

MODERNIZING THE LAST LAND OF MYSTERY

Long Forbidden Tibet to Have Telegraph and Telephone



The Grand Lama

MYSTERIOUS Tibet is at last doomed to give up its secrets. The last of the world's great lands of mystery is about to be opened permanently to the march of modernization.

Lhasa, the secret and inscrutable, is to be invaded by hordes of tradesmen from the four corners of the earth, and white men for the first time in the history of the world will be permitted freely to invade the land where the dalia lama rules in a wonder palace, surrounded by the glamour of the mysterious and supernatural.

Soon the click of the telegraph will be heard in the glittering Portala, the palace of the lama, and telephone bells will ring throughout the city and the land. A telegraph line is to extend from Lhasa to Peking. Telephone lines will be put up, and funds have been appropriated for the building of hospitals and schools in Tibet. Arrangements are being made for a mail service, and newspapers will be published throughout the recently "forbidden land."

These remarkable innovations in the land of the lama can be traced directly to the British Younghusband expedition in 1904. Since the expedition the Chinese resident, a progressive and enlightened Oriental, has effected many reforms; and it was he who recommended the construction of the telegraph and telephone.

TOWERING, in much of its territory, near the clouds, Tibet has remained in forbidding isolation for centuries.

"Roof of the world," it has been called, its most remarkable physical distinction being the Himalayas, the highest mountains in the world. A "great white plateau" is Tibet; rather a series of plateaus, ranging in altitude from 10,000 to 17,000 feet above the level of the sea.

Lhasa, its capital, is seven miles in circumference and formed in a great oval. It lies at an altitude of 11,500 feet above the level of the sea. The population numbers between 70,000 and 100,000.

One can imagine the difficulties which confront a traveler in Tibet when he thinks of the immensity of the country, exceeding 700,000 square miles. The population is said to number 6,000,000. Indescribably poor, for the most part, these people support more than 433,000 priests.

Mecca of Buddhists, the temples of Lhasa



A Religious Procession in Tibet

In his book, "The Unveiling of Lhasa," Edmund Candler, a member of the Younghusband expedition, describes the city:

"The Portala is superbly detached. It is not a palace on a hill, but a hill that is also a palace. Its massive walls, its terraces and bastions, stretch upward from the plain to the crest, as if the great bluff rock were merely a foundation stone planted there at the 'divinity's' nod.

"The 'divinity' dwells in the palace, and underneath, at a distance of a furlong or two, humanity is huddled abjectly in squalid smut-begrimed houses.

"Lhasa itself is squalid and filthy, undrained, unpaved. Not a single house looks clean or cared for. The streets after rain are nothing but pools of stagnant water, frequented by pigs and dogs searching for refuse.

"The place has not changed since Manning visited it ninety years ago. He wrote then:



Musicians of the Land



Home of the Grand Lama in Lhasa

was permitted to enter the temple on the following day, took occasion to invite two members of the British party to accompany him.

Passing through various courts, where hollyhocks and snapdragons grew in abundance, the visitors entered a shrine located in a cave. A light burned in a pyramid of butter. The walls, the stone deities, the doors, the floor were slimy with the deposited grease of centuries. The air was fetid. Many such shrines were visited before they arrived at last at the shrine of the Jo, the most famed and most revered image in the world.

It was a great pillared temple, heavy with smoke and almost shrouded in gloom. Beyond, a great sanctuary, where hundreds of gold lamps, containing butter, cast a pale yellowish light on an immense golden idol, a great idol with the face of a boy, smooth, placid and pleasant. It is Gautama in his boyhood, before he had learned of the futility of earthly things and his face had assumed its later look of sadness.

Given to the Chinese emperor by the king of Magadha in acknowledgment of his assistance when the Yavanas were overrunning the plains of India, it was brought from Peking in the



