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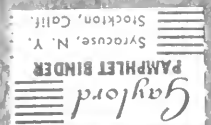
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Hand Book on the
Haka Chin Customs

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Haka Chin

Customs 

By W. R. HEAD

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HAND BOOK

ON THE

HAKA CHIN CUSTOMS

BY

W. R. HEAD

PROVINCIAL CIVIL SERVICE AND LATE ASSISTANT
SUPERINTENDENT, CHIN HILLS, BURMA



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INTRODUCTION.

REMEMBERING the many difficulties, in respect of the decision of cases according to custom, with which I was met on first taking up my appointment as Assistant Superintendent, Haka, I have collected the following during my thirteen years' experience in the Chin Hills; this is designed to be a Hand Book of ready reference beyond dispute, these customs having been admitted correct by representatives of the most important families in Haka, whose names will be found under the Chapter on Inheritance.

As regards Chin names, the Government spelling has been adopted as far as possible.

My thanks are due to Mr. H. E. Fisher, Assistant Superintendent, Haka, for his trouble in collecting the representatives in order to aid me in checking the customs.

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HAND BOOK

ON THE

HAKA CHIN CUSTOMS

CHAPTER I.

Marriage.

Nupi Tit.—Among ordinary villagers, a man usually marries where his inclination leads him, but as regards well-to-do persons and Chiefs, this only refers to minor wives (*nupi shun*); the *nupi tak* (chief wife) is more a marriage of convenience and a matter of expense, and it is only her offspring that can inherit the property. A *nupi klai* is the wife married after the death or divorce of the *nupi tak*—she has the same social standing as the former, in that she can participate in her husband's feasts. A *nupi shun* is nothing more than a concubine and has no social status; they do the manual labour of the house and work the cultivations.

In any of these cases, when a man wishes to marry, he sends two of his male relations (*lam ka tu*) to demand the hand of the lady of his choice from her father or his heir. If they do not consider the applicant desirable for any reason, they will not refuse outright, but will demand such an exorbitant marriage price as to make it prohibitive to him: if the girl's relations are agreeable, they will appoint a day for the discussion of the matter, and, on that day, the girl's father (or heir) will hold a feast and two relations from each side will arrange the various prices to be paid. When an agreement is come to, the elder arbitrator on the girl's side will supply a fowl—this fowl is usually a red one—a white fowl is never used as this kind is killed when invoking a curse upon any one—and an extra good pot of *zu*; he will then set himself down at the latter, hold the fowl in his hand and near him will sit the other arbitrators; the details of the marriage price will be repeated by him, the other

side correcting and arguing if he makes a mistake, and he will conclude by saying that, in token of the arrangement now come to, he kills a fowl—this is called *ar at*, and it is given to the suitor and his followers. For this the suitor has to pay from a big pig up to a big *mythun*. Should either of the parties break the contract after this ceremony, they make themselves liable to *let man*, which is fixed at the time the fowl is killed: it generally consists of the payment of a big female *mythun* or is less with very poor people.

At this consultation, all those who are due to receive prices contribute *zu* and the day of the marriage will be arranged: on which day, the husband will kill a pig, *ar sa tat*, which will be eaten by the girl's brother and relations only—this is called *ar sa ei nāk*, and for this the brother, or recipient of the *ta man*, will be given by the husband a *mahooya* bead or its equivalent in price; this ranges from Rs. 5 to Rs. 30 according to means and for the cooking, *sa lu sum*, he receives another bead, valued at from Rs. 5 to Rs. 20. If, for any reason, the girl does not wish her real brother (*inpi so*) to receive this price she can allot it to any other male relative she chooses; in this case, the man chosen would partake of the pig's flesh. If the man, who is to receive this price, performs *hau* on that day, that is kills a pig, the husband returns the compliment by killing another one—the size of both animals depends on the means of parties. The same procedure applies if the uncle performs *hau* on account of *pu man*.

