



**MARRIAGE CUSTOMS.**—For marriage purposes the people of New Britain are divided into two classes. No man may marry a woman of his own class. To do so would bring instant destruction upon the woman. On Duke of York Island, initiation into the secret society, which is called Dukduk, seems a sufficient preparation for the boys, and there appears to be no needful preparation for the girls. On New Ireland some girls wear a fringe across their shoulders until they are marriageable.

**GIVE US A WOMAN WHO LAUGHS.**—For a good, every-day household angel give us a woman who laughs. Her biscuits may not always be just right, and she may occasionally burn her bread and forget to replace dislocated buttons, but for solid comfort all day and every day she is a very paragon. Home is not a battlefield nor life one unending row. The trick of always seeing the bright side, of shining up the dark one, is a very important faculty, one of the things no one woman should be without.

**GIRLS IN CAGES.**—In New Britain girls are put into cages, in which they remain four or five years without being allowed to go outside. These cages are conical, seven or eight feet in height and ten or twelve feet in circumference, and four feet from the ground, where they taper off to a point at the top. They are made of the broad leaves of the pandanus tree, sewn quite close together, so that no light and very little air can enter. There is only room for the girl to sit or lie down in a crouched position on the bamboo platform, and her feet are never allowed to touch the ground all the time she is confined in the cage.

**KALMUCK WEDDINGS.**—Among the Kalmucks of Central Asia the marriage ceremony is very romantic. The girl is put on a horse and rides at full speed. When she has got a fair start the lover sets off in pursuit. If he catches her she becomes his wife, but if he cannot overtake her, the match is broken off, and a Kalmuck girl is very seldom caught against her will. The idea of capture in marriage occurred almost all over the world. Hence, no doubt, the custom of lifting the bride over the doorstep, which occurred among the Romans, the redskins of Canada, the Chinese, the Abyssinians and other races.

Suns rise, moons rise,  
Young Love is gay;  
Suns set, moons set,  
Love's flown away.  
Oh, Love, false Love,  
To stay but a day!  
Time flies, Love dies,  
Gone, gone, for aye!

Suns rise, moons rise,  
Dear Love, stay!  
Suns set, moons set,  
Vainly I pray.  
Oh, Love, fickle Love,  
Great is thy power,  
Tho' you stay but a day,  
Or only an hour.

**FRUGALITY AND OLD AGE.**—At 103 years old the general health of M. Chevreul, of Paris, is excellent; he eats and drinks heartily and sleeps soundly. His legs, however, begin to show signs of weakness, and it is for that reason only that he has ceased to attend the Monday meetings of the Academy of Sciences. His habits are very regular. He rises early and takes a plate of soup. He goes to bed again and sleeps till noon. He then has breakfast, which consists of two eggs and some minced meat. The repast over, he drives out for two or three hours. On his return he reads scientific and literary works, following with interest the recent proceedings of various scientific bodies and the accounts given of recent discoveries in many departments of science. At 4 o'clock in the afternoon he takes a bowl of milk with two biscuits. He lies down again for two hours, after which he has another plate of soup and goes to bed for the night.

## THE STORY OF A BEAUTIFUL DAY.

The beautiful morning stepped down out of the Eastern sky and bent her lovely face, in silent benediction, over the slumbering earth. In her hand she held a bright young Day. "See!" she cried, pointing to the motionless trees, the closed folds, shut windows and quiet homes. "They are all at rest. And see," pointing to the heaving ocean, the proud mountains, the mysterious forests and broad placid plains, "how beautiful they are! They are all thine. Go forth; do with them as thou wilt, and the spirit of the evening shall crown thee or shroud thee, as thou shalt deserve when thy long journey is over." And the beautiful Morning stooped down and kissed the bright young Day.

"Mine!" cried the bright young Day. Oh, beautiful Earth! and he stretched forth his young arms in loving greeting and made a quick leap forward.

The Earth responsive stirred. The bleating of sheep and lowing of kine: the song of birds, and the voices of men and women filled the air, while the smoke curling up from a thousand chimneys lay in a blue mist along the valleys.

"Mine!" cried the bright young Day, laughing aloud in the joy of his youth and strength, and shaking his shining locks, till they lay along the little rosy clouds in golden streaming.

"Mine! I will make them fairer still. I will bathe them in a new and shining glory, till they will lift their hands and cry: 'Oh, glad, golden Day!'" And he shook again his shining locks, till they fell like a curtain of gold over the waking world. The breezes caught his spirit and rushed forth with a thousand tricks and dalliings. The wild flowers shook the dew from their heavy bells and gave forth their songs of fragrance, keeping time to the silver chiming of the running brooks and fountains; while from countless sprays, and from the shelter of many a hidden nest, out of the full hearts of happy birds, poured forth a song of jubilation, filling the air with its full-throated cadence. Angels of pain, with veiled forms and silent lips stepping over the thresholds from the darkened homes within, were borne on the breath of that song away through the blue air to heaven, and faint voices thankfully asked: "Has the Day come? Open the windows and let us see this new and lovely Day." Children on their way to school shouted as they pelted each other with cowslip balls, crying: "What a glorious Day!" Lovers parting, kissed each other at the shady end of the lane, murmuring, "What a perfect Day"; and older people, content even amid their many cares, nodded brightly to one another on their busy way, saying: "Lovely Day, friend; lovely Day." And the heart of the bright young Day rejoiced as he hung smiling over his beautiful Earth.

