang main road and turned north-west across a stony waste at the foot of a barren range of mountains trending in much the same direction. At its further end is a fine snow-capped peak called Zhara Ri † by the Tibetans. Among the tarns which lie at its foot is a beautiful turquoise lake fed by a waterfall issuing from a glacier. It is the haunt of spirits and is considered sacred by Tibetans, whose lamas often come to spend the summer in meditation in the lovely woods which surround it.

We arrived that night at Trampadrong, ‡ a hamlet in a cultivated valley, where we put up at a local chief's house. Tibetan houses hereabouts are usually square and lofty two-storeyed buildings with walls of undressed flat stones. A stable or cattle pen, in a state of indescribable filth, occupies the ground floor. In the upper storey are the living rooms, barely furnished with a few dirty woollen cushions, low tables and fire-pans. Staircases are rarely found, the usual means of ascent being a notched beam, loosely leaned against the side of a hole in the floor, which must be ascended as a monkey runs up a stick. The flat mud roof is firmly beaten down on bundles of brushwood laid on the roof beams. At the back is an open shed used as a granary, and near by is a little covered furnace where the morning and evening offering of burning juniper branches is made. Some of the better-class houses are painted internally

\* Usually incorrectly written Gi La.

† In Chinese Hai-tzü Shan, "Lake Mountain."

‡ Chin. Ch'ang-pa-ch'un.



and have the lintels and posts of the doors and windows carved; and often there is a private chapel decorated with painted scrolls and images.

From Trampadrong to Dau we travelled along a series of narrow valleys and crossed some easy passes. There were many small villages and tracts of cultivation, but it was melancholy to find nearly half of them empty and the fields abandoned. This was the aftermath of frequent rebellion and official oppression. One hamlet of a dozen houses called Dronggo\* was completely deserted, and in a lamasery near by only two of its forty lamas remained. The aspect of the country is pleasing; woods are rather scarce, but the mountains are low and grassy.

The weather had changed for the better since we had left the cold valleys about Tachienlu, and it was on a sunny afternoon that we arrived at Barmed, † a hamlet of half a dozen houses at a place where two or three open valleys meet and form an undulating cultivated plain. On a hill near the village is a monastery of red lamas peeping picturesquely out of a grove of trees. The only point of interest about it is a superstition that if the number of lamas is at any time allowed to exceed forty, sudden death will at once carry off those who are in excess. An old monastery called Lhagong situated in moorland pastures a few miles distant recalls an incident in ancient Tibetan history. A powerful king of Tibet who lived in the seventh century had compelled the Emperor of China to betroth his daughter to him. On her way to Tibet the princess rested at Lhagong. When she was about to leave the temple a large bronze image of Buddha which she was taking as a present to her husband was found immovably fixed to the ground. The lamas who were consulted ventured the opinion that Buddha was charmed with the seclusion of the spot and wished to remain there, and suggested that his reluctance to go might be overcome by setting up a replica. The image also is believed to have spoken. The advice was followed, whereupon the original image was removed with ease. The replica, which is made of earth, is still to be seen in the principal temple. A sacred relic of a kind not uncommon in Buddhist countries is also shown in this temple: a large footprint in a slab of marble, said to be that of Bashpa Rimpoch'e, a famous lama saint and friend of Kublai Khan, the great Mongol Emperor of China.

Two days later, crossing a wooded pass called Nag-t'ren-he-k'a or Sunglink'ou, we descended into the plain of Dau. We had now left Chala and entered the territory of five small states called the Hor-se-k'a-nga or Horpa clans, which extends along the valleys of two rivers called the She Ch'u and Dza Ch'u, the latter being another name of the Yalung, a tributary of the Yangtze. The names of the states are Drango, ‡ Drio, K'angsar, Mazur and Beri, and the prefix Hor indicates that they

\* Chin. Chung-ku.

† Chin. Pamei.

‡ Chin. Huo-erh Chang-ku, Huo-erh Chu-wo, Huo-erh K'ung-sa, Huo-erh Ma-shu, Huo-erh Pai-li.

are of Mongol origin. In the early part of the eighteenth century the country was governed by a powerful lama named Ngawang P'unts'o, who was sent by the fifth Dalai Lama to convert the district. He founded thirteen great monasteries, some of which we passed on this road. Ngawang was afterwards ousted by a Mongol intruder, probably one of the Mongol band who subjugated the whole of Tibet about that time. After this Mongol's death the country was divided amongst his sons, who are the ancestors of the present chiefs. They have now, of course, been deposed by the Chinese, who have installed Chinese magistrates at Dau, Drango, and Kandze.

The Horpa country is the most prosperous part of Eastern Tibet. The valleys of the two rivers have a genial climate and fertile soil which support a farming population probably the densest in Tibet. Here are produced crops of wheat, barley, beans, roots, and potatoes; and at Dau, where the elevation is below 10,000 feet, even maize can be harvested. In the extensive pastoral districts of the north and north-east, flocks and herds of innumerable sheep, cattle, mules and ponies are let out to graze. But the occupation which brings the greatest profit to the Horpa people is the commerce. The Horpa merchants, amongst whom are counted the ruling chiefs and monasteries, almost monopolize the caravan trade between Tachienlu and Lhasa. The profits are so great that one finds the common people living in houses that elsewhere only lamas could afford to build, and an example of what these people are able to spend on luxuries is shown in the case of the Kandze monastery, where in the past year a new gilded roof had been put on the principal temple at a cost of £5000.

Dau\* is a small town lying in a plain, five miles long by one broad, gradually sloping southwards to the She Ch'u. The plain is extensively cultivated and, in order that the ground may be broken up earlier in the spring, irrigation is generally employed. The population of the town is two hundred families of Chinese, Tibetans, and half-castes. There is one main street full of Chinese shops and thronged with hawkers. Protestants and Roman Catholics have mission stations here, working mainly among the Chinese, and the Chinese tower of the Catholic mission is the most conspicuous building in the town. A little to the west is a great walled monastery called Nyimts'o,† where before the recent rebellions over one thousand lamas lived. Though the greater part has been burned down there still remain the principal temples and a great chorten or pagoda at the south-east corner.

