

dance of milk. And also because of his love Krishna gave a thousand thorough-bred mares that shone like the bright moonbeam and were caparisoned with gold; and also for each of the five brothers five hundred well-broken black-maned white she-mules as fleet as the wind. The Lotus-Eyed One also gave them a thousand women young and charming, beautifully clad and radiant, with hundreds of golden ornaments hung around their necks, finely arrayed and skilled in service. He also gave to Subhadra a hundred thousand saddle horses from Bahli as a matchless wedding gift and ten men's burdens of the best wrought and unwrought gold gleaming like fire. Krishna's elder brother Baladeva, the doer of bold deeds, sent to Arjuna for a wedding gift to honor the union a thousand fiery elephants that towered aloft like mountain peaks, that never fled in battle, well accoutered were they and hung with loudly ringing bells, magnificent, adorned with gold, and each one furnished with a driver.

According to the commentary, two passages in the Ramayana allude to a custom that is not without charm. At the wedding of Sita and Rama, Sita's father took from her mother's hand a gem which he handed to the groom's father for Rama to put on his bride's head.

It is clear from these citations that when a maiden flies away from the paternal nest flocks of gold birds fly from her father's money bags. It is a familiar fact that the marriage of a daughter in India often means the ruination of the family, even extending to children and children's children.

MARRIAGE A LA HINDU.

BY BASANTA KOOMAR ROY.

LADIES who enjoy or endure single blessedness are as scarce among the Hindus as tigers are in America, because Manu, the Moses of the Hindus, unequivocally enjoins the marriage of every Hindu girl as soon as she attains maturity. If, perchance, a girl gets to be sixteen years of age, her parents feel humiliated for having such an "old maid" in the family. The neighbors, friends, and relatives begin to talk about it. The ladies in their after-dinner gossips condemn the negligence of the family as regards the marriage of the girl of sixteen. A meddling woman may

even take upon herself the onerous task of calling upon the mother of say, Satyabala, the girl.

The visitor says to Satyabala's mother: "We all are very much interested in you and your family, so I have come to ask you what you are going to do with Satyabala. She is of more than marriageable age now. Everybody is talking about her. They all wonder how you, her own mother, can sleep at night or eat rice when you have a daughter sixteen years old on hand."

The mother's eyes fill with tears of sorrow and humiliation as she replies mournfully: "Yes, I realize it all. But what can I do? I am a woman. It is not my province to go a-hunting for bridegrooms. Satyabala's father [a Hindu wife never utters the first name of her husband, for it is improper, but she talks of him as baby's father, the master of the home or just "he"] is so indifferent. He does not, like all other men, realize the gravity of the situation. I am about crazy thinking of my daughter. I can't rest well! I don't feel like eating; my head begins to thump the moment I look at Satyabala. To-day, when he comes home I am going to make him move in the matter without delay. There is no time to lose. The case is serious—serious indeed. I thank you for speaking to me the way you have done. That's how friends should be."

The mother hangs her head and instantly raises it again, and this time bursts forth with indignation: "We may even lose our caste by not giving our daughter in marriage when we should."

Lose caste? Yes, lose caste; for parents lose their caste if they do not give their daughter in marriage in time, and losing caste is a thing which every Hindu dreads above all others. In the United States, if by an unexpected fluctuation of the money market a man would lose his place in society, he may regain his former place by another prank of the money market. An instant can make or unmake the dollar caste. But in India there is no getting up from a caste. There is only going down if you once lose it. The caste rules and other social rules bind the Hindus stronger than the laws of kings. A Hindu would rather commit a crime and be an unpaid guest in a penitentiary than violate social etiquette and lose his caste. For losing one's caste means a good deal more than can be imagined here. It is social ostracism, and in a communistic society it is worse than death; it is life-long misery and humiliation. It is felt at every turn, it hangs like the sword of Damocles over the ostracized, and takes away his mental and moral stamina.

