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ODD THINGS IN SIAM

CURIOUS CUSTOMS AND CEREMONIES THAT ARE STILL OBSERVED.

Cutting the Topknot of the Child For His Spiritual Welfare - The Wedding and Its Celebration-Cremation With Refreshments.

In Slam the cutting of the topknot is so important a ceremony for the future at mal welfare of the child that it is most scrupulously carried out, with all the pomp and ceremony that the means of the parents will allow. That the poor people may not be deprived of the benefit of the ceremony the government provides all that is necessary for it at one of the temples at Bangkok. The center of the ceremony is the cutting off of the topknot, which is all the hair children are permitted to wear up to that time. But associated with it are a number of purifications and other religlous forms which have to be scrupulously carried out. The topknot, which is ordinarily adorned with a chaplet of flowers or beads, often held in place with a jeweled pin of considerable value, is now much more resplendently adorned, while the child is further loaded with the richest jewels the family can provide. After the ceremony the hair is allowed to grow all over the head and is usually worn about an inch long, standing up like a brush. The child is now reckoned to have reached man's estate, although, to their credit be it said, the Siamese are in no hurry to marry their children. In fact, undue haste to make a match for a daughter is apt to raise a question as to whether things are so flourishing with the family as they might be.

When marriage is thought of, it is often the result of mutual affection and takes the form of an elopement, with subsequent forgiveness by the old folk. The more formal way calls for a lot of negotiation and the payment to the parents of "ka nom," which is often, however, returned to the daughter on the birth of her first child. The mouks, who are the astrologers of the country among other accomplishments, are called upon to fix the lucky day, on the arrival of which the bridegroom and his friends go to the bride's house, carrying presents of cakes and betel. All Siamese chew betel, and not to offer it to a guest is a serious breach of hospitality. The quids when ready for chewing consist of leaves of the betel pepper, chips of areca nut-there is no such thing as betel nut that careless travelers write about—a little slaked lime and sometimes tobacco also. The Slamese word for this mixture is appropriately "muk." This will always be in evidence at weddings, and the preparation and presentation of the betel tray to the bridegroom constitute one of the forms of acceptance by the bride of his authority over her. The monks will be already in attendance, feasted with the best that can be provided, and the ceremony of marriage is performed by them with the sprinkling of consecrated water over the couple.

But the greatest ceremony of all takes place after death. If the person be of high rank, the body is placed in a ture in a large metal urn of among the commoners in an ordinary coffin. After being kept a period that lengthens with the exaltation of runk a day is fixed for the cremation. All the friends of the family are invited. and enormous sums are spent on entertaining them and providing free shows for the general public. The guests will enter the inclosure, while Chinese theaters, Slamese marionettes and plays will be provided for all who care to witness them. On entering one would be met by some member of the deceased's family bearing a black bag, into which all are invited in turn to dip a hand. It is found to contain a number of tiny balls, each of which is hollow and contains a screw of paper. A Siamese figure on it refers to a similar figure on some article in one of the booths in the inclosure, and the guests are expected to present the number to the attendants and receive as a present whatever it represents.

There may be a dinner, but anyway refreshments will be provided in abundance. Just at sunset the pyre will be lighted. A stick of scented wood or a wreath of flowers made of the perfumed sandalwood, as well as a candle of unbleached wax, is handed to each guest, and lamps are lighted at the foot of the steps of the pyre. Just as with us those at the graveside perform the last office for the dead in dropping a little earth into the grave, so in Siam each one lights his candle at a lamp and places it under the urn or coffin, together with the scented stick or wreath. Buddhist monks away in one of the booths will be reciting sacred texts meanwhile, but nothing in the way of prayer, whether for the dead or the living, enters into the ceremony.

Fireworks will be let off, including a very mournful one known to the natives as the "roaring of elephants." It is made by shaving a thick bamboo very thin at one point and then making a slit. The inside is filled with composition and sealed, and this, when fired, exerts great pressure on the slit, making the edges vibrate continuously, so producing a series of loud groans of a most doleful character. When the deceased is of high rank, the king sends an aid-de-camp with a lamp lighted from one that is kept continually burning in the royal temple and whose light was originally obtained from a tree fired by lightning. After the cremation the ashes are collected and most of them thrown into the river, though often a few are placed in the temple in a wooden urn.—Mission Field

"Why do you watch the thermometer on the wall so closely?" queried the in

"Because," replied the untrained nurse, "the doctor said if the tempera ture got any higher I was to give you another dose of quinine.".

Notice to Creditors.

In the matter of the estate of Reg. eld Syverson, Deceased.
Notice is hereby given by the under-signed A ndrew Gilderhaus, administrator of the estate of Regnein syverson, late of the County of Griggs. State of North Dakota, to the creditors of and all persons having claims against said deceased to exhibit them with the necessary vouchers, within four months after the first publication of this notice, to said administrator at the place of his residence in the City of Aneta, in the State of North Dakota.

ANDREW GILDERHAUS.

First Publication on the 21st, day of July, 1904.

Notice to Creditors.

In the matter of the estate of Diary Coloy. Deceased.
Notice is hereby given by the undersigned Thura L. LeVailey, Executrix of the last will of Mary Colby, late of the city of Morhead in the county of Clay, and state of Minnesota, deceased, to the creditors of, and all persons having claims against, said deceased, to exhibit them with the necessary vouchers, within four months after the first publication of this notice, to said Executrix at the office of Wije & LeVailey in the town of Dazey, in Barnes ounty, North Dakota.

Dated Cooperstown, June 20th, A. D. 1994.

THURA L. LAVALLEY.

24-28

Executrix. In the matter of the estate of Mary Colby

Notice for Publication.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR.

Land Office at Fargo. N. Dak., June 27, '04.
Notice is hereby given that the following named settler has filed notice of his intention to make final proof in support of his claim, and that said proof will be r ade before Oscar D. Purinton. Clerk of District Court, at Cooperstown, N. D., on August 6, 1904. viz:
LARSG. ISRAELSON.
H. E. No. 23409 for the nw4 of sec. 12, in twp. 147, n of range 58 w.
He names the following witnesses to prove his continuous residence upon and cultivation of said land, viz:
Gilbert Olson. Andrew Anderson. John N. Johnson and Martin Olson, of Cooperstown, N. D.

C. C. SCHUYLER.

Notice to Creditors.

In the matter of the estate of Benjamin A Upton, deceased Notice is hereby given by the undersigned Oscar D. Purinton Administrator of the estate of Benjamin A. Upton late of the town of Washburn. In the county of Griggs and State of North Dakota, deceased, to the creditors of, and all persons having claims against, said deceased, to exhibit them with the necessary vouchers, within six months after the first publication of this notice, to said administrator at his office in the Village of Cooperstown, in said Griggs County.

Dated July 12th A. D. 1944.

OSCAR D. PURINTON.

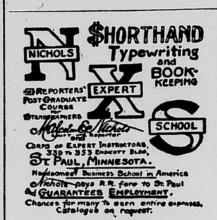
7-14

Administrator.

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