

KHAMS OR EASTERN TIBET

J.H. JEFFREY M.B., Ch.B.

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CHAPTER 1 DOORS OPEN

On the left bank of the Greater Gold River (Ta Chin Ho), two day's journey or so above the city of Tanpa in West China, stand the impressive ruins of the Far-reaching Dharma Lamasery (Kwang-Fah Sze). The ruins are arranged in crescentic form to follow the contour of a river-side flat, and stand on the site of a still older lamasery, which had belonged to Tibet's heterodox Black Sect. About one hundred and ninety years ago, with the conquering Chinese, came changes. It was necessary to turn the thoughts of the conquered Jarong and Geshi-Bawang people, from Lhasa, to their new over-lords in Peking. To this end, the Chinese Emperor was declared to be a Buddhist incarnation, equal to the Dalai Lama and Pan Chen Lama in Tibet; and under the Emperor's direct patronage, Lamaism was compulsorily reorganized, with the Yellow Sect Lamas heavily subsidized, and with one of their number holding office as Bishop of the region directly under the aegis of the Emperor.

The Far-reaching Dharma Lamasery was made the seat of this Lama Bishop. Eighteen feudal princes were allowed to retain their hereditary offices, but had to indicate their allegiance to China by appearing every year at the lamasery to worship.

But changes came again, and the Imperial rule of China

gave place to that of the Chinese Republic. With the disappearance of the Emperor, the lamasery fell on evil days. Local officials no longer transmitted the revenues legally due to the lamasery; its chapter gradually scattered, and in due time the Bishop of the day found himself living in lonely isolation and relative penury, though still glorying in the resplendence of his position, to the departure of which glory he seemed to have blinded himself.

Such was the position in 1934 when a missionary passed by. It happened that the Bishop was engaged in the occupation which some consider to be the lama's main occupation when in residence. He was looking out of a window! As the traveller passed, he hailed him and invited him to come into his room and talk, for he had heard of the foreigner's presence in the neighbouring town. During the conversation in Chinese which followed, the missionary told of his desire to preach the Gospel to the Jarong people, and of his need of first learning the Jarong and Tibetan languages. He gave the Bishop some Christian literature, and begged permission to be allowed to take his photograph, promising him a copy in return for this privilege. Lamas who have travelled, like photographs, though the unsophisticated in Tibetan regions may be camera-shy. Happily the Bishop belonged to the first category, and was flattered by the offer. A friendship was struck, and the Bishop offered to teach the missionary Tibetan.

A few weeks later, the missionary decided to take advantage of the proffered tuition and accompanied by one of his junior workers, returned to the neighbouring town from which he could walk daily to the lamasery for lessons. The Bishop received the foreigners kindly, and undertook to keep his promise. Alas, it was soon clear that teaching foreigners was not his forte, and as weeks slipped by, the

two missionaries were tempted to think that they were wasting their time. The Bishop knew how to drill his lama pupils in the Tibetan alphabet, and to lead them on, step by step through the imagined profundities of Tibetan learning; but he had never learnt the rules of systemized grammar, and so with broken Chinese, he could not impart much to the two minds trained in Western ways of thought. He could teach lama novices the magical power of spells and chanted liturgies; the various ways of choosing propitious days for beginning journeys, or being married; the manner in which the gods should be worshipped and coerced into showing favour to men; the manner in which the work of malicious demons may be prevented or undone. He could impart such knowledge of the Universe as Lamaism teaches, such as the flatness of the earth with its several satellite worlds, or the exact number of the stars which he considered to be one hundred and eleven million one hundred and eleven thousand and one hundred and eleven 'because Buddha saw and counted them all'. He could also discourse learnedly on such subjects as the wanderings of the soul of the deceased between death, and the reincarnations in which he believed. But to explain the use of Tibetan declension case endings, or the greater mysteries of Tibetan verbs to his two foreign pupils, was quite beyond his powers. Though he could talk excellent Lhasa Tibetan as well as Jarong, he had never had to learn Tibetan in a systematized grammatical way and so, with his little knowledge of Chinese, he proved himself a most disappointing teacher.

There were other handicaps too, for being a man of position he still had public business to transact at times, and so his various affairs frequently crowded out lessons to his pupils. It is proverbial that 'the East' cannot be hustled, and in the case of the Bishop, it seemed as though his delight in the importance of his business made him linger

inordinately over the transaction of his affairs, that he might enjoy them the more. At their best it is seldom that the Easterner can put through the amount of work in a given time, that the business-like Westerner can do.

Yet another occasional cause of wasted time was the Bishop's childish delight in dressing up! His two pupils were both tall, the senior being around six feet three inches! One morning, for his entertainment, the Bishop had his pupils try on some of his ecclesiastical vestments. They dressed in thick red waistcoats, heavily and richly worked with real gold and silver threads, each garment costing forty ounces (liang) of silver. As the epaulettes exaggerated their breadth, and the long flowing robes and high pointed hats exaggerated their heights, the Bishop chuckled like a child with simple delight. It seems that the Dalai Lama had recently sent out an order to high ecclesiastics to look out for tall men who might be employed, four at a time, as door keepers at his palace, the Potala in Lhasa; where it seemed they would serve in the guise of the 'Four Heavenly Kings', mythical beings whose portraits appear, two on either side of every orthodox temple door in Tibet! The Bishop thought that perhaps the two missionaries might meet the requirements!

But there were other sides to the Bishop's character; and as the days passed, the missionaries observed that he was a man of high principles and lofty ideals. He had the greatest admiration for a man of integrity, reliability, and truthfulness; seemed to aim to reach this standard himself; and as a shrewd judge of character, was quick to assess the moral worth of those with whom he came in contact. If he found a character who not only conformed to those requirements, but also placed learning, and the things of the spirit before the things of this world; and moreover combined with it all a benevolent and placid spirit given to

good works, then his admiration knew no bounds, for clearly this was the ideal he had chosen for himself.

Arriving earlier than usual one morning, his two pupils found the Bishop chanting through one of his sacred books. Pausing for a moment he explained that he did this every day so that when he was old and his eyes were too dim to see, he would have the precious word stored in his heart. With what yearning the missionaries longed that the word which he was storing in his heart, might be the Word of Life instead; and how they longed that such a sincere soul as the Bishop might be led out of the darkness he called light, into the light of God! 'If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!'

It is often asked whether those who have gone far into the so-called mysteries of idolatry really retain their belief in the doctrines to which they are committed, but in the case of the Bishop, it seemed he certainly believed. On another occasion when the missionaries arrived for the lesson, the Bishop was going through ceremonies to ask help from an idol in a matter of local politics, at the request of the local Chinese magistrate. The local Jarong had risen in rebellion against excessive taxation and were even then threatening to burn the Chinese town. Within an hour or two a letter for a town alderman was brought to the Lamasery, and fell by mistake into the hands of the magistrate who at once detected in it underhand work against himself, for he was not popular. Possession of the letter so strengthened the magistrate's position before those he ruled, that it was accepted at once as an answer to the prayer to the idol and acclaimed as such. As the Bishop — rubbing his hands with delight — emerged from the room to meet his pupils, the missionaries were nonplussed for an answer, so genuinely did the Bishop believe his idol had answered prayer. For the missionaries, the incident proved a lesson against lightly dismissing as of

no consequence, superstitious ideas which to the heathen are reality. Such ideas have to be swept away, but they cannot be disposed of by mere ridicule.

But now we must come to the reason for writing so much about this interesting man. One afternoon, like a bolt from the blue, the Bishop announced that he controlled eighteen princes (now a merely nominal number) and he could give his two friends a passport to travel through the territory of all those princes! It was with difficulty that the two missionaries suppressed their excitement for this territory included a number of states hitherto regarded as closed to the Gospel. That night in their inn, the junior missionary told his senior that the evening before he had been reading in the second Psalm 'Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession,' and so had felt led to ask the Lord to give him those very states. Though perhaps the verse was taken out of its context, the Lord had heard, and in less than twenty-four hours had moved the paramount lama ecclesiastic of the region, to offer a passport thereto.

"Well," said the senior, "that is interesting because the first time I sighted the lamasery (a month or two earlier), I prayed aloud, that God would do great things here, and in a few minutes I was being called in to meet the Bishop. That was the beginning of our association with the old man."

In the days following, the question of a passport was frequently spoken of. The Bishop asked the missionaries why they wanted to visit those states, and they told him frankly it was to propagate their religion and do medical work. The Bishop thought this was very virtuous and became more and more enthusiastic, though he realized that the doctrine they wished to propagate was diametrically opposite to what he taught, for the missionaries had been careful to see to it that their friendship with the old man was

not the result of their concealing their own beliefs and aims. The Bishop's own way of putting it was that their teachings were contradictory, and he illustrated this by putting his two hands back to back.

Meanwhile the year 1934 was slipping by: to prepare for such a journey, time was needed to buy in the necessary silver, and prepare suitable clothing. Moreover, ordinary household stores were low, as were medical supplies, and since a prolonged journey was being planned into very high altitudes, and unknown regions stretching far northwards where the climate could be expected to be more severe, with winter coming on, and with the possible difficulty of procuring supplies, on the way, common sense dictated delay until the spring. By then it would be possible to organize a caravan, and travel in a manner considered appropriate for travellers of consequence. But the urge of the Spirit persuaded them to set out as soon as possible. Accordingly a short visit was made to their base three days' journey away, to make what preparations they could, and then the two missionaries returned to the lamasery to ask for the promised passport. The Bishop was as friendly as ever, but it was nine days before he could bring himself to write out the passport. There had been further local political trouble, and for the second time the local Chinese magistrate was seeking safety in the lamasery with his family and attendants. A few days later he left, dismissed from office, and a new official arrived to take his place. The Bishop took part in the welcoming of the new man, and the bidding farewell to the retiring one, and could not give himself to the weighty task of writing out a passport for the missionaries. Such a task could not be undertaken lightly! The time came, however, when it was actually written, and two great seals (one Chinese and the other Tibetan) being produced with much show, the imprints were placed on the

document. The afternoon of the 5th of October saw the missionaries actually on the road bound for the North, clad in woollen gowns like the Jarong, accompanied by a Jarong dedicated to the Lama church who had been unable to qualify as a lama, as an interpreter.

In promising the passport the Bishop had explained that he was giving it to them because 'Their hearts were knit together' explaining this by hooking together his two fore-fingers. He then added in a mixture of Tibetan and Chinese, "Dkon-mchhog T'a tsu-teh" — "It is God who has done it!" His words were perhaps truer than he realized.

After leaving the Bishop, the travellers headed northward and passing through the last Chinese Colonial outpost, Hsuch'ing now called Ch'inhwa, they entered the state of Kroskyab, of which Drozur is the capital. The king was a man of desrepute, who was said to regard neither his gods, nor men. His anxiety to possess a potion to save himself from being poisoned however gave reason to doubt the complete accuracy of this report. He did not seem disposed to be helpful, but as he had recently been even more uncivil to his overlord the Chinese Magistrate, the missionaries felt their welcome might have been colder. But their passport could not be entirely ignored. Moreover, it was noted that they spoke Lhasa Tibetan (those elementary sentences learned from the old bishop in the Far-reaching Dharma Lamasery), and so the local people whose sympathies were with central Tibet, rather than China for whom they showed strong antipathy, tended to accept them the more readily on this score. Some medical work done, also helped to gain acceptance for the missionaries. Thus help was given in obtaining horses to carry the travellers' baggage to the next state. The baggage included two horse loads of copies of the four Gospels in Tibetan, one load of medical supplies and a tent, and one load of personal effects and provisions.

Thrilled and thankful to God, the Lord's messengers pushed on beyond Drozur, for they were now in territory not previously seen by any Westerner. Some years earlier another missionary had penetrated as far as Drozur, but had been fortunate to escape with his life.

After a day's journey from Drozur, the missionaries crossed the Ta-chin river by coracle into the State of Dsiggag, where they found the people more disposed to be friendly than in Kroskyab; as indeed were all other peoples they met in their travels. From Dsiggag, they travelled far north out of the deep valley country, via the State of Chogtse, to the State of Ngaba on the great grassland plateau of Tibet. Returning, they passed more completely through the State of Chogtse, and then the State of Tampa, and so back to the Far-reaching Dharma Lamasery, where they told the Bishop of their journey. The difference between the Tibetan Plateau, and the 'deep-valley country'; and of the individual states referred to, are dealt with fully later.

The Bishop heard the travellers' story with pleasure, and felt flattered to learn how much weight his passport had carried when presented to the rulers of the States visited. However he also took the opportunity to enquire privately of the man who had served as interpreter, of the tempers and characters of the missionaries, as he had experienced them. A report was given which pleased the Bishop, and confirmed for him a thought that his two friends must be at least re-incarnations of persons of advanced sanctity, if not of some higher beings! How essential it is for the missionary to realize how minutely the heathen examine his life! But how strangely they may seek to explain the manifestations of the Spirit of Christ in human frames. Paul and Barnabas were once mistaken for Jupiter and Mercury, and now two other missionaries were being thought of as possible Buddhist

avatars!

After a few days further delay, with renewed and mutual asseverations of friendship, the missionaries took leave of their friend to return to their base, from which they had been absent for two-and-a-half months. The story of the journey is a tale in itself. Nine times, passes averaging three miles high were crossed. Nights were often spent in the open in hard frosts, or falling snow. Parched barley-meal and butter-tea was the staple of their diet. Weariness from tramping days on end, or sitting without a change through the life-long days on yak-back was the rule. But against the hardships of the road, the missionaries had the joy of knowing they were the first to penetrate to these regions with the Gospel, and on their return to know that doors had been left open through which they could return later.

The missionaries never saw their bishop friend again, for six months later the Communist rebel armies of China were driven by Government troops into the mountains where, as elsewhere, they gave themselves over to terrible massacring. In the slaughter, the Bishop was killed, beheaded, it was said. Shortly before their final leave-taking, the missionaries had added a New Testament to the gifts of literature they had made to the Bishop. As talk once again had turned to the subject of doctrine, the Bishop of his own accord promised to read a portion from it daily. Then, picking up a copy of **Pilgrim's Progress** he had previously received he asked "What about this book?" He was told, "Yes, that is good also, but the New Testament is the book on which to nourish the soul." Whereupon, once again the bishop averred his intention of reading daily from the sacred book. It is on record that 'the entrance of Thy Word giveth light', and so the missionaries wonder if after all, they will some day meet their friend again in the city of which 'the Lamb is the light thereof', or whether he ended

his days in the darkness in which he had lived.

As regards the journey just completed, had the dictates of common sense been followed, and a delay been made until the spring, it would probably never have been taken at all. The opportunity would have been lost. Alas! that opportunities given them for '— closed' territory to be entered, have still not been taken advantage of.

CHAPTER 2 DOWN TO EARTH

The sequel to the story told in the foregoing chapter has yet to be written, for though there had been given reasons for encouragement in the belief that the autonomous territories visited would be open to the Gospel, there were also rebuffs, so that it was never finally possible to establish settled missionary work within their borders. The story of the Acts of the Apostles opens with accounts of the Holy Spirit operating with the majesty of the divine prerogative, to upset the natural order of things that the Apostles of Christ might be launched on their task of obeying their Lord's last commission. But the same book goes on to tell of conflict with world forces, and to relate incidents in which the same omnipotent spirit seemed to leave the powers of evil to have their way, when interference might have been expected in the interest of the servants of Christ and of 'the work'. Yet we dare not say that the Holy Spirit was directing the conflict any less, when as the result of false accusations, Paul was left to languish in prison for two years because the Governor Felix, desired a bribe; while twenty or thirty years earlier an angel from the Lord Himself, had come to open the prison doors for other Apostles. Nor dare we say that the Spirit Who, with the gift of tongues performed such wonders through simple men at Pentecost, was not still operating when Paul was stoned and left for dead at Lystra;

or when the riot at Athens seemed there, to have left the last word with the Devil. In Christian work, the Lord's hand may at times be seen working strikingly on behalf of his servants. At other times advance seems to be one long struggle against overwhelming odds, with nothing to encourage but the remembrance of God's undertaking and faithfulness on former occasions.

Lest the story of the Abbot of Far-reaching Dharma Lamasery give the reader the impression that Tibet is about to open to the Gospel, it is necessary to emphasize that contending with the seemingly invincible, was the dominant feature of missionary work to reach Tibetans, when last access to Tibetan country was possible. Nevertheless, memories drawn from the past, of God's undertaking in specific circumstances, have proved to be most steady to the missionary, who might otherwise have been tempted to abandon the task as an impossible one.

It is now necessary to descend abruptly to the prosaic, and consider in some detail the topography of the land with which we are dealing, with its rigorous climate, arduous means of communication, and inconveniences of life. The inhabitants of these rather inaccessible, if romantic regions, must then be considered in regard to their temperament, culture, outlook on this life and beliefs regarding the life to come; their attitude to intruding missionaries, and the religious and political controls to which they are subject, whether voluntarily or involuntarily. It will then be possible to review the opportunities for, and difficulties of taking the Message of God's Saving Grace to these peoples; and perhaps to consider the methods and means God would use to this end.

In the popular mind, few countries conjure up thoughts of romance and mystery combined with inaccessibility and the lure of the unknown, more than does Tibet. These

thoughts are enhanced by the knowledge that free travel and the right to reside in Tibet have been definitely forbidden to the Westerner. This very prohibition itself heightens the interest. It was not generally understood however, that China claimed direct suzerainty over a very large part of Tibet, and that the most populated regions are included in this territory; and that moreover where China ruled, the missionary, had hope of entrance subject to local conditions and the whims of local rulers both Chinese and native. China's direct control of metropolitan Tibet was lost soon after the Revolution in 1911, when Tibet's ruler the Dalai Lama summarily informed the Chinese president, Yuan Shih-K'ai, that he intended to rule Tibet himself. The territory then under Chinese oversight was north-eastern Tibet called Tsinghai (or Ko-ko-nor in Mongolian); and south-eastern Tibet which includes the Province of Sik'ang, (formerly called Ch'wanpien and earlier still Ch'ien tsang or Anterior Tibet), and a large section of the Province of Szechwan, which ethnographically and geographically, really belongs to Sikang. In our search for a name to apply to the territory being considered we have adopted the Tibetan word 'Khams', since we have evidence that this geographical division of Tibet was apparently thought of as extending far enough to include the most easterly of the Tibetan peoples, and so over-rides China's arbitrarily drawn provincial boundaries. On the other hand it includes territory to the west where China no longer rules, though Western maps commonly indicate otherwise. For convenience we are also including here a consideration of some territory to the north which is hardly included in the term 'Khams', but which happens to be under the oversight of the Szechwan provincial government.

Country which is nowhere under a mile high (save for a very few valleys at its edges), and which is more often

between two and three miles above sea level, with plenty of peaks and ranges much higher still, is no ordinary country. Such is Khams. The country must be thought of as an extension of the great plateau of Tibet, covered partly with deciduous or coniferous forest, but more particularly with open grass-lands suitable for grazing such stock as may be acclimatized, and in favoured spots, capable of producing hardy cereals. The yak is the animal reared in particular, and barley is the staple grain. The country is not as flat as the proverbial pancake, but consists of wide open valleys separated by relatively low rolling hills. Sometimes from a suitable vantage point, these rolling hills may be observed as far as the eye can see into the clear blue distance, all approximately of the same height, suggesting an ancient peneplain which has in geologically more recent times, been cut into by streams. The view however is not monotonous, for always somewhere there are higher mountains to be seen, often snow covered, and possibly straddling one's road ahead. Speaking very generally, drainage is from north to south. The great rivers of Khams are the Salween, the Mekong, the Yangtze, the Yalong, the T'ong, and the Min. The Yalong, T'ong, and Min all eventually empty into the Yangtze. The Min may for practical purposes be taken, in its upper reaches at least to be the natural geographic border of Khams. As these rivers flow south, leaving the high plateaux, their valleys, and the valleys of their tributaries are cut deeper and ever deeper until they have produced an entirely different topography to that already described, namely, one in which deep steep sided valleys alternate with mountain ranges rising thousands of feet above their beds (perhaps a mile or more). We leave the geologists to tell us how far these approximately parallel ranges, are but the remains of the gouged-out edges of the plateau from whence the rivers had

their origin; and how far they are their result of separate upthrusts of the earth's crust. Sufficient for our purposes to note the transition from the grasslands already mentioned, to this country which has been picturesquely named 'The land of deep corrosions'. In this zone of territory, Tibetan peoples to the north meet non-Lamaistic aboriginal peoples to the south in some of the wildest and most fascinating territory of China, while the Szechwan-Sikang-Yunnan border still awaiting proper survey, staggers erratically across mountains and rivers. From east to west these aboriginal peoples to whom we allude are the Lolo or Nosu, Nakhi or Mosu, Lisu, and Lutze.

