Koko-nur on the north and China on the east. Taller than the Tibetans of the west, they are famed for their quick intelligence and open disposition ; a large proportion of the readers and chief lamas of the great schools and the higher officials belong to this race. The nomad tribes of the north-east are known by the Chinese common appellative of Sifan (“western aliens”). They include Mongol, Tibetan, and other tribes. In the east, near the borders of China, are the numerous tribes called Gyarung or Chentui ; their language has been studied by Hodgson, who has pointed out its remarkable similarity of structure to that of the Tagals in the Philippines. To the south of these are the Laka or Lolo (mainly in Sze-chuen), Liso, and Moso ; the last-named have advanced to some extent into Indo-China. The Laka or Lolo are remarkable for their European white features. Their language, along with that of the Liso and Moso, &c., forms a group cognate to the Burmese. Not so far east are the Lutze or Kunung, Melam, Arru, Pagny or Djion, Telu, and Remepu, all speaking a dialect of Tibetan, mixed with foreign words, for which the name of Melam is appropriate. Savages are found, says the pandit explorer A—K, in some of the valleys of the range north of Saithang (i.e., the Altin-tagh north of the Syrien plain). They have a thick and dark skin, are well built and apparently well fed. They are clad in skins, and live in caves and deus or under the shelter of overhanging rocks. Being ignorant of the use of arms in the chase, they lie in wait for their prey near springs of water or salt flats. They are remarkable for their fleetness of foot ; even a horseman finds difficulty in over­taking them. Whenever they see a civilized man they run off in great alarm. They are said to know how to kindle a fire by means of a flint ; and they flay the animals they kill with sharp-edged stones. This is not the only survival of the Stone Age, for in the case of some religious rites the lamas are shaved with a “lightning stone.” The country is thinly peopled and large tracts in the upper plateaus and Mngari-Khorsum are quite uninhabited. In the province of Kham the population is very irregularly distributed, and the nomad character of the tribes occupying a great part of the upper country makes any estimate doubtful. The central provinces of DbUs and gTsang are the most densely peopled, and A—K puts the population of Lhasa at 25,197 (7540 being lamas). The totals lately given by Chinese authorities (4,000,000) and by the Russian staff-officers (6,000,000) are probably nearer the truth than the 11,000,000 and 33,000,000 of former authorities. The Tibetans are a very social people, and all possible circumstances, especially marriages and births, are made occasions for feasting and enjoyment. The burial customs are peculiar. First the hair is plucked out from the top of the head, in order to facilitate transmigration. The corpse is not disposed of everywhere or always in the same way (lack of fuel sometimes preventing cremation), and the lamas decide whether it is to be put away by interment, by throwing into the river, by burning, or by exposure to beasts and birds of prey. The last-named mode (regarded as very honourable) has almost dis­appeared in the west, but is still practised in the central and eastern provinces ; the body is cut in pieces and the bones broken into frag­ments by professional corpse butchers, and, when all the flesh has been devoured at the selected spot, called dúr krod, to which the body had been previously carried, it is not unusual to throw the remaining fragments of the broken bones into the river ; sometimes the phalanges of the fingers are preserved to be used in bead-rolls. The lamas are generally inhumed in a sitting posture, the knees being brought up to the chin and corded together as tightly as possible. In the case of the gyalpos or kahlons the body is burned in a metal vessel, the ashes being afterwards carefully collected to be made into an image of the deceased. Polyandry has been practised from the earliest times, and has been carried by the spread of the race into more genial countries, such as Bhutan. The joint husbands are usually, but not always, brothers. The arrangement seems to work smoothly, and women enjoy general consideration, according to all travellers who have spoken of the subject. The wedding ceremony takes place at the house of the bride’s parents, after adequate presents have been offered by the elder brother, husband or bridegroom, and without the assistance of any priest. It consists chiefly in the engagement of the intending spouses and the placing of a piece of butter by the bride’s parent on the head of the bridegroom and by his parent on that of the bride. Unless otherwise stated by the mother in each case, the elder husband is the putative father of the children, and the others are uncles. Polyandry has resulted in the assignment to the wife of a paramount position, which in the north-east and east of the country has grown among certain tribes into a real sovereignty, of which we hear from the beginnings of Chinese history, and which has left certain sur­vivals among the Lolo and Moso tribes of the present day as well as in the late Burmese court.