Our road now led up the valley of the She Ch'u,‡ a river which Rockhill in his book, 'The Land of the Lamas,' erroneously calls the Nya Ch'u. It enters the Yalung a little to the north of Hok'ou on the Batang road.

\* rDa-u; Chin. Tao-fu.

† gNyis-mTs'o. Rockhill's name Nin-ch'ung is wrong, probably a Chinese name.

‡ Sh'e Ch'u, locally called Dau Ch'u.

Shortly after the town is left the valley contracts and runs between broad-shouldered mountains, fairly well wooded. The many villages are generally found on the alluvial fans of lateral ravines where irrigation is possible. The valley has a prosperous appearance and in many parts is very beautiful. At Gyel-se-ch'u-k'a, a bridge over a small affluent is called by Chinese the General's Bridge,\* in reference to Yo Chung-chi, a famous general who took a leading part in the subjugation of Tibet in the eighteenth century. After a high neck has been crossed the valley opens out into broad flat lands through which the river winds in several branches. In the upper part is to be found a remote station of the Roman Catholics, where a French father has gathered a colony of Chinese Christians engaged in opening up alluvial soil, neglected by Tibetans, who prefer the openings of ravines. The priest lives in a whitewashed mission house at the hill foot overlooking the fields and vegetable gardens of his flock. The passing traveller is sure of a hearty welcome.

We crossed the river above the mission by a new timber bridge erected by the French father, and ascended a mountain-side to Drango,† a village of about a hundred families, on the north-east face. The river Nyi Ch'u ‡ runs in here. One of the Horpa chiefs formerly lived at Drango in an imposing but dilapidated palace of three storeys, now used by the Chinese magistrate. At the back of the hill is the great Drango monastery, the second in importance of the Gelugpa or yellow sect monasteries of the Horpa district. Secure behind a high and massive wall the lamas live in a maze of brown-and-white dwellings, amongst which rise conspicuously the two principal temples glittering with gilded roofs and pinnacles. These arrogant monks, whose quarrels are a constant source of worry to the Chinese magistrate, received us with very scant courtesy.

We went on for two more days up the She Ch'u. The great north road to Tibet by which we were travelling is full of interest. It is more frequented than the official road through Batang, because the passes are few and easy, accommodation and supplies abundant, and pasture unlimited. Not to speak of the varied succession of prosperous villages and splendid lamaseries, broad pasture lands and nomad encampments, the traveller is diverted by wayfarers of all sorts and conditions. Day after day long caravans of laden animals pass on their way to Tachienlu with wool, hides, medicines, or other merchandise, or return with the teas and silks of China. At one time black shaggy yaks jostle in the road with the long-horned hybrid dzo. At another one is blocked by a stream of laden mules and ponies carrying the merchandise of some monastery of Kandze. In herds of hundreds they crowd the road, urged on by the cries of wild-looking, skin-coated teamsters, armed with swords and guns. These caravans take their journey easily, breaking camp at dawn and stopping soon after noon in order to spare the animals and allow them to graze at will before

\* Chiang-chün Ch'iao.

† Brag-hgo ; Chin. Chang-ku.

‡ sNyi Ch'u ; Chin. Ni-pa Kou.



