

and goats, when they are hurt, and even rub their own skins with it, when they are sore. Several weeks later, we found more of this stone between Nako and Chang and Pindi Lal bought a large quantity of it for two *paisa*. There we were told that in a pulverised state this stone could be used internally and externally, and would cure all diseases both real and imaginary.

Pindi Lal's treasure stood us in good stead in the course of our tour, for people continually approached us with the desire to be cured of all kinds of diseases. Government had granted us five rupees worth of Quinine and Castor Oil which had to serve as a cure for everything. The fame of my medical skill which was, however, without any foundation, spread far and wide. Once when travelling through the desert between Bashahr and Spiti, and far away from any human habitation, I met with a youth and an old woman, his mother, who said that they had travelled three days to meet me and get medicine to cure the old woman's eyes. As I was a Christian lama, it was my duty to render help, they said. All who have travelled in this country know how unpleasant it is to unload boxes in the middle of a stage, open them, and have them loaded again. In a case like the present there was, however, no escape, and I had to get at one of my boxes to find some ointment which would be, as I hoped, a little more efficacious than Castor Oil. Ordinarily Pindi Lal attended to the sick who were continually hovering about our camp and made them happy by handing over to them one or other of our blue stones with much genial advice.

The aspect of the village of Shipke is not different from that of the villages on the other side of the border, but the appearance of the inhabitants undoubtedly is. Not only does their dress show the genuine Tibetan cut, but also the pigtail is much in evidence here. I am sure that the people of Poo also were in the habit of wearing pigtails at an earlier date than 1650 A.D. But after they had become subjects of the Bashahr Raja, they assumed the fashions of that State. The people of Shipke try their best to extract as much money as possible from the few European travellers, they see. But as Mr. Schnabel said, there is some excuse, for tax-collecting is carried on in the most cruel way all over Tibet, and they have to part with all their few rupees, when the tax-collector comes. Only recently news was brought to Poo that an unfortunate wretch whose taxes had not been paid for the last three years was whipped to death at Shipke. No wonder, that most of the Tibetans would prefer to become British subjects.

There are three ruined castles at Shipke.¹ The oldest of them is situated rather high up above the village on the West. It is known by the name of *mKhar-gog* (broken castle), and is built in cyclopean style (Plate XI, a). Only portions of two walls are still in their original position. There are no traditions whatever current about this castle. We bought an ancient stone axe of the type of the Ladakhi *Kalam* which was asserted to have been found on the site of this stronghold. It is interesting that this kind of stone implement was in use here also.

¹ The earliest picture of Shipke with the Purgul mountain is found in *Reise des Prinzen Waldemar von Preussen* 1845, Plate XXI.