

FROM A TIBETAN BUDDHIST MANUSCRIPT, the title of which may be freely translated, "The Sutra of the Excellent and Victorious Vehicle Concerning the Sacred Golden Lights of the Arya". This manuscript comes from the library of the Imperial Palace, Peking, and both Chinese and Tibetan scholars ascribe it to the reign of K'ang Hsi (1662-1722). It is the work of a skilled lama (Tibetan Buddhist) scribe, who has employed the scholarly style known as "thick letters", now largely used in Tibetan printed books. As most of the finer paper used at this period came from Korea, it is reasonable to suppose that this leaf is also of Korean origin, although the blue coloring and black glaze were undoubtedly added in the Tibetan scriptorium. ¶ The Tibetan written language, which has of late years aroused great interest among students of comparative philology, is a direct contribution from India. It was introduced by the great Buddhist lay minister Tonmi, who, after mastering Sanskrit, selected the Nagari alphabet as the literary medium of his native tongue. The literature of Tibet, of course, is almost wholly Buddhistic; her scribes, her artists and her printers are Buddhist monks, and have been for more than a thousand years. China had her "Dark Ages" during the four centuries preceding the glorious T'anz Dynasty—Tibet's "Dark Ages" are still with her, only relieved by the faint gleam of a decadent scholarship and the steadier glow of a grotesque but virile art.

*Note: The Tibetan example will
be found in the small covered box.*