

Is MYSTERIOUS THIBET TO BE OPENED TO THE WORLD?



The presence in St. Petersburg of a mission of four high officials of Thibet, the first representatives of that practically unknown country to visit Europe, and the announcement that the Dalai Lama, ruler of Thibet, has been persuaded to himself visit Russia, is looked upon as indicating that the barriers which have closed the white man out of "The Forbidden Land" will soon be let down to civilization.

A Buria from Transbaikalia, named Akhrambo Atshwan Dorschieff, who has gained the favor of the Dalai Lama, returned to Ljadia last October and was received by the Emperor. He returned to Thibet and succeeded in persuading the Dalai Lama to send a special mission to St. Petersburg to open friendly relations with this country. This mission has arrived under the guidance of Dorschieff, and has been received by Count Lamour. It consists of four persons, one of whom is the Dalai Lama's second secretary. It brings an autograph letter from the Regent of Thibet to the Czar.

The Russian newspapers attach much importance to this journey, and no doubt properly. It marks another step in the extension of Russian influence toward the Indo-Chinese possessions of France. The Russians regard the establishment of a chain of communications across the rear of the Indian Empire and the permanent isolation of India from the Yang-tse-Kiang valley as practically assured.

The present is the first opportunity that Russia has had to make overtures to Thibet—for, although it is a country of 651,500 square miles, with a population estimated at over 6,000,000, it is an unknown land except to the few intrepid adventurers who have explored it in great personal risk. The country is in central Asia, bounded on the north by the Kwenlum Mountains, on the

18,760 feet. Of the climate the same explorer says: "No amount of woolen clothes will keep out the wind on the Chang, so skins must be taken." During the period already referred to the enormous stretch of country crossed by Captain Bower's party did not show a single tree, and only two species of shrubs, and these rarely exceeded six inches in height. They found a large number of flowering plants and grasses, however, while for variety the landscape, both on the Chang and elsewhere, is diversified in many places by gigantic masses of rock and terrific precipices. This is, in fact, what is poetically known in Asia as the "Roof of the World," and at the southwest corner of it, at Gilgit, on the borders of Kashmir, is the place "Where Three Empires Meet," the title of Mr. Knight's work.

The hideousness or sublimity—according to the view one takes—of nature on the Chang, and in other parts of Thibet, is not left to itself. As in the Tyrol and other Catholic countries one sees wayside crosses and picturesque shrines, so in Thibet, only far more frequent, are the huge rock-cut images which are supposed to represent the Buddha, the "shortens" or monuments of a religious character, and inscriptions, large and small, cut in the rocks, of prayers and sacred sentences. As one tramps along a Thibetan road, it is said, any stone against which the weary foot stumbles may be found on examination to bear the inscription, "Om mani padmi, Om" (O! Thou Jewel in the Lotus, O!), a devout aspiration which, in a slightly altered form, will be familiar to readers of Sir Edwin Arnold's "Light of Asia."

Ever since the days of Marco Polo, who entered Thibet in the fifteenth century as the envoy of Venice, Thibet has been famed as the nursery of East-

one played some monkey trick on another.

"Again there came a change. The solemn chanting ceased, and then rushed on the scene a crowd of wan shapes, almost naked, with but a few dark rags about them, as if they were shivering with cold. They wrung their hands despairingly and rushed about in a confused way, as if lost, starting from each other in terror when they met, sometimes feeling about them with their outstretched hands like blind men, and all the while whistling in long drawn notes which rose and fell like a strong wind on the hills."

The sudden onrushing of these wildly whistling shapes occurred at frequent intervals during the ceremony. The change from one phase of this curious mummerly to another was always startlingly abrupt. One never knew when some peaceful anthem and stately dance of holy figures would be suddenly interrupted by the clashing discord of cymbals and trumpets and the whirling torrent of shrieking fiends."

"At one period of the ceremony a holy man with an Archbishop's miter on his head advanced, to the beautiful chanting of men and boys, the basses, trebles, and tenors taking successive parts in solo and chorus. * * * This holy man blessed a goblet of water by laying his hands on it and intoning some prayer or charm. Then he sprinkled the water in all directions, and the defeated demons staid their shrieking, dancing, and infernal music and gradually crept out of the arena, and no sound was heard for a time but the sweet singing of the holy choir."

BREAKS FORCE OF THE WAVES.

Mattresses are Strung Together to Protect Ocean Beaches.

At many of the favorite seaside summer resorts in this country the beaches are from time to time ravaged by wild storms, and hitherto no adequate method of protecting them against such onslaughts has been discovered. As a result the cottagers may awake one morning and find that the pleasant strand on which they strolled during the previous evening has, during the night, been eaten away by the hungry waves. Now, however, an ingenious inventor has devised a method for the protection of such beaches, a method which, he is confident, will prove effective. It consists of a number of mattresses, which are formed of fibrous material and which are held together by means of warps and bars. The mattresses, thus connected, are laid on the beach, the warps and bars being placed in such a manner that the long, fibrous covering is kept stiff and immovable. As a further safeguard, however, stronger fastenings are placed here and there, and by means of these the mattresses are anchored firmly to the beach. The mattresses are arranged lengthwise in the direction of the current, and the warps and bars are arranged diagonally. The object is to break the force of the waves and prevent them from wreaking their full fury on the beach. Experiments, it is said, prove that a protection of this kind is useful for such a purpose.