As well as the typical grasslands and the typical 'deep corrosions' there are to be found regions of all grades of transition. Wild and most desolate valleys of rocky crags and barren soil are found, down which icy streams from melting glaciers begin their courses to tropical Burma, or to the far off China sea. On the other hand, entrancing regions of well-wooded mountain sides, luxuriantly flowered alps, and enthralling views also abound. Naturalists have visited Khams from time to time and reported on their findings, but it is beyond our ability or present wish, to present a catalogue of the country's flora and fauna. The newcomer from the United Kingdom however, is impressed with how European rather than Asiatic this is, and is reminded that the Tibetan highlands have been held to be but the eastern end of a great more or less continuous mountain system which included the Alps, Carpathians, Caucasus and Himalayas. Thus you will find an astonishing abundance and luxuriance of such old acquaintances as the buttercup, celandine, fox glove, iris, violet, primula, daffodil, anemone, hollyhock, raspberry, strawberry, and currant, each species of course in its own appropriate habitat. A Swiss visitor would find his own natural floral emblem, the

edelweiss, more abundant than in his homeland, while (turning to fauna) the many lammergeyers and marmots of Tibet's higher altitudes might well make him nostalgic. Through these Elysium-like alps and forest glades of Khams, deer and wild goats bound, wild boars root, and squirrels spring, and various species of the leopard and lynx family disport themselves. At the sterner altitudes of the grasslands, wolves roam, and wild yak move in herds. Other creatures more peculiar to the region occur as takin and as a white bear (first seen by the intrepid J.H. Edgar and when reported on regarded as a mere traveller's tale); while to the east where Khams ends are found the pandas, of which the giant white species has in recent years been introduced to Western zoos.

Perhaps of more concern to the missionary minded reader however, is the matter of climate, for climate is thought to modify temperament, both racially in the case of indigenous peoples, and individually in the case of the missionary who has been transplanted into their midst. Thus, to digress momentarily, inhabitants of temperate regions, when moved to the tropics are said to develop an irritability and forgetfulness due to loss of powers of concentration, and accordingly on empirical grounds, missionary societies and business houses give their members and agents frequent visits to their homelands. On the other hand, dwellers in the temperate zones, when moved to Arctic regions are observed to develop depressions. Much of Khams is, as regards latitude subtropical. Kangting, Litang and Batang, three important centres within it, are approximately on the same parallel as Delhi or Cairo, but altitude vastly modifies their climate. We suspect however, if daily records were kept of the summer afternoon temperatures in some of the deeply cut 'corrosions', that tropical temperatures would be recorded, where vegetation is sparse, and the cliffs radiate

the heat first absorbed into shut-in valleys and gorges. Happily cooling off at night is considerable, and moreover, irregular heating of the air in these enclosed spaces produces sudden and violent perpendicular swirling winds which, though highly unpleasant because of the miniature dust storms they produce, have the effect of greatly modifying temperature by replacing the hot air with cooler air from above. On the whole, in spite of latitude, we may regard tropical conditions in Khams as too transitory to produce their traditional effects.

At the other extreme, on the more northerly grasslands, arctic conditions may be experienced at the higher altitudes (say 13,000 feet) sufficiently severe for nomadic Tibetans to forsake in winter their spider-like tents of black yak hair cloth for low-built dwellings made of turf supported with that often precious commodity, wood. As yet we have heard of no missionary attempting to spend a winter under these conditions, but doubtless some one will do it before a Christian church is established among these people. At that time the missionary may be partly sustained by the knowledge that the bitter frosts of winter are but seasonal, and that summer will bring a respite of mild and pleasant weather.

More than tropical and arctic extremes however, Khams provides those climatic conditions due to high altitude alone. In this respect, physiologists have paid attention to such things as pulse and respiration rates, blood corpuscle counts, and exercise tolerance tests, as the human body has to undergo adaptation when a lowlander takes up residence in high altitudes. Here we will merely observe that the average European or American of good general health, finds little difficulty in acclimatizing to life, say up to 10,000 feet. Above that height a sense of great exhilaration and increased vigour is observed for a few weeks, followed by a

reactionary period when all muscular activity demands much greater exercise of will for its accomplishment, and when an introspective missionary may become depressed over his own sense of laziness. It is also stated that at these higher altitudes the new-comer is particularly exposed to unusual fears and apprehensions which may be quite groundless, and which have to be guarded against. Sleeplessness is often spoken of as being experienced at high altitudes, but it is the writer's opinion and experience that this is exceptional. It appears to occur in individuals who are susceptible to a mild and unrecognized anxiety state. On the other hand, idleness can make the mind drop into an insouciant dreaminess, when personality seems to lose its identity in the environing mountain spaces, and this has been commented on, and suggested as the source of one Buddhist conception of the Nirvana state.

Possibly the most striking feature of the climate of Khams is its range of variation within a period of twenty-four hours. A winter day may begin in one of the 'deep corrosions' with ten or twenty degrees of frost, and at two o'clock in the afternoon in a sunny courtyard a temperature of 80° F may be noted the same day. Or in July the missionary may be riding horseback over the grasslands enjoying the midsummer sun with only a shirt on his back, when with little warning, a hail storm will spring up and compel him shiveringly to pull on hastily, every extra garment he has at hand, while the temperature drops abruptly several degrees and seems to drop much more as the icy hail lashes him. Dressing for such a climate brings its difficulties. In rocky districts these great diurnal ranges of temperature causing much expansion and contraction (i.e. solifluction) are a factor in the fragmentation of the rocks which is a feature of Khams, and makes rocky roads seem so much more rocky.

Meteorological records of course have not been widely kept as yet, and it is difficult to speak authoritatively for such a great region. However, generally speaking we can say that most precipitation occurs in summer, whether as rain, or the violent thunder and hail storms of the grasslands just referred to, or even as snow at still higher altitudes. Winter is typically a period of cold nights, but pleasant sunny days of almost cloudless blue skies. The sequence of these is broken two or three times each winter by a few days of overcast, increasing and terminating in falls of snow, after which the blue skies appear again. The lie of individual valleys decides local diurnal winds which may spring up very suddenly and be biting cold. Higher overhead at about 14,000 feet for almost 365 days of the year, a westerly or south-westerly wind blows along with changeless monotony.

Points connected with life and travel in Khams will be mentioned in a later chapter, but the subject of earthquakes may be briefly referred to, for Khams is an earthquake region. If a line be drawn from the important centre of Kangting (Tatsienlu: capital of Sikang Province) through Taining and Taofu (two centres with a status of 'hsien'), and continued north-west it will be found that this indicates very closely a line along which earthquakes occur. Edgar has remarked that the epicentre of each successive quake seems to occur progressively further north-west along this line. The region is well scarred with fissures. Tibetan stone houses in this region often have great baulks of timber built horizontally into their walls to help limit the effects of cracks caused by quakes running from top to bottom. On March 24, 1923 a disastrous quake occurred with its epicentre at a place, Kaladrong, with a Rossi-Forel intensity of ten (i.e. there was complete destruction of buildings). The loss of life throughout the district was very heavy. The quake occurred while the inhabitants were preparing their

evening meals round the kitchen fires, where cauldrons were boiling. The quake splashed the contents of these cauldrons over all around, causing frightful scalds over and above other injuries, and accounted for the death of many. The geologist, Arnold Heim has made a study of this region and the interested reader is referred to his report in the **“Bulletin of the Geological Society of America”** (volume 45. pp 1035 - 1050).

CHAPTER 3

THE PEOPLES OF KHAMS

It is now necessary to consider the people who live in these great tracts of territory. It is usual to dismiss the question as to who they are quite quickly by remarking that the Tibetans are a branch of the Yellow Race, apparently related to the Mongolians. In support of this the facial characteristics of the Tibetans are referred to, and the subject is left at that. The peoples of Tibet are bound together by a common religion which more than anything else makes for national cohesion, as on the other hand, religious differences can make for the greatest disunity. A common language spoken throughout most of Tibet further helps to unite the scattered and isolated sections of the population. It is therefore an easy step to assume that with one religion and one language the peoples are one racially, but the assumption may be very fallacious. Unity of religion is no real argument here, while as regards the conception of a common language, perhaps insufficient attention has been paid to regional differences. In this respect, a point to be considered concerns Tibetan literature which, for the most part is the religious literature of the land. Lama students drawn from every home throughout the hierarchical dominions, study these books and come to adopt the language of them as standard Tibetan as far as they understand them, and their own speech comes to be

modified accordingly. Thus, over a period of hundreds of years, religious studies have apparently been smoothing out linguistic differences between sections of Tibet's population. The process would be more rapid if real erudition were more general among the priesthood, who generally speaking alone are literate; and were it not that the Tibetan of the books is of different style, depending mostly on the period of composition. Tibetans are given to travel, and intercourse with neighbouring peoples breaks down linguistic barriers. On the other hand, there are several ethnic groups in the east of Kham, who still use their own distinct languages, though their lamas learn standard Tibetan, as Roman Catholic priests learn Latin.

Tibet is not a land where people would naturally choose to live. The difficulties of wresting a living from such inhospitable country, are such that if they had had a choice, the original settlers would doubtless have sought more fertile regions and milder climate. It is therefore suggested that the Tibetan population is made up of the descendants of ethnic groups who, under pressure from aggressive neighbours have been forced out of more favoured regions. Their numbers have also probably been augmented by outcasts from other societies, fugitives from justice, and political refugees from surrounding regions who have sought safety in the fastnesses of Tibet. This view is favoured, though admitting that a Mongolian element may dominate in the nation as a whole. The author has drawn attention to a considerable Aryan content in Tibetan which is particularly related to the Celtic-Latin group of languages, in the **Journal of the West China Border Research Society, 1937 pp., 135 - 159.** Edgar (**Ibid 1932 V p 68**) had earlier noted a few Sumerian words in the language. L.A. Waddell repeatedly affirmed that the elusive Aryan race was in fact Sumerian. It remains to be explained how

this Sumero-Aryan content comes to be in Tibetan.

An example occurs in history, of people being forced to migrate into Tibet under pressure from a stronger people behind them. When the Goths (Yueh-chih in Chinese) were under pressure from the Huns (Hsiung-niu in Chinese) they began their great migrations westward from somewhere in what is now Mongolia. Most of their hordes crossed central Asia and overran Europe, but a section known as the Lesser Goths (Hsiao Yueh-chih in Chinese) turned southward into what is now Tsinghai or Kokonor, where they took refuge, and doubtless contributed to the formation of the population there. It was suggested by the Rev. J.H. Edgar that the blue-eyed Tibetans very very occasionally met with in Khams, are descended from them. This suggestion presupposes that the proto-Goths had blue eyes which may or may not have been the case. (After the Gothic migrations, the Huns of course also migrated across Asia to Europe).

It is thought that the people called Jarong, found in the extreme east of Khams, also represent a migration into Tibet under duress. The migration was from the north-west of India from the frightful massacres of Tamarlane (A.D. 1336 - 1405).

Highlanders the world over have the reputation of being intelligent people, but emotionally volatile; and generally speaking the Tibetan is no exception. Typically he is restless and craves change of experience, and so will not remain at one occupation indefinitely. He finds variety in travel, and perhaps excitement in brigandage, between periods of domestic life. Tibetans have been likened to the Arabs, who are recognized as being gifted with great intellectual powers but too given to internecine struggles, to build up an influential civilization capable of contributing much to world culture. Nevertheless in discussing Lamaism, it will be seen

that Tibetan civilization is quite remarkable.

It is now necessary to comment in turn on each of the Ethnic groups in Khams. This will be done with the hope that students of missionary work will find information of value, but with the knowledge that the casual reader may find the matter to have merely the holding interest of a gardener's catalogue, and that he will soon abandon the book. These racial groups are to be found partly in Szechwan and partly in Sikang, but as the provincial boundary has been drawn quite arbitrarily, and follows no geographical feature, or ethnographic border, it may be ignored in this study. Moreover there were until 1948, no serious hindrances in the way of the missionary's crossing, and recrossing it at will.

The Hsi-Fan: The classical name for the Tibetans is **Tupo** from which our English Tibet is believed to be derived. The Tibetans call their country **Böd**. As the Chinese cannot pronounce a final **d**, and the nearest sound they have to a Tibetan **B** is an unaspirated **P**, it is clear that the **Böd**, and the **po** in **Tupo** are the same. The ideographs for **Tupo** however are now pronounced **Tu-fan**. An apostrophe used in spelling a Chinese name indicates an aspirate. The initial syllable **T'u** may be explained as meaning **aboriginal**, but appears to be a Chinese homophone for a Tibetan syllable of obscure origin. **Vide W.W. Rockhill's The Life of the Buddha, popular edition p. 216.**

During the T'ang Dynasty of China (A.D. 618-906) the T'u-fan or Tibetans, overrunning country north-west of present day Sung P'an, emerged into China, and turning south repeatedly overran the whole border as far as the Nanchao confederacy in Yunnan. China was glad to buy them off. It was at this time that China paid tribute to Tibet, which tribute included a Chinese princess named

Zakong or Kongcho (Wen Ch'ang in Chinese) who was sent to the Tibetan court to be the wife of King Srongtsan-gampo. This was in A.D. 641, in the reign of the Chinese emperor T'ai Tsung. The invasions of China proper were checked and the Tibetan hordes turned back, but remained in the territory they had overrun, around and north-west of Song P'an. This land was formerly occupied by a Tartar tribe called T'u ku hun (or T'u Yu hun) and also by a people called Ch'iang. The descendants of these T'u-fan are now called Hsi fan or Western Tibetans. The word 'Western' is applied because they are found to the west of China, though they are to the east of Tibet. Like all Tibetans the Hsi fan are Lamaists, and their language may be regarded as a dialect of Standard Tibetan. Its deviations from the Standard as it is spoken in Lhasa, are presumably due to words absorbed from the Tartar T'u ku hun they overran. Around Song P'an the Hsi fan farm the high but open valleys, and graze their animals on the alps of that region, which is transitional between the typical grasslands and the deeply gouged-out valleys to be found to the south. They live in large wooden farm houses. More remote from Song P'an are found nomads, Hsifan yak caravans, and the caravans of people living beyond them, bring out skins, wool, salt and dried medicinal herbs to the city of Sungp'an, and in return they buy tea by the hundredweight, and an assortment of Chinese products to take back to their homes. The Christian and Missionary Alliance worked amongst these people from south Kansu and from Ts'ing-hai.

The Ch'iang Min: South of the Hsifan, live remnants of the Ch'iang race already referred to. The Ch'iang people have a long history, and have apparently experienced a number of migrations. At one time they occupied country reaching from Kansu to a point below Yaan (Yachow), now in

Sikang province. For over 2000 years they withstood Chinese aggression, but their independence was finally broken in the reign of the Emperor Ch'ien-lung. (A.D. 1736-1796). They are entirely housedwellers who farm terraces, and the steep slopes of the valleys on the right bank of the Min river north of Wenchwan. They also keep herds of goats and sheep. Their houses being of stone two or more storeys high with flat roofs on which much of the work is done, are not dissimilar to those of other peoples found throughout West Szechwan and Sikang.

The Ch'iang-min are very religious. They are not Lamaists and therefore need not be considered Tibetans, but it emphasizes the anomalies of the region, that because of their geographical position, they need to be referred to here. They have a considerable pantheon of their own and a hereditary priesthood, the members of which however, do farming. The theory that the Ch'iang are of Jewish origin seems to be without adequate foundation. They are not monotheists as has been supposed.

The supreme god of the Ch'iang is a benevolent sky god, who since the arrival of Christianity, some sought to identify with Jehovah. His worship is conducted in the presence of a white stone, which is sometimes confused with the deity himself. In the belief of the Ch'iang in their sky-god, we may recognize traces of an ancient belief in the One True God, and a missionary might conceivably choose this as a starting point in his preaching, following the example of Paul on Mars Hill who said to the Athenians, 'Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you.' (Acts 17:23) But he would not want to graft the glorious Gospel of God onto a plant grown up in heathen darkness.

The Ch'iang people do not apparently make images to represent their gods, unless the private god which each priest makes for himself with the skull and other parts of a

monkey be regarded as an image.

Rev. T. Torrance, F.R.G.S. worked amongst the Ch'iang people for a number of years, and for his labours saw a Christian church established among these people. Later, missionaries of the China Inland Mission from Kwanhsien occasionally visited these Christians. Unhappily no workers were forthcoming who could undertake the sustained spiritual care of this church. Later they fell within the district which was being worked by a native Chinese missionary organization, but the last news of them suggested that they were in great need of sound Bible teaching.

In the last few years, the 'Chinese-ization' of these people had been accelerated. Now, few but the older people speak their own language, which does not seem to be related to any of the languages around, and apparently will soon be lost. The younger people speak Chinese, and wish to be regarded as Chinese.

It is recorded that in settling in their present habitat, the Ch'iang displaced a people named Yao who are no longer found in Szechwan, but whose descendants are in Kweichow Province. This isolated item of information leaves one speculating about the migrations of a forgotten age, perhaps before China was China.

Dr J. Rock, the authority on the Mosu, Nasu, or Nakhi of Yunnan, regards the Ch'iang and Mosu as being derived from a common stock, which the Chinese regarded as being the original Tibetans — probably because they know of no people beyond them in the direction of what is now Tibet. If Dr Rock, and Mr Torrance who concurred with him were correct, much light should be thrown on the ethnography of the Sino-Tibetan borders.

The Ch'iang have a tradition that they once had a literature, which through inattention to learning, they lost.

Dr David Graham formerly of the West China Union University, Chengtu drew attention to the fact that this tradition is by no means peculiar to the Ch'iang as we now know them. The Karen people of northern Burma also have this belief. The tradition can also be recognized in a Chinese story of the way the Buddhist Scriptures reached China. They were lost in a river en route and were only recovered by catching the fish which had swallowed them, and then tapping the fish on their backs to make them disgorge the papers they had swallowed! Chinese Buddhists recall this event when chanting, by tapping a wooden fish with maddening monotony. The significance of this 'lost scriptures' tradition may be explained to us some day.

The Krechu or Hehshui: To the north-west of the Ch'iang are found a people called Krechu or Hehshui. The latter name means Blackwater and is the name by which they are known to the Chinese. It is really the name of a river, in the valley of which some of these people live. They are housedwelling Lamaists of a wild lawless disposition, given to plundering, and notorious for thieving. They have been violently anti-Chinese and were never really conquered by them. As well as being farmers, they are noted craftsmen with metal. Their skill in building house walls with broken stone, and with mud for mortar is also famed. If available information about these wild and inaccessible people is correct, it may be taken that their social structure is feudal, families giving allegiance to village elders, who in turn give allegiance to one of several headmen. These headmen, in turn formerly acknowledged a king as overlord, the king of Someg, in whose territory people called Jarong also dwell. Unfortunately, when this prince died somewhere around 1933 without direct issue, three rival claimants for the kingship appeared and civil war ensued. These three men

represented three parts of the Krechu country, namely Mach, Luhwa and Laisu. Luhwa and Mach represent the upper and middle regions of the Hehshui valley respectively, whilst Laisu lies on the other side of a mountain from the headwaters of the Hehshui. A state of unstable equilibrium was arrived at, with Mach and Luhwa united and maintaining their general independence under the more forceful ruler of Mach, and apparently these two regions must now be regarded as one independent principality. Laisu being without a ruler, the county authorities from the Chinese city of Lifan, (which claims oversight of those people) has stepped in and attempted to introduce the Chinese form of local government, by appointing a petty official called a hsiang-chang to control the region. This is in accordance with China's usual policy of waiting patiently until an opportunity occurs in the autonomous regions, such as the extinction of a royal line, or a local rebellion against the excesses of a native ruler. Then she steps in, over-rules the issue, and establishes her own system of government. In this case however the new regime at Mach has also appointed a man to oversee Laisu as headman. The Chinese authorities were unable to persuade him to withdraw! We do not know how the situation was resolved. However, this story gives a fair picture of inter, and intra-race politics in these regions generally. If space could be taken to describe the political intrigues, often with violence, together with the complications which arise through close intermarrying among the ruling classes, the picture would be complete.

