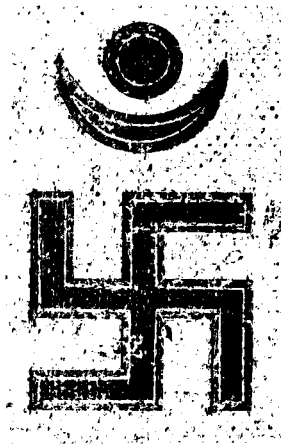


LHASA



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GEVAL LONDON

LHASA



Surgeon 1904

# LHASA

AN ACCOUNT OF THE COUNTRY AND PEOPLE  
OF CENTRAL TIBET AND OF THE PROGRESS  
OF THE MISSION SENT THERE BY THE  
ENGLISH GOVERNMENT IN THE YEAR 1903-4

WRITTEN,  
WITH THE HELP OF ALL THE PRINCIPAL  
PERSONS OF THE MISSION,  
BY  
PERCEVAL LANDON  
*Special Correspondent of the 'Times'*

πὰρ δ' ἴσαν ὠκεανῷ τε ῥοὰς καὶ λευκάδα πέτρην  
ἠδὲ παρ' ἡελίοιο πύλας καὶ δῆμον ὑνείρων  
ἦσαν.

Vol. I

HURST AND BLACKETT, LTD.

LONDON

1905

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**DEDICATE**  
**THIS BOOK**  
**TO**  
**LORD CURZON OF KEDLESTON**

## INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

---

WE of the Tibet Mission and its escort were honoured with the conduct of a task which for fascination of interest could hardly be surpassed. Few, if any, of us doubted the wisdom of the great and far-seeing statesman who initiated the enterprise and inspired it throughout. But, whether the policy was wise or unwise, we determined that it should not suffer in the execution. On us, we felt, were fixed the eyes of many millions, not in India alone, nor in England alone, but all over Europe and America also, and in many an Asiatic country besides.

We who work in India know what prestige means. Throughout the expedition we felt that our national honour was at stake, and down to the latest-joined sepoy we bent ourselves to uphold and raise higher the dignity of our Sovereign and the good name of our country : to show that not even the rigours of a Tibetan winter nor the obstinacy and procrastination of the two most stolid nations in the world could deter us from our purpose ; above all, to try to effect that purpose without resorting to force. If, as unfortunately proved to be the case, fighting were inevitable, we were determined still to show moderation in the hour of victory, and to let the ignorant Tibetan leaders see that we

would respect them as we demanded they should respect us, and, in place of distrust, to establish a confidence between us which would prove the surest foundation for future relations.

A loss of life was indeed necessitated which every one of us regretted ; yet I for one believe that at any rate some good will come to the Tibetans as the result of our work. War does not always mean oppression. Nor does the breaking of the power of a despotic Government mean the down-treading of the people.

From the first the Tibetan peasantry showed goodwill towards us. They were especially anxious to trade—no keener traders could be found. We have, as one result, partially freed the people from the terrible incubus of priestly control, and there are unmistakable signs that we left them better disposed towards us after our advance to Lhasa than they were before. Owing to the magnificent behaviour of the troops, the confidence of the people was entirely gained. Villagers and traders thronged to our camps. Soldiers went about unmolested in every part of the Lhasa bazaar. Officers were admitted to the most sacred shrines. Captain O'Connor, my right-hand man in dealing with the Tibetans, was received not only with real ceremony, but with real warmth by the Tashi Lama at Shigatse. And last, but by no means least, Tibetan wool-merchants are already making arrangements for trading with India.

How all this was effected none can tell better than Mr. Landon. He took the keenest interest in the mysteries of Tibet, and appreciated to the full the wonderful scenery which to my mind was infinitely the most fascinating of all our experiences. I have

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

vii

not had the advantage of reading the proofs of his book, and I cannot be responsible for any political views which he may have expressed. But I feel confident that no more competent chronicler of what the Tibet Mission saw and did could be found, and we were indeed fortunate in having with us one of his enthusiasm and powers of description.

F. E. YOUNGHUSBAND.

*27, Gilbert Street.*

*Grosvenor Square, London.*

*December 15th, 1904.*



Private Seal of the Dalai Lama.



A LETTER TO SIR FRANK YOUNGHUSBAND, K.C.I.E.

MY DEAR COLONEL,—

It was into the mouth of a British chieftain in the first century that Tacitus put a criticism which has become famous. "Men," protested Calgacus, "are apt to be impressed chiefly by the unknown." In a sense, somewhat different from that in which it was originally intended, this estimate has remained just to the present day. Spread out the map of the world and there before you is proof enough of one of the most marked, most persistent—perhaps also one of the best—characteristics of an Englishman. You are but the latest of a succession of explorers which has no rival in the history of another race. The sturdy trampings of Sir John Mandeville, perhaps also his even more robust imaginings—be it remembered, that without the latter we should not have had the former—have had their successors in unbroken line to the present day. Other nations have had their home-keeping centuries—years in which the needs of commerce or high politics have demanded that they should for a time develop and not explore. But, decade after decade, the English have always had their representatives creeping on a little beyond the margin of the travelled world—men to whom beaten tracks were a burden, men for whom the "free air astir to windward" was inevitably more than the new-found territory, however rich, upon which they were just turning their backs.

Century after century it is the same old story. The instinctive tracks of voyagers in Elizabethan years; the restlessness ashore of merchant 'venturers the moment Blake had won for

them and for us the peaceful occupation of the seas; the lonely dotted lines that drive a thin furrow of knowledge across the blank salt wastes of Australia; the quick evaporation of the mists of African ignorance; above all, the prosaic English placenames of arctic peak and tropical island and anchorage, unvisited and unknown, except by a shore-line on an Admiralty chart no longer dotted as conjectural—all these have carried on an unconscious tradition; and there is no apology needed for the present story of another English expedition which won its way where all other living men have failed to go.

