

benefit. I carefully moved it to an uncomfortable place near the smoking stove. I did not enjoy the heat, nor the smell of cooking fat, but my head was close to the single small hole in the wall, through which a mild gust of wind occasionally thinned the smoke. "Talkan," or parched flour, stirred into a paste with Himalayan tea, sugar, and plenty of melted butter, was placed before me, and was followed by a bowl of salt tea, flat cakes of bread, and fried eggs, the latter most unsavory in appearance, but not unappetizing. The visit seemed to give real pleasure to the household. Whenever I looked at the wrinkled little mother-in-law, she made a half curtsy, jerked her hand to her forehead, and smilingly said, "Ju!" In spite of being a Mohammedan, the only one in the village, she was unveiled, and went about freely among the men like the Buddhist women.

The position of women among the Ladakhis, as among the Tibetans, of whom, it will be remembered, they are a branch, is peculiar because of the practice of polyandry. This custom, like the prevalence of monasticism, as several writers have pointed out, is probably due chiefly to the limited amount of land available for cultivation, and to the consequent necessity of restricting population. If two brothers from a family of three have a single wife, and if the other becomes a lama, the entire family heritage of fields can be kept undivided, and a single house will serve for the whole family. But the question at once arises, What becomes of the daughters for whom there can be no husbands under such a system? There do not seem to be any. For some unexplained reason, girls appear to be less