The Krechu speak their own language which may be akin to Tibetan. A Chinese estimate of their number suggests a population of 40,000 people in Mach and Luhwa. If Laisu is proportionately as populous one might guess that the total number of Krechu must be somewhere around 60,000.

Apart from a few copies of the Gospels in Tibetan which may have been carried into their country, it can be said that these people have not yet had the opportunity of hearing the Gospel of God's saving grace.

Polotze: In the valley of a tributary of the Hehshui, live another sedentary people called Polotze. They are reputed to be as wild as the Krechu, and fighting and pillaging often occurs between the two races. These people are said to be a colony of Nosu (or Lolo) from Yunnan Province, who were engaged as mercenaries by the Chinese to fight the Hsifan during the Ming dynasty (A.D. 1368-1644). It seems that they now speak the same language as the Krechu, and have become Lamaists. Members of this race come to the city of Song P'an occasionally, in the interests of trade, but very little is known about them. So far no one has taken the message of salvation to them.

Heofan: Sandwiched between the Ch'iang and Krechu is another small racial group of people called the Heofan. Their origin is as obscure as that of the Polotze. Their name means **the hinder Fan**, and is doubtless given in reference to the Hsifan who would be **the anterior Fan** as seen by Chinese administrators in the city of Song P'an. The name assumes a connection between the Heofan and the Hsifan. Their country was visited somewhere about 1922 by an exploring missionary, who found them deeply involved in the growing of opium, which was being smuggled into China.

Rgyalrong or Jarong: To the south of the various Fan people, and to the south of Ngaba, are to be found the Rgyalrong who constitute the largest ethnic group in Khams. They are constituted into small, but well defined

states. The first missionaries to meet these people, on hearing their name, accepted it as a Chinese one, and transliterated it 'Kiarung' according to a system of transliterating Chinese words, in vogue at that time. In fact the local Chinese hardly know the name, but some who have come into contact with Westerners, seem now to be adopting it, and going further, identify the people with an ancient race called in Chinese Rung or Jung or Yung. Locally, Chinese who have not been influenced by Westerners, refer to these people as Manchia (less politely as Mantze) or as I-ren. Now the name **Man** originally referred to non-Chinese people living to the south of China; and **I** was the name of a people to the east. Both terms came to be used loosely for anything barbarous, i.e. non-Chinese, and so going a step further came to be transferred to the people of west China whom we now call Jarong. (The readers unacquainted with Chinese may take the suffixes, **Chia tze** and **ren** as being equivalent to **men** in such words as Frenchmen and Dutchmen.) That it has been possible to transfer these ancient names, **Man** or **I** to another people, suggests a need for a name which has occurred relatively recently, since the practical disappearance of the original bearers of the name.

The word Jarong is really the Tibetan name for the people, and if transliterated strictly as written, should be **Rgyalrong**, but the Tibetan spelling is complex and the rules of pronunciation of combined consonants so involved, that it is necessary to use a system of modified transliteration which will give some idea of pronunciation to the ordinary reader. Accordingly the writer in this book adopts the spelling **Jarong** as indicating the correct pronunciation fairly well instead of writing it **Kiarung**, which confuses languages and pronunciation, and a geographical term with an ethnographical one. The letter r

in the word is a pure **r** and is rolled by the people themselves, and by some other peoples of Khams. Such an **r** is pronounced by the Chinese as **l** in the word **Paris**, which the Chinese call **Pa-li**, and in the word **Rhine** which they call **Lai-yin**. It therefore seems wrong to identify the Tibetan — **rong** with the Chinese **Jung** (or **Rong** or **Yong**) the initial sound of which falls between a **J** and an **R**. The people named **Jung** were in very ancient times found in the west of China, in association with a people called **Ti** but neither can now be identified with certainty.

The name **Jarong** or **Rgyalrong** is explained as being an abbreviation of **Rgyalmarongmi** (itself something of a contraction) meaning 'the valley dwellers of **King Mardo**.' **Rgyal** is the root of the Tibetan word for **king** (cf. the English word **regal**) **ma** stands for **Mardo** which is an apotheosed mountain and a tutelary god or totem of the **Jarong**: — **rong** — **i**, the Tibetan name for those deeply cut valleys spoken of in the last chapter as the 'deep corrosions': — **mi** means people.

Kiru or **Kiri** is the people's name for themselves.

It is an intriguing thought for readers of British origin, that the **Jarong** are probably of the same stock as themselves. They seem to have come but recently to their present home. Two reviews, one by Dr R. Morse of West China Union University, and the other by Rev J.H. Edgar, have been made of the racial groups to be found in ancient times in the regions with which we are dealing, and both tantalizingly skip over what is now **Jarong-land** as though it were unoccupied. Possibly it was, for though the **Jarong** are a virile people, their land contains many apparently fertile valleys still in the virgin state which suggests they have not yet been able to occupy their territory. The fact that the Chinese have merely transferred to them, names taken from more ancient peoples, also suggests their relatively recent

arrival on China's borders. The Jarong have no histories as we know them, and can tell strangers little about their past. When pressed for information, however some will assert that they came from Tibet. The ruling families of the individual states seem to have kept personal records of their doings, and of their lines of succession. Some of these records were lost a few years ago when defeated Chinese Communist armies ravaged and pillaged throughout the region between 1935-6. Of those which escaped destruction, the writer had the opportunity of perusing a Chinese version of the history of the royal house of Wasze, the most easterly of the Jarong states. This shows that in the reign of the Chinese emperor Ming-Yuen-le (1503-1525) a man named Chuin-pu-sze-la-sze appeared from Tibet, and visited the Emperor at Peking, making him a present of some books. The Emperor replied with gifts, and made provision for his return journey. Later (perhaps in the next reign) Chuin-pu-sze-la-sze was invited to help China against her enemies troubling her in the vicinity of Wenchwan. Because of illness, Chuin-pu-sze-la-sze's younger brother acted for him, led an army of his followers against China's enemies and defeated them. The Szechwan provincial authorities in Chengtu so appreciated his services, that they petitioned the throne that he be allowed to remain. The result was that this mysterious filibuster was invited with his followers, to settle permanently in the empty country which is now Wasze, his position being made that of a hereditary prince. The records show that the men of Wasze have always faithfully adhered to the terms of their agreement with China, when trouble has arisen. Originally their eastern boundary was the Min River, but in return for help given to China in one campaign, they were allowed to occupy a small stretch of land in the county of Wenchwan on the east of the Min.

We are left to suppose that the other Jarong states were

constituted at about the same time as Wasze, but can only speculate as to where the people had come from originally. Clues present themselves however. We have noted the real name of the people, and now note that in the upper reaches of the Indus valley to this day, are to be found a people also calling themselves Kiru. Moreover, we note that the time of the appearance on China's border of the filibustering Jarong of Wasze, agrees very well with the time that Tamerlane was carrying out his conquests, and massacres in the upper Indus valley, and it is reasonable to think that these activities provided the necessary stimulus to begin a great migration of the Kiru into, and across Tibet.

L.A. Waddell has shown that in early times, before the main Aryan invasions reached India by the Ganges valley, there had been colonies of people of Syrio-Phoenician stock (according to the same authority) in the Indus valley. Syrio-Phoenicians travelled westward and colonized Britain, while others travelled eastward and established colonies in India. (Waddell: **Indo-Sumerian Seals Deciphered**). Thus we may find kinship between the Jarong and the people of Britain. This is a startling find, but there is some confirmatory evidence. The Jarong language contains words surprisingly like English words. In Jarong, a **cloud** is **stim** suggesting the English 'steam.' Painful is **zur** 'sore' (pronounced **zore** in Somersetshire). Clothes is **wed** suggesting 'weeds' as in 'widow's weeds'. The part of the body across one's shoulders is called **rbak** suggesting 'back'. Boiling water is said to **stsu** suggesting 'stew', this word meaning also 'to cook in water'. A bull is a **bola**; a lid is a **kap**, pronounced like 'cap'. You (plural) is **nye**, suggesting 'ye'. A pig is a **pag** (as also in Lhasa Tibetan). A jug is a **jog**, while in Britain articles of inferior earthenware are sometimes called 'pigs'. The Jarong language uses an indefinite article 'a' and a definite article 'de' much as we

use 'a' and 'the' in English. (Negroes talking English tend to say 'de' for 'the'.)

For honorific purposes, when addressing persons of exalted rank, the Jarong use the plural second personal pronoun (**nye**, i.e. ye, you) for the singular as was done in English, until by over use the true singular pronoun 'thou' dropped out of use.

In the presence of superiors, Jarong men uncover their heads and crouch to the ground. Women do not uncover their heads but crouch, to the point of dropping to the ground in a sitting posture. This movement however is often reduced to a merely formal gesture, and in this the Westerner will at once recognize the curtsy, still required of ladies in court society in the United Kingdom.

The Jarong now commonly bury their dead in coffins in the Chinese manner, but an older custom still known to them, is to bury in a sitting posture as did the early colonists in the Indus valley.

Lamaism is now the religion of the Jarong, and obscures their earlier beliefs on which it has been superimposed. However the early Syrio-Phoenician colonists were sun-worshippers, and we may note that Edgar has reported that at the beginning of the century the Chinchwan natives worshipped the sun with incense, genuflexions, and prostrations. (The Chinchwan is a section of Jarong land).

The houses of the Jarong are made of broken, undressed stone, skilfully fitted together, and set with mud. Typically they are three storeys high, the bottom floor being for animals, the next floor being for the family, and the third storey being a chapel for the domestic idols. This chapel usually only covers a part of the storey below, which means that it opens onto a flat mud roof, and itself has another section of flat mud roofing. In the west of Jarong land these roofs are very serviceable, but in the east the rainfall is

greater, and accordingly, makeshift sloping roofs of wooden shingles and stone supported on big trestles, are superimposed on the mud. These are so obviously but after-thoughts, and not integral parts of the house structure, that it is suggested that house design has been brought from a dryer climate to the west, and that the people have not had time to evolve a proper roof suitable to the climate of the region. This supports the view of the comparatively recent arrival of the Jarong in their present domains.

The Jarong ornament the exterior of their houses with whitewash outlining windows, doorways and corners, as well as slobbering designs on the walls. These designs include the swastika, with its arms bent either dextra, or laevogyatory or both: and often with the same arms curved to form a broken circle, rather than a broken square. The usual or laevogyrate form is that adopted by lamaists orthodox sects, while the dextragyrate form is used by the heterodox lamas of Tibet's Black Religion which, having adopted the outward forms of Lamaism, is really pre-Buddhist in origin. The swastika seems to have been originally a sun symbol, but if we understand the present Lamaistic interpretation, it represents the whole system of cycles which constitute our experience of the outside world — day and night, solar, lunar and stellar rotation, and the seasons, from which all that is for our good is believed to emerge. Hence, by a process of crude simplification it comes to be but a good luck symbol for the unlearned. Another design is a solid circle and crescent, which obviously stand for the sun and moon; the crescent moon appears as a cup below the sun; while yet another design represents a steer's horned head. There are transitional figures, showing that a crude blotch with a horn emerging from either side to stand for the steer's head, and a white

blotch to indicate the sun with the horns of the crescent moon rising from either side, partly to surround it, are fundamentally the same design. The parapets of Jarong houses have upwardly projecting, triangular corners of whitewashed masonry, while in the centre of one side, an incense stove is commonly built. Against the sky the block of masonry of the incense stove, flanked on either side by the corner 'horns' of the parapet, gives the same design as a Jarong pointed out to the writer. The incense stove is a place for burning cedar fronds with meal. From these clouds of white smoke ascend heavenwards, and are supposed to carry away spiritual impurity.

In one corner, or perhaps at each corner, small sapling conifers cut from the mountain side, are fixed into position. It is difficult to determine the full significance of these, save that they are part of the idolatrous paraphernalia of the house. As Edgar has suggested they may be emblematic of the ancient groves, (asherah) which on the authority of Pliny we are told were the first temples. Apparently it was originally considered that altars only should be erected to the gods who should not be enclosed with walls.

It may here be noted that the groves (asherah) came to be a symbol of the goddess of fertility, and the word probably connected with the goddess Ashtereth, who may be the moon goddess, or Venus. She was the chief goddess of the Canaanites and may be taken to represent the female principle in nature. She was represented by an ox head with horns, or by a woman's head bearing the crescent moon. Baal the chief god of the Canaanites and Phoenicians, originally a sun god, was also represented with a horned head. Jeremiah 32:29 contains a reference to Baal worship on the house tops.

Before closing these remarks on the Jarong people, a comment may be made regarding the most north-westerly of

them, namely those of the great state of Kroskyab. Edgar suggested that the people were not of as pure racial stock as the subjects of the other states. He noted that temperamentally they were more lawless and uncouth than the subjects of the other Jarong states, and that their language seemed to vary considerably from standard Jarong. In this connection it may be noted that in Kreskyab are three place names ending with the affix — **ur**, namely Drozur (the capital), Ozur and Mozur. This is a Dravidian suffix meaning 'a place' and incidentally occurs in the Biblical 'Ur of the Chaldees' (Gen. 13:7). One is left to speculate on whether, in their hypothetical migration from the Indus Valley, the Jarong of present day Kreskyab were accompanied by people of Dravidian stock from India with whom they intermarried.

The Jarong are organized into States, each with its own king, and a definite social structure. Below the king are various grades of local rulers, of which the heads of a few of the more honourable families constitute a permanent Council of State, and advise the king and share responsibility for the more important decisions of government. Below the local rulers, whom we may call lords, are the villeins who have freehold of land but are required to give a proportion of their produce to their over-lords. These over-lords in turn are answerable to the king for their actions, for forwarding to his royal castles an agreed amount of all produce of the land, and for calling upon the villeins and slaves in rotation, to do the king's service, which ranges from the hewing of wood, drawing of water and providing domestic service, to serving as couriers and even envoys to neighbouring states, or travelling on large trading expeditions with which the king may concern himself. The slaves seem to be usually those who, through misfortune, especially of being an orphan, or to have been

born of slave parents, find themselves without sustenance and are taken on as menials by those better placed in life. In return for hard service, they are given an occasional garment, and just sufficient inferior food to maintain life.

The Jarong are agriculturists, raising crops of wheat, barley, buckwheat, maize (in places), potatoes, hemp sesame, turnips, cabbages (largely for pickling) and a variety of beans. In working their fields they help each other in an agreeable manner, by lending their services to each other on a daily basis. Those who can own livestock, keep horses, yak, 'catalos' (crosses between the domestic cow, and the yak), pigs and goats: The horses and cattle graze on common grazing grounds on the mountain tops above the cereal line, leaving them in the care of herdsmen, to whose support all contribute who use their services.

A foreign missionary, or for that matter a Chinese who desires to settle in one of these autonomous states and build himself a house, i.e. occupy land, must first of all receive permission from the king. The fact that permission to occupy land preceeds primarily from the king, and is associated with an obligation to give some service to him is our reason for calling these autonomous states 'feudal'.

Jarong kings rule with iron hands often tyrannically, and their subjects live in terror of them. Limits can be exceeded however, and frequently the natural spirit of independence to be found in the Jarong, move them to lay aside their abjections, and rise in rebellion against their sovereigns. Nevertheless the Jarong regard a king as a necessity to give cohesion and centralizing unity to their social system, and if they dispose of one, will select another, even if it means inviting one from a neighbouring state to assume the office. Inheritance of the sovereignty usually follows primogeniture, and at times may pass into the hands of females. Lower ranks of nobility are also inherited by primogeniture.

Others than the first born of the titled class however, do not inherit special rank and in a generation or so their offspring sink back into the general mass of the populace. However the process is somewhat slowed down by the fact that individuals do not generally marry out of their class. This aligns Jarong society with the early British policy, and not with customs of (formerly) some European peoples. Among the Jarong one notices the usual disadvantage of simply organized communities with limited government, namely that much depends on whether the ruling individual happens to be good or bad, strong or weak, competent or incompetent. Ability in the conduct of public and private business is a personal gift the Jarong particularly admire. Referring again to the practice of marrying within the individual's social class, it may be noted that the Jarong princely families are few, and much intermarrying in one region seems to be fixing a tendency to produce mentally deficient individuals.

The Jarong autonomous states at present are Kroskyab, Ziggag, Tambai, Chogtse, Wogzhi, and Wasze. Formerly there were three others, but two were disrupted to make room for five Chinese colonies about 190 years ago, when the armies of the Emperor Ch'ien-lung conquered the region. The third state lost its autonomy in the 1920's, when from misrule, its king was assassinated. No successor being found, the administration of its small population was merged with the local government of the Chinese irredenta of the region, who up to that time, as always, had enjoyed extra-territorial privileges.

The government of the Jarong in the immediate Chinese colonial region, has for the most part been delegated by China to hereditary rulers named **sheo-pi-s** who in return for their office were obliged to come to China's aid with trained Jarong soldiers in the event of a military emergency

in the borders. In practice these **sheo-pi-s** rule their people with the same despotism as the hereditary princes rule theirs, but the sheo-pi-ships generally are smaller in area than the autonomous kingdoms. The sheo-pi-ships are found in three Chinese counties or 'hsiens' namely, Mowkung, Chin-hwa and Lifan. The ruling line of one sheo-pi-ship, that of Hannyong has become extinct and regular local Chinese government of a Ch'u-chang has been imposed on the people instead. Edgar estimated that the Jarong, as perhaps being one million souls. Perhaps about half of that number would be more correct.

Though for ten years work was carried on from the Chinese colony of Mowkung, situated in the middle of Jarongland, there were serious and prolonged intermissions. The complications of life in a Chinese centre, dearth of workers, and local political trouble, so militated against non-Chinese work being done, that to the day of evacuating the station because of Communist activities, no more could be said, than that initial contacts had been made with the Jarong around. An enormous amount of work had to be done really to master the Jarong language, before the Gospel could be brought to the people in a way all could understand.

Nevertheless, a start with linguistic work was made. A draft grammar has been prepared, and the beginnings of a dictionary made. It was found best to use the Tibetan alphabet and script for writing. A short '**Life of Christ**' as a tract in Chinese, came our way. It seemed to meet our need, and so we translated it into Jarong and printed it on an office duplicator. We also translated the book of Jonah. This was a good translation exercise for ourselves, being simple narrative in form. It moreover set forth some primary ideas we needed to build on, in talking to the Jarong, namely the personality of God Who was concerned

for the people He had made, was grieved when they sinned against Him and had to come under His judgment, but was prepared to forgive, when true repentance followed. At this point, the further literary work had to be discontinued, as need of furlough, and political changes developed.

Bawang-Geshi People: South-west of the Jarong are to be found a people for whom, strange to say, we have no general name, and so can only call them by the names of their individual states, as they do. The Chinese call them by a general name for barbarians. In Tibetan they are called **Rongmi** which means 'Deep valley dwellers' and is a name which can be applied equally well to a number of other peoples including the Jarong. Formerly they seem to have been organized into three feudal states, namely Bawang Geshitsa and Tamdong. Now Geshitsa and Tamdong are united under the prince of the former. The people are closely related to the Jarong in culture. Their homes are similar to the Jarong houses, having the typical triangles of masonry at the corners of the parapets, and being outlined with whitewash. They also join in the worship of the Mardo Mountain, in the southwest border of Jarong-land. This cult is being submerged in Lamaism, so that it is said that now, few people can give one any information about its fuller teaching. Mardo seems to be primarily a Jarong god, but the Bawang-Geshi people have gone to greater extremes in his worship. It seems that the Bawang-Geshi people, by reason of their allegiance to the god, regarded their girls and unmarried women as belonging to him in a special way, amounting to the marriage relationship. Accordingly before a woman could be married to a man, a ceremony had to be performed to divorce her from her first husband, the god who had to be propitiated. As an indication of her belonging to the god Mardo, the unmarried girls and

women used to wear an indecent dress consisting of a cape over the shoulders, and around the hips another which did not meet properly in front, the hiatus being filled by a narrow inadequate fringe of long strings. Fiats from both Peking and Lhasa forbade this dress, but were ignored. Ridicule from the local Chinese however seems to be succeeding where authority failed, and so happily now an apron is usually added.

