

more respectable people, as Mr. Schnabel informed me, the other one for poor people and such as die of infectious diseases. The graves consist of rocks and stones above the ground. Some corpses are even thrown into the river, especially those of people who die of dropsy. Do the people of Poo believe that the accumulation of water in the body of a sick person is a sign that the Nāgas (*Klu*) claim the body?

Before leaving Poo, I consider it necessary to write a short note about the line of kings who reigned here in former days. As has already been stated, King Ye-shes-'od, whose inscription we discovered at Poo, reigned at mTho-lding, the old capital of Guge, in the days of the great teacher Atiśa. Now a king of the same name is mentioned among the descendants of the first king of Zangskar, and closer research reveals the fact that the Zangskar kings actually reigned at mTho-lding in Guge. How is this to be accounted for? My explanation is this: King Nyi-ma-mgon of Western Tibet divided his empire among his three sons. The eldest received Ladakh, the second received Guge and Purang with mTho-lding as his capital, the third one's portion was Zangskar. The historical accounts of the Tibetans relate of descendants of the first and third sons, but they do not give any names of descendants of the second son. There were apparently none. The king of Guge and Purang died without issue. Then his country was seized by the king of Zangskar, whose sway thereby extended over Zangskar, Guge and Purang, and whose glory almost eclipsed that of the kings of Leh. Ye-shes-'od is a member of the important line of kings who reigned over the three countries mentioned above and whose capital was at mTho-lding.

We left Poo on the 6th July on our way to Shipke. At first our road took us down to the rocky banks of the Satluj where we had to cross a rope bridge. The place of this bridge is called mTho-rang, or 'Height itself.' From inscriptions on both banks of the river, it becomes evident that there has been a bridge in this place from ancient times. The oldest inscription is in Gupta characters, and too much effaced to allow of reading more than *sya*, the termination of the genitive case, at the end of the line. Several of the Tibetan inscriptions seem to be almost a thousand years of age, judging by the form of their characters. It is interesting to note that two of them, one on each bank of the river, give the following advice to the person who intends crossing: *Ma-ni-grongs-shig!* "Do not forget the *mañi* (the *Om mañi padmē hūm*) [when crossing]!" This was very appropriate advice, for unpleasant as this bridge is now-a-days, it was far more unpleasant in the old days when the traveller had to entrust his life to three rotten ropes plaited of willow twigs at an altitude of about 100 feet above a broad and violent stream. No wonder, people called the bridge 'Height itself.' At the present day, the bridge consists of a strong steel cable provided by the Public Works Department; and the usual trolley being broken, a wooden saddle with two rope slings attached to it, has to do service instead. As Mr. Schnabel informs me, hardly a year passes by without accidents on this bridge, and even a battered traveller like Sven Hedin who had to cross it ten months before us, clothed his feelings in the words: "This bridge is a proper place for people desirous of committing suicide!"