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Physical Character of the Karens.—By the Rev. F. MASON, D. D.

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KARENS.*

The name Karen has been adopted from the Burmans, who apply it to various uncultivated tribes, that inhabit Burmah and Pegu; but it is used, in these notices, as designating a people that speak a language of common origin, which is conveniently called Karen; embracing many dialects, and numerous tribes. These tribes, though speaking a common language, have no common name with which to distinguish themselves; but in this respect, they do not differ from our own ancestors. Caesar found some twenty or thirty different tribes in Britain, but it does not appear that they had any common name by which they designated themselves.

* The following pages are offered as answers to "Queries respecting the human race addressed to travellers, by a Committee of the British Association for the Advancement of Science," at the request of Col. Phayre; and embrace all the writer has to say on the general division of the Queries, entitled "Physical Characteristics;" from Query 1 to Query 49.

No answers are given to Queries 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, and 30, relating mainly to anatomy, because satisfactory ones have not been obtained. Nor are answers given to Queries 13, 14, 15, 16, because the writer has already published on the subject of Language in the Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, and in his work on "Burmah." To write again on the subject, would necessarily compel him to repeat considerable of what is already in print, which seemed undesirable.

The word Karen has been supposed to signify *aboriginal*, from *yen** “first,” and *ka†* a formative particle; but the derivation is European, not Burmese. The Burmans have never been so recondite in naming wild tribes. When the Buddhist missionaries landed at Martaban, they denominated the aboriginal inhabitants *Beloos*, or “Monsters,” and the Burmese still retain the name for a tribe of Karens on the borders of Karenee. The subdued Bghais they dispose of as *Loo-Yaing,‡* “wild men; while the more civilized Mopghas that bring honey and bees’ wax for sale, they call *Taubya,§* “wild bees;” and they find in the dress of another a distinctive name, and call them “Red Karens.”

The word *Karen* is probably a Karen word. One of the northern Karen tribes, with which the Burmans must have held most intercourse before they conquered Pegu, call themselves *Ka-yong*, which is sufficiently near the Burmese to be the same word. Then we have a precisely parallel case in the name they give this tribe, which is *Gai-kho,||* a Karen word that is manifestly identical with *Kai-khen*, the name the other Karen tribes give them.

Eight distinct Karen tribes are known, who speak dialects so diverse, that they cannot understand each other; and yet, on examination, the larger proportion of the roots of each dialect are of common origin.

These tribes have often several names, and not only are travellers misled by them; but residents often take up wrong impressions and give, for distinct nations, names that refer to the same tribe.

A few of the tribes only have distinctive names for themselves, and all, when speaking to each other, use the word for man to designate themselves; precisely as the Hebrews use the word for man as the proper name of the first man, Adam. Were these terms for man adopted in English, the tribes would be much more accurately distinguished than they are at present. Thus we should have

| | | |
|---------------------|-----|------------|
| Pgha-knyan | for | Sgau. |
| Pie-yà | „ | Bghai. |
| Prà-kă-yà, or Kă yà | „ | Red Karen. |
| Heu-phlong | „ | Pwo. |
| Peu | „ | Taru. |
| Plau | „ | Mopgha. |

* ရင် † က ‡ လူရိုင်း § တော ဗျား || ဂို

| | | |
|--------------|-----|----------------|
| Pray-kă-yong | for | Kay or Gaikho. |
| Lau | „ | Toungthu. |

Sgau, or Pgha-knyan.

This tribe is known by a diversity of names.

Sgau, the name the tribe give themselves.

Burmese Karens, thus designated by some English writers.

White Karens, the name given them by English travellers to distinguish them from the Red Karens.

Myeet-tho, so designated by the Burmese.

Shan, the name the Pwas give them.

Pa-ku, the name by which they are known in Toungoo, and to the Red Karens; but it more properly denotes a sub-tribe of Sgaus.

Shan-ne-pgha, a name given to another sub-tribe of Sgaus.

We-wa, a small sub-tribe of doubtful origin, but probably originally Sgaus.

BGHAI, or PIE-YA.

The Bghais have no distinctive name for themselves, besides Pie-ya.

Bghai is the name the Sgaus give them, and they recognise the name so far as to apply it with an adjective to sub-tribes among themselves.

Bghai-kă-teu, "Bghais at the end," is the name of the Tunic Bghais, as used by the Pant Bghais; because they live at the extremity of the tribe nearest Toungoo.

Tunic Bghai is the name given to the above sub-tribe, by English writers, because they wear tunics or frocks.

Bghai-kă-hta, "Upper-Bghai." The Pant Bghais are thus denominated by the Tunic Bghais, because they live on the streams above them.

Pant Bghai is the denomination by which all the Bghais that wear pants are known to English writers.

A-yaing, or Ka-yen Ayaing, "Wild Karens," is the name the Burmese give to nearly all the Pant Bghai.

Leik-bya-gyie, "Great Butterflies" is the Burmese name of a portion of the Tunic-Bghai.

Leik-bya-guay, "Little Butterflies" are other villages of Pant Bghai.

Pra-pa-ku, is the name given by the Red Karens to the Bghais that live near the Pa-kus.

Manu-manau is a Burmese name given to a mixed sub-tribe of Bghais.

Pray is the Red Karen name applied to the Manu-manau and to some other clans related to the Bghais.

Lay-may is Burman for a sub-tribe of Bghais, called Pray by the Red Karens.

Shan-kho is a name given to a Bghai clan in the north-eastern part of Toungoo.

RED KAREN, OR KA-YA.

The Red Karens have no name for themselves, except Ka-ya, or Prà-kă-ya.

Ka-yeu-nie, "Red Karen" is the name given them by the Burmese, on account of the red-striped pants they wear.

Bghai-mu-hta, Bghai-mu-htay, names given them by the Bghais, signifying "Eastern Bghai."

Yang-laing, "Red Karens" is their name among the Shan tribes.

The-pya the name by which the Kay people designate them.

Ta-lya a small sub-tribe of Red Karens, are thus denominated by the Red Karens themselves.

Yen-ka-la, the Burmese name of the above clan.

Tha-vie, or Tha-vie-la-kha is a Red Karen name for a people of their own tribe living ten days' journey above them, on the Salween, and who were separated from them when driven from Ava, sixteen generations ago.

In 1861, our Assistant in Karenee reported a singular letter that was sent by them to Karenee; the object of which was not stated distinctly, but it was understood as a challenge to fight. The following is a translation:—

"Now, the words of God and his commands have come to us. Let all men give up the customs of their ancestors, and offerings to spirits, and live in peace. As for us in the land of Tha-vie, we will dwell in peace and obey the commands.