For us the door was opened, and though it has now again been locked as grimly as before, at least for many months we have lived in the very heart of the real Tibet. The course of our expedition lay through no deserted wastes of sand, through which a stealthy or disguised European creeps painfully from water-hole to water-hole, avoiding the least sign of man or human habitation, learning little and caring to learn less of the people from whose notice he was shrinking. We have moved through the only populous and politically important districts of the country, we have made our stay in the centres of Tibetan life, and of necessity we were brought into immediate contact with that mysterious government and religion upon which no other European transgressor into the forbidden land has been able to throw the light of personal knowledge. It has been but a passing chance, but perhaps for that very reason the more interest attaches to the simplest account of men and places upon which the curtain has again impenetrably fallen.

Yes, the chance has been a great one, but there is a touch of regret in our ability to use it. One cannot forget that the network of baffled explorers' routes which circumnavigate and sheer painfully off from Lhasa, represents the last of the greater explorations possible on this earth. The barriers that guard the pole are of nature's making only. It is not endurance only, or even chiefly, that has attracted us in the past, but for the future there will be little else for our explorer to fight. The hostility of man, which has added a spice of interest to all exploration hitherto, will never again whet the ambition of a voyager to an undiscovered land.

That the last country to be discovered by the civilised world should be one which has few rivals in its religious interests and importance, fewer still in the isolated development of its national characteristics, and none in its unique government and policy is a fitting close to the pioneer work of civilisation; that the English, who have long been faithful servants of that restlessness on which all progress is based, should have done the work, is not unjust; and that you, my dear Younghusband, should have been chosen to lead this rear-guard of exploration was for all concerned a good deal more than fortunate. In these pages I do not intend to praise, or indeed lay greater stress upon your work, or that of others, than such as the bare narrative may of itself suggest from time to time, but I am none the less aware of the debt which this country owes to your quiet constancy and determination.

Sincerely yours,

PERCEVAL LONDON.

*5, Pall Mall Place, London.*

*January 1st, 1905.*

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#### AN ACKNOWLEDGMENT.

WRITERS on Tibet have acquired an unenviable reputation for concealing their indebtedness to other workers in the same field; I take this opportunity of saying that it would be difficult for me to set down the full number of those to whom I am indebted for help in writing these two volumes. Besides the authors of all books on the subject, I am glad to think that there is hardly a man on the expedition who, consciously or not, has not added his tale of help to the book, and will not recognise lurking in some phrase or footnote a fact which could only have been given

me by himself. Some, however, I must single out for my especial thanks, and in mentioning these, I trust that I may not be regarded as ungrateful by those whose names I am compelled to omit. The actual writer of such a book as this is among the last to whom a reader should feel gratitude.

To Sir Francis Younghusband, to Lord Curzon, and to Captain W. F. T. O'Connor, to Captain H. J. Walton, Lord Amptill and the late Major Bretherton, to Mr. Claude White, Lt.-Col. L. A. Waddell, Col. Sir James R. L. Macdonald, Captain C. H. D. Ryder and Captain H. M. Cowie, to Mr. E. C. Wilton, Lt.-Cols. Iggulden and Beynon, Mr. H. H. Hayden, and to Majors Shepard and Ottley, my obligations throughout the following pages are continual and, I hope, obvious. Less patent, but almost equally indispensable for any success, has been the help I have received from Mr. L. Dane, Sir Edward Maunde Thompson, Mr. Filson Young, Mr. Herbert Blackett, Mr. A. W. Paul, and Mr. Valentine Chirol. Last, but in an especial way, I wish to thank Countess Helena Gleichen for the real value and interest she has added to the book by her coloured plates. With the exception of two photographs—those of the Jelep and of Gnathong, kindly given me by Captain D. H. Drake Brockman—the remainder of the illustrations are my own.\* In the event of any obscurity or the need of an explanation, the reader should consult the index, which has been prepared with unusual care. I should be glad to receive any additional information, notes or criticisms, as I hope to make of "Lhasa" a work of Tibetan reference, and, in any future edition, shall carefully revise the book up to date.

\* So far as my attempts at colour are concerned, I should like at once to refer the reader to my apologia on p. 373 (vol. i.) and p. 253 (vol. ii.). At the last moment I am glad to acknowledge the kind permission which Messrs. Johnston and Hoffmann have given me to use three of the photographs taken by Mr. Claude White.

## CONTENTS OF VOLUME I.

---

CHAP.	PAGE
I.—THE EARLY HISTORY AND VISITORS OF TIBET . . . . .	I
II.—THE RISE AND PROGRESS OF THE TIBETAN QUESTION . . . . .	26
III.—THE STARTING PLACE OF THE EXPEDITION . . . . .	54
IV.—THE CHUMBI VALLEY . . . . .	95
V.—THE DISASTER AT GURU . . . . .	136
VI.—THE ADVANCE TO GYANTSE . . . . .	157
VII.—ARRIVAL AT GYANTSE . . . . .	193
VIII.—THE FIGHT AT THE KARO LA . . . . .	245
IX.—THE NIGHT ATTACK ON THE MISSION . . . . .	279
X.—LIFE IN THE BESIEGED POST . . . . .	326
XI.—SUPERSTITION: MANNERS AND CUSTOMS: ART . . . . .	347
<hr/>	
APPENDIX A . . . . .	391
„ B . . . . .	411
„ C . . . . .	413

# APPENDICES

# APPENDIX A

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## NOTES ON THE NATURAL HISTORY OF SOUTHERN TIBET.

BY CAPTAIN H. J. WALTON,  
Indian Medical Service, lately Medical Officer and Naturalist  
to the Tibet Frontier Commission, 1903-4.

THE following sketch of the Natural History of Southern Tibet is not intended to be, in any sense, an exhaustive list of the fauna of that area; it is merely a brief account of some of the more striking animals that were met with in the districts visited by the Tibet Frontier Commission. While I do not think that much of popular interest is omitted, I would point out that, during the months when Natural History observations would have been of the greatest interest, indulgence in such pursuits for those members of the Commission who were at Gyantse—amongst them myself—was strictly discouraged by the Tibetans, who emphasized their disapproval of the wandering naturalist by forcible protests from the famous “jingals from the Jong.”