What does social ostracism mean? It means that the ostra-

cized man is not invited in the feasts or festivals at the homes of his friends or relations. It means that friends will not consent to accept his hospitality. It means that he cannot get brides for his sons, and husbands for his daughters from his own caste. It means that even his married daughter cannot visit him without losing her caste. It means that priests, barbers, and washermen refuse to serve him. It means that his fellow caste people refuse to serve him. It means that his fellow caste people refuse to attend the funerals in his family. It means that he cannot enter the public temples as before. Above all, it means sneers and jeers, taunts and looks of contempt on all sides. And it needs a strong man to bear up gracefully under all these afflictions.

That is why Satyabala's mother assumed an indignant air when she spoke of losing caste. So if they are inclined to be indifferent, they are not allowed to be so.

One fine morning you will find a man coming with a bundle of old papers wrapped up in a piece of cloth, an umbrella under his arm and, if the road is muddy, his slippers in his hand, for he would rather soil his feet than soil his shoes. The moment he is seen by the people of the neighborhood, they all run wild with joy and begin to shout, "He is coming! He is coming!" The children vie with one another in running to convey the news to Satyabala's mother. He is coming! If you ask them on the way, "Who is coming?" they would only reply by saying, "He is coming." In their overjoyousness they have forgotten everything but that. "He is coming." Who is this man? He is the matchmaker. His is a hereditary profession. He is the human-estate agent. He brings the father of the boy and the father of the girl in touch. He makes a match between two young people and receives handsome commissions from both families. He is a man of subtle intelligence and possesses a mellifluous tongue which he wields to the best advantage. He has in him the instinct of a successful lawyer. He can by force of argument, not necessarily always the strongest, make the worst things appear the best. He has the pedigree of thousands of families at his fingers' ends.

He enters the home of Satyabala's parents followed by the immense crowd that has already gathered round him. He takes his seat and falls into conversation with the bride's father, and very ingeniously informs him that he knows of a good looking, well educated young man of good family and financial standing who lives in a town near by. The young man, he assures Satyabala's father, is suited in every respect to his daughter. The mother lis-

tens, from behind a screen, to every word the matchmaker says, and in the exuberance of her credulity, so characteristic of her sex, believes every word she hears and is correspondingly elated. Then the father goes inside to consult his wife, for in household affairs no Hindu husband dares do anything without the consent of his wife. He knows full well that if he does anything without his wife's sanction and she does not like it, she will make the home unbearable for him.

When asked her opinion about this match, she replies—still under the hypnotizing influence of the matchmaker's inflated encomiums—: "That's the boy I want for my beloved daughter. I am perfectly willing that the match be settled. I have every faith in the matchmaker's words. He has been our friend ever since he managed to bring me into this family."

Then the father comes out and tells the matchmaker to proceed with the arrangements for the match.

The matchmaker is served sweets and other eatables. After eating, he takes a look at the bride and departs for the home of the groom with his books of pedigree, umbrella and slippers, chewing betel-nut as he walks.

Some hours later we find him seated in the parlor at the groom's home, surrounded on all sides by the male members of the family and the neighborhood. He is the observed of all observers. Every word he speaks is listened to with rapt attention, every expression of his face is watched with close vigilance. The ladies from behind the curtain listen and believe all they hear. The matchmaker begins to describe the prospective bride as a girl of exceptional beauty and refinement. He assures them that she resembles Lakshmi (the goddess of wealth and beauty) in personal attractiveness, that she is like Saraswati (the goddess of learning) in intellectual attainments; that she has eyes as beautiful as the eyes of a fawn; that her hair, when loose, would almost sweep the ground; that she knows painting, embroidery and other fine arts. In short, she is in every way qualified to be the wife of the prospective groom, Janaprya (the name meaning "the beloved of the people").

Like the father of the girl, the groom's father too runs inside to ask his wife's opinion in the matter. She is evidently so well pleased with the description of the girl that she is willing to go further with the match. The matchmaker is then informed of the desires of the women.

The father accordingly calls an astrologer to select an auspicious day in which they can go to see the bride. The astrologer, after

many and various calculations, fixes upon the auspicious day. The father of the girl is informed of their intended visit. He in his turn starts making preparations for the reception of the guests most welcome. The ladies in the family begin to make all kinds of rich and rare dishes to satisfy the groom's party—rather, the party of the groom's father.