If *vwawā a* is performed in compliment to the girl on that day, the husband would give a *hni* (skirt), valued from Re. 1 to Rs. 2, to the women who cooked the flesh, this is called *rawl shuang hni*: he must also give from Re. 1 to Rs. 2 to the men who carry the cooked flesh to his house, this is known as *sa rhom porr*. He might also have to pay Rs. 2 to Rs. 5 (or its equivalent) to the brother's men friends, who escort the wife to her husband's house—this is known as *koipa man*; likewise Rs. 1-8-0 to Rs. 2 to the girl's friends when it is called *koinu man*: the chief girl friend of his wife must also be paid Rs. 2 to Rs. 5—*maw man*.

All females, grown up or children, who accompany the bride to the husband's house, are each entitled to receive a small fowl—from annas 2 to annas 4 each—this is called *ar klai swel*.

On the marriage day, the relations of the husband will come and give him presents for the payment of *mante* to do with *ni man* (aunt's price)—this is called *klom*: where the husband has sisters, the eldest, who will claim *hlawn*, will provide him with half the *mante*; if he has no sisters, he must

be responsible for the whole amount—this is called *ni man rhem*.

Nu man, or mother's price, is payable by the husband to the girl's mother and may be from a big pig up to as much as a big *mythun*; she can, if she chooses, make this over to any one of her female relations: only in the case of the girl divorcing her husband is it paid back.

Shalpa man (slave's price) was formerly paid to the most important slave in the brother's household, but is now taken by one of the male relatives chosen by him; it ranges from a bullock to a big *mythun*—when a girl divorces her husband, it is returned. If the recipient of this price kills a pig for the husband on the wedding day or on the day of the *vawak* ceremony, he is entitled to two beads for *ar sa ei nak* and *sa lu sum*, of the same value as that given to the *ta* (cousin).

All the above prices, on account of marriage, are payable in Haka and its villages propitiating the same *nat*; but, when a Haka girl is married by a man from an outside village, he has to pay further prices in *kè toi* and *don man*.

Kè toi may be described as "the price of going on foot"; this is paid to the girl's brother and ranges from Rs. 5, or its equivalent for a poor man up to a big *mythun* for a Chief: the uncle receives like payment and the aunt receives from Rs. 5 up to a big *mythun*. These three persons must be satisfied the day the wife arrives at the husband's house, otherwise the girl would be taken away again; however, they would be overtaken and appeased before reaching their village.

Don man or meeting price, is paid by the husband to the girl's brother, uncle and aunt, as they go and meet him and his relations on their way to the village. If he did not satisfy their demands before entering the village, they might, if very much dissatisfied, ask for *mai klam* extra, which varies from a brass pot valued at Rs. 7, up to a big *mythun*.

On account of *don man*, the brother would receive anything in value from a brass pot of seven spans up to a *mythun* and a half—the uncle the same and the aunt from Rs. 7, up to a big *mythun*.

A Haka man, marrying a girl from an out-village, will not be liable for either *don man* or *kè toi*.

On the marriage day, the following prices are bound to be paid up—*mante* taken by the aunt. *In kai man* is also due, but, if the parties are on good terms, it may be paid by degrees.

In Kai Man—Price for marrying into a family—Not demanded in Haka, only from the southern villages, who are not connected with the Hakas in any way: this is only

applicable to persons of position and is not paid by poor people. It is taken by the recipient of the *pun tau* and varies from a small *mythun* up to two beads, a large *mythun* and a small one—other property or cash may also be handed over.

Formerly, a Chief, or person of importance, wishing to marry into a good Haka family, had to pay up the *in kai man* prior to the *ar at ni*; now-a-days it is payable then or by degrees: it would be repaid in the case of breach of contract.

The payment of this (*ham nāk*) ensured nobody else demanding the hand of the girl in question and, anyone else marrying her after that, would make her relations liable for *let man* and the *in kai man* would be returnable. The following is an illustration:—

Ni Kar of Dongvar demanded the hand of the daughter of Ding Lyen of Paipa on account of his son—for *in kai man*, he gave Ding Lyen two *pumtèk* beads and promised a further big *mythun*: prior to *ar at ni*, Ding Lyen declared that the contract could not be fulfilled and so, for *let man*, paid Ni Kar a big *mythun* and returned the two beads received for *in kai man*.