### MAMMALS.

Of the larger mammals, that with which we became most familiar was the Kiang (*Equus hemionus*).<sup>\*</sup> Both at Kamba jong and at Tuna there were large numbers of these wild asses. They went about, as a rule, in troops of ten to thirty, though, if alarmed, several herds would unite temporarily. There is nothing horse-like about the kiang, but from his size and fine carriage he resembles a large mule, rather than an ass. The reddish chestnut colour of the upper parts is well shown off by the white belly and legs. The mane is of a darker colour, and

<sup>\*</sup> The Natural History Museum in South Kensington—of which the authorities have been kind enough to look through this proof for me—has, in one or two cases, adopted for the national collection a different classification from that of Capt. Walton. In order that his identifications may be recognised in every case, I have appended the N. H. M. name in a foot-note where there is any divergence.—P. L.

this colour is continued as a narrow stripe along the middle of the back, and for some distance down the tail. As the kiang is not harassed by the Tibetans, those we saw were fairly tame, and would allow one to approach to within about sixty yards of them. Then the herd would show signs of uneasiness, and would move off for a hundred yards or so. On several occasions I tried to get at closer quarters with them. I rode slowly towards a herd and the moment the animals became in the least alarmed, I galloped towards them as fast as possible; but the kiangs outdistanced me without an effort; indeed, I never succeeded in getting them to do more than make off at an easy canter. It is true that my Tibetan pony was not particularly speedy, but a greyhound that belonged to one of the officers of the Commission escort was almost equally unsuccessful in the chase of these fleet-footed animals. At Lhasa there were three semi-tame kiangs; all were mares. Even these, however, although one could approach to within twenty yards of them, resented attempts at closer intimacy. The kiang must be a very hardy animal. Those at Tuna seemed none the worse for the very low temperatures experienced there, though their only food consisted of coarse grasses, to reach which they often had to scratch away the snow.

According to Blanford and other authorities, the kiang is merely a variety of the Asiatic wild ass, another variety of which (*E. onager*, v. *indicus*) occurs in Western India and Baluchistan. It is strange that an animal should be found in the bare desert tracts, west of the Indus, exposed to quite the other extreme of temperature to that to which its near ally is subjected in Tibet.

A few specimens of the Great Tibetan sheep (*Ovis hodgsoni*) were obtained at high elevations, on the slopes of the mountains near Kamba jong. A fine male is said to measure four feet at the shoulder and bears a pair of massive horns, which differ from those of *Ovis poli* by their curve not forming a complete circle. The Tibetan sheep is closely allied to *Ovis ammon*.

Bharal (*Ovis nahura*) were very common on all the lower mountain ranges. The females and young, which keep together, were constantly seen and were surprisingly tame, but the old males with good heads required careful stalking. The Tibetans used to shoot a good many about Kamba jong. The bharal is



a wonderful climber ; even quite young ones negotiate the most formidable-looking precipices with apparent ease. Bharal mutton, except that of old males, is very well flavoured, though it is not to be compared, as an article of food, with the Tibetan gazelle.

This Tibetan gazelle or goa (*Gazella picticaudata*) was one of the commonest animals that we encountered. It occurred in large herds on all the open plains and downs. The horns of the male are closely ringed and much curved back, being commonly from twelve to fourteen inches in length. The female is without horns. Gazelle shooting is about the easiest sport to be obtained in South Tibet. The meat is excellent for the table. Except in places where they had been much worried by us, the gazelles were, as a rule, by no means shy. During the day they scatter about grazing over the plains. When alarmed, the individuals generally unite into a herd and make off at a rapid pace at first, but by using ordinary caution one could generally approach within range of them again.

I have been much puzzled by a statement made by Sir Joseph Hooker, in his "Himalayan Journals." He mentions antelopes ("Chiru," *Pantholops hodgsoni*) occurring near the Cholamu Lake. Whatever may have been the case in Hooker's time, I am almost certain that there are no antelopes in this part of Tibet at the present day. The furriers at Lhasa had no skins, nor did I see any horns offered for sale. I made enquiries of several educated Tibetans, and they all asserted that the animal occurred considerably to the west of the country visited by the Tibet Frontier Commission.

Of the carnivora of South Tibet, the snow leopard (*Felis uncia*) is the largest. Though rarely seen by us—I myself only saw one during the fourteen months that I spent in Tibet—it appears to be fairly common, judging by the numerous skins that were offered for sale by the Tibetans.

The lynx (*F. lynx*) also is tolerably common. This animal is by some authors considered to be a distinct species (*F. isabellina*) from the European lynx, but the distinction appears to rest mainly on the fact that the Tibetan lynx is paler in colour than the other.

On two occasions, near Gyantse, I saw a small light-coloured

cat. This was probably Pallas's cat (*F. manul*); but as I did not succeed in shooting one, and as the Lhasa furriers had no skins that I recognised as belonging to this species, I am uncertain about their identification.

Wolves (*Canis laniger*) were shot occasionally during the winter. The ordinary Tibetan wolf appears to be considerably paler in colour than the European animal, but Dr. Blanford considers that the two belong to the same species. A black variety of the wolf is said to occur in Tibet, but I saw none.

Otters were seen on several occasions in the vicinity of Phari jong. It is much to be regretted that no specimens were obtained.

We shot examples of two species of foxes. At Kamba jong, *Vulpes alopec, var. flavescens*, is common. It closely resembles the common fox of Europe, of which it is considered a variety, differing, like so many Tibetan animals, in being paler in colour. It carries a magnificent brush. The length from nose to tip of tail of one that I procured—an adult male—was  $44\frac{1}{2}$  inches, and the height at the shoulder  $14\frac{3}{4}$  inches.

The other fox (*V. ferrilatus*) is a smaller animal, with a relatively much shorter tail. It occurs from the neighbourhood of Gyantse to Lhasa. A fine male, shot near the Karo la Pass, measured thirty-six inches in length.

A light-coloured weasel (*Putorius alpinus*) was tolerably common at Gyantse. Its habits are very similar to those of the European weasel, and it feeds largely on birds.

