

## BUYING INDIAN BRIDES.

STEPS TOWARD OBLITERATING AN INDIAN CUSTOM—HOW AN OSAGE WEDDING IS CONDUCTED.

Wichita, Kan., July 7.—When President McKinley recently attached his signature to a bill passed by the Chickasaw Indian Council, raising the price of marriage licenses from the ordinary price to \$1,000, he, as "Big Chief" of all the Indian tribes, took the first step in obliterating one of the blotches on civilization—the sale of Indian



QUANAH PARKER, COMANCHE CHIEF.

Who bought his favorite squaw for five hundred ponies.

women as brides. This traffic in human hearts has grown to enormous proportions in the Southwest; so great, in fact, that other steps must quickly follow in order to banish this evil.

The barbarous custom of selling a girl as the

wife of any man who bids the highest is practised mostly among the Osages, who are the richest people, as a whole, on earth. Scarcely a wedding takes place in the Osage Nation but it turns out that the bride is the unwilling wife of a rich master. In many cases the husband is a white man who has married simply to better his financial condition. Other tribes in Oklahoma who follow this custom are the Kiowas, Comanches, Apaches, Chickasaws and Creeks.

Thousands of beautiful young Indian squaws have stood upon the auction block and had their charms extolled in a loud voice. A crowd of rough, grasping men stood around and bid in competition, as though she were so much horse-flesh. Even so eager were some of them for the prize that often a handsome young squaw would bring \$1,000. Not later than last January a pretty Osage girl was sold at auction, and two rival bucks bid against each other until she was "knocked down" for 283 ponies, or \$2,830.

The Chickasaws are the most civilized tribe that now carry on this practice of selling their women as brides. They are one of the Five Civilized Tribes, and according to the last census there were 11,000 women in the tribe between the ages of eighteen and twenty-five unmarried. Each of these squaws has a headright worth about \$5,000. Thousands of white men go to this nation, select a suitable woman, go to her father and make the necessary arrangements for the marriage. The white man generally agrees to pay so much money or do a certain amount of labor for the bride. It makes little difference whether the girl likes the scheme or not. Only the fullblood Chickasaws practise wife selling. After their blood has been mixed by intermarriage—and the greater part of that nation is now populated by mixed bloods—the girls have a right to choose their own husbands. As many fullbloods yet sell their daughters, the Federal Government recently put into effect a high marriage license act. By this law any white man who may become legally wedded to a Chickasaw girl and secure a tribal citizenship must pay \$1,000 for the marriage license. This law does not forbid the Indian girls marrying white men, but the tribal benefits do not go with such a wedding unless \$1,000 is paid. Consequently the price is so high to those who marry for money that the girl is not worth the buying; and on the other side, those who marry the Indian girl for love may yet do so at the same old price.

It is a noticeable fact that during the first two months under this new law not a license was applied for, but a great many were issued just before the law went into effect. There are many beautiful and well educated Chickasaw girls, whose fair faces have attracted thousands of white men to woo them for themselves alone. To-day happy homes in many of the Western States attest the fact that these women are good housekeepers and know how to make their husbands happy. To them the actions of their ancestors are disgusting.

Quanah Parker, chief of the Comanches, is the most open violator of the law as regards bigamy. He has eight wives and bought every one of them. Too-nocey, his favorite squaw, was sold at auction about ten years ago. Parker was then a young warrior, and had just returned from a big hunt. He was flushed with success, having killed many deer. Too-nocey's father knew that she was above the average in personal appearance. She was also well educated. So he invited the young warrior over to a great feast a couple of days before the sale. Too-nocey was warned by her father to smile her sweetest at young Parker. The warrior was

guests. All eyes turned toward the Strike-Ax wigwam. There stood Miss Strike-Ax. What a vision of dark skinned beauty! Such a bridal gown! The shimmering white robe around her shoulders is of the finest buckskin, covered with silk. The shawl is hand painted and edged with elk teeth and fine beads. The two crosses at her ears are of diamonds, and cost three thousand dollars, while the dress cost \$250. The bride was mounted on a little pony. Behind came the mother on foot.

When they had advanced to within one hundred feet of the runners the two women halted. The pony was turned loose, and the six bucks



A CHICKASAW BRIDE AND BUCK.

fascinated. When the sale was called he was in the front row and made no effort to conceal his desire that he wanted the girl for his first squaw. Several other bucks were equally determined to add the beautiful young woman to their household. Too-nocey's father acted as the auctioneer.