THE RIVER JUNCTION AT CH'AMDO



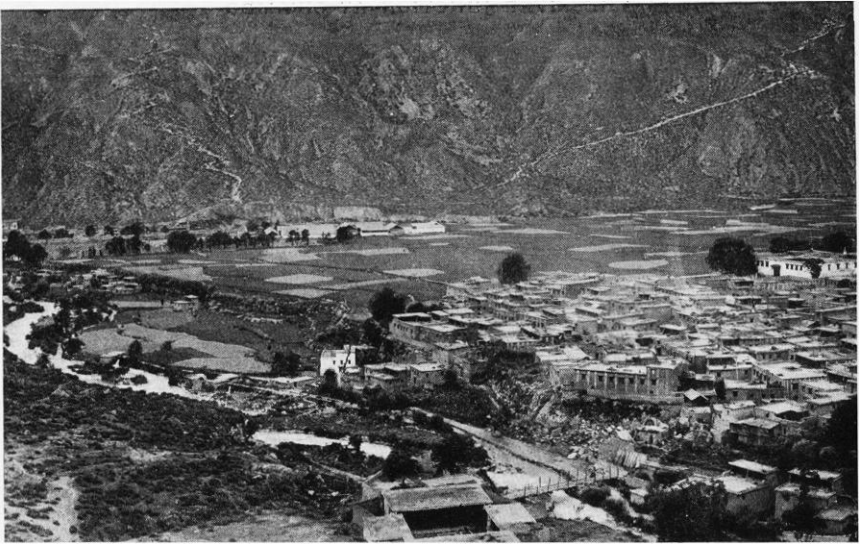
RUINS OF CH'AMDO MONASTERY



THE YUNNAN BRIDGE AT CH'AMDO

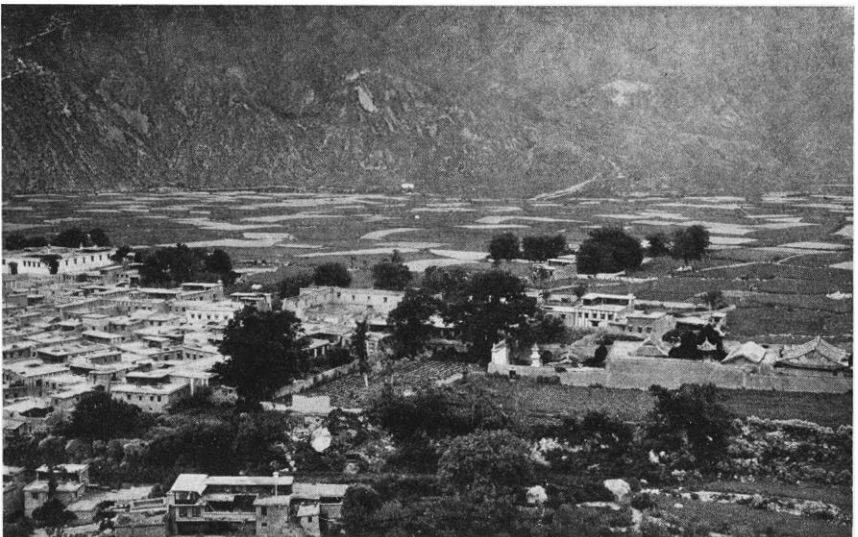


MONASTERY OF RIWOCH'E FROM SOUTH-WEST



BATANG I.

Overlap



BATANG II.

the evening round-up. Occasional fellow-travellers are bands of lama novices trudging on foot to the seminaries of their order in far-off Lhasa. Living on the alms of the faithful, they sleep in the open or wherever hospitable shelter is offered in monasteries or farmhouses. Instead of a peaceful ringed staff, such as the early mendicants of Buddhism used to carry, they are armed with lances to protect them from the dangers of the road. One often meets a stream of country people clad in their gayest clothes returning from some monastery festival, or it may be a stately lama riding to some appointment in varnished hat and silken robes of yellow or maroon.

Passing Drio,\* where from a high bluff the massive palace of a dispossessed chief commands this section of the road, we left the valley of the She Ch'u and made our way over the grassy downs separating it from the Yalung. Here was a small lake and a Gelugpa monastery called Joro Gompa.† The monastery is a neat walled village built on a hillside whence there unfolds a charming view across the lake to a jagged range of mountains rising on the further side of the river. Grazing on the surrounding uplands we saw the innumerable sheep and oxen of the Kandze people. Further on when we surmounted a low ridge there opened out before us the broad plain of Kandze, studded with villages and monasteries. To our left the silver stream of the Yalung wound round the foot of steep cliffs, beyond which rose an unbroken range of snowy mountains, culminating near at hand in a towering peak called Kawalori and stretching westwards to the far horizon. To our right was the sea of undulating grassy downs, and at the further end of the plain, to which we now descended, a bright spot on the hillside indicated the monastery and town of Kandze.

Kandze ‡ is the most important town of the Horpa country and the third largest in Eastern Tibet. The cluster of three or four hundred houses, intersected by winding roads cut deeply into the loess soil, lies at the mouth of a shallow valley. A gateway in the form of a pagoda stands at the entrance, and near by are two other lofty buildings, the palaces of K'angsar and Mazur chiefs. On the face of a bluff above the town rises the great walled monastery, with tier upon tier of crowded dwellings, and, high above them, the temples and palaces of the abbots, resplendent in white and brown and gold. In former times this monastery was second only to Ch'amdo, and now, since that has been destroyed, is the first in Eastern Tibet for wealth and size. Thirteen hundred lamas find a home in its walls and many more in the dependent priories. It is extensively endowed with landed property, but also derives a great income from its activities in the Lhasa tea trade. We were taken round the monastery by

\* Dri-o ; Chin. Chu-wo. The district Dau marked on our maps near here does not exist.

† Jog-Ro dGön-pa ; Rockhill is incorrect.

‡ dKar-mDze, "White and Fair" ; Chin. Kan-tzü.

a crowd of interested lamas and shown the interiors of the temples full of images, frescoes, and illuminated scrolls, and kept in excellent repair. In Kandze I met the young K'angsar chief, the wealthiest Tibetan in the Marches, and also the King of Dege who was passing through. The latter was accompanied by his queen, a handsome and intelligent lady from Lhasa, who, as is so often the case in Tibet, was plainly the master spirit of the two.

I separated from Mr. Clements at Kandze and left the town on December 22. We descended by a road sunk in the loess down to the River Yalung. This river in its course above Kandze is generally known among Tibetans as the Dza Ch'u,\* and further down where it turns south as the Nya Ch'u.† This double appellation has caused some confusion on European maps. Near Kandze the river in winter is a deep stream flowing 3 to 4 miles an hour, 50 yards broad at its narrowest, but broadening out to 70 yards at the winter ford. We crossed the river in the skin coracles commonly used in Tibet, fragile bowls with incurved edges, made of ox-skins stretched on frames of withes. The coracle, which holds five people, is propelled by a single paddle and waddles across the river like a duck walking. Animals, of course, have to swim across unless the water is low enough for the ford to be used. The Chinese have attempted to build a timber cantilever bridge at this place, 210 yards long. The summer freshets always wash the central pier away, and in the annual repairs the Chinese magistrate finds a useful source of private income.

We proceeded up the populous and cultivated valley, past Nyara ‡ Gompa, a beautiful monastery of the Sakya sect, visible from a lofty hill for many miles, past Beri § where a Horpa chief dwells in a ramshackle palace overlooking another great monastery, past some alluvial flats where the winding river affords some excellent duck-shooting, to Dargye Gompa. || Dargye was the first of thirteen great monasteries founded by the Ngawang P'unts'o I have already mentioned. Its name is generally misspelled and confused with the kingdom of Dege, which is quite a different place. Dargye is remarkable only for a grand portico ornamented with frescoes which is used as a congregation hall, but its delightful situation on the southern slopes of some rising ground at the side of a little brook bordered by a poplar grove gives it an air of repose and affluence. A little further on is

\* rDza Ch'u.