"Nevertheless, at the proper time we will make a feast; and this feast is not a woman's feast, but a man's feast; and when the time arrives to dance, we will dance. And the shades of the dead, and the

spirits will look on. We say to you, if you wish to look on, come and look, and bring sword and spear. We have appointed the month of March for the time of holding the feast."

PWO, or HEU-PHLONG.

The Pwos call themselves Sho.

Pwo is the name given them by the Sgau.

Meet-khyen is a name given them by the Burmese, signifying "River-khyens."

Talaing-Karens is a designation they have in some published papers, and they are sometimes thus designated by the Burmese, because they are principally found among the Talaings.

Shoung is a name given to a small sub-tribe of Pwos in the north of Toungoo.

TARU, or PLU.

Taru is the name given to a tribe nearly related to the Pwos by the Red Karens.

Khu-hta is the name they give themselves.

Be-lu or monsters is the name by which they are characterized by the Burmese. A part of the tribe shave the whole head excepting two tufts of hair, one on each temple, which gives them a sufficiently frightful appearance to account for the name the Burmese have given them.

Be-lu-ba-doung is the name given them by the Kay tribes.

MO-PGHA, or PLAU.

Mo-pgha is the name of one of the villages, from which the missionaries have named the whole tribe; but it is a name they do not recognise themselves. Neither do all call man Plau. Small as is the tribe, there are two or three different dialects among the people, and we have Pie-zau, and Pie-do for man, as well as Plau.

Tau-bya, "Wild Bees" is a name the Burmese give them in some settlements.

Bgha-Pwo is a designation sometimes given them.

KAI, GAIKHO, or PRAI-KA-YOUNG.

The Kai, or Kay, or Gaikho have no distinctive name for themselves, beyond Prà-kă-young, or Kă-young, their word for man.

Kà appears occasionally as designating the people, but it signifies land in their dialect, and properly denotes the country.

Kai, or Kay is the name given them by the Bghais, but they never use it alone. They make three divisions of the tribe.

Kai-kheu "Upper-Kai," often applied to the whole tribe.

Kai-la "Lower-Kai."

Kai-pie-ya "Kai's people."

Gai-kho is the name which the Burmese give them in imitation of the Bghai Kai-kho.

Pa-htoung is the name the Red Karens give them.

Hashwie is a small tribe related to the Kay, and thus denominated by the Bghais.

Hashu is the name they give themselves.

TOUNGTHU, OR LAU.

The Tounghthus are related to the Pwos by their language.

Toung-thu is the name given them by the Burmese.

Pa-au is the name by which they designate themselves.

There is nothing to associate this tribe with the Karens but their language, excepting that the people have the appearance of being a Shan tribe.

SHAN KARENS.

The generic name that the Shans give the Karens in their own country is Yang, which is softened in Burmese into Yen, or Yein. Hence we have of the following Karen tribes is the Shan country of which we know little more than the names.

Yang-lang, "Black Karens."

Ying-ban.

Yen-seik.

Yein.

Sok, or Tsok is the name the Shans give all the Karens that reside in the Burmese territories, without distinction of tribe.

PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS.

Though the preceding tribes are one in language, they are scarcely one in anything else. They differ materially in their physical characteristics.

The Pwos and Tounghthus, that usually inhabit the lowlands, resemble the Burmese, who inhabit similar localities, in their physical traits more than they resemble the Karens that dwell on the mountains. They are a short muscular people with large limbs, larger than

the Burmese ; while the mountaineers are usually of little muscle and small limbs. It is a popular idea that mountaineers are stronger, and hardier than lowlanders, but, however, it may be in other lands, it is certain that in Burmah the mountain tribes are weaker people than those who live on the plains. The cause, however, may possibly be other than the locality.

In stature, all the Karens, excepting perhaps the northern tribes, are shorter on an average than Europeans. In a promiscuous assembly of one hundred men, embracing several tribes, two were *five feet seven* inches high, eight were *five feet six* and a half inches, and all the rest were shorter. An intelligent man that measured *five feet five* inches and a *half*, was confident that he was taller than the average of Karens. I should fix the average at from *five feet four* and a *half* to *five feet five*. The shortest man I have measured, is a Bghai chief, who was only *four feet eight* inches high ; and the tallest Karen I have seen, was not quite six feet.

A company of one hundred Karen women had only two that were *five feet one* inch high, eight were about *four feet ten* ; and the rest shorter. The average cannot be more than *four feet nine*. The shortest woman I have noted, was *four feet five*.

In different villages, the average would vary considerably from the above. A village of Mopghas, on the hills, that can be seen with a glass from the city of Toungoo, is remarkable for its short men, especially the younger ones. I doubt there being one over five feet high. On the contrary, the northern Bghais and Gaikhos are comparatively tall, perhaps as tall, usually, as Europeans ; but they are a small minority ; and I attribute their superiority, in part, to the higher and cooler region that they inhabit.

Though small in stature, the Karens appear to be tolerably well proportioned. No prevailing disproportion between different parts of the body has been noted.

In those parts of the body which are not exposed, the northern Karens, at least, are as fair as the Chinese. The young people, both male and female, among the Gai-khos and northern Bghais, often show red and white in strong contrast on their countenances ; altogether unlike the uniform clay colour of their more southern relatives. I have met with individuals, who, if seen alone, would be pronounced

part European. Indeed, if not exposed to the sun, some of them would be as fair, I think, as many of the inhabitants of Northern Europe.

The yellow tinge of the Chinese is very distinctly seen on many of the Karens, particularly the females; and yellow, as well as white, is considered handsome, by Karen connoisseurs of beauty.

The hair is straight and coarse, usually jet black; but a few have brownish hair.

The eyes are commonly black, but as we proceed north, many hazel eyes are met.

The head is pyramidal, the breadth of the face across the cheek bones wider than across the temples, and the bridge of the nose rises only slightly above the face. Occasionally a decided Roman nose is seen, but there is still a depression between the eyes not possessed by the Romans. The face is lozenge-shaped, and the whole countenance, in typical specimens, is Mongolian. There is a great diversity in individuals, and these traits are less developed in the more civilized Sgaus and Pwos than in the wilder Pakus and Bghais.

It is not easy to describe the characteristic countenances of the different tribes, yet there are characteristic differences, which the experienced eye detects. There is considerable too in locality, which affects the countenance, apart from the difference of race. Thus the Sgaus of Tavoy and Mergui can usually be distinguished from the Sgaus or Pakus of Toungoo. Education also affects the countenance. The Karens that have been educated in our Mission schools look like quite a different tribe from their wild countrymen on the hills.