The day arrives. The father of the boy starts on the mission with the astrologer, who is also a palmist, to read the horoscope and the palms of the girl. The matchmaker of course is an essential companion. They also take with them a young friend of the boy so that he may describe to the boy the physical attractions of the girl, for it is thought that older people cannot enter into the sentiments of the young.

When the members of the party reach the home of the bride they are shown into the parlors, and there they chat, chew betel-nut, and smoke the hookah (water pipe).

The girl is brought into their presence, ushered by a maid or some of her female friends. She is dressed in her best silk *sari* and loaded with armlets, bracelets, necklace, bangles and a dozen other ornaments to add to her beauty. Poor families would often borrow ornaments from neighbors to adorn the would-be bride.

Then the most trying moment arrives. The astrologer takes her hand and reads her palm. He afterwards reads her horoscope to see whether astrologically this boy in question and the girl should be mated or not. It often happens that one little thing about the horoscope will make the match impossible, and no other consideration—money, ornaments, accomplishments or social position—nothing is of any avail to undo the effect of the inauspicious stars. If, as in this case, the horoscope is all right, they then proceed with the match-making. They loosen her nicely dressed hair to see how long it is. Ladies in India do not use very many artificial additions in their coiffures; it is perfectly safe to let down her hair. Then she is given a book to read to test her learning and to study the quality of her voice. Next she is asked to write. The visiting party carries the handwriting home to show to their people, as they also carry a tape measuring her stature. She is asked to answer some questions to show the extent of her intelligence. Some one will say something funny to make her laugh, to see how she looks when she laughs, for it is a well-known fact that many people look perfectly charming as long as they keep their lips closed, but the moment they part their lips in an attempt to smile or laugh, beauty vanishes.

In the meantime, a sister of the girl brings in her handiwork,

such as silk embroidery, painting, and samples of her sewing. Singing is not taken into serious consideration. If she can sing, well and good. As to dancing that is a matter of no importance, because in India dancing is done only by professional nautch-girls.

After all these trials and tribulations for the prospective bride, the members of the party are served elaborate refreshments, and return home without giving any definite word at once, for they want to consult other members of the family before the final answer is given. After due deliberation with his mother, wife and other members of the family, the groom's father informs the bride's parents of the decision. If the answer is yes, the father of the girl and his party plan to go to the groom's home to see the boy. The test there is not so severe as it was in the case of the girl. The girl's father inquires about the boy's intellectual attainments and future prospects from his teachers or professors as the case may be. Inquiry is made of the neighbors as to what kind of company he keeps, for in India, as elsewhere, they believe that a man is generally known by his companions. The bank account and real estate of the groom or his family may often affect his matrimonial plans, for they often make up for disqualifications which otherwise would be insurmountable.

If both parties agree on the match, each party again sees the boy or the girl, as the case may be, gives presents, generally in gold coins, and together they draw a contract stating the terms of the marriage. The giving and taking of the dowry is invariably decided by caste rules and the social status of the respective families. In some castes it is to the girl's parents that dowry is due; in others it goes to the groom's parents, but invariably in every caste it is the so-called higher castemen who demand and the so-called lower caste people are obliged to give. By caste I here mean different grades of social status within a caste.

The Hindu parents are exceedingly careful in marrying their sons and daughters. Very frequently they will see half a dozen or more boys and girls before they choose one, for they want the best they can hope to get. They want to surpass their neighbors; they want to be proud of their daughters-in-law or sons-in-law.

This match between Satyabala and Janaprya, it is evident, was decided upon by their parents. The boy and the girl themselves have little or nothing to say in the matter. Their opinions might have been asked as a matter of formality, but the Hindu boys and girls generally feel too bashful to talk about their marriage. They leave it entirely in the hands of their parents, at least to be polite.

The more they resign their own wishes to the wishes, or at times downright whims, of their parents, the more they are praised by everybody far and near. The least objection on their part will be construed as the height of impertinence, to say the least.

When everything is all right, the astrologer is again called in to select the most auspicious day, taking into consideration the stars under which both the bride and the groom were born. There are some months of the year and some days of the month in which a Hindu marriage ceremony can never be performed. These months and days are observed most punctiliously. They are, as they think, sure to bring calamity on the newly married couple or their families.