The woolly hare (*Lepus oiostolus*) is universally distributed. The most obvious distinction from the British hare is afforded by the large patch of grey fur over the rump of the Tibetan species. This characteristic patch is well marked even in quite young leverets. The woolly hare is singular in its custom of habitually squatting among bare stones on the hillsides in preference to the grassy plains. It was particularly numerous at Kamba jong, where on one occasion three guns shot fifty-four in about three hours.

The Tibetan marmot (*Arctomys himalayanus*) occurred very locally throughout the country. It was nowhere very numerous, and its whistling call was heard more often than the animal itself was seen. The places affected by this beast were all at very high elevations. The burrows, the entrances to which resemble those of the common rabbit, are frequently made under rocks.

The marmots appear to hibernate from about the middle of October to the beginning of April. This is quite a large animal, the body being as much as two feet in length.

A much smaller marmot than the preceding species, specimens of which I saw but did not shoot near Phari jong, in the Chumbi Valley, was probably *Arctomys hodgsoni*. If so, this species would appear not to hibernate as strictly as its larger relative, as it was in January that I saw it.

One of the commonest rodents in South Tibet is Hodgson's mouse-hare (*Lagomys Ochotona curzoniæ*). Wherever the country is tolerably level the ground is tunnelled in all directions by its burrows. This species is highly gregarious, and does not hibernate at all. Even during the severest cold of the winter the little mouse-hares could be seen sitting at the mouths of their runs, sunning themselves. Although they are essentially social animals, large numbers living in close proximity to one another, as a rule their burrows are quite distinct one from another; and although in case of a sudden alarm a mouse-hare will take refuge temporarily in the nearest burrow, I noticed on several occasions the presumably rightful owner of the burrow driving the intruder away. The mouse-hare is a little, tailless beast with small rounded ears. It is in shape rather like a guinea-pig, and is of about the size of a large rat. The friendly terms on which it lives with a small bird—the brown ground-chough (*Podoces humilis*)—recall the somewhat similar association between the "prairie-dog" (*Cynomys sp.*) and the ground-owl (*Speotyto cunicularis*), though in the latter case a rattlesnake is said to form a third member of the "happy family."

Both field-mice and house-mice occur in South Tibet, but the species have not yet been identified. A newspaper correspondent, in an account he gave of a visit to the Jo-kang in Lhasa, speaks of white mice living in one of the shrines of this cathedral. This is an error. The mice in this shrine, which are surprisingly tame, belong to the species of the ordinary house-mouse of Tibet. This is larger than *Mus musculus*, and considerably paler in colour.

Although I was constantly on the look-out for them, I did not see a single bat in Tibet. I was informed by an officer of the escort that he had seen some very small bats flying round the jong at Gyantse. I went to the place mentioned on many

evenings, but no bats appeared, and I think it probable that the officer mistook for small bats the crag martins which abounded about the rocks.

At all low elevations musk-deer (*Moschus moschiferus*) were common, and nowhere more so than at Lhasa.\* Considering its abundance, I was amused at the impudence of some Tibetans who wished to sell me a live specimen for thirty-five pounds! The musk, which is obtained from a gland on the belly of the male, is, as usual, much in demand among the Tibetans for medicinal purposes. The chief characteristics of the animal are the large movable lateral hoofs, the long canine teeth, and the peculiar brittleness and wiry texture of the fur.

I was much disappointed at having no opportunity of becoming acquainted with the shao (*Cervus affinis*). This somewhat mysterious stag—mysterious, at least, as far as its geographical distribution is concerned—must be, to judge from its antlers, one of the finest of the Asiatic *Cervidæ*. I took a great deal of trouble in endeavouring to ascertain from the Tibetans something definite about the area it inhabited. The antlers were common in many monasteries throughout the country we visited, and in the shops at Lhasa, but beyond saying that the shao inhabited a tract of country to the south of Lhasa, my informants were all exceedingly vague in their statements. Two specimens (one of which, a female, was captured alive, but which unfortunately died) were obtained by officers in the Chumbi Valley.\* These evidently came into the valley from Bhutan, but I obtained no reliable evidence as to how far to the East this species ranges. I was told that the reason so many shao antlers are for sale at Lhasa, is that they are in great demand by Chinese merchants, who export them to China to be used medicinally. It is a great pity that the antlers are considered to be most valuable when “in velvet,” as this naturally necessitates killing the animal.

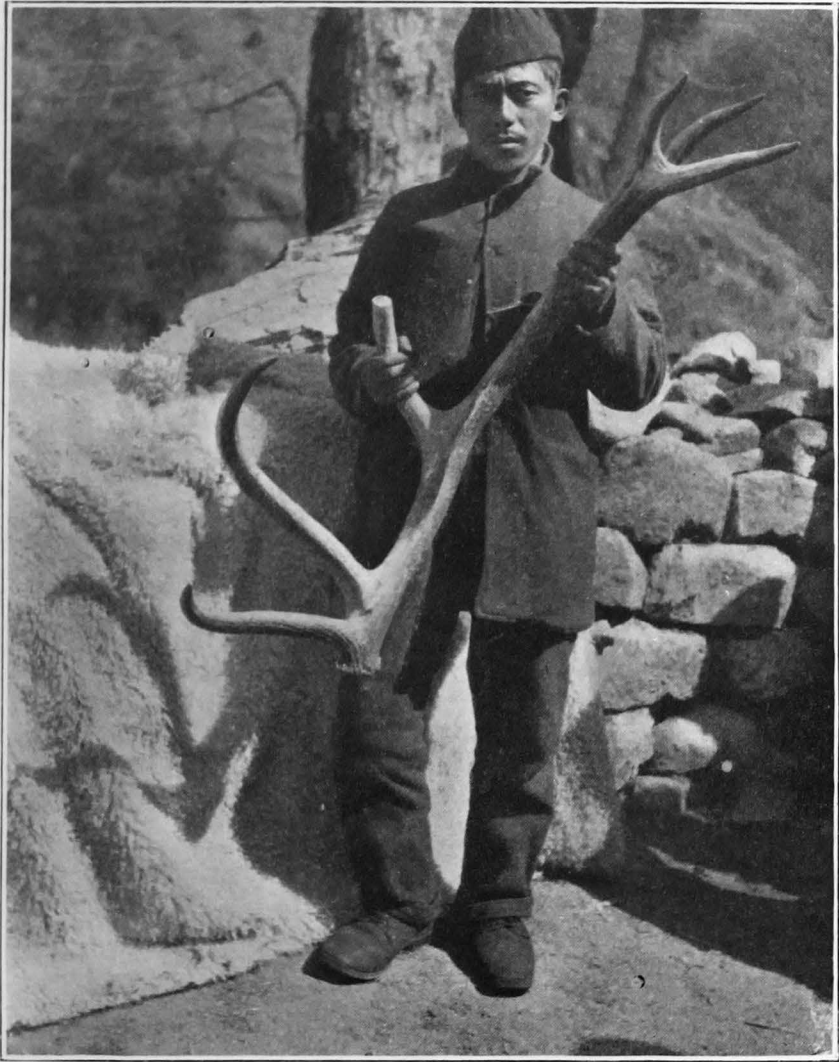
The wild yak (*Bos grunniens*) does not inhabit the parts of Tibet visited by the Tibet Frontier Commission, but domesticated animals are used everywhere for purposes of transport. All tame cattle are phlegmatic creatures, but the palm must certainly be awarded to the yak for the highest form of philo-

