

TIBET'S CALL FOR THOUSANDS OF BRIDES

FROM their mountain fastnesses thousands upon thousands of Tibet's Buddhist monks are now looking down toward matrimony. Such a wholesale marrying and giving in marriage as the land of the lama is about to undergo would be hard to parallel.

Every here and there throughout this country of mysteries is stuck a Buddhist monastery, some of them with 2,000 to 3,000 occupants. Fountain-heads of the Buddhist faith are these men. Ascetic, esoteric and all such terms may be applied to them. Abstract reasoning is their forte. Most of their time is given over to the contemplation of things and thoughts infinitely higher than this earth—that is, if tradition is to be believed.

Probably a good many of them are old reprobates; but of that there is little positive testimony. What is undoubted, however, is that they are the head and forefront of the Buddhist religion, which holds sway over millions upon millions of yellow men in the far east: the Chinese, the Japanese and the Indians.

Now the practical Chinese are going to drive these men out of the monasteries and marry them off, whether or no. Thousands of brides will be required. Wedded bliss is to be obligatory. There is to be no respite, no choice between the ascetic joys of bachelorhood and the loving arms of yellow brides. When the Chinese do a thing they do it thoroughly.

Having called the dala lama an "ungrateful reprobate" and driven him into India, the Chinese government promptly announced that it would make short shrift of his followers.

This is in pursuance of a scheme of China to take actual, as well as nominal, charge of the Tibetan government. Practically all the government there has resided in the monks, who are numerous, powerful and have almost a monopoly in the brains of the nation. Most of the people are an ignorant, licentious lot, so that the monks are all-powerful.

Now, everyone knows that it is no easy task to destroy the power of a body of men such as this at one fell swoop. Even when robbed of their temporal authority, their indirect influence will be as great or even greater than before.

Trust the Chinese, though, to find a way. With "their ways that are peculiar," they generally arrive at results.

This instance possesses both novelty and effectiveness. Marry off the priesthood and its power is gone.

Each yellow bride, no doubt the astute celestial reason, will convert a scheming, mischievous monk into a happy man of family, with plenty to do to provide provender for hungry yellow mouths.

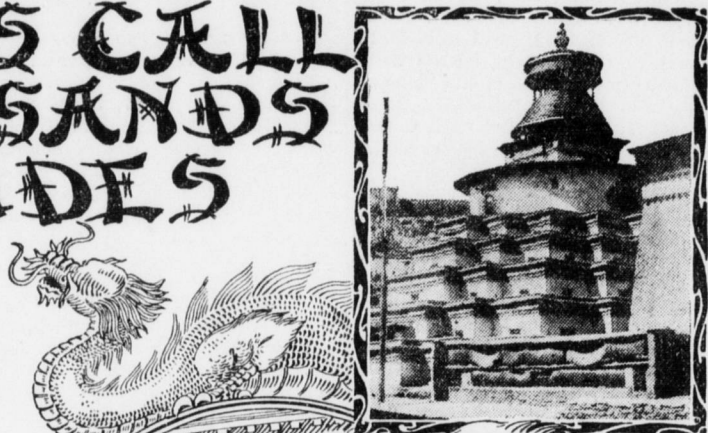
All through the plan there is to be found wisdom in large chunks. Heretofore these men have lived in splendid isolation. Tibet is pretty well up in the air, anyway, being mostly a plateau about 15,000 feet above sea level. Much above that tower its highest pinnacles and it is in these that the monasteries are perched. Veritable mountain forts they are, to which the populace has for untold ages looked up with awe and reverence, as befitted the contemplation of those prime mystics of the Buddhist church.

At one fell swoop these monks, old and young, are to be robbed of their awe and mysticism. As plain, ordinary heads of families they will appeal to their former followers as merely married men. All their craft, it is to be presumed, will be required to keep their wives in order and the Chinese government will therefore have a large job taken off its hands by these presumably lovely yellow brides.