† Nya Ch'u. Rockhill in his 'Land of the Lamas' gives this name wrongly to the She Ch'u, mentioned above. From Nya Ch'u is derived Nya-ch'u-k'a, the Tibetan name of Hokow, at the crossing on the main road to Batang; also, Nya-rong, the district south of the Horpa country, called Chan-tui by the Chinese. Nya-rong, which means "Valley of the Nya," has given the Chinese name of the river, *i.e.* Ya-lung. From the other name, Dza Ch'u, are derived Dza-ch'u-k'a and Dza-k'o, names of districts near the river north of the Horpa states.

‡ Nya-Rag.

§ Be-Ri. Neither from the local chief nor at the monastery did I get Rockhill's spelling Berim. Chin. Pai-li.

|| Dar-rGyas dGön-pa.

a fine mani mound of a type not unusual in these parts. These mani walls are piled with slabs of stone inscribed with the mystic charm "Om mani Padme Hum" or with figures of deities. It is the rule of the road that they must be passed on the right hand, for otherwise bad luck will be brought on the caravan, and Tibetan animals are so trained to this that they do it as a matter of course. Some of these mani mounds are adored in themselves, and often women may be seen in the act of knocking their heads on the stones in the hope of obtaining some material benefit such as relief in childbirth.

We left the Yalung valley at Rongpatsa,\* the wealthiest district of the Horpa states, and crossed a low pass into the valley of the Yi Ch'u, a tributary of the Yalung. Our road had followed the northern flank of the range of mountains which came into view near Kandze, and, looking back from this pass in the clear atmosphere of evening, we were gladdened by a magnificent perspective of the mighty range of granite peaks culminating in Kawalori with the rosy hues of sunset on its snows.

We had now entered the kingdom of Dege and were in pastoral country among the black-tented nomads. On Christmas Eve we were at Yilung,† where a petty chieftain has a solitary residence and levies toll on all the tea caravans that use the north road. The weather was fine, and Christmas Day was so warm that my Tibetans stripped to the waist as they walked along. In these high altitudes the temperature falls quickly after sundown, and on Christmas night, which we spent in a Tibetan tent, it fell below zero. A Tibetan tent is not a comfortable abode in winter, and it is strange that the people have not adopted the snug felt house of the Mongols, with whom they have had much intercourse. The loosely woven yak-hair canvas admits air and cold which do not invite one to stay up late. Our host this night was seventy years of age, and his mother an aged crone of ninety, unusual ages in Tibet.

The next day on the way up to the Muring ‡ pass we skirted a narrow tarn amidst desolate mountains, lying, it would appear, in the break between limestone country of the north-east and the granite of the range to the south. The difficult Muring pass is 14,700 feet above sea-level. The greatest danger in crossing any of these high passes is the huge sheets of ice which the numerous small springs and leakages from the rocks gradually form during the winter. Some of them are glassy slopes 50 or 100 feet across, and are especially dangerous in the spring when they are disguised by a thin covering of snow.

At Dzogch'en,§ where we arrived the same evening, one of the principal lamas was a relation of my interpreter, and I was warmly welcomed and entertained in a house belonging to a high official. The monastery, which

\* Rong-pa-ts'a; Chin. Lung-pa-ts'a.

† Yi-lung; also called Lha-ru Ga-t'o; Chin. Yü-lung.

‡ sMug-Ring La; this appears to be correct, though Rockhill gives Muri La.

§ sDzog-Ch'en; Chin. Chu-ch'ing. Usually spelled incorrectly Jogchen.



belongs to a little-known sect of lamaism, is one of the most important in Eastern Tibet. It lies at the northern end of a dry lake facing the high rocky and snowcapped peak of Norbuyukyal,\* in the recesses of which many lama hermits dwell in retreat. As in most of the monasteries of the Red or older sects of lamaism, the principal deity in this monastery is Padmasambhava, the most honoured saint and magician of the earlier Lamaism. The images and chortens or miniature pagodas in this monastery are magnificent specimens of Tibetan work in gilded bronze and silver, richly carved and decorated with a profusion of precious stones. Three huge images of Padmasambhava were recently cast and gilded at a cost of £5000, a pretty large sum considering that the population round Dzogch'en is entirely nomad and numbers only a few thousands.

From Dzogch'en our road led over the range to the south and down into the watershed of the Dre Ch'u or upper Yangtze Kiang. At the pass which we crossed, the Le La, 15,000 feet, the rock was all limestone, showing that the eruptive granite only extends as far as Dzogch'en. We had now left the great north road, and the character of the country had completely changed. We descended into the narrow and densely wooded ravine of the small river Zi Ch'u. Shortly after passing Kolondo,† a small monastery and hamlet, the river enters a profound gorge and for 5 miles flows between vertical limestone cliffs rising 1500 feet above it. So narrow is the chasm that the midday sunshine scarcely finds its way to the bottom, and a general gloom and chill reigns throughout the day. Occasional rifts in the walls afford glimpses of still higher crags and precipices towering to the sky. The narrow road finds a precarious footing along the river-bank, and blocked by precipices crosses and recrosses by flimsy bridges or climbs steep slopes of fallen rock. The gorge ends abruptly, the mountains now bare of forest slightly recede, and when a final corner is turned the pagoda and temples of Göñch'en come into view.

Göñch'en,‡ or the Great Monastery, the capital of the King of Dege, lies in a narrow place where two ravines meet, surrounded on all sides by high mountains of which only the lower slopes rising steeply to 2000 feet are to be seen. Consisting of one great monastery, two palaces, and scarcely half a dozen houses, it is a remarkable capital for a large state, and has given rise to the statement that the king was a lama. The monastery belongs to the Sakya sect of lamas, who are very powerful in Dege, and their well-known custom of painting the houses in broad vertical stripes of red, white, and blue gives the place, which is built in terraces, a bizarre appearance. There is a legend that the site was once a lake, and that a great Tibetan magician and bridge builder named T'angtong Gyalpo turned it into dry land by covering it with his cloak. The miracle is commemorated in one of the temples. The royal palace,

\* "The Turquoise Jewel." Rockhill gives another name which I could not trace.