A Revered Victualer

Few publicans take as much interest in the welfare of their clients as does Mrs. Mary Lee of the Beehive, White Waltham, near Maidenhead, England, who is the oldest licensed victualer in Berks, and who recently celebrated her jubilee as a dispenser of ale. As long as her strength and eyesight permitted, it was her habit every Sunday evening to carry her ponderous family Bible into the taproom, place it reverently on the table, the visitors making room for it by pushing their beer-jugs to one side, and to read a chapter to the assembled company, who always uncovered while the sacred book was in the apartment. The frequenters of the Beehive greatly respected the old lady for her efforts to give them moral instruction, and although her occasional comments might not commend themselves to the followers of what is called the higher criticism, they were homely and to the point. Mrs. Lee also displays in the taproom a notice intimating that any one using impolite language or singing songs of a risky tendency, would be promptly expelled. Altogether, the venerable lady seems to be a model licensed victualer.

Iron Scarce In Philippines.

Iron, we are told, is wanted in the Philippines for the manufacture of tools, farming implements, building trimmings, weapons, and hundreds of other articles. The wheelwrights are looking everywhere for iron with which to repair and construct vehicles. The mining engineers are paying large sums of money for pieces of old iron for use in the various mining enterprises, says Cassier's Magazine. Owners of sugar cane crushing machinery, proprietors of machine shops, and shipbuilders are offering all sorts of prizes for iron, steel, and other metals. Yet it is almost an impossibility to buy iron in the islands. Native machine workers produce hundreds of different kinds of metal implements and parts of machinery from old vehicle springs and wagon tires.

Potato Yield per Acre.

The average yield of potatoes in the United States is about 100 bushels to the acre. Under half-way decent treatment this average could easily be made 200 bushels.

Not So Heavy's Box.

Lots of men who imagine they are public spirited citizens will not bear their names announced when the roll of donors is called.

Pictorial Humor

QUICK WORK MIGHT SOLVE IT.

A lady was recently reading to her young son the story of a little fellow whose father was taken ill and died, after which he set himself diligently to work to assist in supporting himself and his mother. When she had finished the story she said:

"Now, Tommy, if pa were to die, wouldn't you work to keep mamma?"

"Why no," said the little chap, not relishing the idea of work. "What for? Ain't we got a good house to live in?"

"Oh, yes, my dear," said the mother; "but we can't eat the house, you know."

"Well, ain't we got plenty of things in the pantry?" continued the young hopeful.

"Certainly, dear," replied the mother; "but they would not last long and what then?"

"Well, ma," said the young incorrigible, after thinking a moment, "ain't there enough to last till you get another husband?"

Ma gave it up.—Answer.

A HORIZONTAL SHAVE.

A famous orator arrived late in a Southern city, where he was engaged to lecture. He needed a shave badly, and had just time for one. Hastening to his room in the hotel he rang for a barber. A bright-looking boy came in and announced that he was the barber. The gentleman sat down on a chair and told him to go ahead.

"I beg you pardon, sir, but would you mind lying down on the couch?"

"Why?" asked the astonished lecturer.

"Well, sir, you see, I am generally sent to shave the corpses, and I can shave a man better when he is lying down."—New York Tribune.

A DEBTOR IN DIFFICULTY.

Maud—"When are they to be married?"

Ethel—"Never."

Maud—"And why so?"

Ethel—"She will not marry him until he has paid his debts, and he cannot pay his debts until she marries him."—Fun.

A MATTER OF FORM.



Cora—"Do you think it's good form for a girl to wear a short bathing-suit?"

Dora—"Depends altogether on the girl."

CORRECT DIAGNOSIS.

Shrewd Doctor—"I see what's the matter. It's mental strain—too much worry."

Bank Cashier—"What do you advise?"

"Change of scene."

"Where to?"

"Oh, almost any country where there is no extradition treaty."

LIKED LITERARY MEN.

Young Author (engaging board)—"You have several literary men boarding here, I believe."

Mrs. Silmside—"Yes, quite a number. I like literary men."

"I am delighted to hear it."

"Yes, you see, literary men never kick when I demand cash in advance. They are used to it."

MAKING THE BEST OF IT.

Mrs. De Fashion—"My daughter has fainting spells and our doctor is unable to stop them, so I have come to engage your services."

Professor Shassal (dancing master)—"Vat you wish off me, madam?"

Mrs. De Fashion—"I thought you might perhaps teach her to faint more gracefully."

THE CHIEF COST.

Ashit—"And so you have given up your summer trip to Wetspot-by-the-Sea?"