When a Haka woman marries into an out-village, or if a Haka marries from an out-village, the husband has to arrange a *shir in*, that is, a house in the village for the father or brother to put up in; the owner of this house would eat the flesh of a pig killed by the husband (*ar sa tat*) and, by this, is adopted as a male relative or brother of the girl's, and she would take refuge in his house, if she quarrelled with her husband and he would look after her when ill; the owner of the *shir in* would receive a *pumtèk* bead valued at from Rs. 3 to Rs. 6 for *ar sa ei nāk* and from a bullock to a big *mythun*. It is in his house too that the *vwawk* a pigs would be killed. Four other *shir in* must also be arranged for the *pu ta shalpa man so* and *ar at pa* if they attend. They, in the same way, have pigs valued from Rs. 15 to Rs. 20 according to means, killed for them by the husband, the flesh of which they eat with the owners of these houses—the latter, on account of *ar sa ei nāk*, receiving one *mahooya* bead each (on property) from the husband valued at Rs. 3 to Rs. 10—they thus, by eating of the flesh of the pigs killed, become in the position of relations to the girl.

Unless the *pu, ta, shalpa man so*, and *ar at pa* are prepared to each kill for the husband an animal in return, no *shir in* would be furnished for them; it is imperative, however, that the recipient of the *pun tau* be given one and he must kill a pig in return.

CHAPTER II.

Marriage—(contd.).

Big Price (Manpi).—The most important of all the prices connected with marriage—it is the big price paid to the bride's father (or his heir) and is only returnable in the event of a woman divorcing her husband. A big Chief from out-villages demands five kinds of property, but rarely receives more than three, for his daughter; if she is marrying to an out-village, they would be arranged on the *ar at ni* as follows:—

1. One hundred *pumtèk* beads (probably eventually receives seventy only).
2. Five gongs.
3. Five *maihum* (brass pots).
4. Five *darumpu* (brass pots).
5. Five *mythun*.

If in Haka village, it would be:—

1. Fifty *pumtèk* beads (thirty probably really paid).
2. Three gongs.
3. Three *maihum*.
4. Three *darumpu*.
5. Three *mythun*.

The next in scale would be thirty beads with two each of the abovementioned property. With an ordinary villager, the beads vary between five and twenty in number and one each of the other articles.

It must be remembered that Chins always demand as much as possible—although arranged on the *ar at ni*, not more than two-thirds are really paid—that is to say, the other third would be paid by degrees.

Before the advent of Government, slaves formed part of the *manpi* corresponding to the number of the other property, but now-a-days other property is demanded instead, *i.e.*, *mythun*, land, cash, gongs, etc.

The details of the first mentioned are due from Tyer Hlei of Wantu to Lyen Mo of Sangte on account of his daughter Shwe Nāk.

With regard to the second example, it occurred in the case of Kuk Hrè of Darkwangsung, who married Men Koi of Sangte, daughter of Ya Err.

As an example of a villager—Tong Zan of Sangte married Shwe Hnem of Kodon; he is liable for twenty b. ads, one gong, one *maihum*, one *darumpu* and one *mythun* to Ya Tang, her father, or his heir.

Mother's Price (Nu Man).—This is the price paid by the husband to the mother of the girl he marries; if this girl belongs to Haka village and married a man of that village, the *nu man* would consist of a big *mythun*; while if she married a man from an out-village, her mother would claim a small *mythun* as well. Among the poorer class, a small animal would be substituted for a big one.

Nu man is forfeited if the husband dies before payment of same, but, if the mother dies before having received it, she can either bequeath it to any of her daughters or to her youngest son, as he would be responsible for her *shè* (death due). If the mother is dead at the time of the marriage, the father and brother or nearest male relative, would decide as to which relations would receive the *nu man*.

A mother has the right to transfer this price to any female relation she chooses.