Who the Bawang-Geshitsa people were originally, it is still impossible to say. They speak their own language, quite distinct from that of the Jarong with whom they live in such close contact; and distinct also from that of other Tibetan peoples. They occupy, and farm a very fertile river basin which naturally, and because of their own industry, is perhaps the most picturesque region in all Khams. They are timid, and suspicious of foreigners, but of good intelligence and physique. Their valleys are as well populated numerically, as any territory in eastern Tibet. However their numbers seem to have dropped greatly in recent years. Copies of the Gospels in Tibetan which their better educated lamas and others can read, have been distributed widely among them on repeated occasions, and the writer can testify to the power with which these people are gripped by the stories of the Lord, as they read them. However they still await the Evangelist to explain to them what they read.

If a guess at their numbers was called for, we might suggest that the Bawang-Geshi people would number about 60,000 souls.

When the Chinese under the Emperor Ch'ien-lung were conquering the Jarong and Bawang-Geshi people, they were in terra incognita and found themselves in difficulties at times. They felt the evil spirits of the land were in league against them. In driving south from Meno, now called Mowkung they needed to cross the Hsiao-Chin river, but

dared not do so against the confederated forces of native peoples on the right bank. Curiously, however a mist was forming over the Mardo Mountain, which is near the river. When formed, the mist descended and spread over the river. The attacking Chinese crossed the river under cover of the mist and occupied their objective. The god mountain had let down its devotees! To commemorate the event the Chinese built a special temple for the god on the left bank of the river at Yetsa. At Meno itself a setback had occurred for the invaders. It was a night when the Chinese, believing their campaign to be nearly over, were giving themselves to drunken celebration. Without warning the confederated forces, probably most Jarong, swooped down and put them to rout. The Chinese fled in disorder, back along the road to the Pa-lang Pass towards Chengtu. At a place now called Wan-ren-fen (the graves of the myriad men) which is the last ascent before the pass is crossed, the Jarong came up with them and committed a great slaughter.

Chaglami: To the south-west of the Jarong and the Bawang-Geshitsa people are to be found the people of Chagla, the **Chaglami**.

Formerly Chagla had its own prince, whose capital was at Tatsienlu but the tyranny and oppression of his court was such that about 1915 the Chinese authorities deprived the family of office. The former territory of Chagla includes the Chinese city of Tatsienlu or Kangting, the capital of the new province of Sikang. We shall write more about Tatsienlu later. Most of the country which was Chagla is grassland, and lies at an altitude averaging about 13,500 feet above sea level. The inhabitants may be regarded as a branch of the T'u-fan and speak a dialect of the Tibetan language. They include both house dwellers and nomads, but the nomads are usually employed by the house dwellers to watch their

herds. Much itineration has been done amongst them, and tracts and copies of the Gospels have in past years been distributed in great numbers, in particular by that noted missionary traveller and explorer, the late Rev James Houston Edgar. To digress momentarily, in the south of Chagla, in territory which is called Minya, is to be found the Minya-Kongka perhaps the most impressive mountain in all Khams and at one time suggested as a rival of Mt. Everest in height. The highest peak of this glorious and majestic snow-covered massif is now named by the Geographical Society Mt. Sun Yat Sun as a courtesy to China. The second highest peak is named Mt. Edgar, after the missionary, who to date has excelled all others in arduous labour, and endured bitter hardship, that Khams might be opened to the Gospel from the Ch'iang territory in the north, and Kangting in the east, to Batang in the west.

Probably most of the male members of Chagla's scattered population have at some time visited Tatsienlu on trading expeditions, and many of these have visited the foreigners stationed there, as part of their natural sightseeing programme. To these the Gospel has been faithfully proclaimed by such missionaries as Rev. and Mrs Cunningham and other workers of note, who have preceded them. At one time missionaries were even in residence in one of the villages of Chagla (viz. Tongolo). As yet however, there is no Christian Tibetan Church established among them, though from time to time some have professed faith in Christ. In Tatsienlu itself, Chinese and Tibetans mix fairly well, but on the grasslands the Chinese have proved themselves poor settlers, and are somewhat despised by the virile Tibetans. On the other hand they are found to be pleasantly disposed towards foreigners, as the result of contacts made by missionaries and a few travellers, over a period of some decades. Doors

into Tibetan country were probably widely open to the missionary, in the country which was Chagla. We speak in relative terms however, for the impression must not be given that the people are ready to accept the missionary's message, and abandon their heathenism.

As well as grasslands, the Kingdom of Chagla also included in its realm, country which geographically should really belong to the Jarong and the Bawang-Geshi people, whose boundary's it meets at Tanpahsien, a decadent Chinese colony, but an important administration centre. This country is of the deep valley type, and includes house dwellers who may be survivors of some earlier race of people, but who have now adapted Lamaism and the Tibetan language. In this section there is also a colony of Geshitsa people.

The Greater and Lesser Gold Rivers (Ta-Chin-Ho, and Hsiao-Chin-ho) unite at Tanpahsien. They are so named because alluvial gold has been worked for in their beds. Having together drained the country of the Jarong, Bawang and Geshi, and given to it the collective geographical name Chin-chwan (Gold Basin), they now unite, to take a terrifying course southward as the Tong River; cascading and crashing through gorges considered impossible for man to traverse, down to Wa-Sze-Keo, where it is joined by the Kangting or Tatsienlu River, a few miles below the city with those names. As a matter of fact, two Westerners have individually made the journey from Tanpahsien to Waszekee, and survived to tell of their experiences of scrambling over terrible precipices by swaying ladders attached to the cliffs by creepers. Only the lightest baggage loads could be taken on their backs. Both men agreed that no one else should attempt to travel that road. Skilled mountaineers however might find the hazards to their taste! The two travellers were J.H. Edgar perhaps about

1925, and Rev. Ralph Holder about 1935.

The population in this region is sparse, but a few stone Tibetan houses can be seen on the mountain sides at high altitudes. They are said to be built with very low door lintels to discourage Yeti (abominable snow men) from foraging around. Yeti are said to have long arms, but will not enter a house if they have to get down and crawl! We cannot confirm anything of these reports!

The volume of water in the rivers in these parts has impressed the writer. At Tsenghua the Ta-Chin-Ho was once seen in spate when the swirling torrent was estimated as a quarter of a mile wide, though fully 2000 miles from the sea.

CHAPTER 4
THE PEOPLES OF KHAMS (CONTINUED)

Litang and its peoples: About seventy miles due west of Tatsienlu, the traveller leaves Chagla territory and enters territory controlled by the Chinese from Litang, a Tibetan centre with an important lamasery where the Chinese have established a city they now call Lihwa-hsien. It must be born in mind however, that a Chinese 'city' (or hsien) in Tibetan country implies an administration centre of a particular grade, rather than a great localized community.

The road formerly used by officials travelling to and from China and the Lhasa Court, via Tatsienlu passes right through the territory controlled from Litang, on its way to Batang, Chamdo and beyond. This road has been much travelled by missionaries, but north and south of it lies much unexplored territory, occupied by wild and lawless peoples, partly nomads, and partly sedentary.

Lying in a plain seventy-five square miles in area, Litang is above the cereal line. As the wheat would not ripen, at this altitude the Chinese conquerers (not understanding meteorological conditions) considered the land to have been cursed by a great lama. The Tibetans have co-operated in this belief by producing a story of a lama who defied the conquering armies of Chao-Erh-feng Warden of the Tibetan Marches at the time of the Chinese Revolution. The lama was captured by the Chinese and beheaded, but as his

head was severed from his body, Hydralike, another appeared. This was also removed, only to be replaced by another. This in turn was severed from his body, only to be replaced by yet another. The Chinese persisted with their beheadings, and the lama continued to produce new heads, until apparently wearied by their persistence, he gave up the contest. Instead a great earthquake occurred, and a new hill appeared near Litang, which the horrified Chinese observed, resembled in form the hat of the deceased lama!

Though cereals will not ripen, it is worth noting the value of the plain otherwise. It is estimated that in summer it will feed 6000 sheep, 40,000 yak, and 2000 horses together.

The town of Litang itself is an unsavoury one, made up of flat-roofed houses described as being 'like a mass of divided rice fields when on the roofs, and from the streets resembling artificial caves divided by a deep passage.' The same writer (J.H. Edgar once more) adds, "the village is dirty and the dwellings dark and smoke begrimed, but the trade is brisk and the streets are thronged with a variety of Tibet's wildest types." The buildings of the famous lamasery however, add barbaric grandeur to the place.

From Litang 'city', oversight is given to seven regions of whose population Edgar has given us an estimate as follows:-

Maeya	1200 families
Chueh T'ing	500 "
Ch'onghsi	300 "
Morahsi	500 "
Tsotsang	300 "
Lamaya	150 "
Litang	400 "
Total	3350 or perhaps 20,000 individuals

Considering the area of the region controlled by Litang, 20,000 individuals indicates on the whole a very sparse and scattered population. In Ch'onghsi, Marahsi, Tsotsang, and Litang the people are mostly house dwellers. Elsewhere they are nomads.

To bring the Gospel to these people in a fuller way than has been done so far by the distribution of literature, with the difficulties of supply, possible danger, and opposition from the paramount lamasery of that region, will require as arduous a life of travel, and work at high altitude, as in any region in S.E. Tibet.

Until we know more than we do at present, about the races of Tibet, we must regard all these peoples of Litang as being derived from the T'ufan, but must bear in mind however that the T'ufan are themselves largely a hypothetical people.

The people of Chonghsi are ruled by a boorish prince, whose territory straddles the main road from the Chagla border to within a few li of Litang. Until recently he was in the habit of extracting a toll of \$50 (35 taels or Chinese ounces of silver) from all caravans passing through his territory, whether they were composed of Tibetans, Chinese or foreigners.

In the south of the territory controlled from Litang (not shown on the accompanying map) is to be found one of the most lawless regions of Tibet. It includes the land of the Kongkaling and Hsiang ch'eng outlaws, neither of whom ever acknowledged Chinese rule.

The territory of the Kongkaling people is divided into three parts, namely Bebze, Rem and Tonyi. They are united under one king but are administered individually by a headman or **besi**. In 1930 the Kongkaling people were under the dominance of a Hsiangcheng ruler, and erstwhile lama, who had risen to power with the aid of desperadoes,

and ruled from Chungtien lamasery in North Yunnan.

Formerly the Kongkaling and Hsiangcheng people were included in the principality of Litang, but the royal family which used to rule all the Litang peoples was destroyed in 1904 by Chao-Erh-feng, of whose imperialistic plans we have already written. Since then, these people have given themselves over to banditry, and raid far and wide down into Yunnan, and north-west to Tatsienlu, and no authority seems able to stop them.

Sandwiched between Kongkaling people on the north and north-west, the Hsiangcheng people on the west, and the Lolo on the south in the Kingdom of Muli, (Mili of the maps) a country firmly ruled by its sovereign. The people of Muli keep on good terms with their warlike neighbours, by allowing their marauding bands right-of-way through their territory in return for some share in the spoil. They are not however a warlike state.

It would seem that in deeds of lawlessness, generally speaking the Hsiangcheng people now play second fiddle to the Kongkaling people; but for the 150 years until the time of Chao-Erh-feng it was they who, of all Tibetan peoples, were the greatest thorn in China's side as they travelled far and wide on plundering expeditions. They guarded carefully the secret of the roads through their country, and when Chinese fell into their hands entertained themselves by giving vent to the most fiendish cruelty, flaying their victims alive, tearing out their tongues, suspending them on hooks inserted into their flesh, or by impaling them on stakes. Their activities however were checked for a time at least, when Chao-Erh-feng laid siege to their lamasery fortress Sampeiling, but only after a siege so prolonged, that some of Chao's officers mutinied against him and had to be executed. At long last an old lama from a distance, informed Chao of the secret of the lamasery's water supply

and following his directions a water culvert was found and blocked. But even then, though parched with thirst, the lama-desperadoes still held out hoping against hope for help from friendly neighbouring Tibetan states. At length one day at dawn such help seemed to have appeared, and to be hailing the besieged in the Tibetan language, to open their gates to them. This was done, but the besieged were victims of a ruse, for with the doors open, an ambush rushed in and commenced the final slaughter which for years broke the strength of the Hsiangcheng people.

Hsiang-ch'eng is really a place name attached to these people. It is 180 miles south of Litang. Who these people really are it is difficult to say. Du Haldo, an authority of a former century, called them **Mongfan**. they have also been called **Hsifan** which name is given confusedly to various Tibetan groups in South Szechwan and North Yunnan, (to the people of Muli for instance) as well as to the people in the north, around and west of Song P'an. The writings of a present day authority would suggest that he regarded the Hsifan of the south however, as quite distinct from the Tibetans (T'ufan).

Geographically speaking, we may consider that the people of Muli, Hsiangcheng and Konhkaling, occupy a region where the shallow grassland valleys of the Tibetan plateaux on the north, are beginning to be cut deeper and deeper, until on the south at lower altitudes they form the deeply cut valleys of Yunnan. The people are farmers and house dwellers. Few Westerners have passed through this country, the inhabitants of which are still without a knowledge of the Gospel.

South and west of Muli are to be found the tribes of Nashi or Lolo, a very numerous people whose habitat spreads far to the east. They intermingle with Tibetans in these out of the way regions, and a branch of them called Su, who seem

to have developed a hybrid language of their own, are found living in Muli country. By general consent however, the Lolo, (as they are not Lamaists, by reason of their numbers and the extent of the territory they occupy) are regarded as a major missionary problem in themselves, distinct from the Tibetan challenge, and so they will not be further dealt with here.

Before closing this section, a word about the Lamasery at Litang is necessary. It cannot compare in size and impressiveness with some in Tibet, such as those at Kumbum or 'Labrang' in the north, but it is the most important in Khams, and draws its students from far and wide. Copies of the Tibetan Sacred Books or 'Bible' called the Kanjur were printed there from wooden blocks. It was printed in red, unlike the copies printed at Derge which are black. It was founded by the first lama, to be styled Dalai Lama (His two predecessors were also given this title posthumously). He founded the lamasery on his way back to Lhasa from Mongolia, after presenting himself to that people, and converting them to belief in himself and to Lamaism. Apparently what is now the Black Sect of lamas, the pre-Buddhist **Bon** Religion, was already established at Litang and its proponents resisted strongly, the establishment of the new teaching. Accordingly a contest in magic ensued between the Dalai Lama, and the Bonist priest with each side producing impressive thunder-storms. Finally of course, the Dalai Lama won, and the new lamasery was established. So runs the story as related by Bell in his "**The Religion of Tibet**". Any attempt to evangelize the peoples of Litang must take into consideration the opposition to be expected from this Devilish stronghold of systematized superstition. The spiritual contest may well be as intense, and certainly more real, than the one Tibetans imagine took place at its foundation.

Batang and its peoples: Beyond the Litang administration, are the territories controlled from Batang, and from Lhasa — a route surveyed for the purpose at the beginning of the 18th century, and along which a remarkable system of relays of galloping posts was maintained, to link the courts of Peking and Lhasa. Accordingly Protestant missionaries and the societies they have represented have given considerable attention to Batang as a centre for missionary occupation, and work has been carried on there, with intermissions, by various agencies since 1908, when Muir opened a station for the China Inland Mission. Its altitude is perhaps 9000 feet, and the necessities of life can be grown or obtained there relatively easily, and accordingly the establishing of a missionary station there is a more workable proposition than at Litang. Since the Chinese Revolution however, when Tibet dispensed with China's overlordship and Chinese officials ceased to pass through, it has lost its strategic importance, and is now with the territories around it, but an end in itself. The caravans from Tatsienlu to Lhasa all go now by the longer but easier route north-west to Jyekundo (or Ieshuhsien), and then south-westwards to Tibet's capital.

Batang is smaller than Litang having a population of less than 5000 inhabitants (400 to 500 families). The plain on which it is situated is one mile square. Its altitude is 9400 feet. Snow seldom falls in Batang and ice is never more than half an inch thick. A point on Batang's debit side is that malaria has been reported there, taken in by Chao-Erh-feng's soldiers, and now propagated by local mosquitoes whose larvae survive the frosts of winter in frozen bog-land. Batang seems to the writer to be the highest place at which malaria has been found.

Considering the attention that missionaries have paid to Batang during the last sixty years, it is surprising that so

little written information seems available about the territory administered from Batang, the distribution of its population, and the temper and social organization of the people. Even Edgar who resided at Batang from 1909 (until circumstances arising out of the Revolution of 1911 compelled an exacting retreat with his wife 'by the back door' down into Yunnan) has apparently left no systematized written information about the region.

In the reigns of the Ch'ing emperors (A.D. 1644 et seq.) Batang was ruled by the Lhasa court, and was presumably a unifying centre from which, as at Litang, oversight was given to petty princes. Accordingly it was a centre China found necessary to occupy. Whether this was accomplished by warlike or peaceful means, we are left to speculate, with an inclination to the first alternative. The western boundary of the Batang territories seems to have become the boundary between purely Tibetan administration from Lhasa, and Chinese administration from Peking about A.D. 1720.

In an old Chinese work entitled **An Illustrated Treatise on Tibet** (Hsi-tsang Tu K'ao) there is an isolated and obscure statement, "In regard to Batang, some suppose that it was the ancient realm where White Wolf ruled over the T'angchu. Tinglin lamasery is there, and there supposedly are the descendents of the ancient Tingling." We are in ignorance as to who this White Wolf was, and who the T'angchu and Tingling were. The answer to these questions may be hidden in Chinese records with which we are not acquainted. 'Tinglin' (meaning 'grove of nails'), the name of the monastery referred to, seems to be a Chinese transliteration of a non-Chinese name, and may be a variation of 'Tingling' which is obviously one. The people around Batang are now apparently sometimes spoken of as 'Jong', and may be connected with the ancient Jong referred

to in the notes on the Jarong (q.v.). If this is so, then the ancient T'angchu and Tingling may be branches of the ancient Jong race. But at the best, this is at present but speculation.

Failing definite information to the contrary, we must assume that Batang claims to control in its extensive administration, a population comparable to Litang, made up of a few Chinese colonists and traders, and by Tibetan communities, mostly sedentary who through their chieftains and headmen, are supposed to recognize the authority of the Chinese magistrate (Hsienchang) at Baan (the new name for Batang).

The lamasery at Batang, however destroyed by Chao-Erh-feng and then allowed to be partially rebuilt, cannot compare in importance with that at Litang, though locally, its lamas formerly had considerable power.