\* Another small and immature specimen was bought by Brig.-General Macdonald at Lhasa, but this also died.—P. L.



The head of a "shao," or Tibetan stag (*Cervus affinis*). In the possession  
of Claude White, Esq.

sophical imperturbability. It appears to be perfectly indifferent to the weather, provided only that it is cold enough ; it forages for itself, and requires no grooming, stabling, or other attention. At night the Tibetans secure their yaks in a row by tying thin



A curiosity: a six-pointed "shao" horn from Chema.

yak-hair cords to the beasts' horns and to a thicker pegged-out rope. One would think that the yaks had only to shake their heads in order to free themselves, but it never seems to occur to them how easy it would be to escape. Yak drivers, on the march, encourage the yaks to step out by shrill whistles ; if

more drastic measures are required they hurl rocks, with unerring aim, or sling stones, with equal skill, at the unfortunate animals. For agricultural work, especially for ploughing, the Tibetans generally use hybrids between the yak and ordinary cattle, as these are more docile and easier to manage than the pure-bred yak. A peculiarity of the yak, that I have not seen referred to anywhere, is the colour of the tongue. In some yaks this is quite black, while in others it is of the usual red colour. In



A pack-yak.

connection with this fact it is interesting to remember that several of the domestic dogs of Eastern Asia (for instance, the chow-chow) have black tongues; but if, as I believe is the case, the Polar bear and occasionally the Newfoundland dog also have tongues of this colour, it seems impossible to imagine any reason for this peculiarity. Possibly it is confined to animals living in cold countries, but this suggestion does not explain why only about half the yaks are black-tongued. More information is required on this subject.



Ploughing yaks in the Nyang chu Valley. The head-dress is of crimson and white, and the necklaces are of plaited leather and cowrie shells. The nose ring is tied to the red and white frontal ornament by a strip of filagree brass.



With the exception of the dogs, there is nothing of special interest about the other domestic animals of South Tibet. Excellent wool and well-flavoured mutton is provided by the sheep, and the common goat of the country is a small long-haired animal, resembling the goat of Kashmir.

Although, as a rule, not much trouble is taken by the Tibetans in breeding their dogs, these animals are much prized by the people. Apart from the swarms of cross-bred mongrels, it is possible to recognise at least four well-characterised breeds. Of these, the finest is the so-called Tibetan mastiff. This is a great shaggy creature, with a very massive head. It is usually black-and-tan in colour, and has a very thick, rough coat. Its eyes show some "haw" like a bloodhound, and it has the pendulous lips of that breed. No monastery of any pretensions in Southern Tibet is without at least a pair of these fierce dogs chained up on either side of the entrance.

The commonest dog is very like a badly-bred collie, but lacks the magnificent frill and brush of the latter.

The Lhasa terrier is an entirely distinct breed. It is very similar to a drop-eared Skye terrier, but carries its tail, which is densely feathered, tucked up tightly over its back. It is extremely common at Lhasa, but most of the dogs there are too long in the leg, and I had much trouble in procuring a really good specimen.

The other distinctive breed is the Tibetan spaniel. This is a small black dog—sometimes black-and-white—rather like a Pekinese spaniel. Good specimens of this dog are even more scarce than Lhasa terriers. The dogs that are prized most by the better-class Tibetans are small Chinese lap-dogs, of various kinds, that are brought as presents from Peking by the merchants.

The Dalai Lama has an elephant at Lhasa. This was sent to him, I believe, either from Nepal or Bhutan. It is a small male with slender tusks, and has lived in perfect health at Lhasa for some years.

## BIRDS.

Among the resident Tibetan birds, two—the lämmergeier (*Gypaetus barbatus*) and the raven (*Corvus corax*)—are of particular interest. Both species are almost ubiquitous throughout Southern Tibet; they appear to be quite impervious to the

rigours of the climate, and keep fat and lively under conditions that would be fatal to other birds of their great bulk. The powers of flight of the lämmergeier are truly superb, and it is a magnificent sight to see one circling, without an effort, around some precipitous mountain-peak, an occasional flap of the wide wings sufficing to impart all the impetus required. The old stories of lämmergeiers carrying off babies from Alpine villages are pretty well discredited nowadays; certainly the Tibetan bird appears to feed entirely on carrion, associating with griffon vultures around the carcasses of yaks, sheep and other animals. On one occasion I put up a hare, which ran for a hundred yards or more along a bare hillside, a few yards below a lämmergeier that was sailing along close to the ground. The latter took absolutely no notice of the hare, which it might easily have seized. No doubt a lämmergeier *may* occasionally take a living animal, but I fancy that it would only do this if the beast were sickly or very young. There were hundreds of lämmergeiers about the camps of the Commission at Kamba jong and Tuna, and I had daily opportunities of studying their habits, but I never saw them eating anything but offal or dead animals. The length of the lämmergeier's wings prevents the bird from rising at once from the ground; when it wishes to fly, it is obliged to hop forwards for some yards, in order to get up a little "way," and it then presents rather a grotesque appearance. The weak, querulous cry also seems very inappropriate to such a noble-looking bird. During the summer months the lämmergeier retires to the higher mountains, where it makes its large nest on some rocky ledge; but, even then, it comes down to the plains at times, especially in the evening. Thus, both at Gyantse and Lhasa, these birds were always to be seen. The wedge-shaped tail and peculiar flight enable one to recognise a lämmergeier immediately, even at a great distance.