† Chin. K'uo-lo-t'o.

‡ dGön-ch'en; Chin. Te-ko or Kêng-ch'ing.

with fine carved doorways and internal decorations, is occupied by a Chinese official. The large temples, in which Padmasambhava is the principal deity, contain some magnificent images and miniature pagodas of gilded bronze, encrusted with turquoises, corals, and other precious stones. These works of art, executed by workmen from Ch'amdo, are certainly the finest in Eastern Tibet.

A small temple called the Park'ang, or Printing House, holds the Gönch'en edition of the Tibetan Canon, the Kangyur and the Tengyur. The lamas claim that the blocks were cut by orders of the King of Dege some hundreds of years ago, and that it was envy of a petty king having forestalled them that caused the lamas of Central Tibet to set about making the Narthang edition now used at Lhasa. There are two other sets of blocks in South-Eastern Tibet, those at Dzogch'en and Litang, and, if its history is to be believed, the latter is the earliest printed edition of the Tibetan scriptures. It was originally prepared by a King of Sadam, a native dynasty which reigned at Lichiang in Yunnan, and spread over a large part of Eastern Tibet during the middle ages. The work was executed by Chinese block-cutters, and for this reason every page bears its number and title in Chinese as well as Tibetan. On the fall of the dynasty the blocks were removed to Litang, where they now remain. As the Tibetans learned block-printing from the Chinese, the story is not unlikely.

The old kingdom of Dege,\* usually misspelled Derge, was the largest and most powerful state in Kham. It extended from the Horpa states in the east to Ch'amdo in the west, and from the Koko Nor district in the north to Batang and Draya on the south. It included the upper course of the Yalung, and the Dre Ch'u or Yangtze Kiang traversed it from north to south. Except in the north and north-east the country is a maze of precipitous limestone and sandstone mountains seamed by tremendous gorges draining into the Dre Ch'u. A scanty population of fifteen thousand families is scattered over the whole country, cultivating the alluvial fans of ravines or the lower alpine slopes and grazing the open country of the north. There are no villages or towns of any size, the largest not counting more than a score of houses. In certain parts there are a few workers in metal, carrying on a trade handed down from generation to generation. The articles they produce, such as sword-blades and scabbards, and brass and copper teapots, are of fine workmanship, and highly prized throughout Tibet.

The kingdom came to an end in 1910, when after a fratricidal war lasting for more than a quarter of a century the Chinese stepped in and deposed the king. He was exiled to Batang and granted a pension, while the other claimant fled to Lhasa. The country was then divided into five districts under Chinese magistrates. Throughout Dege the red or older sects of lamaism prevail, the principal being the Sakyapa and the Nying-

\* sDe-dGe, "The Happy Land"; Chin. Tieh-erh-ko-t'ê.

mapa, but in the north are some monasteries of the Bônpa or black lamas. The Dalai Lamas never succeeded in establishing a single monastery of their own order in the country.

I left Gönch'en on 1 January 1917, following the Zi Ch'u down to where it falls into the Dre Ch'u. I had last seen the Yangtze nearly 2000 miles lower down where it forces its way through the famous gorges between Hankow and Chungking. Here at an elevation of 10,000 feet were the same limestone precipices, the same tortuous channel, and the same wooded heights, but how different the other details of the landscape! No fleets of junks, no sweating trackers, no busy villages, but a solitary Tibetan hamlet, a pair of flimsy coracles, and a turquoise blue stream flowing between ice-bound rocks. The river's breadth in winter is 80 yards, and the summer rise about 15 feet.

For two days after leaving the Dre Ch'u we traversed the limestone country, threading our way through gloomy chasms and crossing a high pass. At T'ungp'u,\* a tiny hamlet where a Chinese magistrate ruled in solitary state, so great an event was the arrival of a traveller that the whole garrison of fifty men turned out to receive us. Then followed three days in the open grass country amongst the wandering nomads, the subjects of the petty chief of Lhato, now pensioned off by the Chinese Government. At the Lazhi La, 14,500 feet, we crossed over into the watershed of the Dza Ch'u, the upper waters of the Mekong, the great river of Indo-China. The next pass, the Japed La, 15,700 feet, was the highest and most difficult we had encountered. It crosses an abrupt ridge of towering limestone bluffs which have been thrust through the overlying sandstones. The ridge follows the line of the Mekong valley, running southwards and south-south-eastwards towards Draya and Gonjo. It contains the highest summits between the Mekong and the Dre Ch'u, rising to about 19,000 feet, but is not the water-parting, being crossed by streams flowing into both of these rivers. To the east of it are grey sandstones broken by occasional outcrops of limestone; to the west the uniform red sandstones of the Mekong valley. On January 9, descending from the Tama La we turned the corner of a high spur, and the massive ruins of Ch'amdo at the confluence of the Dza Ch'u and Om Ch'u came into view. At the bank of the river we were met by some Chinese and Tibetan officials, and after a short interview crossed the Mekong by the Szechwan bridge and rode on into the town.

The important town of Ch'amdo †—the name means "The Meeting of the Waters"—lies on the spit of land between the Dza Ch'u ‡ on the east and the Om Ch'u on the west. They are both large rivers, the one being

\* Chinese name; in Tibetan, Rang-sum.

† Ch'abs-mDo; Chiamdo is incorrect; Chin. Ch'ang-tu or Ch'a-mu-to.

‡ sDza Ch'u. This is the upper Mekong. On some maps the course of the Mekong below Ch'amdo is called the Om Ch'u or Omu Ch'u, but this is incorrect, as the Om Ch'u or western branch is far the smaller. Om Ch'u appears to be the correct spelling of this river's name.

