



26-year old lama at Labrang.

My visit was intended principally for the two senior lamas in order to obtain permission to visit the temples of the monastery and, if possible, to pay my respects to the incarnate Buddha. In contrast to the stiff and unhelpful lamas whom we met at the monastery, the two seniors were amiable and smiling. They simply dissolved in smiles and slight bows. One of them is the controller, while the other, called the »timpan«, receives gifts for the »Gegen«, conveys them to him and announces whether the applicant is to be received or not. I gave each of them a red sash, a snuffbox and triptych mirror and received in exchange two torn blue sashes that had, no doubt, done service many times in this formality. Who knows, they might soon come into the hands of the worthy prelates again. The former, an elderly man, though very polite, could not compete with his colleague in this respect. The latter was scarcely more than 40. It was hard to imagine where he had acquired his elegant manners and his engaging smile. In manners and appearance he reminded me very much of a famous courtier at the court of the Emperor Alexander III. His movements and his long, narrow fingers were also the same as those that once upon a time contributed so much to that courtier's charm and success. With innumerable smiles he informed me that the »Gegen« was unwell and that I would not be able to see him unless I spent some time at Labrang. He would, however, undertake to present my gifts. I produced a sash of respectable size, on which I arranged a piece of silk cloth, a watch in an enamelled case representing an adorable woman, whose rather pronounced charms were, perhaps, none too suitable for a monastery, a silver chain and quite a simple ring which I took off my finger before the eyes of the prelate in order to produce a more striking effect. The charming fellow went off to His Holiness at once, but after a long absence he brought back the news that I could not possibly be received until the patient felt