The Karens rarely marry with other races; but among those who are settled near the Burmese, a Burman is sometimes found with a Karen wife, and in every instance that has come under my personal observation, the children have had a strong Burmese cast of countenance. There in a village near Toungoo where there are several of these mixed families; Europeans do not distinguish them from Burmans. Still, persons acquainted with the Karens, readily recognise them as a mixed race. There is a village, however, on the mountains called "Village of Talaingings," that tradition says was settled by a company of Talaing men who fled into the jungles during some of the wars in Pegu two or three centuries ago; but there is very little in the coun-

tenances of their descendants to distinguish them from other Karens. Their faces are a little longer, their cheek bones not quite so widely expanded, and their faces have a little less of the lozenge shape.

BIRTHS.

When a child is born, in some clans the mother, in others the midwife, cuts the umbilical cord, and puts the placenta into a joint of a large bamboo, and wraps it in a rag. The father then takes it and hangs it up on a tree. An abortion is treated in a like manner, but the tree selected is a species of *Ficus*, and the abortion is supposed to become one of the *Cicadæ* that are so often heard singing at evening.

On returning to the house, if the child be a girl, the father goes through the pantomime of performing a woman's labours, beating paddy in a mortar, and the like. If a boy, he spears a hog, and, seizing the first man he meets, wrestles with him, to indicate what his son will do when he comes to manhood.

The knife with which the navel string is cut, is carefully preserved for the child. The life of the child is supposed to be in some way connected with it, for, if lost or destroyed, it is said the child will not be long lived.

About the third day, when the navel string sloughs and comes away, the father takes his net, and, with a few friends, goes out fishing and hunting. The success of the party is deemed prophetic of the character of the child. If much fish or game is obtained, he will be prosperous; if little, he will be unfortunate.

On the return of the party, a feast is made, the friends are invited, and the child is purified and named. Children are supposed to come into the world defiled, and unless that defilement is removed, they will be unfortunate, and unsuccessful in their undertakings.

An Elder takes a thin splint of bamboo, and, tying a noose at one end, he fans it down the child's arm; saying:

“Fan away ill luck, fan away ill success;

Fan away inability, fan away unskilfulness:

Fan away slow growth, fan away difficulty of growth:

Fan away stuntedness, fan away puniness:

Fan away drowsiness, fan away stupidity:

Fan away debasedness, fan away wretchedness:

Fan away the whole completely.”

The Elder now changes his motion and fans up the child's arm ; saying :

“ Fan on power, fan on influence :

Fan on the paddy bin, fan on the paddy barn :

Fan on followers, fan on dependants :

Fan on good things, fan on appropriate things.”

He next takes a bit of thread that has been prepared for the purpose, and tying it round the child's wrist, says : “ I name thee A. B. ;” using the name that the parents had previously determined upon.

Sometimes a name is selected from among their ancestors, or other relatives ; but in such cases they are always careful to select one whose bearer was rich, or valiant, and prosperous ; ever avoiding the poor and unfortunate, as they suppose the name influences the character of the man.

Often a name is selected indicative of the state of the parent's mind at the time the child is born. A man rejoices at the birth of a son, and he names it “ Joy.” A mother is suffering, and she calls her daughter, “ grief.” Another has a son born when he is hoping for deliverance from Burmese oppression, and the advent of White Foreigners, so he names him “ Hope.”

Frequently a child is named from some circumstance connected with its birth. One is called : “ Father-returned,” because the father returned from a journey just as the child was born ; and another is named “ Harvest,” because born at harvest time. For like reasons we have, “ New-house,” “ Sun-rise,” “ Evening,” “ Moon-rising,” “ Full-moon,” and “ February.”

Sometimes the child is named from its appearance, and hence we meet with the names “ White,” “ Black,” and “ Yellow.” “ White” is about as common a name in Karen, as Smith or Jones in English.

The animal, vegetable and mineral kingdoms all occasionally furnish names. There are “ Tiger,” “ Yellow-tiger,” “ Fierce-tiger,” “ Gaur,” and “ Goat-antelope ;” “ Hornbill,” “ Heron,” “ Prince-bird,” and “ Mango-fish ;” “ Eugenia,” “ Job's-tears,” “ Cotton,” “ Gold,” “ Silver,” and “ Tin ;” with many others of a like character.

When the child grows up, and developes any particular trait of character, the friends give it another name, with “ father” or “ mother” attached to it. Thus, a boy is very quick to work, and he is named

“Father of swiftness.” If he is a good shot with a bow and arrow, he is called “Father of shooting.” When a girl is clever to contrive, she is named “Mother of contrivance.” If she be ready to talk, she becomes “Mother of talk.”

Sometimes the name is given from the personal appearance. Thus, a very white girl is called “Mother of white cotton ; ” and another, of an elegant form, is named “Mother of the pheasant.”

Occasionally, the name refers to locality. Thus, one living near the Sitang, is “Father of the Sitang ; ” and another, on the borders of the Thoukyekhat, is “Father of the Thoukyekhat.”

Frequently a second name is given without “father” or “mother” being attached to it. Thus, a handsome young person is denominated “Yellow-rising sun ; ” and one with remarkably long hair, “Horse-tail.”

When a man is married, and has a child born to him, his name is changed again to the father of that child. The mother’s name is changed in like manner. Thus, I have a Bghai writer called Shie-mo, and his father is known as the “Father of Shie-mo ; and his mother, as the “Mother of Shie-mo.”

Where there are two persons of the same name, they are distinguished by appending to their names the names of the villages where they reside ; analagous to the Norman *de* followed by the name of a place.

The Red Karen ceremonies, at the birth of a child, differ considerably from those noted above. With them, after the child is three days old, the time at which the mother is deemed convalescent and able to walk out, a feast is made by the parents, and the house is open for all to come and eat and drink who choose. All who come are treated as brethren. After the feast, the mother takes the child in a wrapper, on her back, and goes down out of the house. She is then supposed, by a legal figment, to proceed to the paddy field, but in fact she goes out a few yards, digs the ground a little with a hoe, or spade, pulls up a few weeds, and returns to the house. These are symbolical acts, by which the mother pledges herself to labour for the support of the child. The mother next carries her babe to the houses of her near relatives, where the people visited present the child, if a boy, with silver or iron ; if a girl, with beads, or a chicken, or a pig.

After these preliminaries, the child is named ; often after some person that has been visited who made handsome presents ; and always

after some relative, that the memory of their ancestors may be preserved.

Infanticide is rare. Occasionally, when the mother dies, the infant child is killed and buried with her; and I have known a woman confess that she killed her little sister, soon after her birth, because it was ugly; but such things are not common. Children are not exposed.

