

X. Note on the white Satin Embroidered Scarfs of the Tibetan Priests. By Major T. H. A. Lloyd. With a translation of the motto on the margin of one presented to the Asiatic Society.

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Having received lately, with a letter from Bútan, one of the silk scarfs mentioned by TURNER as in use in that country and Tibet, which, though rather dirty, is of a superior manufacture and more highly ornamented with figures of deities than those I have heretofore met with, I think it may be presented as a specimen to the Society. I can fully confirm TURNER'S account of its general use in all intercourse, and am sorry I have not had any opportunity of ascertaining the origin of the custom, which is, I believe, peculiar to Tibet, Bútan, and Sikhim. I applied to Mr. CSOMA KÖRÖSI for an explanation of the sentences woven in at the ends of the scarf, and that gentleman has kindly transcribed and translated them. I enclose his notes on the subject, and to save you the trouble of a reference, I shall copy what TURNER says on this subject; to whose account I can only add that these scarfs are almost indispensable in all religious offerings, as well as on the occasions he mentions.

Titalya, 31st May, 1836.

T. H. A. LLOYD.

Extract from Turner's Embassy, 4to. Edition, 1800.

Page 67. "We each advanced, presenting, one after the other, a white silk scarf, or long narrow piece of *pelong*, fringed at both ends, as is the custom in these countries, to the Rája, who, keeping his seat all the time, took them in his hand, and passed them to his *zempi*.

Page 71. We delivered to the *zempi*, or master of the ceremonies, a silk scarf for each of us, which being thrown across our shoulders, he dismissed us.

Page 72. An inferior, on approaching a superior, presents the white silk scarf; and, when dismissed, has one thrown over his neck, with the ends hanging down in front. Equals exchange scarfs on meeting, bending towards each other, with an inclination of the body. No intercourse whatever takes place without the intervention of a scarf; it always accompanies every letter, being enclosed in the same packet, however distant the place to which it is dispatched. Two colours are in use for this manufacture, which is of China, white and red: the latter is rather

confined to the lower orders : the white is respectful in proportion to its purity and fineness ; there are various degrees in both. I am yet ignorant of the origin of this custom, but shall endeavour, at some future time, to obtain an explanation of it.

P.S.—I may also mention that the *kow-tow* or nine prostrations, as knocking the head nine times on the ground, is in these countries always performed by inferiors approaching their superiors.”

Translation of a Tibetan sloka, found on a white piece of China scarf, called བཀྲ་ཤིས་ཀྱི་འཕྲུལ་པ་ : bkra shis-kha-btags, or “ scarf of benediction.”

༄༅། ཉིན་སོ་བདེ་ལེགས་ མཚན་བདེ་ལེགས། ཉིན་མའི་གུང་
ཡང་བདེ་ལེགས་ཤིང་།

ཉིན་མཚན་དག་ཏུ་བདེ་ལེགས་བའི། དཀོན་ཚོག་གསུམ་གྱི་བཀྲ་
ཤིས་ཤོག།

The same in Roman Character.

Nyin-mo bde-legs mts'han bde'-legs, Nyin-mahi gung yang
bde-legs-shing,
Nyin mts'han rtag-tu brda-legs-pahi, dkon-chog gsum-gyi
bkra shis shog.

Translation.

“ Blessed the day ; blessed the night ; the mid-day also being blessed : may day and night always return (bring) the special favour of the three most precious (holy) ones.”

(Or thus ; the favour of the eminent three holy ones) the
བདེ་ལེགས་བ་ being rendered, in Latin, *insignis, eminens, &c.*

NOTE.—On the cloth the བདེ་ལེགས་ is not sufficiently distinct ; I took it first for བདེ་ལེགས་ as in the two former lines ; but now I correct it as it probably stands on the cloth.

30th May.

A. CSOMA KÖRÖSI.