



*Tanguts in the yard of the sarai at Labrang.*

a lively prelate of 40 who was enthroned at a separate table on a dais at the back of the room. He had also lived among the Buriats in the Transbaikal district and greeted me in good Russian, of which, however, he only knew one word. There was also an elderly Buriat present who had been studying the Buddhist religion for 10 years and spoke Russian perfectly. Coloured Russian tablecloths, tea-glasses with holders, Russian marmalade, caramels and a couple of large musical boxes bore witness to their close relations with Russia. It was only the red clothes of the lamas and the absence of the three kisses of welcome that made one realise that one was not in the land of the Czar. The »holy» lama ate with an excellent appetite between prayers and it did not take much persuasion for us to do justice to the lamas' »pelmeni» (chopped meat wrapped in dough).

I sent a message to the Timpan to ask, if I might continue to see the temples, but as his reply was as polite and non-committal as his whole personality, I lost my temper and decided to leave Labrang the next day.

The monastery covers a large space and contains a multitude of small houses, painted white and enclosed by walls. Large, fine temples tower among them, mostly of a brown colour with gilded roofs, spires or other ornamentation. They are built in two or three storeys and the black frames of the windows, broader at the bottom, give them the appearance of tapering towards the top. I was told that there were 18 large and 40 small temples in the monastery. There are about 3,000 lamas, including many Mongols, Torguts and