No measures are taken to alter or modify the form of a child, or any of its limbs. It is carried about in a wrapper, naked, till it can walk, when it is sometimes clothed in a loose tunic; but more often, it is allowed to run about naked. No modification of the limbs is practised.

Among no people are children taught so little as among the Karens; and nothing is taught them to modify the character. They grow up like weeds, and are remarkable for nothing so much as for their wilfulness and disobedience. Yet the Sgaus have a very stringent injunction to obedience to parents. The Elders say:

“O children and grandchildren! respect and reverence your mother and father; for, when you were little, they did not suffer so much as a musquito to bite you. To sin against your parents, is a heinous crime.

“If your father or mother instruct or beat you, fear. If you do not fear, the tigers will not fear you.”

They are also taught to obey kings; another of the commands of the Elders being: “O children and grandchildren! obey the orders of kings, for kings in former times obeyed the commands of God. If we do not obey them, they will kill us.”

There is nothing remarkable in the sports of the child.

The age of puberty may be set down at from twelve to fifteen years. The people not having had the means of keeping their ages, nothing precise can be affirmed that depends on a knowledge of the age. The Karens consider fifteen as the marriagable age.

While writing, six Karens came in, and on inquiry, one says his mother had five children, two say their mothers had eight, two belonged to families of twelve children, and one man of about fifty years of age is the last surviving child of thirteen by one mother. Women that live to forty-five years of age probably bear on an average from nine to ten children. The Karens consider ten as the proper complement.

A verse from an old song intended to teach the duty of children taking due care of their aged mothers, says :

“ A mother can bear ten children,
A child cannot bear ten mothers :
A mother bears ten children
And her strength is exhausted.”

Twins are very uncommon ; much more so than among European nations ; and I never heard of more than two at a birth.

A large family is deemed a great blessing. When seated around the fire at night, they sometimes sing :

“ People’s Kyee-zees many, I covet not,
People’s money much, I covet not,
I covet young paddy ten cubits high,
Good children and good grandchildren.”

The proportion of sexes among adults is remarkably equal, for it is very rare to find either man or woman over twenty-five years of age that is not married or has been married. The proportion in infancy cannot be very diverse.

Children are reared with difficulty. Large numbers die in infancy from want of care, and from ignorance of the proper way to manage the diseases of children.

Nothing remarkable in their senses has been observed, excepting that their eyes are uncommonly good in seeing objects at a distance ; but which may be the result of habit. When I have shown them the villages on the distant hills through my glass, and asked if they did not see them plainly ; the reply has often been : “ Yes, but I can see them about as well without the glass.”

The women bear children to quite as late an age as Europeans. Women, that I should judge to be between forty and forty-five, may be often seen with children at the breast.

Three years is the period for which a child is deemed entitled to his mother’s milk ; but they are oftener suckled longer. It is not uncommon to see a woman suckling her babe at one breast, and its elder brother or sister at the other.

BETROTHAL.

The Karens go on the principle that marriages are made in heaven. They believe that parties who marry do so in accordance with an engagement into which their sentient spirits entered in the presence of God, before they were born.

It is a very common practice among all the tribes, except the Red Karens, for parents to betroth their children while young, if not in infancy. They have an idea that children are benefitted by it. If a child is sickly, the parents say, "We had better seek a wife for this boy. A wife may invigorate him and make him stronger."

Some one then who has a daughter is selected, and if the parents are agreed, and the fowl bones give a favorable response, a feast is made, and the children are betrothed. The feast is provided by the parents of the boy, and one of the Elders offers the prayer of betrothal, saying: "Lord of the land and water, Mokhie of the land and water; these two are engaged to be united in marriage. May they have long life, may they produce seed, may their shoots sprout forth, may they grow old together!

After a boy and girl have been betrothed, should they, on coming to marriageable age, be unconquerably averse to the union, the parents say: "Ah! their spirits did not consent, their guardian angels did not make the agreement."

The young people sing:

"God and the spirit;
Without their consent,
No marriage is made.
God and the spirit,
And with their consent
No marriage is staid."

Should there be a mutual desire to sever the engagement, the parents of the youth go to the friends of the girl; and after the introductory remark that the union does not appear to have been agreed to in heaven, they say: "They were not planted together, they were not sown together, and they do not love each other. Water spilt, leaves the vessel empty; flour thrown out, leaves the basket empty. There must be the loss of half, and the paying of half." Then the parents of the girl pay half the expenses of the feast at the betrothal.

ENGAGEMENT.

When a young man wishes to take a girl for a wife, the first persons to be consulted are her parents. If they make no objections, he employs a go-between to transact the business for him.

The go-between takes a fowl and gives it to an Elder who consults its bones, and if the response is unfavorable, the match is broken off and no further proceedings taken.

When the fowl's bones are read as approving the marriage, the go-between goes to the parents of the girl, when, in some sections, the following form of dialogue takes place :

Go-between.—"Now I will creep up thy stairs, I will tread on the steps of thy ladder. Thou plantest up large house posts, thou flattenest out wide bamboo planks. Thou callest thyself the master of the house, a good man. When the sun rises, it shines upon thee ; when the moon rises, it shines upon thee. Thy head is as large as a still pot, thy tongue as long as the gigantic bean pod. How wilt thou reply ? The children lift their eyes on each other. They lift their hearts on each other's heart. Wilt thou approve ? "

Girl's Guardian.—"Man is the horse's tooth ; the elephant's tusk. Woman is a tree, a bamboo. We are the woman, the female. We cannot reach distant waters, nor arrive at far off lands. We dare not seize those who seize us, we dare not strike back again. The man can reach waters, and arrive at distant lands. Can he take upon himself the charge of a house and a field ? "

Go-between.—"Fear not, be not anxious, for the house and the field. Mother dying, occupy mother's chamber ; father dying, occupy father's hall. By day, there is one sun ; by night, there is one torch. Fear not, be anxious for nothing."

Girl's Guardian.—"If thy word is true to thyself ; if thy language is faithful to thyself ; if thy word is one, thy foot-print one—Let not the tree depart from its shadow, let not man leave his place—very good. Thou art a hunting dog, thou scentest the covert ; thou trackest the game. Art thou satisfied ? "

Go-between.—"I am a hunting dog, and in scenting the hiding place, and tracking the game, I have got to thee."

Girl's Guardian.—"Thou art a hunting dog. What ornaments hast thou brought ? Let me take a look at them."