The raven (*Corvus corax*) is an even more familiar bird in Tibet than the lämmergeier. Although the Tibetan bird is the same species as the European raven, it differs from the latter in being usually larger. Ravens occurred at all the camps of the Tibet Frontier Commission, and where these were more or less permanent, the birds literally swarmed, disputing with mongrel dogs for the possession of offal. My own previous acquaintance with wild ravens was mostly acquired in Iceland. In that

country ravens are tolerably common, but they are so shy and wild that most of one's observations have to be made through the medium of field-glasses. It was, therefore, a pleasant surprise to me to find the Tibetan raven so utterly devoid of fear that one could stand within five yards of a bird, who, quite undisturbed by such a close scrutiny, would confine his protest at the most to a croak or two, and resume his unsavoury repast with undiminished appetite. In spite, however, of the Tibetan ravens' tameness, they still retain the wariness common to all the *Corvidæ*; although in a land where firearms are rarely carried and where ravens are not molested, they cannot possibly associate the sight of a gun with danger to themselves. I found them apparently fully alive to my fell designs whenever I went after them "on business." As usual, with this species ravens in Tibet are early breeders, I found a nest containing young birds on the 6th of April, at an elevation of about 15,000 feet. The inhabitants of Lhasa keep several species of birds in captivity; considering what excellent pets ravens make, I was rather surprised to see no tame ones there.

The Himalayan griffon vulture (*Gyps himalayensis*) is another common bird occurring up to the greatest altitudes. The wonderful rapidity with which numerous vultures appear about a dead animal (although a few minutes before its death no more may have been visible than a solitary bird soaring high up in the firmament) is a familiar fact, but it nevertheless impresses one afresh each time that one witnesses it; especially is this the case among the bare mountains of Tibet, where such a large tract of country must be required to provide sufficient food for each bird.

Pallas's sea-eagle (*Haliaëtus leucoryphus*), a large fulvous-colour bird, with a whitish forehead and a broad white band across the tail, was also somewhat numerous, and, in the plains of Gyantse and Lhasa, the black-eared kite (*Milvus melanotis*) abounds. A pair of these kites built their untidy nest on a tree standing in the garden of the house in which the Commission was living at Gyantse. This house was under a daily bombardment from the guns of Gyantse jong for over two months, and the kites' nest was directly in the line of fire. Although jingal balls were whistling through the leaves, or striking the branches, of the tree for many hours on almost every day, they

scarcely disturbed the kites in the least, and the latter successfully reared their young.

Of the smaller *Falconidæ*, sparrowhawks (*Accipiter nisus*), hobbies (*Falco subbuteo*) and kestrels (*F. tinnunculus*)\* were all fairly common; a few kestrels spent the winter at Tuna, but their numbers were largely reinforced by migrants in the spring. Three species of owls occurred, among them, the large eagle-owl (*Bubo ignavus*), which is rather common at Lhasa. In the spring hosts of migratory birds appeared. Thrushes were represented by the red-throated [ouzel (*Merula ruficollis*)†, on its way to breeding grounds in higher latitudes, but most of the following birds remained with us until the cold weather set in: Redstarts (*Ruticilla rufiventris* and *R. hodgsoni*) were particularly numerous, as were also hoopoes (*Upupa epops*), willow-warblers (*Phylloscopus affinis*), rosefinches (*Propasser pulcherrimus* and *Carpodacus severtzovi*), cinnamon sparrows (*Passer cinnamomeus*), and several species of wagtails. The resident sparrow of Southern Tibet is the common European tree-sparrow (*Passer montanus*). This bird abounds even in places which, from the total absence of trees, would apparently prove quite unsuitable; however, the bird accommodates itself to circumstances and occurs in all the Tibetan villages.

The horned lark (*Otocorys elwesi*) is another common resident species, but is only met with in the bare, treeless tracts of country, and retires to the mountains and higher passes to breed. The same applies to the large calandra lark (*Melanocorypha maxima*), whose melodious call-note became very familiar to us.

Skylarks (*Alauda arvensis*) abound from Gyantse to Lhasa; swifts (*Cypselus apus*)‡ and sand-martins (*Cotile riparia*)§ occur along the well-watered valleys, and swallows (*Hirundo rufula*) and crag-martins (*Ptyonoprogne rupestris*) everywhere.

Flocks of red-billed choughs (*Pyrrhocorax graculus*) frequented the whole of the country that we visited. This is the same bird as the Cornish chough, but it differs from the British species in being of a larger size. As they do not feed on carrion, it is difficult to imagine what food such large numbers find in winter in the bare frozen country round Tuna. Magpies (*Pica bottanensis*)

\* *Cerchneis tinnunculus*.

† *Cypselus pekinensis*.

† *Turdus ruficollis*.

§ *Clivicola riparia*.

are very common at Gyantse and Lhasa. They very closely resemble the British magpie (*P. rustica*), but are distinguishable from the latter by having the rump entirely black; they are also somewhat larger birds.

As might be expected snow-finches (mountain-finches) are well represented in Tibet. Three species (*Montifringilla blanfordi*, *M. ruficollis* and *M. adamsi*) spent the winter with us at Tuna. Though there was literally nothing for them to eat there, except the scanty seeds of coarse grasses, they kept in excellent condition, even during the severest weather.

The Tibetan twite (*Acanthis brevirostris*) is also very common and very similar in appearance and habits to the European bird.

No cuckoos were met with; this is rather strange since several species, including the familiar *Cuculus canorus*, are common in summer up to high altitudes in the Himalayas. The wryneck (*Iynx torquilla*), known in many parts of England as the "cuckoo's mate," occurred in small numbers at Lhasa, early in September. It was no doubt migrating then, as it is a regular winter visitor to the plains of India.