A wife leaving her husband and returning to her family makes *nu man* repayable to her husband: while, if the latter divorces his wife, he forfeits it.

When demanding this price, it is usual for the girl's people to kill an animal and broach *zu* even if the village be at a distance—the kind of animal and amount of *zu* depending on means.

However, it often happens that, when the two families are on good terms, the *nu man* is not asked for at all, but in the event of a quarrel afterwards, payment would be pressed for.

Example :—Tyer Tum, wife of Lyen Mo, of Sangte, is entitled to receive a big and a small *mythun* from Tyer Hlei of Wantu, he having married her daughter Shwe Nāk.

Price of Individual (Pun Taw).—This is taken by the father of the girl or his heir.

Before the occupation of the Hills, a large *mythun* on this account was demanded by Chiefs only—ordinary villagers were satisfied with a small one—now-a-days the latter have increased their demand to a large one.

This price must be repaid if the girl leaves her husband and returns to her family; but if he divorces her, he forfeits it.

In the event of this price not being paid for any reason, *hlawn* returns to the brother.

When a wife dies without offspring, the husband is given the choice of paying his wife's *shè* or returning her *hlawn*; if this latter has not yet been paid by the brother, the husband will demand it from him; if he fails to pay up, the husband will refuse to pay the *shè* and then they may be considered to have come to a settlement.

If the husband dies or divorces his wife before he has paid up *pun taw*, the children of that marriage are taken by the wife's brother (or heir) and he is entitled to receive the *pun taw* of the eldest daughter at her marriage, as well as her *pu man*: in the event of there only being sons, they would pay up their mother's *pun taw*, otherwise they would be held in scorn.

Examples:—Lyen Mo of Sangte has to receive a large *mythun*, as *pun taw*, from Tyer Hlei of Wantu on account of his daughter Shwe Nāk.

Ngun Klung of Sangpi married Tyer Zin, daughter of Lyen Pong of Sangte. A large *mythun* was paid as *pun taw*, but as Tyer Zin returned to her people, it was given back.

Tin Sum, sister of Kwang Ul of Lailung, married Nyer Sum of Klarseow family; two daughters were born as well as two sons. Nyer Sum died before paying *pun taw*, so Kwang Ul took the *pun taw* of the eldest daughter, Sheer Zin, when she married Tin Tang of Sangte, as well as her *pu man*.

Tin Hoop of Kotarr married a Kholun woman, who gave birth to a son, Kwa Sum. She was divorced before payment of *pun taw* and so Kwa Sum paid a large *mythun* on this account.

Kong Mang of Mawkwa married Hlei Zin of Sangte, who died without offspring; Van Mang of Sangte, who had inherited the property of Lyen Hle, father of Hlai Zin, said he was going to take her *hlawn*, but Kong Mang declared himself ready to pay her *shè* instead and handed to Van Mang a large and small *mythun* and seven beads.

Splitting of Pine Torches (Farr Ki Kong).—In the olden days a slave was demanded (now-a-days a *mythun* and a half) on account of this price, the idea being that somebody should do the work of the woman in the matter of splitting pine torches. If ever paid, the *pun taw* so should receive it, but it has never been paid and should not be officially recognised.

Substitute (Tut Hmun Rawl).—This is associated with *manpi* and is an extra price taken by the recipient of the *pun*

law, on the arrival of the woman at the husband's house; it is always arranged on *ar at ni*, that is, the day on which the marriage price is arranged; it generally consists of a large and small *mythun*, but sometimes only the former is paid: in the olden days a slave was given instead and ordinary villagers did not demand *tut hmun rawl*, but this has altered.

In the event of a husband divorcing his wife, he forfeits this price, but in the alternative case it is returned to him; the idea of this being that formerly a slave was given to carry out the work the girl did before her marriage.

Cousin's Price (Ta Man).—This is yet another price connected with the *manpi* and is discussed on *ar at ni*; as a rule, it is handed over by the father or brother to some near male relative; at most it consists of a large and small *mythun* (in lieu of a slave formerly given)—sometimes a big male *mythun* or its equivalent in value is substituted—and at the least a small *mythun*.