When the work of the go-between is done, the friends of the young man take a hog, an ox, or a buffalo, according to their circumstances, and, leading it to the dwelling of the parents of the girl, they kill it and examine its gall bladder. If the bladder is full, they say the omen is favourable to the union; but if flaccid, containing little liquid, it is deemed unfavourable. Still, a feast is made, but it is eaten in sadness, and the people murmur, "If they are married, they will have no children; they will be unsuccessful in their undertakings, and they will die young." Sometimes the marriage is broken off, and sometimes it proceeds.

If the gall bladder be plump, there is great rejoicing, and all say, the couple will live to old age, and have a numerous posterity. Before partaking of the feast, an Elder takes a bit of the liver and viscera of the animal together with boiled rice on a plate, and, pouring them out on to the earth, prays; "Lord of the heavens and earth, Lord of the lofty mountains and high hills, we give thee food and drink. May these two persons prosper and be successful, may they have a posterity, may they live to old age, that they may bring up sons and daughters." After the prayer, the elders eat, and then all the people eat after them. After eating, they drink spirits, beat kyee-zees, dance, and sing songs.

After this engagement feast, sometimes the marriage takes place in a few days, but frequently, for various reasons, it is delayed for a considerable period, sometimes for years; and when the delay is protracted, it is not uncommon for the engagement to be broken off.

Should the girl refuse to fulfil her contract, she must pay all the expenses of the engagement feast with interest. "If a hog was killed, she must repay a buffalo. If a horse was offered, she must repay an elephant; and there is the shame besides."

These exaggerated demands are never exacted to the letter. In general terms it is said: "If a man breaks his engagement, he loses his outlay; if a girl breaks her engagement, she must pay a fine."

If a young man wishes to break the engagement, he publicly declares that he will sacrifice all the affair has cost him, and ask no return: "Let the fowl be," he says, "as if the hawk had taken it. Let the food I furnished the parents be as if the tiger or leopard had devoured it. Let the presents I made her relatives be as if sunk in

the water, or destroyed by fire." After this public declaration, the girl is considered at liberty to receive proposals from others; which, without it, she is not.

MARRIAGE.

If there are no obstacles to an immediate union, after an interval of two or three days, the relatives of the bride conduct her to the house of the bridegroom's parents, with a procession of her friends blowing trumpets. When the bride ascends the ladder into the house, water is poured on her abundantly from the verandah, till her clothes are wet through. She then eats with the bridegroom's relatives, and, attended by her female friends, she goes into the chamber. The young man's friends make presents to all the party, giving the most valuable to the relatives of the bride.

When the time for the company to separate approaches, two of the Elders take a cup of spirits, which is called "the covenant drink," and one speaks for the bride, and the other for the bridegroom.

One says; "Now the woman is thy wife, thy daughter-in-law, thine own daughter, thy own wife who will live with thee. Should she be drowned, should she die by a fall, should she be bitten by a poisonous snake, we can say nothing. But should she be killed in a foray, should she be carried into captivity, should she be put in bonds, thou must purchase her freedom, or obtain the price of her blood."

The other Elder then says: "What thou sayest is true. She is not the child of another, she is my child, my wife, my daughter-in-law. Should she die by accident, I can do nothing. I will lay her out, put food in her mouth, drink by her side, make a funeral feast, and bury her. But should she be carried into slavery in a foray, I will carry a kyee-zee for her redemption, and thou must demand a fine. I will carry spirits to drink, thou must spread out food to eat. We together will purchase the woman. But if we cannot obtain her if she has been killed or is lost, we will demand her price. If I ask her price in kyee-zees, thou must demand it in slaves. We together will make it a reason for making reprisals; and if I am the father of the foray, thou shalt be the mother of it. If I am the head of the foray, thou shalt call the army; and if I call the army, thou shalt be the head of the

foray ; and we will work together. If I go first, thou shalt come last ; and if I come last, thou shalt go first."

Each one then gives to the other to drink, and each says to the other : " Be faithful to thy covenant."

This is the proper marriage ceremony, and the parties are now married.

Now, the people say, they are man and wife and may live where they choose, with the parents of the man, or with the parents of the woman, or may live independent of both. " They may have food or no food ; clothes or no clothes ; may live in peace, or fight and quarrel. No one will interfere. It is nobody's business but their own. No one has any right to control them." As a matter of fact, however, the young man usually goes to live with the parents of his wife, and remains with them for two or three years.

Marriage ceremonies among the Red Karens differ materially from those described above. They never betroth their children in infancy, but leave the young people to make their own engagements.

When the parties have agreed to marry, the man kills one or two hogs or fowls in his own house, and makes a feast. To this the friends of the bride, male and female, conduct her ; and she eats and drinks, and spends the night in the house with her companions.

In the midst of the feasting, and in the presence of the whole company, the bridegroom offers a cup of spirits to his bride, who drinks it up ; and then he asks her : " Is it agreeable ? " To which she replies : " Very agreeable."

The next day the bride returns home and makes a similar feast, to which the bridegroom and his friends go. It is now her turn to offer the cup to him, and when he replies to her question : " Is it agreeable ? " that it is " very agreeable," the two are regarded as married.

Often, however, the reply is playfully given : " Not agreeable," and then the feasts have to be repeated till the favourable response is obtained.

Marriages, according to the Bghais, ought to be always contracted among relatives. First cousins marry, but that relation is considered undesirably near. Second cousins are deemed most suitable for marriage. Third cousins may marry without impropriety, though that

relation is considered as undesirably remote. Beyond third cousins marriages are prohibited.

CHASTITY.

Among the Red Karens, chastity, both with married and unmarried, is reported as remarkably loose. The commerce of the sexes among young people is defended as nothing wrong, because "it is our custom." The Sau-bwakepho has a regular rule to give six rupees damages in cases of rape; but these are the only cases of *crim. con.* that he entertains in his courts.

Chastity is cultivated, however, by the other Karen tribes; and one means by which it is preserved, is early marriages. The great majority are married soon after the age of puberty. Still, while the young people are as chaste as most people in Christian nations, lapses among the married are not uncommon; but illegitimate children are very rare.

The Sgaus at least are not wanting in good precepts, notwithstanding, for a contrary course. The Elders say:

"O children and grandchildren! do not commit adultery, or fornication, with the child or wife of another; for the Righteous One looks down from above, and these things are exposed to him. Those that do thus, will go to hell.

"If you meet the wife of another, avoid her, and pass on the lower side of the road."

Though the Bghais do not appear to have precisely the same form of command, yet they regard adultery as particularly offensive to God, and as being the cause sometimes of bad crops.

Human nature is the same everywhere, and the betrothal of children in infancy often results in unhappy marriages, and unfaithfulness to the marriage tie.

Sometimes the parties, on becoming of marriageable age, so dislike each other, that they rebel against the authority of the Elders, and form connections for themselves more congenial to their tastes.

