

pitiful way. No words, says Kawaguchi, can describe their poor condition. The scholar-priests have to earn their living as well as their expenses as students. Yet they are too busy to go out and make money, and what they receive as offerings from believers and as salaries from temples does not amount to enough to support them. They get a drink of tea gratis, but no flour; and such is their pitiable condition that they will often pass a couple of days without eating.

A noteworthy fact is, that though by their religion the Lamas are not supposed to take life, yet they are said not to be able to pass a day without eating meat, and more than 50,000 sheep, goats, and yaks are killed at Lhasa during the last three months of each year. Their punishments, too, are so cruel—gouging out eyes, cutting off hands, beating, etc.—as to excite the Japanese just as much as ourselves.

It is altogether a sorry picture which Kawaguchi draws, but it precisely bears out the casual impressions we got during our limited stay in Lhasa, and from what intercourse we had with the Lamas. Whether Lamaism has on the whole been a success I doubt. It has had a pacifying effect, it is true. If the Tibetans had been Mohammedans, we should not have reached Lhasa as easily as we did. And the Mongols also have lost their old warlike tendencies. The numerous figures of the placid Buddha sitting in calm repose have had their influence. Cut in rocks, erected in imposing statues, or modelled in bronze and brass, and set up in their temples and household altars, they have hypnotized the people to a sense of peace and rest. The Tibetans, who once carried their arms to Peking itself, are now one of the most peaceful of people. And the Mongols, who had set up a dynasty in China, conquered all Central Asia, and laid waste Western Europe, are now an almost negligible quantity in war.

Lamaism has certainly, then, nourished peace in Tibet and Mongolia. But the peace that has been nurtured has been the quiescence of sloth and decadence. The Buddhist idea of repose and kindness all can appreciate.