Before leaving Batang we may note that in 1934, as the outcome of local fighting between Tibetans and the soldiers of a Chinese war-lord, the boundary of metropolitan Tibet was moved eastwards to the Yangtse near Batang, China thereby losing territory. It is difficult to say for how far along the course of the Yangtze, the boundary was drawn, but a glance at current maps of the region will show that there is an enormous discrepancy between the size of the territory usually claimed for China in the province of Sikang, and that over which she actually had suzerainty. Batang is usually reached from Tatsienlu, but another road has also been used by missionaries, which connects with Tali in Yunnan, the journey requiring thirty-three days, which may be reduced to twenty-eight days when the Tsali pass can be traversed. From Batang the road proceeds to the Yangtse, which it then follows southward for a few days more, before crossing the Yangtze-Mekong divide to pass down the valley of the Mekong to Tali, via Atuntse, a village



*H.J. Amos and J.H. Jeffrey who figure in Chapter 1.
They are wearing Tibetan sheepskin gowns.*



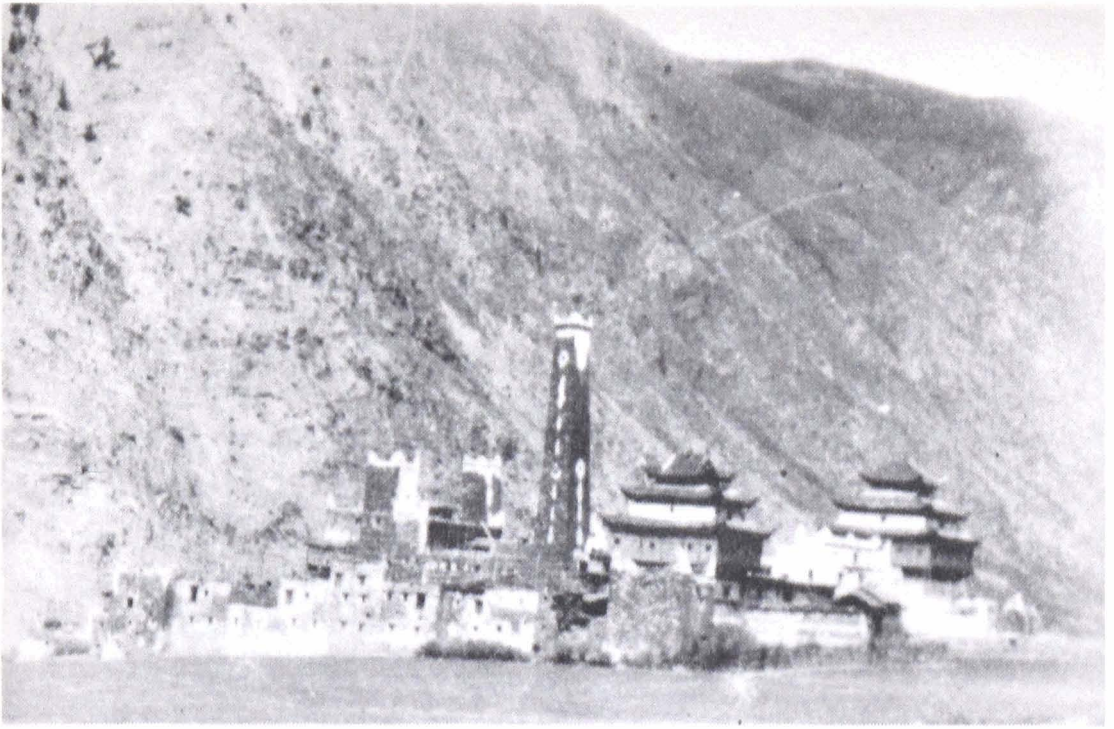
Kwang-Fah Sze or the Far-reaching Dharma Lamasery. Fah is the Chinese term for the Buddhist Scriptures which with the Buddha and the Lama Church, constitute a sort of Buddhist trinity. The centre block of buildings constitute the main temple of the Lamasery.



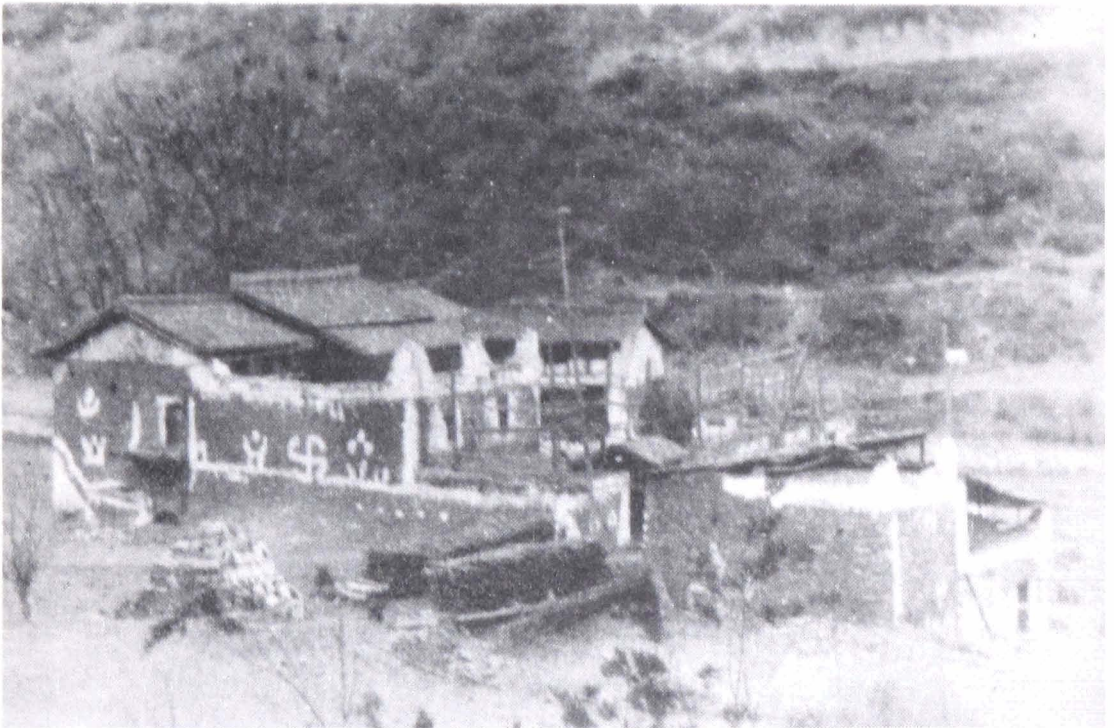
The Bishop of Kwang-Fah Sze in a tent trying to make rain during a drought.



*An ethnically mixed group of travellers pause for a
wayside meal. Note the central cauldron of boiling
tea.*



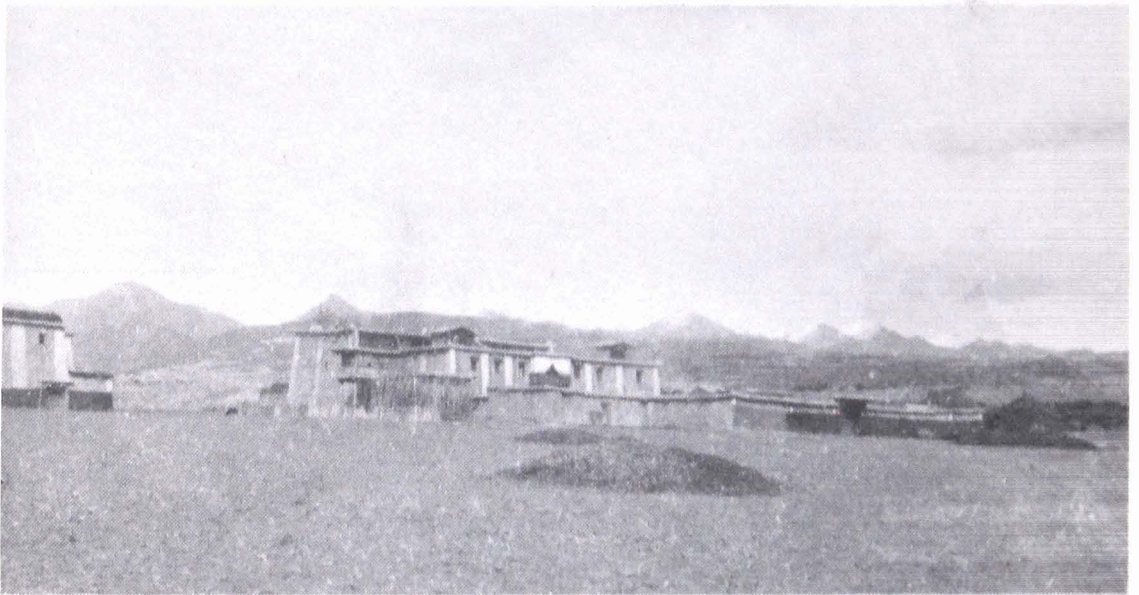
The ruling castle of the Jarong prince of Wogzhi. Between the castle and the background mountain looking deceptively near, flows the Lesser Gold River.



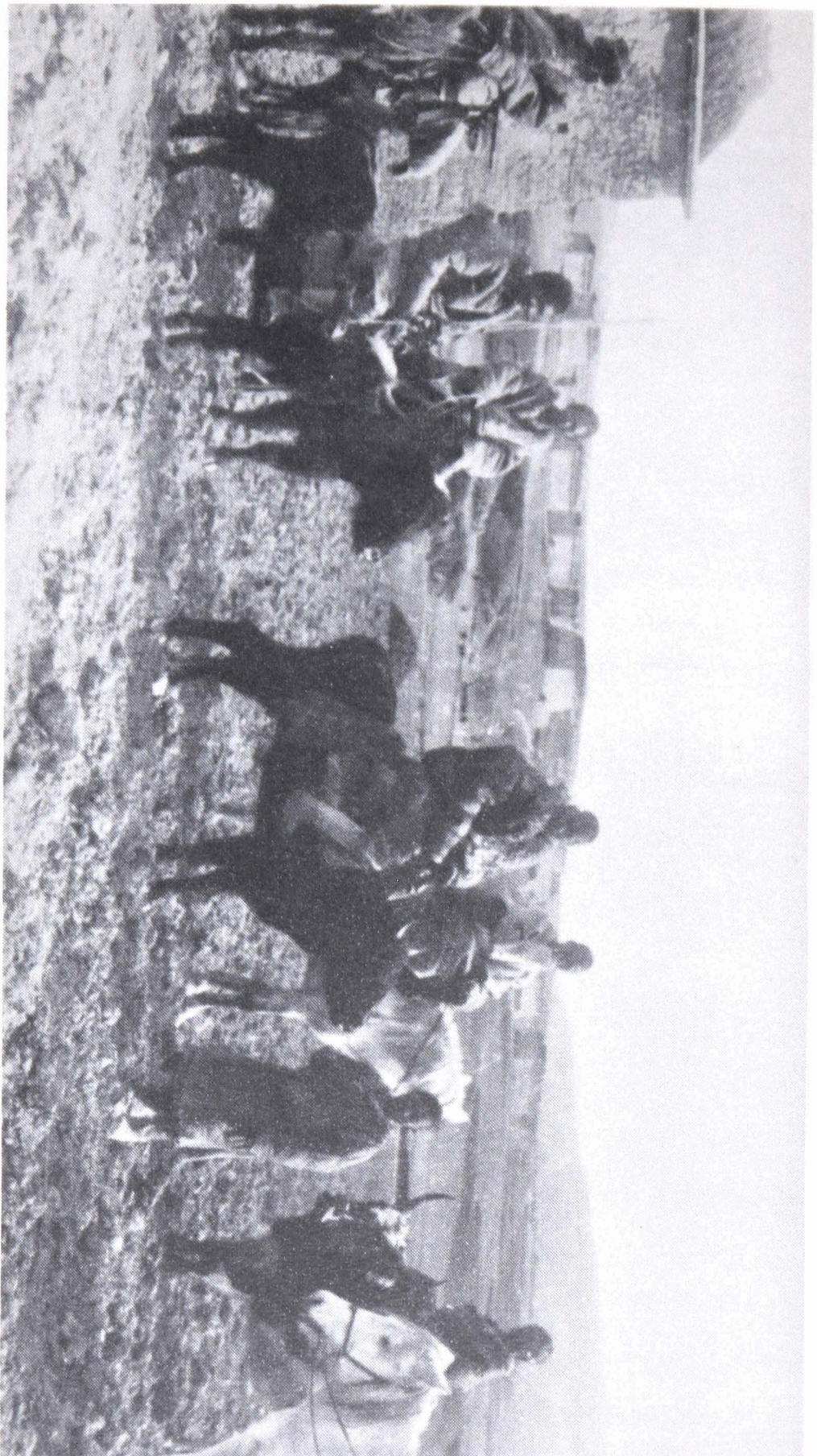
Two small Jarong dwelling houses with flat roofs and white decorations, immediately in front of a small temple with a sloping tiled roof.



Thamkhi, the young man who prostrated himself over the whole road from Kangting (or Tatsienlu) to Lhasa to gain merit to improve his chances when he came to his next incarnation.



Castle and trading post of the king of Ngaba at Mesang.



A rollicking group of grasslanders pause to pass the time of day with the strange Westerners.



A party of lamas exorcising demons from the fields before agricultural processes begin.



A yak train carrying tea by the ton from Kangting into Tibet (cf., the similar trade from Darjeeling).



Two urchins attached as acolytes to a lamasery in Ngaba.

on a small tributary of the latter river. The road thereby passes along a very remarkable geographical phenomenon where the waters of three great rivers are gathered together to run parallel courses for a distance of some hundreds of miles, separated from each other by only a few miles or so. From west to east the rivers are the Salween, Mekong, and Yangtze. This is the country visited in 1911 by the botanist Kingdon-Ward who we believe first coined the term 'the Land of Deep Corrosions' applying it to this phenomenon. In travelling from Batang southwards to Atuntse the road crosses out of Szechwan into Yunnan, but country occupied by the Tibetans is not left behind till the traveller is well south of Atuntse. It will be convenient here to make a few observations about this obscure corner of the Chinese Republic, though some of the territory falls in Yunnan, and therefore is not under the Batang administration, and strictly speaking should not be under the heading 'Batang and its Peoples.' It is difficult in this region to say where the border between China and autonomous Tibet fell. Since the Revolution of 1911 China lost ground to Tibet and did not readily acknowledge her territorial losses, and therefore declined to recognize revised boundaries. It seems however that west of Atuntse, the Salween-Mekong divide should be regarded as the frontier, while west of Batang the Yangtze was the boundary. Before the Revolution a surprisingly large number of Westerners had visited country west of the present boundary. Apart from the Roman Catholic priests who had actually begun work in the Salween valley, the number includes the well-known travellers, Prince Henri d'Orleans, and Messrs. Lytton, Bacet, Edgar, and Kingdon-Ward. A feature consisting of three outstanding peaks (called the Kakarpe) in the Salween-Mekong divide are, in the opinion of Kingdon-Ward, the reason for a dry stretch in both the Salween and Mekong valleys. Tibetan

peoples are found in both valleys as far south as the southern extremity of this dry area, which ends approximately at a place called Chamutong in the Salween basin, and at a place called Yangtsa in the Mekong basin. In the Yangtze basin Tibetans are found still further south. Among them there is a big lamasery at Chungtien which successfully withstood China during the Tibetan rebellion of 1905. We have referred to this lamasery, in writing of the Kongkaling and Hsiangcheng peoples. Chungtien is eight days journey south-west of Atuntse. South of the Tibetans in the Mekong valley, and also across the divide in the Yangtze drainage area the Mosu people are settled, while Lisu, Petsu and some Lutze may be met. South of the Tibetans in the Salween valley is the home of the Lutze, and south of them again are to be found the Lisu. Kingdon-Ward regards the Lutze as an irruption from the west of jungle dwellers who are perhaps related to the Malays. Across the Salween-Irrawady divide in the upper reaches of the Irrawady basin are to be found the Chutze. None of these people, viz., Mesu, Lutze, Lisu, and Chutze are Lamaists, though in the processes of social contact, the Lutze may have borrowed something from Tibetan religion.

The Tibetan country west of the Menkong is called Tsarong, Monkong in the Salween basin is the capital of this territory. Its population in 1911 was, according to Kingdon-Ward, seventy families, mostly Tibetan, inclusive of some adjacent settlements across a river. It had a lamasery with about 100 monks. Before the revolution, China maintained garrisons at several points in Tsarong. Mr Edgar with the traveller Captain Bailey also visited Monkong in 1911, and the former has recorded having seen dwarfs in the village, whom he took to be slaves, and suggested that they might have been captured from a jungle race in the regions where Burma and Assam meet Tibet.

In Tsarong, and in the Mekong and Yangtse valleys south of Batang, the native peoples, unlike most Tibetans, whose main garment is the sheepskin gown, wear a gown of hemp: otherwise they are typical subjects of the hierarchy. The fact that their southern border is the southern border of the dry region referred to, indicates that they have come from the north, and that they are later arrivals in the region than the Masu, Lutze and Lisu, who occupy the more fertile rainy country immediately to their south. Typically, they live in large two-storeyed farm houses. The ground floor of such a house is used for animals, while one, two, or more families occupy the floor above. The families' idolatrous paraphernalia is given a place on this floor, whereas among peoples in the east of Khams, a third storey is provided for it. The walls of these houses are of mud, but the framework of wood. The walls may be whitewashed on the outside. The roofs are flat. As usual in the warmer parts of Tibet where men and animals live so closely together, flies are a plague in the houses. Typically Tibetans of this region south of Batang are above the average in height. However Kingdon-Ward observed many of smaller stature, with definite negroid facial features, which type is also to be found among the races of north-west Yunnan.

In this region two centres need to be specifically mentioned. They are Gartok and Atuntse. In 1911, Gartok claimed to have 200 families, and had a lamasery with over 100 monks, according to Kingdon-Ward. The Chinese maintained a garrison there at that time. It was situated on a tributary of the Yangtze. Atuntse in Yunnan is definitely under Chinese control. It has a population of perhaps 250 families, and lies on a small tributary of the Mekong. Ruins of an old lamasery are there. This lamasery was destroyed at the time of the Tibetan rebellion of 1905. At that time the village changed hands five times in the fighting. Each side

in turn, as it occupied the village indulged in horribly torturing of the defenders. The lamasery has since been rebuilt on another site. About half the inhabitants are Chinese and half Tibetan. The lower half of the village is periodically inundated by slides of mud and scree from the mountain side.

The Tibetans have their own native rulers subject to China, along the route from Batang to a little to the south of Atuntse. As the Chinese style them **T'usze** which term is applied to the Tibetan **Rgyalbo** or kings in the east of Kham, we must be consistent and speak also of these petty rulers in the Mekong valley as kings, but the extent of their dominion in both territory and population must be small. Perhaps we should say it was small, for we have no recent information as to how far these tiny kingdoms are still extant as such. On the other hand, Kingdon-Ward wrote of a **T'usze** at Kangp'u south of Atuntse, who had rule over fifteen thousand families of Chinese, Mingchie, Mesu, and Lisu. This represents a state in size considerably above the average of those with which we have been dealing, and is remarkable in that it indicates a number of very diverse peoples, as united under one king.

Nyarongmi: North of the Litang peoples and west of the Chagla territory is Chantui or Nyarong, a Tibetan state of considerable area, but of relatively small population. The reason for this is that it is almost entirely pastoral, and the people are largely nomadic. The country is of course entirely grassland. It was apparently conquered by China in the nineteenth century, but its subservience to China must have disappeared, for in 1911 it was controlled by Lhasa until the Tibetan agent (or **byikyab**) was expelled by the Chinese. By this move incidentally, China removed her border westwards to a distance of four weeks' journey from

Kangting, whereas it had been but four days. A reason for this move was that in 1909 it had been united with Cantse and Drayu against China. Its capital is Chantui, which the Chinese now call Chanhwa, giving it 'city' (hsien) status. Chanhwa however consists of only the King's ruling castle and a few other houses. There are only one or two Chinese families there, but the Provincial Government of Sikang find it necessary to call it a 'hsien', and have a post-office established there with a Chinese postmaster, to fill in a great void in the centre of this newly constituted province, and so provide a communication link between a chain of 'hsiens' established in the south, and another in the north of the province. The postmaster's principal duties are to attend to the transport problems of forwarding mail north and south, rather than attending to local postal business. Chanhwa controls 2500 house dwellers and 1500 nomads, an extremely small population for such a large area. A negligible amount of farming is done, raising yak herds being the livelihood of the people. A very large part of the population is nomadic, and among these people we have even heard of a nomadic lamasery. Edgar made a journey across this territory from north to south. We are not aware of any other Westerner penetrating far into their country. The Nyarong people may be regarded as a law-abiding and peaceable people.

The Horba: North of Nyarong are several Tibetan states of people called Horba. The main road, carrying the great tea caravans from Tatsienlu to Lhasa, passes through these. The number of states seems to have varied at times, but is now usually given as five, namely: Cantze, Matze, Chuwe, Beri and Daws. The ruling families of these states are loosely united by marriage ties, but otherwise mutual bad feeling characterizes their relationship with each other.

A noted king of the Horba was Kesar who is the hero of a well-known Tibetan epic of the pre-Buddhist era.

The Horba are thought to be descendants of the ancient **Hsiungniu** or Huns.