POLYGAMY.

Polygamy is neither permitted nor practiced by any of the Karen tribes; but Karens who live in the neighbourhood of the Burmese

sometimes adopt the Burmese custom of taking an additional wife, as they do that of worshipping idols. The Sgau Elders charge their children :

“ O children and grandchildren ! If you have one husband or wife, lust not after another, male or female ; for God at the beginning created only two, one male and one female.”

DIVORCE.

Divorces are not unfrequent, arising often from marriages being made by the parents of the betrothed in infancy, and the children grow up without any love for each other.

If a man leaves his wife, the rule is that the house and all the property belongs to her. He is allowed no claim on his money and valuables that may be in the wife's possessions, after he has left her. Nothing is his but what he takes with him.

If a woman forsakes her husband, it is usual to allow a share of the property, but no more than the husband consents to allow.

WIDOWS.

Widows retain their husbands' fireplace, and endeavour to support themselves. When young they usually marry again ; but if old and unable to support themselves, they look for help to their own relations, and often suffer from neglect. The obligation to treat widows kindly is recognised in theory, but often neglected in practice. The following story from the Bghai gives a too true picture of this matter.

“ Formerly, there was a woman whose husband died, and left her to get a support as best she could. All her children were small. Their father had forsaken them, and the mother took care of them in any corner or interstice she could find.

“ She had no relations of her own in that country. She had none but her husband's relations, and her husband was dead, and his relations would not help her. She could not therefore get curry to eat, and she fed her children on the sheaths of the blossoms of the wild plantain flowers : these she called to the children “ brains,” and they knew not, but that was the proper name.

“ When the neighbours heard the children say they lived on brains, they said : ‘ The woman is a witch ! Morning after morning it is

brains; evening after evening it is brains. It must be she goes and gets human brains to eat. We cannot get so many brains: and they have no father. Where can so many brains come from?

"After awhile they concluded they would kill her for being a witch, and they made known their intentions to an uncle of hers. He said: 'Wait till I can go and see her.' When at leisure, he went to see the family. He killed a deer, took the head to the children, and showed the brains to the children, asking: 'Does your mother feed you with brains like these?' They all replied: 'No, uncle, mother feeds us with brains that are bright red.' There are no fibres in them like these.'

"The uncle then repeated his enquiries successively with the heads of a horse, an elephant, a bear, a goat-antelope, a bison, a barking deer, a porcupine, a bamboo-rat, a squirrel, a tupai, a rat, a bird, a fowl, a snake, a frog, a fish, and every kind of animal known in the country; but the children said to all, 'Uncle, our mother feeds us with no such brains as these.'

"He thought to himself; 'It is not this, and it is not that. Surely the woman is a witch, for there is no other kind of brains it can be, but human brains.' So he concluded it was best to kill her.

"However he went out hunting one day more, and all day he met with nothing; so on his return home he plucked two sheathes of wild plantain blossoms, and bringing them into the house, he laid them down by the wash stand. One of the children saw the bright red sheathes; 'My uncle has brought me some brains, I will eat them all myself, I will not give a taste to any one else.' All the children rejoiced greatly, and said 'These are the brains on which mother fed us.'

"When the uncle knew that his niece was not a witch, he almost fainted at the thought of having so nearly consented to her death."

FOOD.

A Karen is a most omnivorous animal. Always excepting the feline race, he eats every quadruped from a rat to an elephant; and there is scarcely a reptile unacceptable to his palate, from a sand lizard to a crocodile, and from a toad to a serpent. Flying ants and crawling grubs are in his bill of fare; and there is no bird too tough, no fish

too bony for his table. Dogs are not eaten by the Southern Karens, but they are as great delicacies in the Bghai country as they are in China.

To this great mass of animated nature, the whole vegetable kingdom is made to serve as greens. Nearly every weed is a vegetable, and the young shoots of the largest trees serve as spinage. They are so careless about what they gather for greens, that one of our young teachers poisoned himself, not long ago, by the vegetable curry he made by the way, while travelling.

Besides game, the Karens raise hogs and fowls for home consumption as well as for sale, and on festive occasions, those who are able, purchase and kill a buffalo or ox; so they do not seem to lack for animal food. Still, they may be often seen sitting down to rice and vegetable curry, with perhaps a taste of dried fish, and they certainly do not eat as much animal food as Europeans. They live much like the wild beasts of the forest. When chance, or something very like it, sends them a whole beast, they eat meat to surfeit; and then they live on vegetables and rice, till the wheel of fortune turns round again.

The meat is often cut into small pieces and boiled in curry; but it is also frequently roasted or grilled. Fish is often dried, as is also the flesh of game sometimes; but dried so imperfectly, that it usually has a very bad odour.

The Karens distil from rice or millet a kind of whiskey, of which men, women, and children often drink to intoxication. But, like their meat, this too they have not on hand constantly; and they are sober a great part of the year, because they cannot get anything to drink to be intoxicated.

In the matter of quantity, they take more food at a meal than Europeans; and yet, if labouring hard, require to eat more frequently. I have often walked with them, up hill and down; and though I could walk all day, from sunrise to sunset, after an early breakfast with a couple of crackers, and water from the brook by the way; the Karens were always knocked up by noon; and had to stop and eat a hearty meal, before they were able to proceed. This is true of all the natives in the country; but is not quite understood by some of our medical men. Natives are sometimes taken into the hospitals, and

actually starved to death by not having food enough allowed them to keep up their strength.

DRESS.

The dress of Karen men, south of Toungoo, is a tunic, or frock, and a wrapper; the latter serving for a sheet to sleep in at night. Each one, too, usually carries a bag slung over his shoulder.

The tunics of different tribes and clans are distinguished by the peculiar embroidery of each.* The Sgau tunic has red horizontal parallel lines on a white ground. The Bghai tunic, on the contrary, has the red lines perpendicular. The Pgho tunic has a broad belt of embroidery at its base, and the Pahu tunic has a narrow band, and the figures varied for every village, originally distinct families, so the markings are equivalent to coats of arms.

One clan of the Bghais wear tunics, but by far the larger portion of the tribe wear pants, and no tunic; and all the tribes beyond them, as the Gaikho, Tarus, and Red Karens wear pants; but each tribe or clan has some variation in the stripes or figures worked on them, so that, like those who wear tunics, they can be distinguished at a glance.†

Excepting the Red Karens, all the women wear a short gown, petticoat, and large turban, all variously ornamented. The Red Karen women have corresponding articles of dress, but each one is merely a rectangular piece of cloth.

The dresses are made of cotton, which the women usually plant, gather, clean, spin into thread, and weave into cloth. The Northern Bghais and Gaikhos, who raise the silkworm, adorn their dresses with a profusion of silk embroidery.