"What do I hear?" he cried in a loud voice. "How much am I bid for this pretty squaw?"

"Fifty ponies," yelled Few Tails, a big chief.

"One hundred ponies," quickly added Parker.

"Two hundred and fifty ponies," put in Few Tails, without hesitating.

Quanah raised his bid and back and forth they parleyed for an hour, raising each other only a few ponies at a time. Finally the young hunter became disgusted and quit bidding for a few minutes. He hung his head in deep thought. The father thought that he had been outdone, and was going to knock the prize down to Few Tails, when Parker bid five hundred ponies, which was more than he had, and so many more than Few Tails possessed that he was out of the race. The father questioned the young warrior where he would get the other ponies, and he gave satisfactory answers, so the girl was given him. He worked for a great many moons in getting this debt paid. Not before nor since that time has any warrior gone in debt for a squaw, but it showed Parker's spirit not to be outdone. A few years later he was made chief of the tribe, and now has eight squaws.

The Osages never allow a marriage to proceed unless the bridegroom has paid for the bride. "Giving the bride away" is an unknown phrase with them. They attach much ceremony to a wedding. A white person who attends one of these weddings will never forget the sight. It is undoubtedly the gayest occurrence in all the Osage rituals of sport. At a wedding not long ago the Indians gathered long before daylight in the public square where the ceremony was to be held. They stood along the outside of a roped arena. About 8 o'clock six young men, disrobed, appeared and took their places in the centre of the square. They were to race for the bride's pony. Then six squaws, scantily clad, came out to race for the bride's robe. On the north side of the square the Strike-Ax family, whose daughter, Lydia Strike-Ax, was the bride of the occasion, had placed a wigwam. A short distance away was the wigwam of Paul Red Eagle, the bridegroom. The buzz of Indian voices was heard all around the square. Indians are great gossipers. The women talked about the bride's trousseau, and the men speculated on whether the groom paid too much for the woman.

Suddenly a silence fell over the assembly of

started after it. In the mean time Miss Strike-Ax was being divested of her fine clothes by her mother. The costly shawl was thrown to the wind. Finally the bride stood clad only in a nightgown. Then Red Eagle, blushing, happy and robust, came running from his wigwam, threw his blanket around the bride and carried her back to his tent. Not a word was spoken, but this ended the ceremony and the guests shouted their approval. Then the party assembled in another part of town at the wedding feast, which consisted of boiled dog, fried dog, canned dog and dog soup. The bride and bridegroom appeared and ate dog from the same plate.

All Indian weddings are carried out on this plan. The bride is always bought before the ceremony. Sometimes she is auctioned off and at other times purchased at a private sale. As in the slavery days of the South, there are many pathetic incidents in this traffic.

#### FIRST AID TO ONE STRUCK BY LIGHTNING.

From Engineering.

It is a popular belief that death from lightning is caused by internal burns or by the rupture of some vital organ, such as the heart, the lungs, or stomach; but, though severe lesions may sometimes occur, post-mortem examinations seldom reveal any serious affections of the viscera, or, for that matter, anything abnormal in the physiological conditions of the stricken person. The same also applies to people killed by contact with live wires. In cases of lightning stroke and electric shock some of the chief nerve centres are intensely stimulated. One of these, the medulla oblongata, situated at the head of the spinal cord, exercises considerable control over the movement of respiration; while the nerve which it sends out, and which is called from its wanderings the vagus, has a similar power over the action of the heart; so that when these nerve masses are subjected to any undue excitement the functions of respiration and circulation are at once interfered with. For this reason, in all cases, whether of lightning stroke or electric shock, the sufferer is to be placed without delay in the most favorable position for breathing, so that by energetically rubbing all parts of the body, and especially by regular traction of the tongue, respiration may be restored if at all possible. Such attentions have recalled animation more than once when all hopes of recovery were given up. In one case forty-five minutes elapsed before the patient gave signs of returning animation, and at the end of two hours he was able to speak. He experienced no other injury than burns on the hands and thigh.

#### SENSITIVE TO THE CLIMATE.

From The Chicago Tribune.

"This climate doesn't agree with me very well," remarked the passenger with the cough. "Well, to tell the truth," responded the chance acquaintance in the next seat, "there are times when it disagrees with me, too, in the most provoking and ridiculous manner. I'm the man who makes the official weather predictions."



A HALF-BREED OSAGE FAMILY