

the Buddha's religion of compassion and love, the "karma" of his evil deeds must inevitably work itself out.

In II. 104 follow the "five vows for the laity." These Pancha-Sila are obligatory on every one professing to be a follower of the Buddha.*

1. I vow and promise not to destroy life. In a note to this rule we read further: In this the first and principal vow are not only included men, but all living beings, and for that reason no one who intentionally hurts, kills, or torments an animal can be a follower of the Buddha.

It is pleasant to be able to accord praise. Let Buddhism have the honor of having by this rule successfully inculcated the sinfulness of murder. Buddhism has much to do with the deep reverence with which human life is regarded in Ladak.† The "suttee" has never obtained in Ladak, nor have I ever heard of child murder. The only murderers of whom I have ever heard have been Mohammedan travelers. But the Buddhist law in its wording and application is much too wide for practical life, inasmuch as it does not refer to human life alone, but to all life of every description, and thus defeats itself. It means, for instance, that all wild beasts, poisonous snakes, mad dogs, etc., are to be carefully left alive. To destroy vermin is a heinous sin—which may perhaps account for the fact that Ladaki Buddhists are notoriously infested with fleas and lice.‡ I have even seen these disgusting parasites carefully placed aside. But to the honor of Ladaki common sense it must be said that they are more usually destroyed. Each flea and louse, each wasp and gnat, each wolf and leopard is a living being, and, in a Buddhist's eyes, has the same value as a man or woman! Of course the slaughtering of beasts for food is strictly forbidden by this rule. Yet there are hundreds of Tibetans inhabiting the higher plateaus who live entirely on milk, butter, cheese, and goat's flesh. Cruelty to animals in every form is of daily occurrence. Heavy loads are placed on miserable, half-starved animals. Beasts are driven until they fall by the roadside, when they are left to die of starvation, unless the ravens and other birds of prey mercifully hasten the end. I have more than once had ponies with raw backs brought to me for a ride of twenty miles up and down hill.

2. I vow and promise not to steal.

To such an extent is stealing practised in Ladak that no one will allow any man to remain alone in his room; if the owner is obliged to leave the room, the visitor must follow. This alone is sufficient to show that in Buddhist Ladak everybody is a thief as soon as opportunity offers. No man trusts even his own brother out of his sight.

* It must be remembered that we are at present only concerned with the laity. The same rules are binding on clerics, and will recur when the priests are being considered.

† I do not think the fact that in Central Tibet murder appears to be by no means unknown, or that even the lamas resort to it in certain cases, can invalidate the claim of Buddhism to have exerted a very great restraining influence.

‡ One can daily see women sitting together engaged in mutually picking out the lice from their hair.