There are two religions in Tibet—Buddhism, in the shape of Lamaism (q.v.), and an earlier creed, generally called the Bon religion, of which not much is known. The latter, a creed evolved from Shamanism, does not seem, from what is said in Buddhist books, to have received any regular form either in doctrine or other­wise until the introduction of Buddhism, which incited the Bonpo to seek in a better organization the means of holding their own. They borrowed much from the Buddhists, as the latter did from them,—many deities supposed to be Buddhist because of their Buddhist names being simply Bon gods. At the present day the two religions exist peaceably side by side, and the Bon creed has numerous adherents and rich convents in the central provinces of DbUs and gTsang, but few in the western and eastern provinces. The Bonpo are sometimes called the “Sect of the Black,” as distin­guished from the “Red” or Old and “Yellow” or Reformed Lamaists, both appellations being derived from the colour of their garments, though Bonpo have been seen in red as well as in black. They are also called Grun-drún-pa(see below). The establishment of the Bonpa or Bon-cos, i.e., the Bon religion, is attributed to Gsen-rábs, also called Bstan-pa Gsen-rábs, i.e., Gsen-rábs of the doctrine, the name under which he is worshipped in the temples of his sect, as, for instance, at Tsodam in east Tibet, not far from Bonga ; his statue, which occupies the central place, represents him as squatting, with his right arm outside his red scarf, and holding in his left the vase of knowledge. In a Bon sutra he is said to hold in his right hand the iron hook of mercy, with which he fishes people out of the ocean of transmigration, in his left hand the seal of equality, and to wear on his head the mitra jewel. His full name is Bon gsen- rábs-gran-drum@@1 Gsen-rábs-mi-po, or “(the) excellent human god,” another name of the same personage, has been identified by some Tibetan authorities with Lao-tsze or Lao-kiun of China. This identification, however, rests only on the slender basis of an apparent affinity of sound between the sen of gsen and a common Chinese appellative for the Taoists. The genuine resemblances between Bonpa and Taoism come from the fact that both religions have drawn from similar sources, from the native rude Shamanism which is much the same in both countries, from the tantric and esoteric doctrines of India, and from Buddhist ideas. The identity is sufficient to have deceived the uncritical mind of native scholars, and the matter has not yet been carefully examined by Europeans. The eighth book of the Grub-mthah-sel-kyi-mé-lon, in twelve books, by a Tibetan lama, Chkoikyi Nyima (1674-1740), which, with three others, has been lately translated by Sarat Chandra Das (in Jour. As. Soc. Beug. for 1881-1882), gives some information on the rise of the Bonpa in the region of Shang-shung, identified, not with the modern region of the same name in the north-west of Lhása, but with Gugé or Ghughè and Knáor or Upper Besahr. Three stages are pointed out in the development of the Bonpa after the time of its mythical founder, who reckoned among his spiritual descendants sages of Persia, Leg-tang-mang (some names of Lao-kiun ?) of China, of Thomo, of Miniak (east Tibet), of Sumpar, and of Shang-shung. The first stage is that of the human and historical founder of the religion, a sage of the name of Shong-hon, who lived in the semi- historical time of Thi-de-tsanpo, the sixth king of Tibet (the first is said to have ruled about 415 b.c.). The second stage, dating from the 3d century B. c., is that at which Bon theories and doctrines began to exist, a beginning coincident with the arrival in the country of three Bon priests from Kashmir, Dusha, and Shang- shung. The recital down to this point gives evidence of the vague­ness of the traditions preserved by the Tibetans with reference to their own beginnings, and shows that the author has striven hard to put together shreds of ancient reminiscence within a fabulous and mythical account. With the third stage we come down to historical times. It is divided into three periods,—the first dating from the arrival of an Indian pandit by way of Kashmir, who wrote some of the Bon books ; the second being that of the introduction of Buddhism and the consequent persecution leading the Bonpo to multiply their sacred books, which they concealed ; and the last being that of the revival of the Bonpa and the bring­ing forth of the hidden books subsequent to the overthrow and temporary effacement of Buddhism by gLang-dharma (908-1013). According to this source, which, however, is certainly tinged by Buddhist prejudice, it was only at the last-mentioned date that the Bonpa reached its complete organization.

Eighteen principal gods and goddesses are enumerated, includ­ing the red wrathful razor spirit, the black wrathful razor spirit, the tiger god of glowing fire (the popular god universally wor­shipped), the messenger demon Rgyal-po, otherwise Pe(d)kar rgyal-po (much dreaded and worshipped in the central provinces : he is said to be identical with the deity Kye-páng of Lhasa, figured as a wooden stick or log decked with rags ; see Jaeschke, Bid., p. 7), the god of sound, the great demon, and the serpent demon. Information is lacking as to the specific characteristics of these gods, and it is not clear to which of them belongs the title of kun-tu bzang-po, frequently cited as the chief Bon god ; he is re­puted to have a wife Yom-ki-long-mo, the eternal female principle, and from their union have resulted all the minor gods and the whole world.

@@@1 The term *gyun-druh (svasti),* also applied to his followers, means the cross cramponnée, the *svastika,* similar to that of the Buddhists, from which it differs only in direction, the Bonpo manner of circumambulation round a shrine or deity being from right to left, while the Buddhist manner is from left to right.