

to be a curiosity shop. Brilliant masks, gaudy banners, and colored streamers bearing printed prayers hung from the walls and ceiling; a row of shelves contained the holy Buddhist books, oblong packages of long, narrow leaves wrapped in cloth or leather; small, shining brass bowls full of water stood on boxes on the floor; and among them a huge salver of oil, said to be replenished once a year, bore on its surface an ever-burning wick. The room was regarded with distinctly more veneration than any of the holy places which I later saw in other, larger lamaseries, and the little lama's reverent attitude made us honor it. When I asked the use of a thin, drum-like object hung vertically from the ceiling, the lama smiled like a pleased child. Seating himself before it, he took a sickle-shaped drumstick in his left hand and a cymbal in his right, and illustrated the call to prayer. The childlike simplicity of the two inmates, especially of the old man, impressed me greatly, as did also the cleanness of the monastery. The other two or three lamas, one of whom we had met trudging down the valley, were away on the tours of begging by which the institution is partly supported.

Later, I visited other lamaseries, including Himis, the largest, but the impression was by no means so pleasant. The walls and ceilings of the sacred rooms were crowded with inartistic and sometimes vulgar paintings; countless images of Buddha and of saints stood in rows with offerings set before them in the shape of little round bowls of oil supporting burning wicks, or of conventional flowers and symbolic forms modeled in dough; and the open spaces in the middle of the room were filled sometimes with