The blue-hill pigeon (*Columba rupestris*), the differences between which and our own blue rock (*C. livia*) are very trivial, is the common pigeon of South Tibet. Although the Tibetans are not pigeon fanciers, this bird lives in a semi-domesticated state in all the villages. Oddly enough, the "snow" pigeon (*C. leuconota*), a handsome pied bird, was only seen at comparatively low altitudes in the Chumbi Valley.

There is a good stock of game birds. In the Chumbi Valley monals (*Lophophorus refulgens*) and blood pheasants (*Ithagenes cruentus*) were very numerous, and on the mountains and high table-lands the fine Tibetan snow cock (*Tetraogallus tibetanus*) was almost equally common. Snow partridges (*Lerwa nivicola*) were decidedly local in their distribution, but the Tibetan partridge (*Perdix hodgsoniæ*) was plentiful almost everywhere. It is an excellent bird for the table, but is too confirmed a "runner" to afford much sport. From the sportsman's point of view, one of the best birds is the sand-grouse (*Syrrhaptes tibetanus*), which also occurred in considerable numbers.

The Hram or Bam tso and Kala tso, lakes on the road between Tuna and Gyantse, were covered in the spring with innumerable geese and ducks, resting, for the most part, on their

way to their breeding grounds. The only goose shot and positively identified was the bar-headed goose (*Anser indicus*). This bird breeds on a lake near Kamba jong, on the Kala tso, and probably on several other of the larger lakes in Southern Tibet. Indeed, at Lhasa, wild goose's eggs were offered for sale in the bazaar, but only in small numbers. The ruddy sheldrake, or Brahminy duck (*Casarca rutila*), breeds all over the country, making its nest in any sort of hole or hollow in the vicinity of some small stream. This bird, owing to its extreme wariness, is a perfect curse to the sportsman in India who is in quest of wild-fowl. While worthless itself for the table, and consequently seldom shot at, it alarms all the better ducks by its loud call, and by being the first to take to flight. It was therefore quite novel to note how tame the Brahminy was in Tibet. There, when nesting, or about to nest, it scarcely took any notice of one, merely waddling off a few yards if approached too closely. Another duck, which breeds certainly at Lhasa and probably elsewhere, is the white-eyed pochard (*Nyroca ferruginea*). "Flappers," still unable to fly, were shot at Lhasa at the end of August. The other ducks that were met with in Tibet were the mallard (*Anas boscas*), the pintail (*Dafila acuta*), shoveller (*Spatula clypeata*), common teal (*Nettion crecca*), Garganey teal (*Querquedula circia*) and tufted pochard (*Fuligula nyroca*). Goosanders (*Mergus castor*)\* were also common from the Chumbi Valley to Gyantse.

Two species of snipes, the large solitary snipe (*Gallinago solitaria*) and the pintail snipe (*G. stenura*), were obtained; the latter only at Lhasa, where it was very scarce. At Lhasa also redshanks (*Totanus calidris*), moorhens (*Gallinula chloropus*) and coots (*Fulica atra*) occurred in large numbers.

The Tibetans are apparently not very observant people. I asked an official of high rank at Lhasa, who had held appointments at several places in Tibet, how many species of birds he had seen. He was silent and thoughtful for a minute or two, while he counted off on his fingers those that he knew. He then replied that he knew of twelve kinds of birds, and had heard of, but had not seen, two others!

On the other hand, a few of the Tibetan names of birds imply some little observation of their appearance, size or habits. Thus the tree-sparrow is called "Kang-che-go-mar," or "the little

\* *Merganser castor*.

house-bird with the red head"; "Pang-che," or "the little bird (that lives) on grassy hillsides," is Severtzoff's warbler (*Leptopæcile sophiæ*), and "Chi-u-teb-tok," or "the little bird as small as the top of one's thumb," is a willow-warbler (*Phylloscopus affinis*). The following names are very good onomatopoeic renderings of the birds' notes:—"Pu-pu-pu-shu" is the hoopoe (*Upupa epops*), and "Di-di-ku-ku" is the turtle dove (*Turtur orientalis*).

At Lhasa many birds are kept in captivity, the favourite cage-birds being larks, rose-finches and turtle doves.

### FISH.

The streams and lakes of Southern Tibet are well supplied with fish. During the summer fishermen from Gyantse and Lhasa go as far as the Kala tso lake for the purposes of their trade. The fish that they catch vary in weight from about half to two pounds or more. They are split in two, like haddocks, and dried in the sun.

I collected several species, but they are at present awaiting identification. One fish, which furnished a good deal of sport to the anglers of the Commission and escort, is quite like a trout in colour and general appearance, but differs in wanting the small "adipose" fin. It was as good for the table as for sport.

Another fish of which we caught large numbers up to four pounds in weight in the Tsang-po and in the streams at Lhasa, is an ugly, slimy brute, with a flattened head and four long feelers hanging from the sides of the mouth. In spite of its repulsive appearance, it was a very excellent and welcome article of food.

### REPTILES.

Of the reptiles, snakes (non-venomous) are said by the Tibetans to occur in the vicinity of the numerous hot springs, but I was not fortunate enough to come across any.

I collected several species of lizards: the most interesting was a large dark-coloured animal, which was often to be seen sunning itself on the rocky hillsides near Lhasa. Its body is remarkably flattened from above downwards, and is of a dark stone-grey colour, thickly marked with black, and a few large white spots. The largest that I secured measured sixteen inches in length.

## AMPHIBIA.

I was requested by a distinguished Russian naturalist to keep a sharp lookout for newts, as little or nothing was known of these amphibians. I spent many hours in searching for them, in the most likely places, but I found none. Toads, also, seem to be quite wanting in Southern Tibet, but frogs of two or three species are very common. Owing, presumably, to the brevity of the Tibetan summer, the frogs are only just about able to get through their metamorphoses before the winter sets in, and tadpoles were still common in all the ditches and ponds at Lhasa at the end of August.