Sehdawa: North of the Horba, is the territory of Sehda which seems to be most sparsely populated and to be mostly unoccupied grassland. We can find no written notes on this territory. In 1940 two French naval officers, Guibaut and Liotard made an exploratory journey into Sehda, but were presumed killed by the natives, as they failed to return.

North of Sehda are the Ngaba people and the Ngoloks of Ch'ing-hai (Kokonor).

Ngaba: West of the Hsifan are the people of Ngaba, who are constituted into a well organized and administered kingdom of the same name. Their northern boundary is the Yellow River. To their south and west is largely unexplored country which includes the YaBainkara Mountains. Central Ngaba however is an extensive rolling plateau of clay. Timber has to be dragged in from the mountains miles away for building. The prince's ruling castle at Mesang, in the centre of the plateau, is an impressive structure of three storeys in height, with walls perhaps twelve feet thick made only of mud. It has a large courtyard in front made up of a square of small dwellings, business apartments, and warehouses built for the convenience of traders, who go and come with their goods from China. These merchants are mostly Moslems from Kansu province. The king has allowed them to adapt a built-up section of the courtyard as a mosque, where they maintain their own ahung, (mullah) and follow the way of life ordered by the False Prophet.

Thirty years ago, a missionary in the city of Kwanhsien in Szechwan, was astonished to receive a deputation of

Tibetans from Ngaba, who asked him to help them obtain a supply of rifles, and copies of the Christian Scriptures to take back to their far distant homes. The missionary of that day was astonished at the request, and feared to have anything to do with it. We suspect too that as Kwanhsien is far from Tibet, he would have no Tibetan literature in hand. However a year or so later the Tibetans came again from Ngaba saying their superiors had told them, "If you can't get the rifles, it does not matter, but try and get the Scriptures"! This time they were adequately supplied with copies of the Gospels in Tibetan. We have often wondered what was the sequel to this incident. Well supplied with lamaistic temples and lamas to use them, Ngaba seemed nevertheless, as open and ready to listen to the Gospel as any region we visited. Ngaba was the last state visited during the missionary journey described in the first chapter of this book. It is possible that strong civil control by the king, accounts for the sense of peace. While we were there two men were captured having been found guilty of brigandage, a common enough occupation in most Tibetan regions. The Prince of Ngaba's judgment on them was to be killed by being beaten with cudgels.

Ngoloks: West of the State of Ngaba are the Ngoloks who have a reputation for lawlessness and violence, but about whom little seems to be really known. Ngolok seems to be an ethnographic term for a widely scattered people who give allegiance to local headmen, but do not show political cohesion of a higher order. From the map they would seem to be occupying the fastnesses of the YaBainkara Mountains, and the Amnyimachin Mountains.

Dergewa: To the west of the Horba and the Nyarong lies Derge, the largest state in Eastern Tibet. Its capital is

Derge-gonchen, a lamasery which prints the Kangjur (Tibetan Bible). The state is said to have a population of 40,000. Five hundred of the males are attached to the lamasery. The people are mostly nomadic and are very scattered. In 1909 its political leanings were towards China rather than Tibet. It is bounded on the north by Dzachuka or Ngolok country. On the south is Batang, and on the east are the Horba states while to the west is Chamdo.

Horba is a village in Derge, noted for its work in teapots, saddles, swords, and guns.

Dashi is a small state between Batang and Derge whose princes ruled 300 families, but pays tribute to Derge.

As the result of colportage, copies of the Gospels have been carried here in generous quantities, and in the past distributed widely through the Horba states and Derge. This sowing of the seed may yet be found to bear fruit.

CHAPTER 5 THE CHINESE

In Marco Polo's days, China seems to have been a good place to visit. The country was firmly governed, and its rulers, the new Mongol Emperors, were interested in the outside world. As a matter of fact, the Mongols had recently conquered most of the known world. Nestorian Christianity was established, and the Emperor wanted the Pope to send him friars, to teach the Chinese the ways of the Christian religion. Doubtless this was to off set Mohammedanism, against which religion the Mongol forces had especially directed their activities. But the Christian friars sent by Pope Gregory X grew fearful of the dangers of their road, and turned homeward again without reaching China.

Years came and went. The years slipped into dreary centuries, and the old silk road across Asia was forgotten, and with it China.

When the Westerners came to China again, they came by sea on trading expeditions. But by now China was old, and was more haughty than she had been when her Mongol rulers had just returned from overrunning Asia and Europe. She believed herself to be at the centre of the political world. She was the source of all culture and civilization; she was in fact the Middle Kingdom (i.e. Chong Kue, the Chinese name for their own country). On the periphery of the Middle Kingdom, were races submitted to China,

absorbing her culture and gradually being assimilated into the Chinese social structure. Beyond the circle of submitting people, was an outer ring of barbaric races, whom it was China's destiny to subdue. When Westerners came to the court of China, whether as trading sea-captains, or as ambassadors representing their respective sovereigns with instruction to promote mutually profitable commerce, these visitors were treated as if they were barbarians, and were expected to prostrate themselves before the Emperor, and tap their foreheads on the ground as an indication of their submission to him. Ill will ensued, and tempers were frayed. High-handed action at the ports caused exasperation. The opium wars ensued, and it is embarrassing to recall that for a while opium was one of the Western imports into China. The Westerners showed that they had the power to enforce their will, and did so. The foreigners were allotted Concessions in the Treaty Ports for residence and business, and were not subject to Chinese law. Westerners were referred to their own consuls when they clashed with Chinese law. This was Extraterritoriality. Great Imperial China was humbled by the despised foreign devils. The literati smarted under the partial loss of their sovereignty. This is why in recent years Westerners in China have so generally felt themselves to be unwelcome. Nevertheless, where China was able to assert her territorial claims, there the Westerners could go, and that included Eastern Tibet. Between the two world wars, out of goodwill for China, Western nations repudiated extraterritorial rights for their nationals, and concessions as such were abandoned. Improved goodwill between the races was looked for, but the Civil War between the nationalists, and Communist armies was activated. China was overrun by the 'Reds' and Westerners had to withdraw. A chapter in the story of the evangelization of Tibet (as well as of China) was closed.

In passing, the constancy of China's colonizing methods over the centuries may be noted. Thus, around 300 BC in the days of the former Han Dynasty, China took into her borders the state of Pa (now Eastern Szechwan) and took steps to Sinoise it by establishing schools. A few hundred years later, having assimilated Pa, China was overrunning Shu (now Western Szechwan). Since then China seems to have been steadily insinuating herself into trading and administrative centres in the Tibetan Marches, until by normal racial growth, she was able to assume political control. Chinese traders, and temporary colonists, marry girls from the local races. They aim to withdraw to their original home territory in old age, but leave behind their half caste children claiming to be Chinese, and claiming racial superiority over the autochthons. China's claims on Tibet itself seem to be based on trade missions sent in from China from time to time, which Tibet has accepted as being merely temporary, but which China now claims to be a permanent arrangement. The establishment of the Wu-tuen (five colonies) in Jarong territory, following a definite military campaign by the Emperor Ch'ien long (1736-1796) is to be noticed. The growth of the Chinese population round Malaya and the Malay peninsula, like Italian irredenta can also be noted in our own day.

The Chinese colonists, the descendant of the Imperial soldiery who conquered the Jarong, were largely Mohammedan, a term which in China usually has a racial, as well as religious connotation. They were settled in conquered territory called the Wu-tuen, or five military colonies, but have not thrived politically. Isolated from Changtu the Provincial Capital, by the difficulties of the terrain (mountain passes around 15,000 feet in altitude: distances calling for continual travel for seven to fourteen days at a time: badly made roads: and bridges constantly

needing repair) little supervision has been given to the colonies by the Provincial Government. Moreover, local warlords were also too preoccupied with their own affairs, (manoeuvring to improve their local military status on the plains) to be bothered to send into Jarongland, any disciplinary force needed to reduce the Wu-tuen to order. The result was that, though a facade of correct government was maintained, behind the scenes the operatives were found to be the leaders of the local Ko-lao-huei (a Mafialike organization) whose chief interest was found to be the opium traffic. Although ostensibly forbidden, opium was grown openly on the mountain side. It made the local leaders wealthy and powerful, so they could buy in rifles, pistols and ammunition, and were able to defy the Government when it suited them. If troops were sent in, ostensibly to suppress the opium traffic, they would return to the plains as escorts for the narcotic they were supposed to destroy — but they would be short of some equipment, as the rifles, ammunition and pistols, had been sold to the local populace. On the other hand, with small arms loosely held, and carried around by every little bandit chief and his personal body-guard, disorder, accidental killings, frank murders, and regional feuds were inevitable, between farming activities. Missionaries insisted on refusing to allow men with firearms to enter Mission premises, and were fairly successful in enforcing the rule by moral suasion. On one occasion however, a junior member of the retinue of one bandit leader, anxious to be officious, did make a scene during a medical clinic being held, by ostentatiously firing a pistol into the air. Before this, when missionaries had first taken up residence in Mowkung, Capital of the Wu-tuen, it seems that in some way they incurred the displeasure of the then bandit chief, who conferred with his council as to whether or not he should kill off the newly arrived

missionary party. It was some years before they learnt how the hand of God had protected them at that time.

As well as feuding banditry, and squabbling warlords, China has had many troubles since the Revolution of 1911 overthrew the Manchu Dynasty. Out of the upheaval of that time, Chiang Kai-shek emerged as the spiritual successor to Sun-yat-sen, the Father of the new Republic, and as military leader of the Nationalist Party. He soon found himself however, in opposition to the Communist Party which early appeared, and has been his chief opponent ever since. Chiang took a moderate course politically, in introducing reforms towards Democracy. He always had to contend with corruption in his own party. The Communists won approval by offering more radical agrarian reform. By 1931, Chiang had the main Communist forces fairly well contained in the Province of Kiangsi, and began to put them under increasing pressure. In 1934 they reacted by bursting out of their encirclement, and beginning what they call 'the long march'. Using smaller roads, avoiding major centres, and making incredibly long forced marches, they trekked westwards, through the provinces of Hunan, Kweichow and Szechwan towards Kangting (Tatsienlu) in Sikang. They made astonishingly long marches to reach the city of Luting-chiao where they had to take an important suspension bridge over the Tong River. They reached the bridge before the defenders had time to destroy it. The defenders however did tear up the wooden floor boards and so a remarkable battle ensued for command of the supporting chains hanging across the gorge. Under fire, the attacking Communists crawled along the swaying chains, and secured their bridgehead. The writer recalls the bridge at its rickety best, and marvels at what the 'Reds' did on it! The bridge was about a hundred yards in length, without the triangulation steadying effect of being suspended from

rigid bowing. By this manoeuvre the Reds had completely bypassed the 24th Chinese army under General Liu-wen-huei, and were free to march into Kangting, Capital of Sikang, and gateway to Tibet, merely a day's journey away. It so happened that Mr J.H. Edgar, (already referred to) was there on his own, and ill in the Mission Home. Knowing himself to be inviting murder if he stayed, he felt too ill to flee and wander on the mountain side, inviting further illness. But a Higher Authority than General Liu seemed to intervene, to turn the Reds away and so instead, they turned northwards into a wilderness of mountains and hardship, and Kangting was saved. The few military people left in the city took credit for the move, by claiming to have spread the news among the Reds that Kangting was heavily garrisoned by the 24th army and by fierce Tibetan troops. It so happened that a friend was able to get a telegram through to missionary colleagues in Chengtu about Mr Edgar's condition. It fell to the writer to make a rush journey to Kangting to his help. The road took him across the north bound route the Reds had taken from Luting-chiao. Unburied corpses, and the dreadful stench of a battle field betrayed the course of the Communists.

As well as the Communists who began their trek from Kiangsi, there was a smaller nidus of them in North China, which by devious routes was making its way westwards and southwards. The two bodies of Communists met in Mowkung, and paused there for a few weeks to rest up and reorganize themselves. As they moved about the land they slaughtered all, and any who showed the slightest sign of having wealth — the possession of a wrist watch, for instance. On the other hand their own losses were heavy, as they did meet some resistance, and were combatting disease and hunger constantly. Houses were wrecked and furniture was burnt for fuel. For instance in Mowkung they were

enticed by the abundance of luxuriantly growing datura, which they tried cooking as a needed vegetable. The result was insanity, and death for some. Datura is related to belladonna and was formerly used in hay fever cigarettes. With houses and contents destroyed, and the population reduced to one quarter of its former strength, the capacity of the region to support them seemed exhausted. Supplies of ready food being pilfered and consumed, the Communists moved on, reduced in numbers by exhaustion, sickness and death, but reinforced by such recruits to their cause as they gathered on their travels. When they came to move from Mowkung, we gather they were really lost in the mountains. At any rate, from accounts of their movements given to me, they divided into three companies, which fanned out in a northerly direction. By this time they had become mere rabble bands, marauding for food round northern Jarong and Tibetan dwellings, while as far as possible, the local people took refuge in inaccessible nooks in the mountains. The westernmost bands of Reds may have been making for the grasslands of Kokonor, but they seemed to have perished in the empty wildernesses, like the armies reputed to have disappeared in bogs. Those in the centre seem to have moved in a northerly direction, apparently aiming at cities in the south of Kansu, where they dispersed, losing their identity as best they could. The third division moved north-west to the area south of Sian, presumably the area from which the northerners had first set out. By this time they must have been really few in number, but if so, they were able to hide this fact. The leaders from both southern and northern bands had stuck together so that later they could boast of their 'long march' and rebuild their army. J. Gunther (**Inside Asia, Chapter 14**) tells us that in October 1934 the Communists left Kiangsi 100,000 strong. After a year 50,000 arrived in

Yemen in the north.

In due time, China being embroiled in war with Japan, the Communists were able to make the gesture of an arrangement with Chiang Kai-shek to assist him in war against the Japanese. In due time however, out of the vicissitudes of the war with Japan, civil war with the Communists, and rival claims for Marshall Plan help (the U.S.A. scheme for helping war time allies recover from their exhaustion after the Second World War) Chiang Kai-shek found it necessary to withdraw his National Government to Formosa, (Taiwan) while the Reds overran the mainland provinces. Now, the Communists are hoping that their murderous history will be forgotten, as they seek to assume a place in the councils of the world, and the world watches to see if the leopard can change his spots.

CHAPTER 6 THE TIBETAN RELIGION

Tibetans are not one race, while their social customs vary from region to region. Some are house-based and sedentary, while others are nomadic and restless. Some practice fairly rigid monogamous marriage, others move through various degrees of permissive sexual alliance, to polyandry. Some make relatively peaceful law-abiding communities: others federate loosely into bands whose main interest is in brigandage, theft, and cattle rustling. A force which can bring any sort of social cohesion to people so diverse, and so sparsely distributed over thousands of dreary square miles of the world's less desirable surface, must be remarkable, and demanding of attention. This force is Lamaism, which provides the religion, law, culture, philosophy and science of the people. As a form of government, it is a hierarchy guided by the wisdom of the most highly educated of the priesthood. At the same time it is democratic, for each family aims to give at least one boy to the Lama church, and theoretically he has an equal chance of rising to the top. Tibet has few towns and villages as we know them: but every family is in touch with the local lamasery, and feels free to turn there when needing help. The lamasery further provides such communal life as is needed. The people know also that (in normal times) at the head of his church in Lhasa, lives a god incarnate, to enlighten their paths and

protect them from evil. The Tibetan believes he shares this world with a host of spirit beings, mostly malignant. They ride the winds, and are held to blame for every sort of calamity or accident which may be met with. The lamas are trained to deal with just such events. They know the appropriate scriptures to read, or the spells to engage the help of the appropriate spirit beings. They know the magic to undo the mischief of demons. Is some one ill? They will undertake to exorcise the evil spirit causing the trouble. Does the patient die? The lamas are still needed to guide the wandering soul through the wilderness of the intermediate state, towards a favourable rebirth and reincarnation, within the limits set by his Karma as the wheel of life turns for him. Is Spring imminent, and agriculture about to begin? Then the services of the lamas are needed, first to clear the fields of evil spirits, enticing the demons into a circle of purifying fire, and shooting with a bow and arrow such as seek to escape from the circle. Is a journey to be undertaken? The lamas will pick the lucky day on which it should be begun, and provide protecting charms to ensure a safe arrival.

Each lamasery (gomba) has its temple (hlakang) in which chanting for communal purposes takes place. Typically the services for chanting begin at dawn, with calls made on a pair of fifteen foot long alpine horns which reverberate through the valleys, to call the gods to come and inhabit their idol forms so that they may be worshipped. (Tibetan idolatry is of the form called 'inhabitation'). To start with, the horn calls are widely spaced, but as dawn advances, the tempo increases, until they are sounding every second or so with insistence and urgency. As the spirits are felt to be arriving, they are piped in with high pitched music on flageolet-like instruments. The rest of the orchestra join in. The lamas seated on hassocks or mats in two opposing lines,

begin their chanting, keeping in unison with the aid of rhythmically beaten percussion instruments. The merit of the sacred books is being released for the benefit of the community.

The story is that Buddhism came to Tibet when king Srongtsangampo received a wife, as tribute from the Chinese court. About the same time he received a wife from Nepal. Though their birthplaces were so widely separated, both ladies were Buddhists. Together they exercised their influence over the king, and Buddhism became the court religion. The teaching of Sakyamuni regarding the Noble Eightfold Path, was heard in Tibet — namely, the Path for Right Views, Right Aspirations, Right Speech, Right Conduct, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness, Right Rapture — each with its appropriate Buddhist connotation. The four Noble Truths were expounded. The Wheel of Life held firmly by Mara, the genius of evil, was explained and the difficulty of obtaining to the Nirvana state was emphasized.

But the people of Tibet do not seem to have been very impressed by the Buddhist teaching, and years passed without the ordinary people accepting it.

Sakyamuni (Sakyathupa in Tibetan), the founder of Buddhism was the son of a minor Indian Rajah of the Sakya clan. As a young prince he was oppressed by the universality of sorrow and suffering. To find the meaning of this, he gave himself to asceticism and meditation, after first renouncing the life of comfort and social standing to which he had been born. He accepted the agnosticism of his age, with belief in reincarnation at death. After a few years, Sakyamuni felt he had achieved enlightenment, and began teaching his way of salvation. Existence was evil and was subject to a continual chain of deaths and rebirths, which needed to be broken. This could be done by intense ascetic

suppression of all desire, while at the same time accumulating merit by attention to right living, and doing good deeds. (The good deeds might be rather insignificant, such as releasing a body louse instead of killing it.) With all desire destroyed, the ascetic becomes an enlightened one, and is free at death to enter the Nirvana state. This is variously explained, but to Sakyamuni seems to have meant being extinguished like a candle flame. Alternatively, the enlightened one might delay his own entrance into Nirvana, that he might help and encourage other seekers to find the way. Such persons are called bodhisattvas. This then, is the dismal teaching which has been called 'The Light of Asia'. To the Christian whose salvation rests on the merits of Another, (and is 'not of works lest any man should boast' viz. Ephesians 2:9) the idea of working for a lifetime, to accumulate merit to earn the right to spiritual suicide is indeed depressing. Actually, Buddhists themselves do not seem to have been satisfied, and so the simple form of teaching called Hinayana (or Lesser Vehicle), underwent change to produce a more abstruse religion called Mahayana Buddhism (or Greater Vehicle). To start with, for salvation, it is human nature to want life, not the extinction of life in the Nirvana state. Accordingly, Nirvana was explained as being eternal bliss in the 'Western Heaven' with its eternal sunset glory. Personal individuality however, was lost like a wave sinking back into the ocean mass.

Further, men require a god to worship. The guidance of a mere human who is agnostic, as they are is not very satisfying. Accordingly, Sakyamuni came to be regarded as divine. It was explained that Sakyamuni had previous heavenly existence.

A heavenly being called Dhyani Buddha was conceived of thought. He was a 'Buddha of Meditation' and was of immaterial form — was in fact, pure thought. For good

measure, five of these Dhyani Buddhas were invented, to preside, one over each of five supposed ages (or kalpas) — three past, one current, and one future. A Dhyani Buddha is too detached a being, to produce by itself any response on earth, but projects a bodhisattva which can operate among men for their enlightenment. It is open to such a bodhisattva to produce a secondary emanation taking on human form and substance. Bodhisattvas may be seen to have their origin 'from above' as by emanation: or 'from below' by enlightenment, as in the case of Sakyamuni, the historical Buddha. Presiding over the present kalpa is the Dhyani Buddha, Amitabha (Opame in Tibetan). He has an emanation who is the Panchen Lama. Amitabha further has a celestial bodhisattva Avalokites-vara (Chonrezi in Tibetan) who is the patron god of Tibet. He in turn has an emanation who is the Dalai Lama.

