

effort be avoided; and, in the long run of travel, this may become a cheerfulness under difficulties which, at lower levels, frequently induce heaviness of spirits, if not actual discouragement. Certain it is that every Tibetan traveller has met with conditions which are always on the edge of being fatal to him, yet in no recital familiar to me can I recall any expressions of that gloom which the honest traveller in Africa or other lowlands has often recounted. Certain also it is that in his struggle for life the Tibetan is cheerful, almost gay. He is dirty—it is not easy to be clean when you are poor and live in a perennially cold country, where fuel always, and water often enough, are in scant supply.

Would you not, O dainty reader, compromise with your morning bath if it were frozen, if you had no fuel but yak dung, if you must strip in a temperature anywhere below zero? Since, in spite of his dirt, which is a depressing influence, the Tibetan is still a cheerful being, he may fairly thank the thin, keen air, the clear sunshine, the blue sky, for the simple joyousness of his narrow life. But these, for their good results, suppose a living, nourished body, warm with the internal combustion of food. And there's the rub! Nearly all the Tibetan fields have been wrenched from the valley's arid flank, have been terraced and revetted against occasional rain-flood, and then have been fed through a tortuous ditch with water from the nearest mountain-stream. The difficulty of thus obtaining workable areas is great, or, in other words, the land supply in this shut-away world being so closely limited, it is obvious that population must be correspondingly limited.