It carries with it *ar sa ei nāk* and *sa lu sum*, one bead or its value for each, the former varying from Rs. 5 to Rs. 10 and the latter from Rs. 4 to Rs. 8.

If the recipient of the *ta man* contributes to the *vwawk* a ceremony in animals and blankets or skirts, he is entitled to receive from a small *mythun* up to a large one from the husband, on account of a *man*.

After the *ta man* has been paid up in full, the recipient would have to give the husband and wife a blanket, valued at from Rs. 2 to Rs. 10—this is called *puan ai, viz.*:—

Rs. 10 if a large and small *mythun* were paid.

Rs. 3 if a large *mythun* only.

Rs. 2 if a small *mythun* only.

Ni fen is not payable by the *ta man* so.

Example:—Tyer Hlei of Wantu married Shwe Nāk, daughter of Lyen Mo of Sangte (whose grandfather and that of Pa Oi were brothers), and to Pa Oi was given the *ta man* paid by Tyer Hlei, *viz.*, a male *mythun* in place of a *mythun* and a half: he also received two beads valued at Rs. 50 on account of *ar sa ei nāk* and, for *sa lu sum*, another bead valued at Rs. 10.

The beads paid to Pa Oi were exceptional—the custom is beads valued at from Rs. 5 to Rs. 10.

Marrying relation by marriage (Nu Klai).—If a man dies leaving a widow, she may be taken in marriage, being willing, by his brother or any relation of his family; in which case he would have to pay a *mythun* to the person to whom

her *pun tau* was paid and he would also render himself liable for any outstanding marriage price.

When a man marries his deceased wife's sister, not a widow, he must pay her full marriage price.

Examples:—The widow of Yā Twel of Sangpi, Sa Tyel by name, was married by Nga Pa, her deceased husband's youngest brother; on which account he paid a big *mythun* as *nu klai* to Ni Karr, brother of Sa Tyel.

Sang Hring of Darkwangsung married Fam Zing of Kenlawt. At her death, he married her sister, Shia Kill, paying a full marriage price on her account.

Male Mythun paid as Price (Tum Man).—This is a custom that is fast dying out. On the day the marriage price is settled, it will certainly be discussed, but it is very seldom paid. Any of the Haka Chiefs will tell you that it is payable, but are unable to give examples of it having been paid. In bygone times, payment was probably enforced by the male relation entitled to it, that is some one related to the recipient of *pun tau man*, if he had the power to do so.

If the husband is on particularly good terms with his wife's relations, he might pay it—this varies from a small to a big *mythun*, according to means.

It has never been the subject of litigation. Not officially recognised.

Enforcing payment of Marriage Price (Man Klau).—To enforce payment of any part of a marriage price, a wife's relations can recall her and place her in her brother's house, until such time as her husband has paid up. In the event of her dying under these conditions, he forfeits any part of the price he has already paid. In the same way, if she quarrels with her husband and takes refuge with her relations and there gives birth to a child, her husband is liable to pay *bu luar nāk* (carrying it away from its house), which varies from a small *mythun* to a big one—it is not payable under other circumstances. When a husband possesses the means and fails to pay up the outstanding price, her relations can fix a time limit; if he then neglect to do so, it is considered that he has divorced her; after which the *kla klau* (restoration of prestige) ceremony would be performed, to wipe out any shame connected with the divorce: this consists in killing a pig or larger animal and in distributing the flesh through the village: which also intimates that she is free to be asked in marriage.

One generally finds that the *bu luar nāk* is paid up, as the husband would be too ashamed to do otherwise.

CHAPTER III.

Marriage—(contd.).

Aunt's Price (Ni Mar).—If a girl has no aunt, a female relation will be appointed by her father or brother to take her place.