But the heart of the Storm-King was cruel and filled with black envy. He looked out from his dark home in the north, measuring the slight form and fair, youthful face of the Day with hatred and contempt, till, gathering up his black robes about him, he rushed forth and gripped the stripling Day in a fierce and deadly conflict. Terrible and long was the strife. The Day was nearly choked with the sulphurous fumes that poured, hot and thick, from the curling clouds about him; his robes were torn and pierced by the jagged lightnings, and his eyes blinded by the thick hail that beat upon him. But he was brave; if needs be he could die; *never* would he yield.

"The Earth is mine, mine, mine!" he cried, loud above the noise of the thunders; and because his heart was full of love, and because he wanted the Earth for good things and happy lives, Heaven helped him, and he prevailed, and the Storm-King was crowded back to his home in the North, with his doors bolted and barred against him, and the Day, with his soft robes and shining locks, smiled once more upon the frightened Earth.

True, the Storm-King had done great and terrible harm. His wild winds had torn up great and mighty trees and left them to die, with their roots all quivering from the pain with which they

had been wrenched from the earth into which they had stuck down so deep and so firm. Houses had been thrown down, so that poor people were left homeless, and ships had been wrecked, so that even now the incoming tide bore in ashore upon its still throbbing bosom the pale forms of the dead.

The Day was grieved and sorrowful for this. He could not plant the noble trees again, nor build the fallen houses, nor bring back the dead to life, but he did his best to help, sending his warm sunlight to strengthen the trees that were left, stilling his breezes, that they might have perfect rest, and scattering seeds upon the trunks of the fallen trees, that bye-and-bye, when their leaves should become brown and withered, a soft robing of green and velvety moss might wrap them round and keep them beautiful still. The airs he made warm and pleasant till the homeless people should have time to build their houses again, and where the dead lay he dried the sands a soft and shining white, and sent messages upon his sunbeams to the dreaming buds to wake and bloom, that they might go and lay themselves in love and beauty upon the new-made graves, when these dear dead should be laid to sleep in the quiet churchyard. Then, again, the Earth rejoiced in the Day. The pain had become quite stilled now in the quivering roots. The younger trees stretched forth their branches in conscious growth. The homeless people made themselves a merry home in tents, and went to work briskly to build their houses again. Even the mourners of the dead were comforted when they saw the blooming flowers and the fairness of the returning day, remembering that their dear ones had gone to a land of sweeter flowers and even fairer days than these.

The bright young Day journeyed on. Fresh difficulties lay before him; it was a much harder journey than he had thought it to be when he stood in joyous anticipation, with his hand in the hand of the Morning. A dreadful spirit, with eyes of fire and robes all stained with crimson, had threateningly crossed his path. Plague was written on her forehead. She knew he would never let her descend upon his Earth, but as she passed him by she stooped and breathed upon it, and fast and far he had to hurry with his pure airs and never-tiring sunbeams to search out and to purge and heal the black spots that her scorching breath had burnt into his fair possession.

Still bravely he journeyed on, though his feet were growing tired and his strength sorely spent with the travel and the conflict. He could see the golden gates of the Evening shining in the western skies, and thankful feelings rose in his heart that his journey was almost done. His eyelids drooped and his heart beat with a slow and heavy throbbing. What matter now? At last he had done his best, and with that thought he turned again his drooping face to the precious Earth he had cherished so faithfully all his way.

"My Earth," he whispered, and the answer came: "Oh, glad golden Day!"

But he scarcely heard, for his heart beat slower still, and his bright head sank upon his breast even as the golden doors unfolded, and the great Spirit of the Evening stepped softly down and out of the western sky. In her hand she held a crown of gleaming stars. Stooping, she tenderly lifted the weary Day and gathered him up into her strong and loving arms, wrapping him round in a soft robe of silvery grey as she placed upon his pale brow the shining crown. His fainting strength revived, and ere he sank to rest, with his bright young head pillowed upon her sheltering bosom, he turned his happy face once more to his dear Earth with a parting smile of peace. It hushed the Earth into a holy and breathless quiet, and wrapped her in a dreaming beauty.

"Is the Day dead, mother?" whispered a little child, with tearful eyes.

"No, child, no," said the mother, in hushed response; "he has gone to be with the Angel Days in Heaven. How his radiance lingers still!"

"Yes," whispered many voices, breathlessly; "it has been a beautiful Day."

Montreal.

H. P.