

The population, therefore, is very thinly scattered; it is chiefly gathered in the districts between 8800 and 10,500 feet in elevation. Tibet undoubtedly possesses the loftiest inhabited localities of our globe; nowhere else does man take up his abode at such prodigious altitudes. Generally, it is Buddhist monasteries which spring up in these high regions; the oldest being that of Hanlé, which is situated fully 14,400 feet above the ocean-level. There probably exist some other convents at equally lofty points in the Gnari-Korsum, on the borders of the lakes Manasarowa and Ravana-prada (lat. 31° N., long. 81° E. nearly). It should be remembered that in Europe the highest inhabited point is also a convent—namely, the Hospice of St. Bernard, in the Alps.

Tibet, like the Himalaya, has its “summer villages.” But if, in the Himalaya, these habitations never exceed the elevation of 11,600 feet (Kidarnath), they rise in Tibet as high as 16,000 feet (Norbou). According to the brothers Schlagintweit, Gartok (15,000 feet) is the most important of these summer villages (which might almost remind one of the *æstiva castra* of the Romans); every year, in the month of August, a fair is held here, which attracts thousands of natives from all parts of central Asia. The summer villages of Norbou (16,000 feet) and Pougá (15,200 feet) are situated in the vicinity of rich strata of salt and borax, and sometimes afford a shelter for the shepherds. The flocks, with their owners, frequently remain for several successive months—from June to September—at an altitude of nearly 16,500 feet. In the Alps, no pasturage is found above 8500 feet (on the Fluhälpe, near Findelen).

The southern slope of the Kuen-luen is not inhabited; on the northern declivity, the summer villages lie as high as 10,100 feet; the villages inhabited throughout the year at nearly 9000 feet (Bouchia). The herds frequently climb in quest of pasture to an elevation of 13,000 feet above the sea.

Subjoined is the elevation of two Tibetan towns :—

Leh, or Ladak,	11,000 Eng. feet.
Lassa.	9,500 „