There is no fixed rule regarding the place where the marriage ceremony is to take place. Sometimes it is performed in the home of the bride, sometimes in the home of the groom; it depends entirely on the terms of the marriage contract drawn, as mentioned before, between the two families. To perform the marriage ceremony, to entertain friends and relations as far removed as one can go with feasts and entertainments, to feed the poor, to distribute clothes to the needy, all require money. So the families that are social equals do not care at all, unless there is some special reason for it such as family traditions, whether the ceremony is performed in their homes or not. Ordinarily both the families try to get out of the expense by urging the wedding on the other. The stronger family generally gets the better of the other. But among social unequals, the family that is lower, so to say, is always anxious, if pocket-book permits, to have the marriage ceremony performed in their house, because it gives them social prestige. When the other family condescends to agree to such a proposition, it gets handsome pecuniary compensation for giving up the wedding. All the members of the visiting party, the servants not excepted, get fees according to the social rank of each member.

It generally takes a long time and tedious haggling to settle these fees and dues. The visiting party claims a high sum, and the hosts try to bring the price down. Often the unpleasant arguing ends in quarrelling and misunderstanding. At times the visiting party despairing of any satisfactory settlement of the issue, feign to depart without taking any money at all. When they pack up their things and are about to start, the hosts come in and yield to the demands of the guests or make a compromise, for it is believed that if the guests go away dissatisfied from a home, some kind of a misfortune is sure to befall the family. When the compromise is made they become good friends again.

Now, to come back to our marriage ceremony. A few days before the day of marriage all kinds of music are to be heard in the house. The house itself is decorated with flowers, flags and festoons. Any passerby can tell what is going to happen in that house. Everybody in the neighborhood seems to be happy. The poor people look forward to the feast they are sure to get. The children are happy because of the new clothes they are going to receive. Everybody is happy, for the girl or the boy is going to be married.

But are the people directly concerned in the affair happy? They may be happy by contagion, but they are exceedingly uneasy. Though they have resigned their lot to their parents' will, their minds oscillate between hope and fear, for they do not know what their lot is to be. They are not sure whether or not their youthful ideals, generally pretty high, are going to be realized. A thousand and one considerations of this nature crowd their minds, and very little room is left for happiness. Still they try to be hopeful for the best, and offer an occasional prayer that their dreams may come true.

At last the long longed-for evening arrives—for it is in the evening alone that the Hindus tie their marriage knot—and feasts and merry-making run riot. But the bride and the groom fast while others feast, for they are not allowed to eat anything during the whole day and evening before marriage. Music of bag-pipe, tom-tom and metal instruments deafens the ears. Under a canopy a group of men squat on small pieces of carpets or mattings on the ground and enjoy the most delicious Hindu dishes. There another group of people is witnessing the elaborate fireworks. Here some are singing. There others are watching the dancing of nautch-girls. Here a few more serious minded are discoursing on the philosophy of marriage and the problems of life and death. There again others are taking life lightly and cracking jokes at each other's expense.

When the auspicious hour arrives everybody goes to the scene of the marriage, which is generally under a canopy in the open courtyard. In the center of the canopy is the spot where the sacred fire has already been lighted. Banana plants have been planted on the four corners of a square. Inside the square there are seats of carpet or Kusa-grass mats for the two priests, two guardians representing each side, and the bride and groom. In that particular spot amid music, especially the music of ladies' tongues (called *ooloo*) characteristic of all joyous occasions, the bride and groom

are brought in, carried in the arms of servants. Both the bride and the groom are dressed in their peculiar caste garments suitable to such an occasion, and both wear a kind of gaudy crown-like hats.

Now they are left with the priests, and the marriage ceremony begins. The priests chant hymns, recite poems, offer prayers to the "sacred fire." They make the bride and the groom say the things that ought to be said on such an occasion.

Addressing his daughter the father says: "Go to thy husband's house and be his mistress. Be the mistress of all, and exercise your authority over all in that house. May children be born unto thee and blessings attend thee there. Perform the duties of thy household with care, unite thy person with the person of this thy husband, and exercise thy authority in thy husband's house until old age."