On the marriage day, it is usual for the husband to kill some animal, from a pig up to a small *mythun*, in honour of his wife's aunt and the flesh is sent to her house, but if poor, only *su* (country liquor) is sent: this is done with the idea of putting her into an amiable frame of mind, before she demands the *mante* (small price), which is not definitely settled on the day the marriage price is arranged, as is her *manpi* (big price).

For the *manpi* part of *ni man*, the most paid in a Chief's family is a big *mythun* and ordinary well-to-do people would demand the same; villagers would be entitled to a small *mythun* only and the least price ever asked on this account is Rs. 5. If the aunt is well off, she may kill some animal when demanding this price.

It is only in the event of a girl divorcing her husband and returning to her family, that the *manpi* is paid back or as much as has been paid up, as well as the whole of the *mante*.

Mante is divided up into the following heads:—*Lam Vāt Man*, *Twal Kai Nāk*, *Hlei Kai Nāk*, *Tya Liak*, *Tut Pa*, *Zu Hrai*, *Ti Awk Man*, *Kwan Tang*, *Rang Karr*, *Puan Pwawk Nāk*, *Vwawk Rhil A* and *Tai Non Nāk*.

Lam Vāt Man.—The aunt escorts her niece to the house of the prospective husband; outside the compound, she will demand from him a knife valued at eight annas, but will accept less. It is supposed that she has had to cut her way through the jungle and has worn out a knife in the process—even if she came by the main village road, she would still make this demand.

Twal Kai Nāk.—This is for entering his compound and consists of a *mahcoya* bead, or equivalent in value, from Re. 1 to Rs. 10. The husband deposes two cude men to argue with the aunt; they at first offer a bead of very inferior quality, which she refuses; they then produce a better one, which may or may not be accepted—in the latter case, a still more valuable one has to be given: she is invariably given what she wants in the end, as, if she is not satisfied, she has the right to go back, taking her niece with her.

Hlei Kai Nāk.—For going up the ladder into the house, she accepts what is given her, without demur—it varies from two to eight annas.

Tya Liak.—Here again, she takes what is offered, which is iron of some sort and from two to eight annas in value, the idea being that by *licking iron* friendship is cemented.

Tut Pa Man which she demands for sitting down in the house—it consists of a blanket valued at Re. 1.

Zu Hrai.—This is a cup bought in the bazaar, for about four annas, given her to fill with *zu*, which she has brought for the purpose in a gourd—this is drunk by the persons who have argued with her over the prices.

Ti Awk Man.—In which are comprised a *mai hum* (brass pot) from five to seven spans, valued from Rs. 5 to Rs. 15, one skirt valued Re. 1 and another from Rs. 2 to Rs. 7 in value, one Burmese blanket of Rs. 2 and another from Rs. 2 to Rs. 7—these are supposed to be propitiatory gifts, as, if she is not satisfied with them, she is at liberty to return all the previous presents and proceed home, taking her niece with her.

Kwan Tang (Coral beads), from five to fifteen strands.

Rang Karr (Brass belts). Chiefs give two and villagers one.

Puan Pwawk.—The idea is that the girl, as a baby, when being carried about wore out a blanket and this is one to replace it: she therefore demands a blanket from Re. 1 to Rs. 3.

Vwawk Rhil At.—The husband will give her either a live or dead pig valued from Re. 1 to Rs. 2—this is compulsory—it can be handed over at any time.

Tai Non Nāk (Mixing of the *zu* grain with water).—When the girl's party are met outside the village by the future husband and his relations, these latter bring *tai* with them; for drinking this, the aunt demands from Rs. 5 to Rs. 10—this is also argued over, but she is eventually satisfied—this may be paid in kind.

Cases have occurred where the aunt was not satisfied the first day, but was called back and appeased on the second.

Uncle's Price (Pu Man).—Price taken by the uncle (or his heir) on account of the marriage of his niece: the amount varies with the station of the parties concerned; where now a large and small *mythun* is paid, before the advent of Government, their place was taken by a slave, male or female.

