

stones, eight or ten inches in diameter, on every one of which the lamas, "for value received," had inscribed the universal prayer, "Om mani padme hum," often interpreted as "Oh, the jewel of the lotus." The number of repetitions of this prayer determines the amount of credit which the worshiper of Buddha lays up for himself in heaven. In the lamaseries the lamas write it on pieces of paper, which are put in hollow wooden cylinders about a foot high and eight inches in diameter. The cylinders are set up in long rows on the outside of a building at a height of three or four feet above the ground, and are mounted so that they revolve easily on vertical axes. Visitors to the lamaseries as well as the lamas themselves take occasion to walk past the rows of cylinders and to strike each one with the right hand in such a way as to cause it to revolve. Each revolution gives the worshiper as much credit as if he had himself said, "Om mani padme hum." The lamas often carry little hand cylinders full of prayers, which they swing round and round instead of telling their beads.

Every house has its prayer-inscribed streamers of cloth fluttering from poles on the roof, to keep off demons; and every man, woman, and child is said to wear a charm for the same purpose. Streamers are used to cure all varieties of trouble. At Leh we were shown one set up on a pole a few months before to prevent the demon of the cattle plague from killing the yaks and oxen. The people confessed their regret that it had proved a much less effective preventive than had the drastic measures employed in certain valleys where all ingress and egress, whether of man or beast, had been strictly forbidden.