Addressing the married couple, the priests and the father say: "Oh bridegroom and bride, remain together, do not be separated, enjoy all proper food, be content to remain in your own home, and find and enjoy happiness in the company of your children and your grandchildren."

The bride and groom offer this prayer: "May the Lord of Creation bestow children upon us and may He keep us united till old age."

To the bride the priest says: "Oh bride, enter with auspicious signs the home of thy husband. Let thine eye be free from anger; minister to the happiness of thy husband, and be kind to all living beings; cultivate a cheerful mind and may thy beauty be bright; be the mother of heroic sons, and be devoted to God. Mayest thou have influence over thy father-in-law and over thy mother-in-law, and be as a queen over thy sister-in-law and thy brother-in-law."

The bride and the groom then repeat together: "May all the gods unite our hearts, may the god of maternity and the spirit of proper instruction and goodness, of wise and pure speech, unite us together."

During these rites and rituals comes the interesting moment of unveiling the bride. The bride and the groom are placed face to face (hitherto they had been sitting side by side, husband always to the right and the wife at the left); the veil is taken off the face of the bride, and they are asked to look at each other—for the first time in their lives. The groom loses no time in obeying the mandate, but the bride is bashful. She has to be asked three or four times before she looks at the face of her husband. In her bashfulness she casts one glance at him and looks down again.

Let us take it for granted that in this case both were perfectly pleased with what they saw, that their ideals were realized. But this does not happen in all cases. A couple may be completely disappointed. Their highest expectations are not to be realized and life seems to be a misery when either is married to a person whose appearance is unpleasing at the first sight. In one case recently the groom began to cry in disappointment, so great was the homeliness of his bride. The priests, parents and friends had a difficult task to calm him. They told stories, recited religious verses, spoke of their own personal experience, but nothing could soothe his broken heart. It was a pitiful sight to see him sobbing. The bride, on the other hand, looked perfectly happy, for her ideals were more than realized in his looks. She never expected to get a husband so handsome as the one she had the good fortune to be favored with.

But however great be the sense of disappointment, Hindu fatalism, in the end, comes to their rescue to buoy them up. The Hindus believe that in everything, especially in birth, marriage and death, human beings must submit to fate. According to their faith it is predestined as to who is to be one's husband or wife. So when the inevitable cannot be avoided, what is the use of being morose or unhappy, instead of making the best of the situation? So they transform their misery into providential blessing and are not unhappy on that account. When the boy who cried at the first sight of his bride was asked later on how he liked his wife, he replied in the most emphatic way that he was the happiest person on earth so far as his married life was concerned, and that he would not change his "homely" bride for the most beautiful woman living. When reminded of his tears, he blushed and said, "That was the greatest blunder of my life."

When the priestly ceremonies are over, the newly married couple is taken inside and there left at the mercy of the ladies. They perform a hundred and one kinds of family rites and observances. They ask the groom most impertinent questions, play jokes, some of them of the most practical kind, such as pulling him by the ears and pinching him. Then the eatables are brought in. They offer him two plates filled with objects which look exactly alike. The groom is asked to choose the one he wants. He makes his choice. He starts to eat. The sweets don't taste sweet. What is the matter? He has chosen the wrong plate, the one that was filled with imitations. Everybody laughs but the groom blushes for his mistake. They offer him a plate of rice. He starts to use his

fingers. Just before he touches the rice, a woman uses her fan and the paper rice flies all around.

When all the jokes have been played at the expense of the hungry bride and the groom, they are given good things to eat. Curtain falls with the end of the midnight breakfast.

LIFE IN A PHILIPPINE VILLAGE.

BY A. M. REESE.

THE little village or *barrio* of Mariveles is situated just inside the narrow cape that forms the northern border of the entrance to Manila Bay. The city of Manila lies out of sight, thirty miles to the southeast, but the island of Corregidor lies only seven miles to



MARIVELES VILLAGE AND MOUNTAIN, FROM MANILA BAY.

the south, and the great searchlights at night are quite dazzling when turned directly upon the village. A large amount of money has recently been spent in fortifying Corregidor until it is now considered practically impregnable.

The village extends for about half a mile close along the beach