Tallit—"Yes, I had to. I had money enough for expenses, but not enough for tips."—Baltimore American.

GOOD AS BEANS.

Englishman—"Hov you brawns bedsteads?"

Hotel Clerk—"N-o, the bedsteads are made of soft wood, but you'll find the mattress nice and hard."

HE WAS SORRY.

Housekeeper—"This is the twentieth time today that I've had to come to the door to tell peddlers that I did not want anything."

Peddler—"Very sorry, mum!"

Housekeeper—"It's some comfort to know that you are sorry, anyhow."

Peddler—"Yes, mum. I'm very sorry you don't want anything, mum."

AT THE LUNCH COUNTER.

Mrs. Stickler—"I don't like blackberry pie, but I suppose I'll have to take it."

Mrs. Schoppen—"Why so, if there's some other kind you like better?"

Mrs. Stickler—"I'm in mourning, you know."—Philadelphia Press.

DECEIVED BY APPEARANCES.

Old Friend (just returned)—"Your engagement with Miss Prettie is off, I see."

Billton—"O-E?"

Old Friend—"Why, yes. She just passed and scarcely deigned you a look."

Billton—"Oh, that's it? We are married."

NO OBJECTIONS.

"Before I promise to be your wife I have a terrible confession to make."

fathered the beautiful girl. "I—I went to the cooking school."

But the young man only smiled.

"Worry not, dearest, I am a health advocate and eat only raw food."

SHE WAS WISE.



Lord De Broke—I cannot live without you.

Miss Cutting—I didn't imagine you were so badly in debt as all that.

A STRICT MODERNIST.

"What do you think made Shylock refuse three thousand ducats in cash and continue to demand his pound of flesh?"

"I don't know," answered the man who didn't mean to be ghastly, but who has merely failed to acquire a familiarity with his subject. "I suppose the Beef Trust happened to be in a position to quote any prices it pleased just at that time."—Washington Star.

A BROKEN ENGAGEMENT.

Harry—"Wonder why it was that Frank and Bertha broke off their engagement. I understood it was all arranged, even to the marriage day."

Dick—"It was discovered that the wedding ring was made by nonunion labor, so the clergyman refused to perform the ceremony, and no other minister in town dares to do it."—Boston Transcript.

A RARE OCCURRENCE.

First Boarder—I wish the landlady would give us notice when she is going to serve chicken.

Second Boarder—Why?

First Boarder—I was so surprised when she brought that fowl in at dinner that I lost my appetite.—Ohio State Journal.

ONE OF THE ADJUNCTS.



Miss Watson—What made you so late comin' to de cakewalk las' night, Mistah Johnsing?

Mistah Johnsing—I couldn't find mah razah.

NEAT HOUSEKEEPING.

Neat Housekeeper—"Have you dusted this parlor?"

Domestic—"Yes, mum."

Neat Housekeeper—"Well, it doesn't look so. Dust it again, and breathe hard while you're doing it."

WHAT AIMS IT.

Literary Man—"Poetry, my friend, is but a form of music."

Ordinary Man—"That so? Well, I—don't you think magazine poetry is a—er—little too Wagnerian?"

ONLY AUTHENTIC PICTURE OF LHASA, "THE FORBIDDEN CITY."
(From a sketch by a native artist.)

east by China proper, on the south by the almost impassable Himalaya Mountains, and on the west by Kashmir. The mountain range on the south separates Thibet from British India, and Eastern Turkestan separates it from Russia. The country, which became subject to China early in the seventeenth century, contains the sources of the Yang-tse-Kiang, the Indus, and other large rivers, and the country is for the most part a high tableland.

The reasons why Thibet should be called "The Unknown Land" have been reinforced and more vividly impressed upon the Western mind within the last two years by the bloodcurdling narrative of torture which was brought back to his government by Savage Landor in 1899. Mr. Landor's experiences also serve to remind the world at large that, unlike any other country, even in Asia, at the present day, Thibet is under what may be said to correspond in some fashion to the Christian idea of theocracy—a government in which the religious hierarchy also wields despotic temporal power. Such as it is, the religion of the country is the prime motive of all its life, whether for good or evil. "I have lounged through Asia Minor, lived in almost every country in Europe, ransacked India from Comorin to the Himalayas, and become fairly well acquainted with China," said a veteran Scotch traveler, "but nowhere in the world have I seen a people so wrapped up in what they considered to be religion as in Thibet." This religion, with the always necessary Asiatic exception of certain Mohammedans in the western parts, is a highly Molochian corruption of Buddhism. But, in order to get a reasonably lively conception of the peculiarities and the intensity of the Thibetan Buddhism, some idea of the country itself is necessary.

"The bulk of Thibet is the Chang, or Great Thibetan Plateau, the highest, as well as the largest, tableland on the earth. As it was, it occupies all the central and northern and most of the eastern portions of the country. As the bulk of the country may best be obtained from the statement of Captain Bower, one of the most experienced explorers of recent years, and of some of the most important features of the plateau, the plateau of Thibet is the highest