A poor man would have to pay a small *mythun* and, besides this, two beads or their equivalent value on account of *ar*

sa ei nāk and *sa lu sum*; while a woman of good social standing would command one large *mythun* and one bead (*fangvarr*) for *manpi* and, on account of *ar sa ei nāk* and *sa lu sum*, two *pumtèk* beads—the next in order is one and a half *mythun* and five beads. A big Chief may demand or have to pay two and a half *mythun* and five beads (*fangvarr*) and two on account of *ar sa ei nāk* and *sa lu sum*.

In trying a case of this kind, the first question to be asked is "Have you killed the necessary animal?" It is a strict law among the Chins that, when demanding *pu man* from the husband, the uncle must bring with him a live or dead pig or its equivalent in cash (according to means)—until this has been done, neither the uncle nor his heirs can demand *pu man*—this ceremony is called *hau*; the flesh of this animal is partaken of by everybody. The husband will return the compliment by killing a pig or some other animal, which is called *ar sa tat*; this flesh can only be eaten by the relatives and is, what might be called, an acknowledgment of relationship by marriage: before eating of this (*ar sa ei nāk*) the *pu* must receive a *mahooya* bead (*pumtèk*) valued at from Rs. 5 to Rs. 30 and also a second bead valued at from Rs. 5 to Rs. 10 on account of *sa lu sum* (cooking of pig's head). However, if the husband does not dispute this claim, they may agree together for the beads to be paid at a later date. If, for any reason, the pig is refused from the hand of the *pu*, he is entitled to demand from the husband anything from a small *mythun* up to a large and small one—this is called *mai klam* (restoration of prestige).

When the *pu man* consists of not less than two *mythun* and a small one, and has been paid up in full, the *pu* will have to hand the husband and wife *puan ai* and *ni fen*—for the former the blanket varies in value from Rs. 2 to Rs. 10 and for the latter a skirt valued at Rs. 5. If the *pu man* consists of less than the abovementioned, *puan ai* alone is payable.

Pu man is only returnable in the case of a woman going back to her relations and divorcing her husband: it still holds good, if a man divorces his wife or she dies or if the woman divorces her husband on the ground that he is impotent; if the husband has only paid part before he dies, his heir is responsible for the balance.

In the case of two or more brothers having only one sister, the *pu man*, on account of her daughters, would be taken by the eldest uncle; if there were two sisters, the eldest and youngest uncle would each take a *pu man*.

Where there are three brothers and three sisters, a *pu man* would be apportioned to each.

With four brothers and three sisters, the eldest and youngest brother would take one each and the third would be taken by the second eldest brother.

While with three brothers and five sisters, the eldest and youngest brothers would each take *pu man* on account of two and the middle brother the one remaining—the eldest takes the corresponding eldest, the youngest the youngest, etc.

Birth Price (Hring Man).—The notes made with regard to *tum man* are applicable in the same way: this price is what might be called an extra *pu man* and consists of a big *mythun*. In the rare event of it having been paid, it must be returned if the girl leaves her husband. It is only asked for by the uncle, but, with his permission, a near relative of his may demand it; it is not discussed on the day the marriage price is settled.

This custom should be done away with, as it is not officially recognised.

CHAPTER IV.

Marriage —(concl'd.).

Dowry (Hlawn).—This generally consists of personal adornments, in the shape of head dresses and beads, etc.; if these are in the girl's possession, she takes them with her to her husband's house. Then, after her husband has paid up *pun taw*, her sister-in-law, if well off, will kill a pig (but *zu* is sufficient) and demand her share, which is one-third.

Where *hlawn* is not available, it must be collected and handed over by the brother after receipt of *pun taw*. If he fail to produce it, the girl has the power of preventing him taking *pu man* on behalf of any daughters she may have and her own *shè*.

Failing possession of the requisite property, he will hand over a female *mythun* to the girl and the first calf born will be given to her husband's sister.

An ordinary villager would hand over from Rs. 5 to a small *mythun*.

In the case of a mother's *hlawn*, it goes to the eldest daughter, unless the mother before her death requests the eldest daughter to divide it with her younger sisters.

Where it is small, the eldest daughter would take the whole lot.

