

ROASTED INDIANS.

CREMATION AS PRACTICED BY THE THLINKETS OF ALASKA.

Providing the Spirit with a Square Meal. A Corpse Awaiting Burial—Weird Scene at the Funeral—How the Cremation is Conducted.

Among those Indians known as the Thlinkets, who inhabit the coast and contiguous islands of southeastern Alaska, the practice of cremation is universal, except in the case of shamans or medicine men, whose spirits after death inhabit a higher world apart from the common herd, and slaves who are considered scarcely worthy of this distinction.

The Thlinket believes that shortly before death the spirit of some loved friend gone before will appear to him, saying: "My dear brother, or good friend, you can last but a few suns longer, and it is best so, for life is but hard; so be ready, for I will soon come to lead your spirit to a land where all is happiness."

With the last breath tidings go out to the clan, who assemble with blackened faces to mourn the dead, and in former years the nearer relatives cut off the hair. The corpse is now dressed in the most valued garments, the face decorated in red and black, and placed in a sitting position, with back to the wall, opposite the entrance. All the property of the deceased is now brought and piled on either hand—the Thlinket counts his wealth in blankets, kept stored away in camphor wood or cedar chests. Masks, rattles, robes, guns, hunting and fishing implements and dancing paraphernalia are placed directly around; the head is surmounted by a grotesquely carved wooden mask in totemic design, brilliant in its inlaying of hollotis shell and topped by a semi-transparent forest of sen lion whiskers, while over the body is thrown a highly ornamental blanket, woven from the finer fleece of the mountain goat and worked in black, white, yellow and blue from old pattern boards that have been handed down through generations until the designs have become conventional.

For three days the dead remains a silent spectator of household affairs, which have to go on much as usual, as a number of families live under the same roof. Visitors come and go, food is prepared at the common central fire, and children toddle about, tumbling over the sleeping dogs; but a general air of quiet prevails until nightfall, when the tribe assemble with drum, rattle and dancing sticks, and to their measured accompaniment keep time in monotonous chant, emulogizing and lamenting the dead.

The scene is weird to a degree, the many colored blankets, the blackened faces, the walls hung with arms and fishing implements, the curiously carved and colored house posts; while festoons of dried fish and meat depend from the roof, and all seen through the fitful flashes of the great crackling fire of cedar logs, over which at intervals oil is dashed to redouble the effect.

For three nights this scene is repeated, but on the third day the wealth of the deceased is distributed among the relatives, each one receiving a certain portion, as judged by popular consent.

The funeral pyre is now erected directly in rear of the house or on the outskirts of the village, in proximity to the shore. Logs of the fragrant yellow cedar are now brought and laid upon each other, forming a hollow parallelogram seven feet long by three wide. At a height of from two to three feet a flooring of logs is laid, leaving air spaces between them, above which the walls are continued for another foot. Beneath the flooring and around the sides kindling and spruce knots, saturated with gum, are placed.

All being in readiness, on this, the fourth day, the class assemble, a plank is removed from the side or end of the house, and through this opening the dead is carried on a mat made from the inner bark of the red cedar, for it is a strongly rooted superstition among these people that should the body pass through the doorway, that later the death spirit would return to claim more victims. As the body is carried out an old woman takes some coals and burning fragments from the fire and scatters them after it, to drive away the spirit of death and cleanse the passageway, and afterward throws out a dog to accompany its master's spirit to the world beyond.

The procession now makes its way slowly toward the place selected for cremation, and when reached the body is deposited on the raised flooring of the pyre and a torch, applied to the resinous splinters readily igniting the whole mass. The women in full dancing habiliments, consisting of a blue blanket faced with red cloth and ornamented with hundreds of mother of pearl buttons, fancy colored caps or headresses of raven or eagle feathers, immense earrings and nose pendants, faces blackened and carrying in the right hand a long pole, the end decorated with sprigs of evergreen and bright streamers, form in a half circle about the head of the pile. The men, with dancing sticks and rattles, are grouped on one side. The nearer relatives sit about promiscuously, mourning and wailing. The older men lead the chant or dirge, which is joined in by all, and to its slow notes the women keep time with the body swaying from side to side and bowing in unison, reminding one of the famous sword dance of the Bedouins.

Oftentimes the arms and personal belongings of the deceased are thrown on the fire, which, by means of long poles, is constantly stirred, and the chant continues until the body is reduced to ashes and the logs consumed. The family collect any remains of bones and the supposed ashes, which are carefully deposited in small decorated boxes or trunks covered with cedar matting, corded with spruce roots, and finally placed in dead houses or family vaults directly in rear of the houses.

