

## NINE CENTURIES OF BUDDHISM—IV.

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The last chapter in Subhadra's catechism treats of "*The Brotherhood of the Elect*"—i.e., of the priests or lamas.

*Question 159.* What applicants are refused admission into the order?

*Answer.* All those suffering from infectious or incurable diseases, . . . all debtors and persons answerable to the law, etc.

The "religion of love and compassion" has no hope to hold out for the leper, the blind, the maim, or the deaf. They are incapable of attaining salvation. The statement about "persons answerable to the law" does not tally with facts. Until the Dogra invasion put an end to Ladaki independence and the rule of the lamas, criminals were regularly received into the monasteries, which enriched themselves from their lands.

*Question 164.* What are the ten vows of the Brotherhood?\*

1. Not to kill or injure any living being.

The disregard of this rule by the lamas whenever obnoxious heretics are concerned has been referred to above. Such deeds are indeed carried out by the laity; but the laity would not stir if the lamas attempted to restrain them instead of urging them on. The fact that their hands are not literally stained with blood is quite sufficient to put any qualms of conscience on the part of the lamas to rest. But they even go further than this. In the early times of Buddhism in Tibet, King Ralpachan persecuted the priests, until a disguised monk assassinated the king, and gained lasting honor to his own name by the foul deed. Nor are the lamas more tender-hearted when punishment only is intended. Pushing pins under the finger-nails is, if the Ladaki are to be believed, a not uncommon punishment in Tibet. Capital punishment is inflicted by drowning, as by this means the actual shedding of blood is avoided. In Ladak itself thieves used formerly to be punished by being beaten with thorns prior to being driven out naked into the desert. The king of Ladak was obliged to keep a specially well-paid clerk for documents intended for Lhasa. If a single spelling fault was discovered—and Tibetan orthography is extraordinarily difficult—orders were received that the writer's hand should be cut off. The Ladaki also state that if a man makes himself obnoxious to the Lhasa authorities, he is politely invited thither, treated most harshly during his stay, and dismissed with presents. Unfortunately such people usually either fall into a river on the return journey or die of some mysterious disease, and it is an open secret that they are

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\*The first eight are the same as five obligatory and three voluntary vows of the laity. We must again go into detail, but can be briefer, for it will in many cases be sufficient to point out that the lamas are no better than the laity.