

Not far from our camp at Horling, on the plain towards Lhari, I found a large stone containing an inscription of Tsongkhapa's time. It mentions, besides the names of the reformer and one or two of his contemporaries, those of an ancient lama-king of Guge, Byang-chub-'od, of the famous lama Rin-chen-bzang-po of the year 1000 A. D., and also that of the Tabo monastery. This shows that in the 15th century people believed in a connection between the Tabo monastery of Spiti, and the great priest-kings of Guge.

From Horling, the high and beautiful snow mountains near the village of Chang, which belong to the group of the Purgul peaks and are over 22,000 feet high, can be seen. We had already admired them on our way to Shipke, when we were much closer to them (Plate X, a). At Namgya, I had heard the following ditty about them :—

*Tise gangskyi rgyalpo yin*

*Purgul rii rgyalpo yin*

*Maspang mthsoyi rgyalpo yin.*

“Kailāsa is the king of glaciers,  
Purgul is the king of mountains,  
Manasarowar is the king of lakes.”

At Horling the coolies from Chang, pointing towards the Purgul group of mountains which is here called Gung-ri (perhaps the *Kungrang* of the maps), said that on those mountains was the fabulous 'aBa-yul, the abode of spirits. Its inhabitants are believed to be numerous, but ordinary people can neither see nor hear them. It is only very good men or lamas who are capable of perceiving anything. When such a pious man approaches that region of eternal snow, he hears the voices of its invisible denizens or the barking of their ghostly dogs, but sees nothing. This tale reminds me strongly of a passage which I had repeatedly found in inscriptions with reference to the Kailāsa mountains :—*dgra bcom bzhugs gnas Tise*, 'Kailāsa, the abode of those who have conquered all enemies' (*arhats*). The ice mountains evidently are not only the abode of the gods, but also that of the dead who, according to the belief of the Tibetans, have acquired paradise.

We reached Lhari, the first village of Spiti, on the 28th July. Although this village is possibly connected with the history of gNya-khri-btsam-po, the first king of Tibet, it is nowadays a very poor place. It consists of only a few scattered houses. Above it, on the side next the brook, there are the extensive ruins of an ancient castle, called Serlang, the former abode of the Lhari people. Below the village there are very many ancient rock-carvings, among which we note, in particular, the ibex and the *svastika*. One of the carvings appears to represent the 'willow of the world' with its six branches and six roots, one of the symbols of the pre-Buddhist religion of the people. Another symbol appears to represent the sun and the moon. Dilapidated as Lhari is now-a-days, I cannot escape the impression that it is a very ancient settlement.

On the 29th July, we marched to the famous Gelugpa monastery of Tabo which is only three miles distant from Lhari (Plate XIV, a). When we were approaching it, I