

THE land of Balistan lies in Kashmir State territory beyond the Himalayan range and to the north of the province of Ladakh.

It is occasionally called Little Tibet, but nowadays it is usually referred to by the State as that part of Ladakh which comes under the jurisdiction of the Skardu Tehsil. Some hundred thousand people speak the Balti language, which in some instances would appear to resemble more the written Tibetan than any spoken dialect of that language.

Proverbs and sayings are in daily use even among the most uneducated, and they are usually referred to as *Mat-i mi-i tam-lo*, i.e. sayings of the men of olden times.

Below are given fifteen of the most common.

Chhu med yul-i berkong chhogo,
The canals (are) large in a
zan med yul-i bre chhogo. waterless land, the measures (are)
large in a land without grain

zan = general term for prepared
cereals; *bre* = wooden measure
of about two pounds.

The wanderer has no land, (and)
the sulky one no food.

Phyanphi myu la yul med,
khrosphi myu la zan med.
The mouse is the head in a
house without a cat. *khong-go* =
khong-go. the head of the house.

Mi-i tam la chhes na rang tam
chhu. If one believed any man's word,
one's own word would be as water.

(Used in the sense that: One's
word is valueless if only a repetition
of hearsay.)

When the inner stomach is full
then whistle. (If one gets what
one wants then what matter
anything or anyone else.)

longka = second stomach of
animals, commonly employed to
imply the seat of personal satisfaction.
hyu = whistling.

Longko gang na hyu hyu.

Spyangku rgas na sang lu thob.

Rang-yul kheer-i gomba.

Sa byungmi rdzes, kha byungmi tam.

Skyang trag na brang chhog.

Rgod nang la ngu nang.

Hrmag tam ma zer, hrmag zan zo.

Kasman-i stagji-kha, hashag-i thsang bed.

Sung minna na hawa hrowed.

Mi-sar khide bes ma byos, khisar khide ling ma byos.

Laidi-i thuk na kangma.

Tnyu la thappa.

Rang-yul byed na pha-skad ma byed.

Although the wolf grow old he gets the sheep. (A rogue is always a rogue in spite of his age.)

In the homeland, steps are golden.

The footprint which comes out of the earth, the word which comes out of the mouth. (A man is known by his words.)

If the disobedient (son, boy,) increase, then the chest breaks.

("A child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame," Prov. xxix, 15.)

Much laughing (brings) much weeping.

Don't speak when in a crowd, eat its food. (The less he spoke the more he heard.)

The magpie builds his nest on a desolate tree. (Tyranny can only be exercised over the helpless.)

When one gives the heart they steal the stomach. (Give him an inch and he'll take an ell.)

Don't travel with a new (inexperienced) man, don't go hunting with a new dog.

The foot should keep within the size of the quilt. (Spend and think according to your income.)

(N'etends pas tes pieds au delà de la couverture.) *laidig* = a kind of patchwork quilt.

OTHERS

To a string a rope. (To make mountains out of molehills.)

Though the homeland be forgotten, the mother tongue never.

Hrmag loq na hyag rdob.

Shu phyungmi bar la ngus na,

chhu borbi bar la rgod; shu phyungmi bar la rgod na, chhu borbi bar la ngus.

If the crowd so desire the yak must be slaughtered. (When in Rome do as Rome does.)

Weep when making the water track, and you'll laugh when the water flows down; laugh when you make the water track, and you'll weep when the water flows down.

shu = earth embankments to control the water in irrigation.

(Care in preparation is rewarded by the work standing all tests.) Also used in reference to the upbringing of a child.

Mi manging tam ma zer, chhu manging rab ma byos.

Don't converse in a crowd, don't ford in deep water. (Don't attempt an impossibility.)

Byabu khnam la, zanno sa la.

Sha halal, sha-chhu harām.

The bird's in the sky, the grain on the earth. (One cannot be nourished by a supply afar off.)

The meat is lawful, but the gravy unlawful. (One is an object of convenience, esteemed and despised as the occasion demands.)

Golong chhu-i duksa, ammed nad-i duksa.

A hollow for water and a weak one for sickness. (One cannot expect more than the particular circumstance or person is capable of giving.)

duksa, from *dukpa* (to remain), and *sa*, place, etc.

From self it will certainly come back to self. (Paid back in one's own coin.)

Chhu khgerbi mi ra la khwul.

A drowning man clutches even a sword. (A drowning man clutches a straw.)