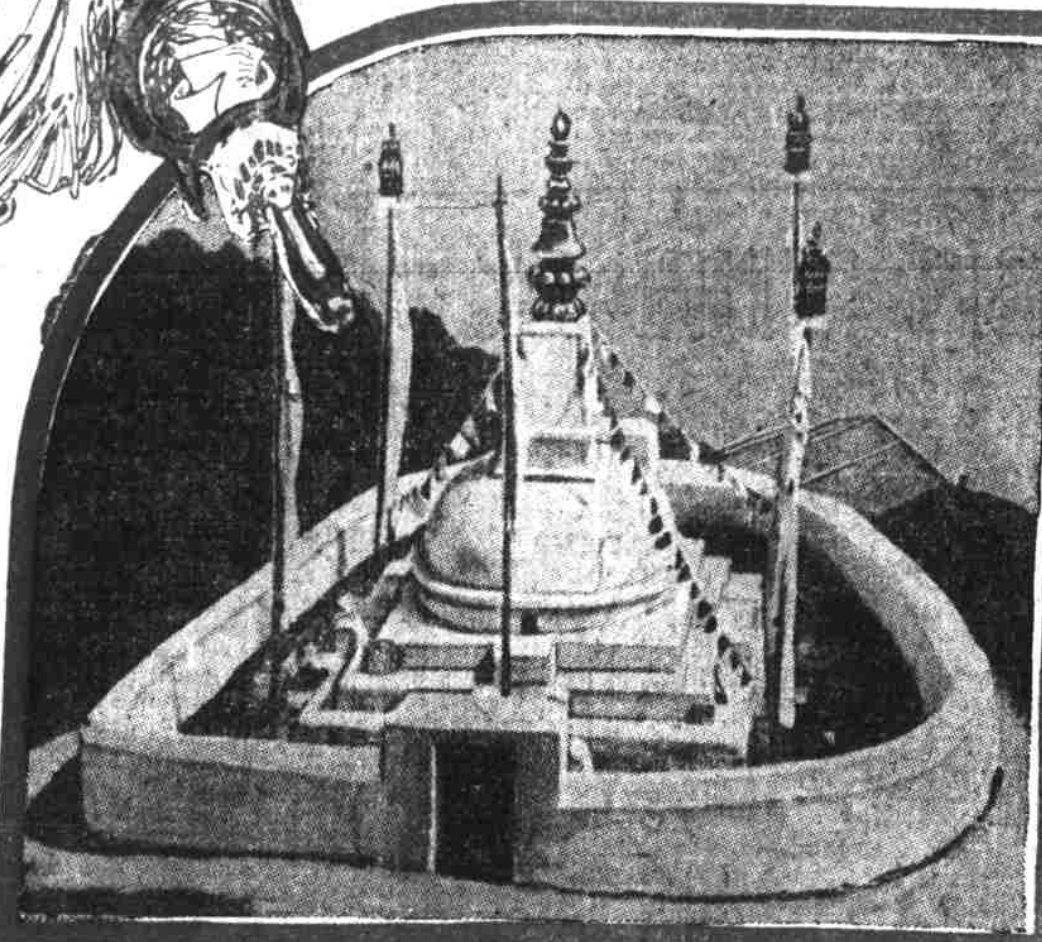
are said to contain the stored wisdom of ages. Mystery spreads her brooding wings over the temples and monasteries. At the Brebyn Temple, in the mysterious city, there are 7700 priests and students; at the Temple of Sera, 5000, and at the Goden Temple, 3300.

Members of the Younghusband expedition, which formally opened Tibet, declare that the people are priest-ridden; that the religion is nothing but the crudest superstition.

Until the British expedition Tibet was little known. With a force of 2000 to 3000 men Colonel Younghusband arrived at the "Seat of the Gods" in the spring of 1904. Although they were met by government officials and the treaty was signed, they were told that the "thirteenth incarnation of Buddha," the dalai lama, had fled. They were compelled to leave without seeing the "god-king."

Lhasa itself, according to visitors, is disappointing. It possesses one of the most marvelous palaces in the world, the Portala, and the dirtiest, most equalid houses. Like a golden crown on a mountain top, the palace, which is an aggregation of several temples, glows as a wondrous setting of jewels.

In the center is the "Red Palace," which contains the audience hall where the grand lama, clad in gold, and seated on a throne supported by carved lions, was wont to receive pious pilgrims. The palace is surmounted by a dome covered entirely with plates of beaten gold, that blaze intolerably in the sunlight. There, on great festivals, the sacred lama surveys the priests as they dance in their hideous costumes.



Monument to a Tibetan Saint

"There is nothing striking, nothing pleasing in its appearance. The habitations are begrimed with smut and dirt. The avenues are full of dogs, some growling and gnawing bits of hide that lie about in profusion and emit a charnel house smell; others limping and looking livid; others ulcerated and others starved and dying and pecked at by ravens; some dead and preyed upon."

Before its annexation to the Chinese em-

pire more than a century ago Tibet had an independent history. It was the cradle of Buddhism. Assuming temporal power in the middle of the seventeenth century, the dalai lamas since then have wielded a power more absolute than ever exerted by any other ruler.

The history of the hierarchy has been one of bloodshed. A most unscrupulous ruler, the fifth grand lama attained rule by inciting the Mongols to invade Tibet, and established his

claim to the "godhead" by doctoring the Buddhist books. His successor was executed because of his profligate life, while the seventh "incarnation" was deposed because he had conspired to kill the regent.

After that it became customary for the regents to kill their successors, and the ninth, tenth, eleventh and twelfth "incarnations" passed into the "Everlasting All" when mere children. They were so holy, it was said, that



Boys Destined for Priesthood

seventh century as the dowry of Princess Konjo. The crown, which contains the largest turquoise in the world—six inches long and three inches wide—is said to have been given by Tsong-kapa in the early part of the fifteenth century.

About the neck of the statue are innumerable necklaces set with the most precious jewels. The throne is of gold and jewels, the canopy overhead is of gold incrustated with jewels.

On the second floor of the temple is the shrine of the guardian goddess, Palden-Lhamo, a three-eyed divinity crowned with human skulls.

Explorers for many years have turned their eyes to Tibet. Henry Savage Landor's experience will be recalled; he got no farther than the outskirts of Lhasa, when he was seized by priests and frightfully tortured.

In 1811 Walter Manning, an Englishman, disguised as a monk, made a trip to Lhasa, but his accounts were unsatisfactory. In 1846 two French missionary priests, Hue and Gabet, passed inside the gates with pilgrims and escaped undetected.

Pundit Nain Sing, an Indian survey explorer, entered Lhasa in 1866 and 1873, and in 1882 Chandra Das, a member of the Indian Educational Department, carried back to India a good description of the city.

Consul General William H. Michael, of Calcutta, recently reported that traders are now freely passing between the Forbidden City and Calcutta. A great deal of labor and time will be necessary before a road can be laid between Lhasa and Darjiling, the railway terminal at the southern side of the Himalayas.