60 yards and the other 32 yards broad in winter. Cantilever bridges in the Tibetan style cross both rivers, the more important, that over the Dza Ch'u, being 81 yards long and having three spans. They are known as the Szechwan and Yunnan bridges, and the fact that the former is the lowest bridge over the Mekong gives Ch'amdo its strategic importance. The town is a poor place containing perhaps a couple of hundred houses, Chinese temples, and yamens. Abbé Huc in his entertaining travels says, "Its houses, constructed with frightful irregularity, are scattered confusedly over a large tract, leaving on all sides unoccupied ground or heaps of rubbish. The numerous population you see in the different quarters is dirty, uncombed, and wallows in profound idleness." One may add that the rubbish heaps are a hunting-ground for innumerable mangy dogs, pigs, and fowls. The one narrow street has a few miserable shops where a ten-pound note would corner the market.

Behind the town on a broad platform 150 feet above it are the extensive ruins of the once great monastery of Geden Jampa Ling,\* the glory of Ch'amdo and Kham. This famous monastery, the largest and wealthiest in all Tibet east of Lhasa, excepting only Kumbum, is a thing of the past, and its gaunt walls contain not a single inhabited dwelling. Since its destruction every foot of ground had been turned and returned by Chinese in search of treasure, so that though I visited it several times only a few clay images rewarded my search. Scarcely half a dozen Europeans enjoyed the privilege of seeing Ch'amdo in its days of prosperity. It was then the seat of the Grand Lamas or Reincarnations, who ruled over an independent state the size of Wales in area. I have already mentioned in my introduction how the Manchu emperors confirmed the Lamas in their dignity. As in the case of the Dalai Lamas the succession was regulated by the statutes of the Manchu dynasty. When a ruling reincarnation died search was made among the male children born about that time. The names of those likely to have embodied the deceased saint were sent to Lhasa, and there, with appropriate religious ceremony and in the presence of the Dalai Lama, the Manchu Amban or Resident made selection by lot from the Golden Urn provided by the Emperor for the purpose. As they grew towards manhood the reincarnations would go to study at Lhasa, and be ordained into the priesthood by the Dalai Lama, but otherwise, in political and religious matters the grand lamas were quite independent of him. In religion they belonged to the Gelugpa or orthodox sect of lamaism.

The huge monastery with its crowded houses and great temples glittering with gilded roofs and pinnacles must have been an inspiring spectacle from the surrounding heights. The three thousand lamas, accounted the haughtiest and most insolent of ecclesiastics, ruled the common people with an iron hand, and even the representative of the Emperor was impotent to cross their will. Attracted by the wealth of

\* Dge-lDan Byam-Pa gLing.

the lamasery, artists in water-colours, gold- and silversmiths, and workers in bronze and copper settled in the town to supply the wants of the lamas and founded a Ch'amdo school whose works are highly prized through Tibet. The country, however, was drained to supply the capital. The scanty population of four thousand families was poorer than in other parts of Kham, and the lesser monasteries few and far between.

The ruin of the monastery took place in 1912, after the Chinese revolution. When the Dalai Lama had recovered western Kham Tibetan emissaries came to the monastery to stir up a revolt, promising the assistance of the army which was then on the banks of the Salween. The Chinese had some 240 officers and men stationed in the district of Ch'amdo under a Colonel Peng Jih-sheng. They had taken no precautions, and the stores of grain for the troops remained in the granaries of the monastery. One day in June Peng sent a party of seventy men to draw out grain, only two of them being armed. Just as they were entering the gates the lamas made a sudden attack, killed those who had entered, and drove off the rest. Peng immediately called in his outlying detachments, and with a force of less than 200 men prepared for trouble. He was cooped up in an untenable position below the monastery with an overwhelming force of several thousand lamas and Tibetans threatening him.

As the lamas did nothing for the next few days except to strengthen the fortifications of the monastery, Peng decided to take the initiative. One night he despatched a force of thirty men up the bank of the Mekong below the monastery with instructions to attack and set fire to it on the further side. At the same time he was to attack from the front. The sortie party got round safely and succeeded in setting fire to some out-buildings, which soon spread to the interior. In the resulting confusion they forced their way in burning and shooting. Peng attacked on his side, and the lamas, thinking Chinese reinforcements had arrived, fell into a panic and fled. The whole of the monastery was burned down and some 150 lamas killed.

Having gained the monastery Peng was able to organize a defence, but for three long months he was beleaguered by the Tibetan army which came up and occupied the mountains round, whence they could search the whole of Ch'amdo with their gun-fire. But the Chinese were eventually relieved by an army from Dege, and the Tibetans were driven back beyond the Salween. In the fighting last year Ch'amdo was again besieged, and the gallant Peng, left in the lurch by his government, was obliged to capitulate to the Tibetans.

At the time of my visit the Chinese had withdrawn from the crossings of the river Salween, but still retained Enta and Riwoch'e, two places beyond the Mekong and west of Ch'amdo. I took the opportunity to visit them. The valley of the Om Ch'u, up which we travelled, is well cultivated and has many small villages. The river cuts a tortuous way

through the red sandstone, exposing a series of remarkably contorted strata. Dividing the Om Ch'u from the Dzi Ch'u, a river to the west, is a pass called the Namts'o La, 15,200 feet, which is accounted one of the worst on the road to Lhasa. The road up is a narrow track ascending through a dense forest of the finest timber I had seen in Tibet. The descent is a long scramble down a slope of loose stones and through a gap in a wall of limestone crags which break through the sandstone. The Dzi Ch'u \* is a large river flowing south, marked on some maps as entering the Salween and in others the Mekong. I was told it joined the latter. Enta, † a hamlet of twenty houses, is an old Chinese post station where we parted from the main road to Lhasa. There is a Chinese magistrate here, most of whose district is occupied by the hostile Tibetans. With only two hundred families to care for he should not find his duty of being a father and mother to the people a difficult matter, but I fear the only part he acts is that of an unfeeling tax-gatherer.

To remind us that Tibet and China were at war we learned at Enta of an encounter which had taken place the day before between some Tibetan marauders and Chinese soldiers on the road we were going, but it was taken as a matter of course and we were allowed to proceed.