Every one now returns to the house, where a grand feast is prepared, consisting of dried salmon dipped in seal oil, hering spawn, potatoes, roots, berries, edible sea weed, shell fish, seal meat and tallow from the fat of the wild goat of the mountain. Food and grease are placed in carved platters and consigned to the flames, to sustain the deceased spirit on its weary journey. With the coming of

night the men assemble, seating themselves around the fire, when the women in full dancing costume file in, forming in continuous rank around the walls, facing the audience of males, and repeat the swaying, bowing dance previously enacted at the cremation, keeping time to the chant. This closes the funeral ceremonies, which have now lasted through four days. The dead may be honored again in future years by a period of dancing and feasting, and the rebuilding of a deadhouse is always a season of ceremonial celebration.—G. F. Emmons in San Francisco Chronicle.

ROOMS FOR BACHELORS.

MEN IN SINGLE BLESSEDNESS WHO DO THEIR OWN HOUSEWORK.

Light Housekeeping Where Women Are Excluded—Reporters, Actors, Mechanics and Clerks Who Cook Their Own Meals. A Peep at the Rooms.

An advertisement in a late paper, offering furnished rooms for housekeeping for gentlemen only, was the cause of merriment at a fashionable uptown boarding house. The advertisement was credited with being a typographical blunder, but the sad eyed actor who was waiting for a date that never came put all doubts at rest by affirming that the advertisement meant just what it said.

"There is more than one house in New York," he said, "where single men rent rooms and do their own housekeeping, cooking, making beds, sweeping, and so on, and a nice life it is if a man is built that way. I am proud to say that while I was down on my luck I occupied an alcove room in this house mentioned in the advertisement. I paid \$3 a week and lived for \$2 more. A legacy left to me by my aunt has put higher living in my power, and I left my bachelor room with regret. The life was pleasant, and after I became a bit expert at cooking I assure you that I cooked many a dainty with all the skill of a French chef."

The writer visited the house where the furnished rooms for housekeeping for gentlemen were located. The ring at the bell was answered by a tidy Irish girl, who said that they had one room vacant. The landlady was summoned and showed the reporter up two flights to a back room.

"This is to rent with all the necessaries for light housekeeping. A closet in the hall is the place for your coal and your green groceries and an ice box for your meat. The price is \$4 per week."

HOME CONVENIENCES.

The room was about fourteen feet square. It contained a folding bed, a cheap chiffoniere, on which were two teacups and saucers of fanciful pattern. In the different compartments were other dishes of stoneware and glass. A cupboard stood at the right of the mantel, in which were two tablecloths, four napkins, a quilt and a wooden blanket, and in a lower compartment an iron pot, a spider and two stew pans. The stove was a No. 5, with two covers, and was polished brightly. A wardrobe, sofa, easy chair, two dining chairs and a round table were placed about the room in convenient positions.

"You don't rent rooms to women?" remarked the reporter.

"No, indeed; I don't want any women about my house. They are more trouble than they are worth. I used to rent rooms to women, but they found fault with everything. They washed their clothes in the bathroom and invaded the kitchen at all times in the day to borrow flatirons. I have a houseful of gentlemen who cook, eat and sleep here, and I never hear a word of complaint and seldom see them, only when they pay their rent."

"What class of men do you have?"

"I have with me now a reporter, an actor, a street car conductor, a florist, an engineer on the Elevated railroad, a bookkeeper, two clerks who cook together, and a policeman."

At this point the lady was informed of the object of the reporter's visit, and she sat down to enlighten him further.

"I am an English woman," she said, "and kept lodgings in London before coming to New York. There it is a common thing for men to do their own housekeeping. I came to New York as a waiting maid to an English actress. Liking the city I concluded to stop here, and conceived the idea of renting rooms to gentlemen only. At first I did not meet with success, but now I can rent all of my rooms. I pay \$100 a month for this house. I have eight rooms that bring me in \$140. There is \$40 profit on my rent. Then I get my living from my roomers. You see, it's this way. A woman nine times out of ten will throw away her waste, but a man won't. My rooms give me more than I can eat—a bunch of celery and other green stuff, meat and fruit that will spoil, and of which they had purchased too much. My roomer girl costs me \$3 a month only, but she doesn't do anything but laundry work and my cooking. My roomers make their own beds, and very handy they are at it."

THROUGH THE ROOMS.

The lady then took the reporter through the house. Only one room was untidy, and that was the actor's. Clay pipes and tobacco were scattered over the mantel; shoes, slippers and clothing were thrown about the room, while on the bed, slovenly made up, was a pile of manuscript and books.

"This man is an actor of good parts," explained the lady, "but he is slovenly about his room. Quite different is the next room that is occupied by the engineer."

This room was neatness personified. The bed was as smooth as could be, the floor was swept clean, and the tin pans were as bright as the brasses on his engine probably were. A small library was suspended on a shelf containing books on railroading, a dictionary and Shakespeare.

Other rooms visited showed the same neatness, but each had some characteristic of the occupant by way of ornament. The policeman had two clubs crossed over his mantel with a pair of boxing gloves between them. The clerk's room was fixed up with push holders for brushes and papers, with the photographs of noted actresses stuck here and there on the walls. A pile of poker chips and a pack of cards were most conspicuous in the bookkeeper's room, but the beds were

well made and the floors and dishes clean.