We have remarked that a religion requires a god to worship, and so the historical Buddha became a god. A religion has one other need. It needs to have something to say about the origin of things. Accordingly, the idea of a primordial Buddha, or Adi Buddha has been introduced, from which all other beings in general, and the Dhyani Buddhas in particular, have been evolved. In Tibetan art one sect of lamas represents the Adi Buddha as a dark blue naked person, sexually embracing his shakti, who is shown white and also naked. A shakti is a female counterpart generated by certain divine beings for themselves, and meant to show how in one person, a fierce aggressive nature may present itself as a mild and yielding one, and vice versa.

Thus had Buddhism changed by the time it reached Tibet; but still it was not fully acceptable to the ordinary Tibetan. One other thing was needed, and that was a way to control vicious demons, and malicious deities. Some one was needed to conquer this host before the faith could

advance. The authorities found a man in North India who seemed to fulfil this need. He was Padma Sambhava, a professional magician who seems to have been one of the biggest rogues in all history. After travelling around Western Tibet for a time exorcising spirits, he announced that his work was done! All the demons, furies and malicious spirits had been conquered, and were about to be destroyed, when they cried out for mercy. This was allowed to them, on their agreeing to serve in future as defenders of the faith. Thus, at one stroke a vast increase to the Buddhist pantheon was obtained. Padma Sambhava established the rudiments of the Red Sect of lamas, and built a lamasery. He also claimed to have hidden in caves and rocky niches, scores of books, to be found when religion in Tibet was able to benefit from them! The way is wide open for canonisity to be claimed for any book, heretical or otherwise, which may yet be written.

His work done, Padma Sambhava withdrew to his home country full of honours. Buddhism was accepted in Tibet about one hundred years after King Srongtsangambo who retrospectively, was declared to have been an incarnation of Avalokitesvara.

Those who followed the teaching of Padma Sambhava, and continued his tantric practices, became the Red Hat Lamas. By tantric practices we mean practices derived from the Tantras or sacred books of the degrading Hindu worship of Siva, and grafted on to Buddhism. Attempts at reforming the priest-craft followed later, completed by one Tsongkapa whose followers, the Yellow Hat Sect (Gelugpa) with the Dalai Lama at its head, is now dominant. Tsongkapa emphasized celibacy, and abstaining from alcohol, as being necessary for his monks or lamas.

As well as the Red Sect, there is also a Black Sect of lamas known as Bonpa (White is their religious colour). It is

generally agreed that the Bonpa represent the old pre-Buddhist religion of Tibet, though they have now modelled themselves after the manner of their rivals, the Red and Yellow Sects, residing in lamaseries and chanting their scriptures. It is thought that they derive from the original animistic Shamans of Central Asia. On the other hand they themselves claim Persia as their spiritual home, and we suspect that one of the dualism (light versus darkness) religions as Zoroastrianism or Manichaeism has contributed to their beliefs.

Shamanism: Those who have a capacity for going into an epileptiform trance or fugue, more or less at will, after a period of induction standardized for the individual, are regarded as putting their bodies at the service of their tutelary deities who are then supposed to take over, and to make oracular utterances in response to questions put to them. The position of the State Oracle at Lhasa seems to have been a recognized office in the Tibetan civil service, given to whoever seemed to have a capacity for this behaviour. It is however, not a practice which is cultivated by those without the gift. We believe it is wrong to say that lamaistic practice is built on Shamanism. The ordinary lama practitioner is content to practice clairvoyancy, crystal gazing (rock crystal being valued for this), astral meditation, astrology, manipulation of magic spells, etc. Heinrich Harrer gives a good critical description of the State Oracle at work in his '**Seven Years in Tibet,**' Chapter 11.

The writer recalls reaching a White Sect Lamastery at dusk one day, and being allowed shelter for the night.

"It was clear however, that the whole chapter of fifty to sixty lamas were preoccupied with other business. That afternoon one of their number had died, and the lamas were beginning a funeral service for him. Some one was chanting

in the gloom of the main temple. On the other hand, in the window of every cell around the courtyard were brightly lit butter lamps. Then gradually I realized that slowly but systematically, one by one the lights were going out in the windows, but were being carried into the temple hall. This was becoming ablaze with light from countless butter lamps. All the time the chanting was working up to its climax, helped on by a growing orchestra. After an hour or so, the courtyard was in darkness save for the temple porch illuminated with the brilliance of a modern cinema doorway. It seemed clear that light for the deceased, to welcome him to the abode of the gods was the idea. The Tibetan knows nothing of the experience of the Christian as he gets older, that 'the course of the righteous is like morning light, growing brighter till it is broad day' (Proverbs 4:18 N.E.B.)"

The supposed mystical depths of oriental religions which are so attractive to some occidentals, are very shallow on examination. The hours spent, for instance in disciplined meditation, seems to mean sitting in one position as long as possible, with the thoughts fixed on one particular object, to produce a desired result. An example may be the case cited by Madam David-Neel who tells of lamas who sit in icy weather, concentrating on the syllable 'Om' imagined as written in their navels and thereby they generate psychic heat. As with normal fatigue, the mind wanders from its point of focus, and becomes open to suggestions from the subconscious. This will include the idea of heat when the mind has been preconditioned for it.

The Tibetan knows nothing of prayer as the Christian understands it, whether as communion with his God, or as petition in the name of Christ. Each lama however is supposed to adopt as his tutelary some deity from the Tibetan pantheon. Each morning he is supposed to invoke

protection and help of this deity.

Prayer wheels, and prayer flags are spoken of by most travellers from Tibet. Hand sized prayer wheels are hollow metal drums which turn on spindles which are extended downwards as handles. In the drum is placed a piece of paper bearing a charm, usually the famous "Om-mani-padme-hum". Each time that the drum is spun on its spindle, is supposed to be the same as speaking the charm once. The efficacy would be multiplied of course, by the number of times the magical sounds were written on the rotating paper. Spinning the drum is facilitated by a small weight attached to the circumference of the drum, adding centrifugal force to the spinning cylinder.

As well as the prayer wheels for personal use, there is a large variety used in batteries and arranged in covered arcades round temples and lamaseries. They are spun by the orthodox circumambulating the temple in a clockwise direction. The heterodox Black Sect circumambulate anti-clockwise. Their usual magic spell is 'O-ma-tri-mu-ye-sa-le-'du'. The drums vary in size, being say about three feet tall by eighteen inches in diameter: They are covered with painted leather, and are stuffed with paper bearing the mystic charms, reputedly by the hundred thousand times.

Prayer flags printed with the magic syllables are attached to poles by their longitudinal edges. The poles are erected at strategic points, such as where a path turns around the corner of a house, crosses a pass, or approaches a rickety bridge over a raging torrent. Each flutter in the wind liberates the potency of the charm. These may be erected by people for their own benefits, and safety; or they may be erected by philanthropic well wishers, who erect them for travellers generally, to earn personal merit, to improve their standing, when at death they come to be reincarnated. An easy way to build up this merit, so we have been told, is to

have a wooden printing block arranged in a frame contraption, with cords hinged over the surface of a river, so that each time the block is lowered, "Om-mani-padme-hum" is printed on the surface of the river. How much more puerile can the wisdom of the East become?

CHAPTER 7 PREACHING TO TIBETANS

There is a story told of a gentleman who was to preach by interpretation to a heathen Chinese audience. He began his address with the words "When the children of Israel came out of Egypt — " When later he had opportunity to ask his interpreter why he had taken ten minutes to translate this opening phrase, the interpreter explained that as well as translating, he had also to tell his audience who the children of Israel were, where Egypt was, and how they came to be coming out of it! The story is probably fiction, but it emphasizes the difficulty met with in bringing a Christian message, to those whose minds are not already equipped with Biblical ideas and history. In bringing the Gospel to the Tibetans, the difficulty is perhaps even greater than with the Chinese, for the Tibetan is a metaphysician and the Tibetan mind is not merely devoid of primary Christian ideas, but it is on the other hand stocked with the erroneous ideas of an astonishing philosophical system, which have to be displaced before any Christian ideas can be received. For instance, the missionary in talking to a Tibetan, will begin to speak of God. But he will at once find that the best word for God in the Tibetan language is considered to be "dkon-mchhog", a term defined as meaning "the most precious thing" for the Tibetans have no real conception of God at all. (cf. Romans 1:28). They consider that all things

continue in cycles indefinitely into the future, and that which has no future end, can have had no past beginning, and so their thinking does not require a personal creator. As the missionary uses this word *dkon-mchhog* for God he is invariably asked if he means the *dkon-mchhog* triad, but there is no misty allusion here to a half forgotten conception of a God Trinity, for the triad referred to is merely Buddha, the lamas, and the lamaistic scriptures. Let us imagine then, that when he speaks of God, he does not mean the Buddhist triad, but a Creator Who sustains His universe, and works for the well-being of mankind. The missionary must then speak of the Lord Jesus as the Son of God, who descended from Heaven and took on man's form, that by a substitutionary death He might redeem fallen man. Here at once, the missionary finds another erroneous conception which must first be displaced, for the Tibetan religious system includes a host of so-called incarnations, and when the miraculous birth of our Saviour is referred to, the Tibetan wants to know if He is the incarnation of a *bodhisattva*, of a god, or merely the reincarnation of a saint.

In seeking to pass these mental hurdles the missionary must also speak of sin as that (with its consequences) from which the Lord came to save us. Here he will have to use the best word available, namely, '*stigpa*' but here again he will find difficulty for the Tibetan idea of *stigpa* is very far short of the meaning the missionary must attach to it, namely that of rebellion against a righteous and loving God. Further, when it is stressed that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God, then offence will inevitably be given to the lamas, who consider that they have no sin. But such offence cannot be avoided. It is even to be expected.

As the missionary proceeds to develop his theme of salvation through the death of the Lord Jesus, the truth that

“the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin” will give further offence, for theoretically the taking of life at all, is obnoxious to Buddhists, and no place is left for a sacrificial death. Conversation will not proceed far as the merit of the Lord Jesus is urged, before it will be necessary to consider the idea that a man may himself accumulate sufficient merit to obtain salvation — an idea by no means peculiar to Lamaism, but which is nevertheless developed by it to an astonishing degree, even to the point of triviality such as the muttering of spells and the whirling of so-called ‘prayer wheels’ to obtain merit.

And so one might continue to point out that for each Christian idea to be implanted in the Tibetan’s mind, some erroneous one has first to be displaced. Outstanding for instance, is the question of the nature of salvation itself — eternal life, or eternal personal extinction. (Nirvana, or perhaps vague bliss in a Western Heaven) There is also the matter of prayer, to be set against the foolish muttering of spells. There is the matter of true meditation of the Word of God, to be set against the so-called meditation of the Buddhist, which seems to be but the cultivation of that mental blank, which leaves one open to suggestions of the subconscious. The missionary will perhaps want to emphasize the danger of procrastination in fleeing from the wrath to come, to accept Christ’s offer of salvation. But the Tibetan believes in a chain of reincarnations for himself after death, each being tantamount to a second chance, and so with thoughts of an endless chain of second chances, the plea of urgency is lost on him!

Generally speaking, it is not possible to preach to large numbers of Tibetans at a time, as can be done to the Chinese, for the simple reason that the Tibetan population is too scattered and too sparse for such efforts. Evangelistic work must therefore be done, by the faithful buying up of

every opportunity that offers to talk to individuals and to small groups. It is inevitable that much time will have to be spent dealing with such difficulties as have been mentioned. Sometimes perhaps argument may prevail to remove a difficulty, but probably the missionary will more often have to rely on reiterated, dogmatic statement to implant a new idea into his hearer's mind.

It has been observed that the more setting forth of the character of our Lord as in the Gospels, grips by its wonder, the minds of those Tibetans who intelligently read them, and accordingly it is felt that more effort should be made to bring the Tibetan at once into vital contact with this wonderful Divine-Human personality; though to begin by discoursing on the Plan of Salvation is easier to many. The wonderful power of Jesus over evil — sickness, death, and the forces of nature — appeals especially to the Tibetan, for after all, his whole system of Lamaism aims at just this; to give to man power to withstand natural forces and calamities, which would otherwise destroy him. Further, direct contact with the person of Christ is more likely to evoke a sense of sin and of personal need, than a discourse on the Plan of Salvation to a soul to whom the question has not yet become vital.

At this point it seems appropriate to remark that though the average Tibetan, (including the lamas) feels no concern whatsoever for the welfare of his soul and may live in deep sin — and the sinfulness of Tibetan life has become a byword — yet nevertheless, there is a very small minority who give themselves to various ascetic practices (pilgrimages, etc.) whose actions seem to indicate a heartfelt need which demands satisfaction. It may even be that this small minority is proportionately greater than such minorities in other nations. To such it seems appropriate to present the Lord Jesus as the one Who can give heart peace.

It is generally accepted that it is unwise to concentrate on attacking Lamaism when dealing with Tibetans, other than by preaching positive truth which will itself undermine the system. In this respect it has been observed that, as thoughtful lamas read the Gospels, they are impressed, as the majestic figure of Christ moves through the scenes, that it is the lamas who set themselves to oppose Him! (in the New Testament the word priest is consistently translated lama.) Accordingly they find the lama set forth in a bad light, and antagonism is aroused. The Word of God as a sharp two-edged sword, itself does the cutting!

In the past, tens of thousands of copies of the Gospels have been put into circulation among Tibetan peoples, and doubtless colportage work will again be important in bringing the Gospel to the Tibetans. It is felt however, that though in other countries many have been won to Christ by their reading the Scriptures alone, and it is realized that this could happen in Tibet also, nevertheless generally speaking, the Tibetan mind is so darkened by his own beliefs, that he is like the Ethiopian eunuch who needed the Evangelist to explain to him what he read.

Yet another fact to be borne in mind is that though the degree of literacy is low enough, the proportion of those who read intelligently and with sufficient concentration to read more than a paragraph or so at a time, out of the general mass of the population is very much lower — a further argument for not allowing wide colportage to be accepted too generally as a substitute for personal evangelism.

Thamkhi was a melancholy soul, with a pleasant but peculiarly wistful facial expression, suggesting long yearning for some satisfaction which was eluding him. He was wearing the red gown which indicated his attachment to the lama church. He was thirty-three years old when we met

him in Ngaba. He was taking life seriously, and wanted to improve his position for his next reincarnation. At the age of thirteen he had set out from Daschiendo (Tatsienlu or Kangting in Chinese) the great centre of the tea trade between China and Tibet. He was going on pilgrimage to Lhasa, but he was not simply walking or riding. He was prostrating himself over the whole distance of several thousand miles. By that we mean he fell prostrate with arms extended above his head. He made a mark with his fingers in the dust of the road. He then rose and walked forward till his toes were touching his mark. He then prostrated himself again, reached forward as far as possible and made another mark in the dust to walk to, and repeated the process indefinitely hour after hour, and day after day, until after eight years he arrived in Lhasa. On coming to an unbridged river he would estimate its width, and do extra prostrations on the river bank to compensate for the distance he spent in the luxury of a ferry boat.

In all this, Thamkhi was aided and abetted by his mother, who carried his minimal bundle of possessions. From Lhasa the couple continued on to a sacred place of pilgrimage in India. While there, the mother died from a snake bite. As a memento to her, Thamkhi carried with him a portion of her skull. From India Thamkhi journeyed back to Eastern Tibet. From there he was planning to continue his prostrations all the way to Mount Omei, a place sacred to Buddhism, in Western Szechwan, a province of China. As a further effort, he was considering a final pilgrimage to the temple on an island in Koko Nor, still prostrating himself along his weary road. We gave him copies of the Gospels which seemed to give him real pleasure, and we prayed that as he read them, the entrance of God's Word might bring him light. (Psa. 119:130)

“What is Jesus like?” The question was shot at the writer

by Priti Geshes of Pyesman one afternoon. He had been introduced to us by his Prince because of his erudition, as being suitable to help with some language studies which were occupying us. The word Geshes was his title, and may be translated Doctor of Divinity. It meant that he had spent many years of study in Lhasa, and had passed advanced examinations in theology. We had the opportunity later, to watch him engaged in public disputations with his fellow Geshes, an annual event which gives the lamas opportunity to show off their learning. The ordinary people cannot follow their arguments, but they can be very impressed by their gesticulations, the swing of rosaries (108 primary beads) and stamping of feet; and the loud expletive interjections certainly hold attention! The senior lamas like Priti Geshes may each take ten to thirty minutes for their discourses, which are preached before the abbot of the local lamasery, as chairman. He is entitled to, and does interrupt the expositor with questions. Fellow Geshes may also interject questions.

We were seated on hassocks in Priti Geshes' private room, with our translation work before us on low tables or overflowing on to the floor. Sometimes we might write on the table: and other times we might write on the floor, even trying out a word in the dust of the floor (cf. John 8:6 & 8). Contact with life in the East, often throws light on Biblical passages. The plastered walls of the room were covered with the usual stylized and lurid painting of Tibetan deities. Hanging thangkas (Tibetan ikons) supplemented the mural art. We paused to drink butter tea, poured from a teapot kept warm on a brazier. Then abruptly came the question "What is Jesus like?" Startled, we paused to pray for guidance in answering, so the Geshes went on "Well, has he horns like this?" (putting his forefingers to his forehead to simulate hōrns) "or do his eyes bulge like this?"

as he pulled his eyelids down horribly to make his eyeballs stand out. In a flash it was clear that the Geshes was trying to fit our peerless Lord into his horrible pantheon as portrayed on his walls, so we made haste to answer "Oh, we don't make pictures of Jesus" (for Tibetan use at any rate) "Well," replied the Geshes, "we don't want your Jesus! . . . He is altogether lovely." (Song of Sol. 5:16) "They seeing, see not; and hearing, they hear not; neither do they understand." (Matthew 13:13)

CHAPTER 8 A MIXED BAG

Anyone considering making a visit to Tibet, will find it convenient to have a long tongue, for the visitor will want to conform to local conventions of politeness, and so on being introduced to a stranger he will roll his tongue out till the tip approximates, as nearly as possible to the chin! At the same time he will display his empty open palms, to show presumably, that they hold no weapons. Travellers in Tibet usually carry little personal baggage, but what they do carry will almost invariably include a personal wooden bowl, typically turned from the root of a vinelike plant, and polished. This is used for drinking butter tea, and for eating tsamba (parched barley meal), this being the staple in the diet of three or four meals a day. In travel the usually worn, bulky sheepskin gown, is girded up to about knee height from ground level, so that a huge bloused-out effect is obtained around the waist. This serves as an enormous pocket for the individual's bowl, and any other items being carried — perhaps a prayer-wheel, or a boiled leg of mutton. A traveller is always popular, who can produce such an addition to the menu, and who passes it around the circle, for each traveller to slice off a hunk of mutton for himself. At such times the tea is kept stewing in a small cauldron resting on three stones, as a tripod. Between the stones a fire of dry cow manure burns, and requires

constant attention in the way of refuelling: and being blown up with a nozzle attached to a sheepskin bag to serve as bellows; which is ingeniously flicked full of air, and then squeezed empty under the elbow of the fire master. No Tibetan will travel over the grasslands without the small cauldron, bellows-bag, and initial supply of dry cow manure in a leather bag, together with a similar bag of tsamba and butter. Hands seem to pass very readily back and forth between the bags, without washing! A supply of tea leaves is also needed — the poorest grade of tea leaf, mostly stalk, being used. A meal over, the bowls are licked clean and the journey continued. As we have remarked, a long tongue is useful in Tibet, where dishes are not washed.