The beautiful monastery of Riwoch'e, ‡ which was the farthest west I attained, lies in a spacious valley at an altitude of 12,600 feet on the sunny side of a wooded mountain. Like Ch'amdo it was the capital of a lama state ruled by an abbot, owing allegiance to the Emperor of China, but in practice independent. It is a stronghold of the Kargyupa, another of the older sects of lamaism. A quarrel between the abbot and one of the other reincarnations led to the latter taking refuge with the Dalai Lama, while the abbot sided with the Chinese. There are half a dozen large temples in the monastery, badly knocked about by the Chinese soldiers who came to protect it. One of them, a four-storey building, contains an interesting collection of ancient weapons and armour, which were captured by the Chinese in their campaigns against the Mongols in Tibet in the eighteenth century, and were presented to the monastery by the general. A miserable village of a few stone hovels is attached to the monastery. I thought it was a beggars' camp till, finding that the monastery was full of soldiers, I had to go and stay there. The haughty lamas objected to any secular buildings which might spoil the appearance of the monastery, so any lay people who wished to live near at hand had to burrow underground, not allowing their roofs to project more than two or three feet above the surface. Being ill at the time I spent two miserable days in a cellar lit by a skylight. I had the good fortune however to witness a religious dance in honour of the Tibetan new year.

\* Dzi Ch'u or Dze Ch'u. I am not sure which, though Dzi Ch'u was given me.

† Chinese name. Rockhill gives Nyulda as the Tibetan name. My informants gave Nge-mda (Snge-mdaa).

‡ Ri-bo-ch'e; Chin. Lei-wu-ch'i.

I returned to Ch'amdo by the same road, and, having stayed there a few more days, set out on the return journey to Tachienlu. As the main road to Batang had been done by several Europeans, including Abbé Huc, General Bower, and Mr. Rockhill, I decided to take a route nearer the Mekong, which was quite new and indicated to some extent the course of the river. I could not follow the river itself, as it was the frontier between the Chinese and Tibetans. We left Ch'amdo on January 29, and followed the main road for two easy stages as far as Paotun,\* where we found ourselves once more in a limestone region. A climb over a short but steep pass, however, brought us back to the Mekong valley, where we emerged on a mountain flank high above the river. A broad expanse of country now opened out before us. From our feet the mountain-side, broken into alternate spur and gully, fell away to where far down a gleam of silver 4000 feet below showed where the Mekong forced its way round some impeding cliff. Near at hand patches of tillage, woods, an occasional farmhouse, or a small monastery graced the gentler slopes, while on the far horizon rose a massive hogsback of high mountains seamed with innumerable ravines and black with dense masses of forest. Beyond it was the valley of the Salween.

The road now ran along the face of the mountain for some miles to a village called Shing'ka. One notices here that agriculture is practised at the remarkable height of nearly 14,000 feet above sea-level in a district well within the temperate zone, and that the villages are fully as prosperous as those in the lower country. I suppose this is accounted for by the heated air of the Mekong valley rising up the mountain-face instead of ascending directly to the sky.

We left the Mekong valley by another pass, and for two days descended the valley of the Ja Ch'u to the hamlet of Towa, where it joins the Me Ch'u, the river of Draya. The Mekong was only a few miles from the confluence, so I went down with a Chinese escort to see it and communicate if possible with the Tibetans on the other side. The Me Ch'u † runs down to the Mekong through a gloomy cañon in the sandstone, which is the only east and west route for trade across the river, but is very rough and often impassable when the river is high. The Chinese were somewhat reluctant to go down, as they said the Tibetans would shoot at sight; but though the latter were very suspicious and would not come near for a long time, we were at last able to hold a parley across the river. They were a rough lot of men armed with rifles, but with no sort of uniform. The river runs through a deep gorge between steep mountains, leaving scarcely any space for the track which follows it. The Tibetans had taken away the ferry-boats or coracles, so there was no means of crossing to the western side.

\* Chinese name. Rockhill gives Tibetan Pungde. My informants, the headmen, Spom-sde = Pomde.

† rMe Ch'u.

We returned to Towa and went on to Yengmdo,\* a monastery and village on the Me Ch'u. Yengmdo, which had never before been visited by Europeans, was the chief monastery of the state of Draya and original seat of the lama princes. It is now a complete ruin, having been destroyed by the Chinese, and its thousand or more lamas have been dispersed.

Draya is two days further up the populous valley of the Me Ch'u. Before it reaches the town the road crosses a pass called the Ge La, which cuts off a bend in the river. On the way up we spent a night at Bika Gompa, which was overcrowded by lamas from Yengmdo and Draya. Jealously guarded in a private courtyard was a young man who was a reincarnation from one of the monasteries east of Tachienlu. The Tibetans, like other Buddhists, believe that after death people are reborn as men or animals or in other forms again and again, being only able to escape the revolutions of the wheel of life by attaining to Buddhahood. The highest state of re-birth is that of the Bodhisats, the saints who, having attained that state, of their own freewill decline the Buddhahood in order to assist suffering mankind to follow in their footsteps. The Tibetans believe that the Dalai Lama is the reincarnation of one of these Bodhisats. But Lamaism has added to this creed by asserting that lesser saints are also reborn to carry on their good works in successive ages. As in our own religion it is the privilege and power of the saints to work miracles, prophesy, and generally assist mankind, so Tibetan reincarnations are credited with similar gifts. The cult of relics brought much wealth to the monasteries in the middle ages. In Tibet, while the use of relics is not excluded, a live saint is a far more lucrative possession, and it is not surprising that a degraded priesthood took advantage of it. So we see that the cult of reincarnations, which was comparatively rare in the sixteenth century, has spread over the whole of Tibet and Mongolia, and every monastery, large or small, tries to possess one or two reïmbodyed saints to attract the offerings of the credulous. If they cannot exalt one of their past abbots to the dignity of a saint and pretend that he is reincarnated, they do not hesitate to appropriate those of other monasteries. This was the case of the young man I have just mentioned. He had been travelling towards Lhasa to join the schools there when his guide and tutor died at Draya. A benevolent lama took compassion on him and brought him to Bika, where he is now permanently appropriated, bringing spiritual comfort to the surrounding villagers and a flow of wealth to the treasury of the monks.