In some of their clans, the Elder who officiates as high priest in their offerings, or sacrifices, has a longer and more ornamented tunic presented to him than ordinary, but nothing in their traditions has been found to explain the reason.

To describe the different modes of ornamenting their dresses, would require a long article by itself, and a series of drawings.

* There is one exception. The Mopghas wear the same tunic as the Tunic-Bghais, but why, no reason is known. They speak widely different dialects.

† There is one exception. The Northern Bghais, and the Gaikhos wear the same pants.

Tattooing is a practice quite foreign to all the Karen tribes, excepting the Red Karens, who are all tattooed across the back with a figure resembling the rays of the rising sun. They can give no account of the origin of the custom. Karens who are brought in contact with the Burmese and Talaings, often adopt their customs, so that Karens are often found, especially among the Pghos, tattooed and dressed like Burmans.

No characteristic mode of amusement has been observed. The Karens dance, wrestle, and show their agility much like the other nations around them.

Games of chance are not unknown to the people, but they are little addicted to them, and never bet on them, unless they have been corrupted by the Burmese or Shans.

Every village has a good complement of old people in it, and I have met with two men, who considered themselves a hundred years of age. Every village has persons over sixty, seventy is not uncommon, eighty is rare, but ninety is met occasionally.

No marked difference has been noticed between the sexes in respect to longevity.

SICKNESS.

Where diseases are not deemed contagious, ordinary attention is bestowed upon the sick by their friends and relatives; but when contagious diseases appear, like the small-pox, the whole population seems struck by a panic, and they abandon their houses and scatter into the jungles, where they build booths, and remain till they consider the disease to have passed away. They deem the cholera as contagious as small-pox, and though husbands and wives, parents and children will unite and watch each other to the end; yet all often run away, as soon as a person is dead, and leave him unburied. It is extremely difficult to get people buried in times of cholera.

The Karens attribute diseases to the influence of unseen spirits, and hence, to cure them, they resort to making offerings to appease the spirits that are supposed to be offended. They have twenty or thirty distinct names for different offerings that are made for the sick. They do not, however, exclude the use of medicine altogether; and the Karen Elders have a large *Materia Medica*, consisting of roots and

herbs, leaves and bark, to fall back upon when the offerings do not prove efficacious.

From satisfactory statistics the annual death rate of the Mountain Karens has been ascertained as a little over two and a half per cent., or about the same as in London. The same years that these statistics were collected, the death rate among the acclimatized European soldiers in Toungoo, was only one per cent. The difference should be attributed, it is believed, to difference in constitution, difference in habits, and difference in treatment of the sick; and not to locality. The Karen Mountains appear as healthy as the Scotch Mountains, or the Mountains of Pennsylvania. That something does affect the death rate besides the locality, is manifest from the deaths in the Toungoo jail. The very years that one man only in a hundred was dying in Cantonments, from eight to seventeen in a hundred were dying in the jail.

Karens lack vigour of constitution, and therefore present a weak resisting power to disease. They are subject to intermittent fevers throughout life. I have prescribed to shivering infants at the breast and to shaking old men of threescore and ten. An European does not escape them, but he has a strong constitution, which struggles hard, and if it comes off victor, it is a victor for life. For the first four years of my jungle travels, I had fever every year, but for thirty years since, with one slight exception, I have been entirely exempt. Bites from land leeches often result in bad sores on Karens; while an European will sit down and pick off a dozen from his legs after a walk, without the slightest subsequent inconvenience. In some localities, there is a species of gad fly that bites severely, and its bite is often followed by an ulcer on a Karen; while I have had the backs of both my hands dotted all over with blood spots from their bites, without suffering anything beyond the temporary inconvenience.

The Karens are a dirty people. They never use soap, and their skins are enamelled with dirt. When water is thrown on to them, it rolls off their backs, like globules of quicksilver on a marble slab. To them, bathing has a cooling, but no cleansing effect. Dirt is death's half brother, and is the father of a host of skin diseases to which the Karens are subject. About half of them have the itch, and

many in the form of dreadful sores. Shingles, and fish-skin, and ring-worm are nearly as common as *psora*.

Many diseases, common to all nations, are much more fatal to Karens than to Europeans. The measles are as fatal as the small-pox in Europe, and the hooping cough often makes sad havoc among children. I have known more than twenty die of this disease in a small village of some two hundred inhabitants.

Consumption kills a few, dropsy more, dysentery many, and occasionally considerable numbers are reported to me as dying of fevers; and yet I have never met with a single case of fever among the Karens, that did not yield to medicine. Enlarged spleen is very common, and is sometimes fatal. Ulcers do not kill, but they are as common as skin diseases, and are in great variety.

There is a disease very prevalent among the Sgau tribes, in which large ulcers appear on the limbs. I have had patients brought to the towns, where they have been sent to the hospitals; and sometimes they have been slightly benefited; but in no case has a cure been effected by European treatment; and I have never found a Surgeon who understood the nature of the disease. One said: "It is not leprosy;" but I think it is a kind of leprosy. Another remarked on the cases submitted to his treatment: "I cannot help thinking there is something venereal in it." This the Karens uniformly deny, but I have certainly seen cases in which both legs were masses of what appeared to be incurable sores completely cured, by severe salivation administered by a Burmese doctor; which favours the idea of the venereal character of the disease; but I have seen others die under the same treatment. The disease is hereditary in most instances, but whenever an ulcer appears, the Karens consider it infectious, and will not have the patient in the same house with them. They insist on his living in a separate house, as much as they would a leper. The Burmese, however, do not consider the disease infectious, in which they are partly correct. The Bghais say it is a foreign disease, and some call it "the Paku disease," and others the "Burmese disease;" while the Burmese in some sections call it "the Martaban disease," and in others "the Toungoo disease."

Goitre is common on the hills in special localities. It abounds in one village on the granite mountains, while villages three hours' walk

distant are nearly exempt, though located on the same hills, with the same geological formation. Three or four days' journey beyond this, in an extensive region, where the rocks are exclusively secondary limestone, goitre is again found in excess, while other villages, on the same limestone range, are quite free from the disease. In neither of these districts has any metallic mineral been found. Still, there must be something special in the localities where it abounds to produce it; but what that is, remains to be discovered. All that can be said of it with certainty is, that it is a disease of the hills, for it is not found on the plains; nor did I ever meet with it on the hills in the Tenasserim Provinces. The Karens attribute it to the soil, and say that the disease is caught by eating beans, pumpkins, and other vegetables raised in the infected locality, and by drinking the water that runs through it. Their theory has probably some foundation in fact.