## INSECTS.

To anyone possessing an acquaintance with British insects, the Tibetan ones seem quite familiar. The common butterflies at once recall our "whites," "blues," "tortoiseshells" and "fritillaries," and various beetles, crickets, grasshoppers, ants, bees and dragonflies are strongly suggestive of our own.

Mosquitoes, of savage propensities, were very common at Lhasa, though they were not at all troublesome elsewhere. The extensive swamps and marshes around the city were, doubtless, responsible for these unpleasant creatures.

## MISCELLANEOUS.

Hunting spiders were common everywhere in summer, but I saw no web-spinning ones. Scarlet "velvet mites" also abounded. A species of centipede, about an inch and a half in length, was obtained in the Brahmapoutra valley.

The Tibetans carry about on their persons a particularly luxuriant parasite fauna of the familiar types. As the lower classes of the inhabitants of Tibet do not appear to possess even the most rudimentary ideas on the subject of bodily cleanliness, this is by no means to be wondered at. Earthworms seemed to be very local in their distribution.

The general similarity, referred to above as existing between Tibetan and British insects, was noticeable too in the case of the common mollusks, which closely resemble the fresh water snails of an English pond.



## APPENDIX B

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SIR EDWARD MAUNDE THOMPSON has drawn my attention to the following, extract from the Warren Hastings papers [British Museum. Additional MS. 29,233, f. 388]. It is a note by George Bogle upon the attitude he assumed towards the Tibetans and Bhutanese, and is not without interest as showing the kind of man Warren Hastings selected for his important commission to Tibet.

. . . . "I sometimes considered that the Character not only of the English, but of all the People of Europe depended upon me. This Idea, of being shown as a Specimen of my Countrymen has often given me a world of Uneasiness, and I dont know that I ever wished so heartily to have been a tall personable Man, as upon this Occasion. It was some Comfort to have Mr. Hamilton with me, and I left it entirely to him to give a good Impression of the Persons of Fringies. But from a national and perhaps excusable vanity, I was anxious also to give the People whom I visited, a favourable opinion of the dispositions of the English. The Hostilities in Cooch Beyhar had shewn them, to the Inhabitants of Bootan and Thibet, as a nation brave and warlike. My Business among them was meek and peaceful. In order to fulfill the Purpose of my Commission I had to gain Confidence and to conciliate Goodwill. With this View I assumed the Dress of the Country, endeavoured to acquire a little of the language & Manners, drank a Deluge of Tea with Salt and Butter, eat Beetle in Bootan, took Snuff and smoked Tobacco in Thibet, & would never allow myself to be out of Humour. If with this view also I have sometimes given presents which a parsimonious Economy might have

saved, and have thereby enhanced my Expences a few Thousand Rupees, the propriety or Improprity of my Conduct may be easily appreciated, by weighing the Object that I aimed at against the Money which it cost me.

“Indeed the whole of my Expences (Servants wages excepted) are in a Manner formed of Presents. Even the Charge of travelling may be included under this Head. An order of Government supplied me with Coolies Horses and Accommodations. The best House in every Village was allotted me for my Quarters, and the best provisions which the Country afforded, were prepared for my supper. During the five Months that I lived in the Lama’s Palace, I had Rice, Tea, Sugar, preserved Fruits, Bread, and dried Sheeps’ Carcases in Abundance, and the whole Expence of living, for myself and Mr. Hamilton, during that Time, amounts but to about forty Rupees. The Presents, I gave to the Bootieas, were principally made in Money. Those to the Inhabitants of Thibet, in Coral, Broad Cloth, and other Articles. The different Genius of the two Nations required this distinction. The Ideas of the high Class of People in Thibet are more refined, and they with difficulty accepted even of those presents from a Stranger. The Bootieas are of a more sordid Disposition, and receive, with little Ceremony, whatever is offered to them. In return I received in Bootan, besides some Pieces of Silk, Blankets, and other woolen Manufactures, Fruits, Rice, Butter in such quantities that I could have set up as a Tallow Chandler, and a parcell of unmatched Tanyan Horses—which have almost ruined me. In Thibet I received Gold Dust and Talents of Silver, from the Lama and his Officers, for all which, except some small Bulses\* which I gave away in the same Manner as I got them, I have given Credit in my Accounts.

“I have stated my Charges fairly. The Money which I expended was for the Honour of the Company, and to facilitate the Object which I aimed at, and thus I submit the Accounts to your Judgement.”

\* *Bulse*—package of diamonds or gold dust (Oxford Dictionary).

## APPENDIX C

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AN account given to the Prince of Tuscany of a conversation held with a Father of the Order of the Jesuits (*Grueber*), who had come to Florence from China, January 31st, 1665. [Br. Mus. Add. MS. 16,506, f. 277 *et seq.*]

Then advancing further into the country of Tangut, he arrived at Retink, a district fairly well populated in the realm of Barantola, and finally in the real kingdom of Barantola, the royal town of Lassa. The present king is called Tena, and is descended by very ancient origin from the Tartars of Tangut. His residence is in a castle built according to European ideas, on a very high hill; it is the royal palace, and is called Butala. It has four stories, and the architecture is fair. The court is very large, and there is an incredible luxury in the dresses, of cottons and gold brocades. Except for this the nation is extremely dirty, as they have a law, for men as well as for women, not to wear shirts, to sleep on the ground, to eat raw meat, and never to wash either hands or face. They are, however, pleasant and friendly to strangers.

One sees the women in the town just as other Tartar women, and contrary to the Chinese custom. The king's brother is called Lama Congiu. This is the Mufti, or, we may say, the High Priest of the Tartars, who worship him as God. They believe that he is the brother of the first king, although they call him successively the brother of all the kings, and hold that occasionally he must die and be born again, and they say that this is the seventh time that he has come to life again since the creation of the world.

This belief is kept up in the people by the astuteness of the king, and fostered by the few persons admitted to the secret, who so manage the affair that even the dirty rags of this divinity are immensely sought after by the highest in the kingdom, and happy is he who obtains the most flowered and embroidered piece. They wear them on their breasts as a relic. Except by their devotees they do not allow themselves to be seen by anyone.

From Barantola he went to Nekpal, etc.