"These men," said the lady, "are up early, get their breakfast, wash their dishes, dress for business and are off, all of them before 8 o'clock. They return from 4 to 7 at night, get their supper and go out again. They are quiet and better tenants than any I ever had."

"Is poverty the cause of their living in this way?"

"Oh, no, I guess not. You know the old saying that one half the world doesn't know how the other half lives. I saw the bookkeeper's salary envelope one week and it had \$50 marked on it. I am sure that all of my lodgers except the actor get good salaries. He sometimes doesn't get any; but I let him stop, for he pays when he can."

At this juncture a neatly dressed gentleman came in and passed up the stairs. It was the bookkeeper, and the reporter recognized him as a familiar sight in the hotel rotundas, a good fellow all around, and supposed to live at a fashionable boarding house up town.

The shopping for the roomers was done by the girl, who bought whatever the lodger wished, taking his book to the store and entering each article of provision purchased, for which the men paid weekly. —New York Evening Sun.

Designer of the Yacht America.

I have heard a great deal in the way of reminiscence about the America recently. Her designer, George Steers, was pretty badly treated it seems. Stevens offered him \$30,000 for a boat that would lead in the yachting contests. The contract being that she was to win all three of a certain series of races, Stevens threw her back on Steers' hands because she was defeated in one of them, though she had amply proved her capacity and superiority to anything afloat. Steers was in a great state, for he could not afford to own her and was owing for the material of which she was built. He was so close pressed that he took an offer of \$20,000, and only found after the sale was completed that Stevens was the real purchaser, the other man being the unacknowledged agent.

Steers had his opinion of such sharp practices, but nevertheless took so keen an interest in his work that he consented to go over in her to England. Stevens was very high with him and never asked him into the cabin. He lived in the fore-castle during the whole expedition. When the Englishmen, however, found out that Steers was the man who built the boat which defeated them, many more of their invitations went to him than to the man who merely owned it by dint of a score of thousands and some slippery work. Steers staid in the fore-castle, but he went from there to dine on board the yachts of the richest and most exclusive nobles of England, and Stevens found himself rather at a discount. At least that is the story as given to me.—Brooklyn Eagle.

Confederate Captives at Big Shanty.

A large cable, fastened to stakes, encircled us round, on the outside of which walked the soldiers who guarded us. They all walked the same way, and the soldier whose post was No. 1 bawled out when he neared either end of his walk, "Right about!" which was the signal for all the guards on duty to right about at the same time and so prevent any chance of a prisoner's crawling away unperceived. I was struck with this wise precaution on the part of the enemy, for already I was beginning to look for some chance to get away, and doubtless others of those chafing Confederates were doing the same. As it was, the regular tramp, tramp of the soldiers' feet and the clock like "right about!" of the master of ceremonies convinced us all of the hopelessness of any such undertaking. I had no blanket, and so, with a heavy heart and a weary head and wide open eyelids which sleep refused to visit, lay down alongside of my men on the bare boards of mother earth, one of the most miserable and wretched of men. —Ex-Confederate Colonel in Philadelphia Times.

"Auntie" in the Kitchen.

Even to-day one will find in many Kentucky households survivals of the old order—find "Aunt Chloe" ruling as a despot in the kitchen, and making her will the pivotal point of the whole domestic system. I have spent nights with a Kentuckian, self-willed and high-spirited, whose occasional refusals to rise for a half past 5 o'clock breakfast always brought the cook from the kitchen up to his bedroom, where she delivered her commands in a voice worthy of Catherine the Great. "We shall have to 'cup,'" he would say, "for there'll be 'row!' One may yet see, also, old negroes setting out for an annual or a bi-annual 'year' to their former mistresses, and bearing some offering—a basket of fruits or flowers. I should like to mention the case of one who died after the war and left her two children to her mistress, to be reared and educated. The troublesome and expensive charge was taken and faithfully executed.—James Lane Allen in The Century.

Picture of a Mountaineer.

Bridger's appearance indicated his age to be 48, but he was remarkably spare and thin of flesh and nearly six feet in height. Altogether he was the most remarkable white man I ever met on mountain or plain in his personal appearance and demeanor. Dressed in the clothing of a white man, he seemed to wear it as a stranger to the garb of civilized life. Fringed, as he had been, so many years by constant dangers, that even while sitting at a campfire in the midst of white men his eyes were taking in every moving object in the entire circle of his vision, slowly moving his eyes from over one shoulder around to gaze over the other shoulder so as to complete the circle, taking in everything as far as he could see, this everlasting watch had become a fixed habit; he was the embodiment of "eternal vigilance."—John F. Oliver in Magazine of American History.

The Gains of Keeping Cool.

Very much is gained by keeping cool under all sorts of danger and threats of danger. If the children were to come this way it would take special delight in picking off those whom it would find already frightened half to death.—Wheeler Intelligence.

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