Fowls and hogs that the Karens raise, are occasionally attacked by a violent disease by which they die off as if they had the cholera; and buffaloes on the plains are subject to a like complaint.

WORMS.

Entozoa are very abundant. The round worm, *ascaris lumbricoides*, is often vomited up by Karens, both children and adults. The common tape worm, *tænia solium*, is a common inhabitant of the bowels, as are also thread worms, *ascaris vermicularis*.

DEATH.

When an elder among the Bghais, with a large number of descendants, dies, the people build a place in the hall for the deposit of the corpse, and they hew a coffin out of the body of a tree, and hew a cover for it, like the Chinese coffins.

The body lies in state three or four days, and during the time men blow pipes, and the young men and maidens march round the corpse to the music. At night, the piping is discontinued, and singing is substituted.

When the piping and marching is not going forward, the exercises are diversified by weeping and mourning; or by the men knocking pestles together, and others showing their dexterity by putting their hands or heads in between, and withdrawing them quickly before the missiles come together again.

Before the burial, an elder opens the hand of the dead man and puts into a bangle or some other bit of metal, and then cuts off a few particles with a sword, saying: "May we live to be as old as thou art." Each one in the company goes through the same ceremonials, and the fragments gathered are looked upon as charms to prolong life.

When about to bury the corpse, two candles made of bees-wax are lighted, and two swords are brought. A sword and a candle is taken by the eldest son, and a sword and a candle by the youngest; and they march round the bier in opposite directions three times, each time they meet exchanging swords and candles. After completing the circuits, one candle is placed at the foot of the coffin, and the other at the head.

A fowl or a hog is led three times round the building in which the body is placed, and on completing the first round, it is struck with a strip of bamboo once; on completing the second round twice; and at the third round it is killed. If a fowl, it is killed by twisting its head off. The meat is set before the body as food.

Young people are buried in a similar manner, but with some abridgement of the forms.

When the day of burial arrives, and the body is carried to the grave, four bamboo splints are taken, and one is thrown towards the west, saying: "That is the east." Another is thrown to the east, saying: "That is the west." A third is thrown upwards towards the top of the tree, saying: "That is the foot of the tree;" and a fourth is thrown downwards, saying: "That is the top of the tree." The sources of the stream are then pointed to, saying: "That is the mouth of the stream;" and the mouth of the stream is pointed to, saying: "That is the head of the stream." This is done, because in Hades everything is upside down in relation to the things of this world.

The body is then buried, and the grave filled in without further ceremony, and when the top of the grave has been neatly smoothed off, a little fence of trellis work is built around it. Within this fence, boiled rice and other food is placed for the dead.

On returning from the grave, each person provides himself with three little hooks made of branches of trees, and calling his spirit to follow him, at short intervals, as he returns, he makes a motion as if hooking it, and then thrusts the hook into the ground. This is done

to prevent the spirit of the living from staying behind with the spirit of the dead.

After the funeral, the grave-digger washes his clothes, or the neglect to do so renders him unfortunate. Married children may dig the grave for a parent, but young ones are prohibited. They must hire some one to do the work, and give him five rupees.

FEAST FOR THE DEAD.

Like the Chinese, the Bghais make annual feasts for the dead, for three years after a person's death. The feast is made at the new moon near the close of August, or the beginning of September; and all the villagers that have lost relatives, partake in it.

Before the new moon, they prepare food, plantains, sugar-cane, tobacco, betel nuts, betel leaves, and other articles of consumption. A bamboo is laid across one angle of the roof of the room, and on it are hung up new tunics, new turbans, new petticoats, beads and bangles; and at the appropriate time, when the spirits of the dead are supposed to be present, having returned to visit them, they say: "You have come to me, you have returned to me. It has been raining hard, and you must be wet. Dress yourselves, clothe yourselves with these new garments and all the companions that are with you. Eat betel together with all that accompany you, all your friends and associates, and the long dead. Call them all to eat and drink."

After dark, all the people eat bread made of boiled rice beaten in a mortar. The bread is spread down, and the people are invited: "All who are hungry, eat bread here."

Next morning, the first day of the moon, which is deemed the proper feast day, the previous last day of the month being regarded as the day of preparation, all who have Kyee-zees hang them up, and beat them. Then they kill a hog, and make thirty bottles of bamboos. Into one bottle, they put honey, into another water, in a third whiskey, in a fourth salt, in a fifth oil, in a sixth chillies, and into the seventh tumeric. The other twenty-three are laid aside. Loopholes are made to each bottle through which a string dyed yellow is tied.

After setting apart the seven bottles that have been filled, the remaining twenty-three are filled with food indiscriminatively. Some with pork, some with boiled rice, some with bread, some with whiskey, and some with betel. When these are filled, rice bread is rolled

up in leaves, and the rolls piled up together ; and then a large basket of open work is woven, into which all these bamboo bottles and the rolls of bread are put.

When the rice and meat is cooked for the feast, after the above arrangements have been made, the food is placed on kyee-zees, or little bamboo stools, if they have no kyee-zees ; and they have to be very particular to spread out all the food at the same instant, lest some of the spirits of the dead, being delayed in eating, should be left behind by their companions.

So soon as the food is arranged on the tables, the people beat the kyee-zees and begin to cry, which they say is calling the spirits to come to eat. Each one calls on the particular relative, for whom he has prepared the feast, as father, mother, sister or brother. If a mother, he says ; weeping : “ O prince-bird mother, it is the close of August, Oh ! It is the new moon in September, Oh ! You have come to visit me, Oh ! You have returned to see me, Oh ! I give you eatables, Oh ! I give you drinkables, Oh ! Eat with a glad heart, Oh ! Eat with a happy mind, Oh ! Don't be afraid, mother, Oh ! Do not be apprehensive, Oh ! ”

After the weeping exercises are over, the spirits are supposed to have finished their repast, and then the people sit down to eat what is left.

More food is then prepared and put into the basket with the bamboo bottles, that the spirits may have food to carry away with them ; and at cock-crowing next morning all the contents of the basket, including the bamboo bottles, are thrown out of the house on the ground ; when the same scene of crying and calling on the spirits of the dead is repeated, as detailed above.

They do not weep long, because it is related that in ancient times a woman had a daughter, whom she loved much, and after her death she made this annual festival for her and wept long ; when a prophet reproved her, saying : “ That is enough. Your daughter says : ‘ My companions have left me. They have all gone on before. ’ ” Then the mother said : “ Seize her for me,” and the prophet attempted to grasp her, but he got only a single hem from her garment. Hence the people never weep long, that the departed spirits of their friends may not be left behind by their companions.



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