This, however, is as little a laughing matter for the hundreds of millions of yellow men in the far east as it is for the monks who are being plunged into the marital state. Since the origin of the Buddhist religion, which goes back to the age of fable, there has been no such momentous happening.

This very dala lama who was sent hiking about his business from the "sacred city" of Lhasa was known as the Buddhist pope. When he reached India women became hysterical to kiss his holy hands and he had to take the top floors of hotels so that none less holy could sleep above him.

If the Chinese are to be believed, he is irreligious and dissipated and the fortress-like monastery where he held forth was a hotbed of vice and revolt. Nevertheless, he was the head of the Buddhist church, to which the Chi-



POTALA, DALAI LAMA'S PLACE IN LHASSA

PHOTO COURTESY BY UNDERWOOD AND UNDERWOOD

TIBETAN MONKS WITH TRUNNETS & FT. LONG

BODHIST TEMPLE IN THE CENTER OF LHASSA

about will mark an epoch in the history of the yellow race.

Rarely, if ever, has a religion been subordinated and a subordinate government effaced with such neatness and dispatch as China has shown. In fact, not even a shortage of brides could stay the conquering hand, for in some regions of Tibet polyandry is still practised and several disturbers might be parceled out to one lady. It might be remarked that, in regions where the wives rule they have shown themselves amply capable of keeping several husbands in order.

In all the world there exists no such mysterious, picturesque and numerous assemblage of so-called monks as are concentrated in Lhasa. Moderate estimates have placed their numbers at 11,000; but the observation of those western intruders allow for many thousand more.

They are of all varieties, representing every vagary which genuine fanatic zeal can devise for the humiliation of the flesh. Some crawl on their stomachs their entire lives and occasionally processions of them have the appearance of a huge serpent.

Yet even this is greatly outdone. In one monastery you may see the abbot, attended by his acolyte, tap on one of many stone slabs. Slowly it slides away and there, within the black chasm the aperture reveals, you may discern the wasted form and perhaps a glimpse of the pallid face of one of the men who are undergoing the living death of permanent self-entombment.

The whole religious system seems to center about devil-worship. At the New Year festival the lamas dance to scare away all the demons that rend the human world and they manage to make themselves up so demoniacally that he must be a nery devil indeed who doesn't chase himself at sight of them.

Even among the Hoboes. "Hullo, Dusty," said Weary Waggles, as the two tramps met in the street. "How's livin'?" "Somepin awful," replied Dusty Rhodes. "The cost of everything's gone up so a feller can't hardly get his three meals per."

"Humph!" ejaculated Weary. "I never knowed you to pay for nothin'."

"No," returned Dusty, "but it's the solemn fact that along my route, where I used to have to ask only once for a breakfast, they make me ask twice these days."—Harper's Weekly.

The Jeweled Set. An actress said of Eleanor Robson: "She is a dear. She has married August Belmont. Now she is in the set that I once heard her so wittily ridicule."

"She said that in conversation with a jeweled matron of this gilded, this jeweled set, she once said: "And where do you think you'll spend the summer, Mrs. Van Gelt?" "Er—the North Cape, I believe," Mrs. Van Gelt answered. "One can get skiing there all through August, you know."

"And where will you spend the winter, then?" "Oh, Florida, by all means. There's such ripping January bathing at Palm Beach."

A clear brain and Steady, dependable nerves Can win wealth and fame For their owner.

Clear headedness and a Strong, healthy body Depend largely on the Right elements in Regular food and drink.

Coffee contains caffeine— A poisonous drug.

Postum is rich in the Gluten and phosphates that Furnish the vital energy That puts "ginger" and "hustle" Into body and brain.

"There's a Reason".

Ossified. "I hear," said Mrs. Oldcastle, "that Doctor Cutler has recently turned to osteopathy."

"You don't say," replied the hostess after she had tossed a five-dollar gold piece to the burdygurdy man outside and told him to move on; "I always expected something of that kind to happen to him. Didn't you ever notice that he seemed to have such a stony stare?"

Its Style. "That singer has a velvet voice," "I suppose that accounts for the pile she gets from it."

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