The next day we arrived at Draya,† or Jamdün ‡ Draya, a small town lying in a plain where three rivers meet to form the Me Ch'u. The place suffered greatly in the rebellions of 1913 and 1914, and the great monastery was almost completely burned down. It was the most southern of the three buffer states, being ruled by an abbot and two other reincarnations,

\* dbYeng-mDo; Chin. Yen-tai-t'ang.

† Brag-gYab; Chin. Ch'a-ya.

‡ Byam-hDün.



whose territory extended on both sides of the Mekong. There are about 150 families in the town and a Chinese magistrate. The name Draya means "Rock Shelter," and is an allusion to a lama missionary who lived in a cave and evangelized the country.

I was laid up again at Draya for about a week, and when I was half through the illness my Tibetan interpreter became anxious and went to consult a lama astrologer. The lama performed some sort of a divination and pronounced that my illness was not serious and that I would be well in three days. Sure enough the sickness, which was mainly due to charcoal fumes, passed off in three days, and my interpreter acquired a still deeper belief in the miraculous powers of the lamas.

From Draya to Batang we took a route somewhat to the east of the main road, passing Gonjo,\* where on a precipitous crag a formidable dzong or fortress, formerly occupied by an official of the Dalai Lama, overlooks the Ma Ch'u. This river flows northwards into the Yangtse. We then turned south-eastward across nomad country and down the long and beautiful valley of a river which joins the Yangtze near Chupalung. Two high and difficult passes, both over 15,700 feet, still separated us from this river, and, as the winter was now wearing on and the first snows had fallen, the passage was extremely arduous. At Shisongong, on a cultivated slope below the second pass, we rested before crossing the river. The next day our road zigzagged down the face of a tremendous precipice, 3000 feet down to the ferry, and opposite at Nyugu rose a similar mountain wall, a striking illustration of the profound gorge through which the Yangtze Kiaug flows.

At Nyugu † we rejoined the main road, and 7 miles further on arrived at Batang.‡ This town has so often been described that there is no need for me to say much about it. It is a busy place, with a mixed Chinese and Tibetan population. It was here that the rebellion took place which led to the Chinese attempt to bring Tibet under their control. Since then the native chiefs have been deposed, the monastery destroyed, and Chinese officials introduced. Catholic and Protestant missions have establishments here, and I stayed with Dr. Shelton of the American mission. Evangelization amongst the Tibetans is found to be most difficult, and success seems only attainable by adopting and educating young children. Dr. Shelton tells an interesting story illustrating the credulity of Tibetans. One night when travelling in the country he was sitting with his followers round the camp fire. The conversation turned on the subject of the kau or charm-boxes always worn by Tibetans on their chests. They contain pieces of writing from the scriptures, small images, and other charms which are supposed to protect the wearer from death. Dr. Shelton challenged their efficiency, and in the ensuing discussion laid a wager that if he fired at a man who was wearing one and did not kill

\* Go-hJo ; Chin. Kung-chueh.

† sNyu-Gu ; Chin. Niu-ku.

‡ Chinese name. Tibetan is hBa.

him he would pay a thousand rupees. No one, however, had faith enough to take the wager. The story got about when they had returned to Batang, and shortly afterwards a deputation of Tibetans whose minds were disquieted waited on the doctor and re-opened the discussion. They suggested that the experiment should be tried on a goat instead of a man. Dr. Shelton had no objection to a goat or any other animal, so the bargain was closed. On the day fixed the Tibetans brought out a goat with a large charm-box attached to its neck. They were very particular to examine the rifle to make sure that there was no trick or magic about it, and having satisfied them the doctor fired, killing the goat and smashing up the charm-box. The believers in charm-boxes were struck dumb, and went away discomfited. A few days after, however, another deputation waited on the doctor and explained the reason of his success. The charm-box which had been used had been blessed by the two reincarnations at Batang. One of these was a saint in acts as well as in name; the other led a notoriously immoral life, and obviously his blessing had acted as a curse and neutralized the blessing of the other. No one knows what the goat had to say about it.

At the time of my visit the main road to Tachienlu was infested with robbers, and I decided to return by the north road and incidentally map the little-known route from Batang to Dege. A long journey of six days lay between Batang and Gönch'en. The road runs on the whole in a northerly direction, following a line of valleys east of the Dre Ch'u. The whole country is densely wooded and thinly peopled. The spring was now coming on, and with it the seasonal snow which rendered the two passes to be crossed before Pelyul very arduous. We reached Pelyul,\* two-thirds of the way to Gönch'en, without incident except that we had to stay one night in a village where every house had a case of small-pox, a disease which decimates the Tibetans. Pelyul has a picturesque lamasery built in tiers on the summit of a rocky pinnacle.

We avoided the main road here and took an easier and slightly shorter road down the river of Pelyul to the Dre Ch'u 4 miles distant. Once more we crossed the river, and ascending the heights on the further side skirted the river at a height of 2000 feet. It was a surprise to find that the upper Yangtze made here a broad right-angled bend not shown on the maps, turning from south-east to south-west and then, at the place where we crossed, to north-west, though how far it went in that direction I cannot say. The river's further course down to the neighbourhood of Batang is still unknown. We recrossed to the eastern bank, and following the river up rejoined the road by which we came just below Gönch'en.

From Gönch'en we retraced our steps to Kandze, taking the slightly shorter main road, and from Kandze went on to Tachienlu, where we arrived at the end of March after just under four months' travelling.

\* dPal-yul; Chin. Pai-yü.