Life in Tibet means travel. We read now of convoys of motor lorries, and even tanks reaching Lhasa over the new roads the Communists have built in from China, to keep the country in subjection. The traditional way however, is on horseback, preferably in the company of others. Through deep valleys and ravines, the road may crawl narrowly round alarming precipices, or climb over fifteen to eighteen thousand feet high passes by the stoniest tracks, to the broad drovers' routes which cross the grasslands. Walking is not usually practical because of mud, and marsh and snow. An alternative is to link up with a yak caravan, and pay a small sum to be allowed to ride any yak travelling unloaded. Most of the yaks will be heavily laden with tea, but the drove usually includes one or two unladen animals. The trouble is that they will probably be equipped with pack saddles, on which it is impossible to sit without voluminous pads of bedding, or perhaps an extra skin gown tied over the saddle. Perched on top of the pile, the rider feels that riding a camel must be a comparable experience. He holds in his hand a piece of rope attached to the ring in the yak's nose, as an approximation to a single rein. Actually, the rope is

for fastening the yak to the tethering lines put down at night, to keep the drove together after they have grazed. A yak cannot be guided as a horse is guided. The rider must be content just to sit on the animal and study herd instinct, as he is carried where the creature will, sometimes in the centre of the herd, and sometimes at its periphery, as the herd moves steadily forward at two-and-a-half miles per hour, under the general guidance of the drovers riding horses.

At times rivers have to be crossed, and are forded when feasible. When this is not feasible, a bridge has to be negotiated. This usually means crossing where the river is narrowed by rocks, to give as short a span as possible for the bridge. That means, of course, that bridges are placed where the torrents are wildest. It requires steady nerves, and a good head for heights to cross some of the bridges, which may be only two planks broad in the centre, and without hand-rails. Animals have to be lead to such hazards singly, and not be allowed to bunch up, lest one horse, mule, or yak be startled and stampede the rest.

In some places, the means provided for crossing a river is a single bamboo rope. To use it, the traveller sits in a loop of rope attached to a wooden tubular slide, made to run freely along the main cable. Seated in the rope loop, and holding on to this just below the sliding collar, the traveller pushes himself (or is pushed) off from the bank. There is a momentary pause, and then a sickening rush as, with a smell of burning wood, the traveller finds himself shooting towards the centre of the river and beyond. If the further bank is below the level of the nearer bank he may be carried right across in one swish. He is more likely, however, to find himself stuck somewhere over the centre of the racing river, and have to haul himself hand over hand (or be hauled) up the sloping end of the sagging cable. One missionary who

was grossly overweight, confided to the writer that when available, he chose to use the stouter cable meant for transporting yaks!

Yet another method of crossing rivers is possible where there are relatively placid stretches of water. It is by skin coracle. These are roughly circular craft, six feet or so in diameter, made of skins stretched over a frame of flexible juniper fronds. The coracle is light enough to be carried upstream on a man's back. On the water it is amazingly buoyant and can be guided into the current, or pulled out of it by strong pulls with a paddle. The writer vividly recalls a trip of several miles, made with his senior, as well as the boatman, in a coracle heavily laden with baggage. As we spun round like a pudding bowl on water, shooting rapids, and sitting as low as possible on the hide floor to maintain stability, it was no reassurance to recall that to fit himself for the trip, the boatman had just doped himself with a smoke of opium, a move calculated to lengthen his reaction times.

Eastwards, across the foothills and on the plains of China, large flat-bottom barges may serve as ferries. The writer recalls one morning reaching such a barge which was already so crowded with farming folk going across for a day's work, that he hesitated to board the boat, and thought of waiting for its next crossing. But a sense of urgency won over the dictates of prudence, so he squeezed on board past the boatman, who seemed about to push off from the bank. But surprisingly he did not, for he had heard the jingle of animal bells coming down the road. Instead, he squeezed his passengers to one end of the barge to make room at the other for three horses and a water buffalo. An easy and uneventful crossing was made, and the writer was left musing over the casual behaviour of the Chinese ferryman, in contrast to the Tibetan who, if he did not swim his

animals across, would have placed them in the boat first, in the centre crosswise over where the keel should be. The animals are stood facing in opposite directions tethered to the gunwales so that if they stampede they will not all move in the same direction at the same time and so upset the boat. In fairness, it must be said that Tibetans know little of placid rivers, while the Chinese ferryman knew the capacities of his craft.

The King of Kroskyab, one of the Rgyalrong states (see chapter 3), was a dismal character who liked to keep himself to himself. To this end, he could be quite surly to the local Chinese Magistrate who was supposed to oversee him in China's interest. He was said to fear neither his gods, nor men. About this we wondered, however, as we noted his desire to possess a potion to protect himself against poisoning. It was to this man's castle, with its painted garuda guarded doors, that the Rev J.H. Edgar came early in the century, preaching the Gospel, and distributing literature. The castle inmates made it clear that his visit was not welcome. But they were in a playful mood, and it happened that just then, they had a prisoner in the castle who was a homicidal madman. He had already done to death two or three of the king's subjects. It would be fun to see what he would do with the foreign visitor. And so Mr Edgar was introduced to his presence. But at that moment, the madman had other thoughts, and an open door meant escape! In a trice he was out and climbing agilely to a lofty pinnacle on the battlements. The fickle castle mob turned to the task of recapturing the madman, and the missionary was able to make his escape as night fell, to the protection of the Chinese colony of Hsu-ch'ing, five to six miles away.

Years later missionaries again visited Drozur in Kroskyab. This time they were given a night's shelter, and

were helped on their way with baggage animals. But the help was given grudgingly, and largely in return for simple medical work done.

Somewhere near Drozur is Meska. We never did find out just where Meska is. But strange things are told of Meska — stories of Tibetan nuns who live a communal life in their own nunnery and defend their rights with Amazonlike ferocity. We met three of these rugged ladies in Tanpahsien once. The Doyenne of the party had fallen from her horse, and had dislocated her shoulder. We reduced the dislocation for her, and asked if we would be welcome if we visited them in their nunnery. The affirmative was implied in the warmth of the excited answering question “Will the doctor come too?” Some medical knowledge is invaluable in opening doors in Tibet, but its usefulness needs to be kept in perspective for Buddhism so emphasizes the doing of good deeds to build up merit, that a doctor can come to be regarded as merely a professional ‘do gooder’ for his own ultimate selfish ends.

Where two civilizations meet, a balance of cultures can often be noted. So it was in Tsakunao, a little town in the Tibetan marches of the Chinese province of Szechwan, to which we had come to do some language work. On the street was a Chinese who did a good business selling bowls of cooked dough strings, suitably flavoured with meat sauce and condiments. We frequently patronized his shop for meals of his speciality. We noticed one small point however, in regard to his service. He had adopted the Tibetan way of serving salt. The locally obtainable salt was very dense rock salt, obtained from wells at Tzeliuchin in the plains of Szechwan. There, brine was drawn from the ground and evaporated in large vats, to produce the hard rock salt of Chinese commerce, albeit black or grayish in appearance

from heavy soil contamination. Alternatively, a coarsely granular salt, also heavily laden with soil contaminants is available, which has been scooped from natural deposits around the Koko-nor. The Chinese way of using salt for culinary and table purposes, is to pound up fragments of the rock in a stone mortar with a pestle (usually another stone suitably shaped). The powdered salt is added to food as required. The Tibetan way, is to steep a piece of rock salt (or a few spoonfuls of crystals) in a bowl of water. A brine is formed and spoonfuls of the brine are dipped out for use as needed to add to food. From time to time more water has to be added to top up the brine. Less frequently, more salt has to be added. But when this point is reached, a dirty deposit of mud has settled at the bottom of the bowl. The brine has lost its saltiness and so as we watched, our shop-keeper, with his shop fully opened to the road, stepped into the road and scraped the now useless contents of the salt bowl onto the street. Just then some Chinese coolies carrying heavy loads of merchandise shuffled by, and in a moment the black splash of salt on the road was lost in the rest of the mire. At once the writer understood a passage of Scripture which had previously given him difficulty. "Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men." (Matthew 5:13)

His Majesty Grashes Tsering King of the Rgyalrong of Chogschi was a very able and enlightened ruler. He did his best to keep abreast of world happenings, following world news from such letters and newspapers, as reached him from China proper, whether through official channels, or through his semi-national trading missions. He always had about his court, some Chinese gentleman who could deal with his correspondence for him. In fact he had even

engaged a lady teacher to run a small school for the few Chinese children who lived around his castle. He had been given the honorary title of Colonel in the Chinese Army, in return for his services in keeping the peace in the Marches.

The mass of his subjects are of course Rgyalrong, and are dealt with in the Rgyalrong language. As a lamaist, the king worked in close, and apparently harmonious collaboration with the local abbot and his chapter of Geshes and others.

The first time we met His Majesty, we were shown into one of his guest rooms, and were astonished to see that he had three clocks arranged around the room. Each clock pointed to a different time, and none was going. That was in 1935. We knew that the Chinese were impressed by the possession of a clock, because establishing the time of day is the province of astronomy, and a knowledge of astronomy in China indicated the most advanced mathematical learning. Thus our surprise at finding clocks in the Tibetan Marches! Other foreign toys which the king liked perhaps more than his clocks, were his two pairs of binoculars.

We have spoken of His Majesty's conduct of his business with the Chinese. In 1947 we had opportunity to observe the king attending to business concerning his own Rgyalrong subjects. It happened that the writer and his wife were staying with King Grashes Tsering as his guests, at one of his country seats, having been invited there to treat his eldest son, a high lama in his own right. He was a very sick man, with valvular disease of the heart and, auricular fibrillation. Incidentally Mrs Jeffrey is a much travelled lady, who at that time, went for six years out of her total seventeen years in China, without seeing another white woman. Unfortunately it was soon clear that we could do little to relieve the lama's condition permanently. In fact he died suddenly some weeks later, while attempting a journey, accompanied by a considerable retinue. We were saddened

to realize that he never showed any interest in the story of God's love, which we had to tell him. His father found comfort in the thought that the son was a high lama, who understood the way disincarnate spirits must travel to be satisfactorily reincarnated.

Our stay with H.M. Grashes Tsering gave us interesting insights into the running of a great house in Tibet. H.M. was a fairly early riser and would seat himself in a chair in an inner court yard, and have a servant assist him in his ablutions and teeth cleaning ritual (for the king had a tooth brush). While the toilet was proceeding, valuable time was saved by the head steward being present in a kneeling position, to make his reports and receive orders for the day, such as deciding the rota for calling in young men for palace service, hewing wood and carrying water from the river, arranging for domestic supplies to be obtained, or trading parties to be sent out.

One day we watched His Majesty review his part-time army of about 200 men. After mustering, the men were marched in single file in a great circle round the parade ground with rifles at the trail. Passing before His Majesty, each man was supposed to reverse his rifle to avoid pointing it at his king. There was no other drill. Confidentially, the king told the writer that the real purpose of the parade was to see that each man still had his rifle, and had not sold it for private banditry! The rifles had come originally from Chinese military sources.

One final note before we leave the subject of King Grashes Tsering. Shortly before taking our last farewell of him, we accidentally discovered that in spite of his liking for clocks, the king could not tell the time of day!

It is a pleasant August morning on the roof of the world. People in ones and twos, or in small groups, some on foot

and some on horse back, are converging from all directions on Chiliku Lamasery, for this is the day the so-called Devil Dance begins — a series of dances by which the lamas demonstrate their powers in the Other World. We mingle with the crowd, and enter the precincts of the Lamasery. The main temple doors are open. The crowd of several hundred people are gathering in the courtyard in front of the temple, the members of the orchestra of trumpets, drums and cymbals are in their places, and the lamasery avatar is on his seat to grace the proceedings with his presence. The lamasery proctors, two burly men, impressively dressed, and with curious square sectioned rods of office, move among the crowd to keep any order needed. The music is beginning, and the ten-foot alpine horns have sounded. The first dancer appears from the temple. He pauses on the top of the temple steps, to dance momentarily, and then trips lightly down the steps to the grass of the large courtyard, where he gyrates and continues his dance. In his right hand is a three-edged dagger, (stellate on cross section with three points) with which he makes stabbing gestures. In his left hand he gestures with a skull cup. He dances on with little variation. He must be a man of about forty-five. Still he gyrates on. How monotonous — will he never stop! But still he pirouettes on. At length another dancer appears, and dances down the steps. Two others follow leisurely, and then two more — and then two more again, until twenty men are dancing and moving in a great circle. Another dancer appears, and gesticulates with a magic three edged dagger like all the others, but in his left hand he carries a trident instead of the skull cup. He dances down the steps, to be followed by a dancer with a blue cord (a noose) in his left hand; another follows him carrying a wand with a miniature skull on its end. Yet others follow, to form a circle of twelve dancers

turning within the first circle of twenty. The circles contract as the dancers move in to the common centre of the circles, and they enlarge as they move outwardly. Slowly the dancers withdraw, dancing up the steps in twos, in the reverse order to that by which they emerged. They had danced for a dizzy ninety minutes. The orchestra ceases.

There is more dancing in the afternoon but we do not attend.

It is another day, and we can hear the orchestra who have already begun playing. We follow the crowd back into the temple court. Today the courtyard is marked out with a square made of seats occupied by people of eminence. In their centre sits a man dressed like a Chinese Buddhist monk, with a large bald head, and a facial mask giving an inane grin. He is there for comic relief, and recalls a reputed contest in magic and logic, between a Chinese exponent of the Buddhist religion, and the doughty lamas (Padma Sambhava in the case of the Red Sect). The story has it that the Chinese was soundly defeated, and was sent home covered in ridicule.

Four dancers in white tunics and trousers, their clothes much decorated with red yellow and blue, are gyrating, gesticulating, and hopping on alternate feet in the courtyard. They wear skull masks to represent graveyard ghouls. They advance and retreat, until with a final dash they rush back into the temple. At this point two lamas from among the seated onlookers rise and sound trumpets, whereupon two black-faced demons dance down the steps, clothed in brightly coloured garments. On their heads are coronets with superstructures. The trumpet sounds again, and a yellow faced demon joins the dancing: and then one with a green face. The lama trumpeters sound again, and two red faced demons join the swirling scene; and then further, two blue ones. With skull cups, and three edged

daggers, the eight demons do an intricate dance and withdraw. The trumpets sound again, and again two demons appear. One has a sword and wears a larger crown than those before him. They do a sort of pas de deux and withdraw. Two others appear who are garishly dressed, the one wearing a huge mask of a stag with antlers; his companion has a great yak's head mask. They also dance together and withdraw. Four further pairs of dancers are called. These are all of a shorter stature. Their masks represent mischievous grins rather than horror. The tops of their masks are painted to look like Indian turbans. They dance together, forming and resolving various figures with some intricacy. They finally return to the temple as they emerged, with a crashing orchestral crescendo.

Four dancers with costumes to represent red skeletons appear, and cavort around awhile, and stand forming a square. Something under a cloth is placed between them, with four cords protruding. The dancing begins again, circling the cloth. Suddenly the cloth is whipped away to reveal a small human effigy with a cord attached to each limb. The skeletons each snatch up a cord, as though larking in macabre style, in the scramble for the corpse. Apparently they have their fun, discard the corpse and dance out of the arena.

There is an interval. Again the dancing has lasted ninety minutes, but this time the delay is short, and soon the play goes on. Twenty magicians have taken the arena and dance with skull cups and three edged daggers. They wear large brimmed black pointed hats similar to their counterparts in Western Aryan mythology. The hats are decorated with miniature skulls, some silken drapery, and peacock feathers. They wear black gowns lavishly decorated with colourful designs in silk. Many demons are called in again, who were seen earlier, in particular those with the coloured

faces, the creature with the stag's head and antlers and the blue headed yak. 'Chief of all the Fierce Ones.' These beings are summoned, in their capacity of defenders of the Buddhist faith. They are ceremonially placated with a libation of holy water, (and with food in some lamaseries). On the ground a leopard skin has been spread. The Fierce Ones are invited to tear to pieces, and drink the blood of a corpse, supposed to be lying on the leopard skin (the effigy is used in some lamaseries). Through the black arts of the magicians this corpse has been packed with the spirits of all who would oppose the Buddhist faith, and who are concentrated in one personality, held to be Lang-Darma, a Tibetan king who became apostate to the faith and was murdered. But the dance goes on. The stag is taking the lead. Now he is seated on the leopard's skin and miming as if eating and drinking. His body almost parallel to the ground is making circles from the waist. He is blood drunk!

The dancing tempo increases again, but the climax has been passed, and now the dancers are returning into the temple. The mystery play is over. In mild sunny weather, in pleasant open air surroundings, we have been entertained with a well executed and colourful spectacle.

But how does it appeal to the native Tibetans? In this respect, after many years, the writer's most vivid memory is of an old man in the audience kneeling trembling as 'the Fierce Ones' appeared, and in particular the blue faced yak — Vajrabhira — Yamantaka — King of Hell and Lord of death. But to those who walk in darkness, and in the fear of the shadow of death, we have to tell of the One Who cried "Fear not; I am the first and last: I am He that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive forevermore, Amen; and have the keys of Hell and of death." (Rev. 1:17)

CHAPTER 9 IN CONCLUSION

Considering that Tibet is regarded as a land closed to Westerners, the number of books on Tibet, and things Tibetan, is really quite remarkable. Most of these books are probably travelogues, such as the story of the travels of Huc and Gabet, or W.W. Rockhill's "**The Land of the Lamas**". Others have undertaken to expound Tibetan lore and religion. Among these are A. Waddell and W.Y. Evans-Wontz. This book, however, is meant to be missionary in tone. The writer's contacts with Tibet were made from China on the east, and personally began in 1932. He has also had opportunity to collect information from a number of pioneers and travellers in the Tibetan Marches. Unfortunately for Tibetan work, it was necessary to establish a base in a Chinese colony (i.e. in Mowkung), and that meant Chinese work always swamped Tibetan work. Sufficient workers were never available to develop the work. In addition, political upheavals were frequent. In 1935 we had to evacuate our station, because the Communist armies were making their famous 'Long March' which brought them through Mowkung. In 1938 on revisiting Mowkung, it was necessary to rebuild completely destroyed premises. A necessary furlough had to be taken in 1939. Two local civil wars over the growing of opium issue occurred, and limited local movements. Finally furlough was needed again, and

the Communists were again sweeping over the country. Complete evacuation followed.

Now the Communist armies have again overrun Tibet killing, and disrupting national life, breaking up Lamaism, and trying to impose Communism in Lhasa itself.

Missionary work as we know it, is no longer possible in Tibet. Copies of the Gospels in Lhasa Tibetan, have however been carried far and wide in that land. We know that many have been wasted, for the colourful paper covers have been torn off and pasted in tasteful designs onto the lattice of windows, where glazing is unknown. The first chapter of Matthew's Gospel with its long genealogical lists of unfamiliar transliterated names is largely incomprehensible to Lamas, and so comes to be regarded as possessing powerful magic. Accordingly it has been torn out of the book to be made up into prayer flags. (In any case, Tibetan books are not bound as are ours, but consist of loose leaves tied in bundles, between 'wooden batters' for storage.) Many books will have been destroyed in recent years, in the pillaging or burning of houses and lamaseries, by Communist Chinese troops. Nevertheless we believe some copies of the Gospels will have escaped destruction, and even now may be being read by spiritually hungry souls in far away corners of Tibet. The missionary is now more than ever denied access to that land. But "The Word of God is not bound" (II Tim. 2:9), and where read, we know "the entrance of Thy words giveth light" (Psa. 119:130). And so we believe that in answer to the prayers of many, Eternity may yet reveal men and women who in Tibet found salvation through Christ in spite of every aspect of the situation seeming to be against it.

Tibet's future is quite unforeseeable, though she seems to be maintaining her sense of nationhood round the Dalai Lama in India. Should the Chinese Nationalists succeed in

carrying out their promised reinvasion of their mainland, presumably some sort of restoration will be attempted, in which event the information in this book may prove a useful introduction to those reopening missionary work. This eventuality, however seems to become more remote as the years slip by. But where the missionary can no longer enter, the Word of God has already gone, and we read “the Word of God is not bound” (II Timothy 2:9) even if man is. Missionary annals could produce many cases of Churches being established by individuals reading the Scriptures for themselves. Accordingly it is humbly hoped that these notes on Tibet may be used to turn the thoughts of the Lord’s Remembrancers (cf. Malachi 3:16) to pray for the honour of the Lord’s name in that land.