The youngest son inherits his mother's *hlawn* if she has no daughters.

Hlawn is not added to father's property when division takes place.

In an important family, the *hlawn* would consist of the following:—

Three or four *lu kim*—head dress worn by women at the *kwang soi* and *lām shèr nāk* ceremonies only; they are now valued from Rs. 15 to Rs. 30, but before the advent of Government from Rs. 30 to Rs. 80, as, now-a-days, the *kwān tang* (coral bead) can be purchased in the local bazaar.

Ngun Ki Kian.—Silver bracelets, their value depending on their weight, from Rs. 10 to Rs. 30—the number of these would vary.

Kwan Tang.—Coral beads, of two kinds, the most prized being those that came from Lushai and the southern villages, the others are those bought now-a-days in the bazaar and they are redder in colour; not more than fifteen strands would be given, or if of the old kind, they would be valued at a *mythun*, while fifty strands of the new kind could be purchased for about Rs. 5.

Tai Sep.—A kind of red bead; two necklaces would be paid, valued at Rs. 6.

Rang Karr (Waist belt), two in number, valued at from Rs. 1-8-0 to Rs. 3 each.

Kwei Tè Ti (Honey beads), so named from their colour; of these, there would be two strands, each being Re. 1 to Rs. 2 in value.

Ti Rāng (White beads), the same number as the Honey beads.

An ordinary villager would produce twenty strands of *kwān tang*; it is only since these beads have been procurable in the bazaar, that they have possessed them for payment. He might pay one strand of *tai sep* valued at Rs. 3. One *rang karr* and there might be one strand of Honey beads.

Any property can be substituted for beads, etc., on account of *hlawn*.

Unwilling Marriage (Ben).—This may be described as the condition, when a woman, as a child or adult, is given in marriage, for the convenience of her relations, against her inclination.

Examples:—Naklwe, sister of Tat Kon of Sangte, when about ten years of age, was married to Run Nol of Naring; after three years, she returned home, stating that she did not wish to live with her husband; she was, however, sent back by her relations; there she remained for another year, returned again to Haka and was sent back—since when, she has

evidently become resigned to her lot and remained with her husband.

Tyer Shwe of Sangpi was married against her will to Ngun Keng of Sakta: she refused to live with him and returned home; although she was beaten by her father, Ya Karr, to induce her to go back, she resolutely refused and was eventually allowed to remain at home and her marriage price was returned.

Killing of Pigs (Vwawk A).—Spreading of Blankets (Puan Pa).—A custom that is not compulsory, but a compliment that may be paid by a father or brother to his daughter or sister—the holding of this redounds to their own glory: it consists of giving a feast, in which any amount of pigs are killed and equal number of blankets are spread for the husband and wife to walk over and a like number of baskets of grain supplied. In lieu of pigs, other animals may be killed—a bullock is the equivalent of three pigs; a buffalo, a large or small *mythun* the equivalent of five each.

In olden days, a Chief performing this ceremony would be entitled to receive a slave from the husband of his daughter or sister on account of a *man*, but, now-a-days, a large and a small *mythun* are given instead: he would have killed about fifty pigs and spread that number of blankets, valued from Rs. 1-8-0 to Rs. 10 each—unless the blankets are spread, no *a man* is forthcoming. Formerly, a villager killing between five and ten pigs was entitled to a small *mythun* on this account, but pride now prevents their demanding same.

On account of *puan pa kai pi*, that is, for walking over the blankets, the father or brother would present his daughter or sister with a big gong, if he could afford it, which she would take home to her husband's house.

The blankets spread would be given to the sisters of the husband and wife, except for the few that are scrambled for by the husband's dependents and those seized by the village elders, which they would afterwards barter for *zu* (country liquor).

After the pigs are killed, the flesh is cut up and sent round to the households in the village and, according to custom, certain other articles.

If the recipients of the *pu man*, *ta man* and *shalpa man* kill five pigs or more and contribute a few blankets for this ceremony, they are entitled to receive a large *mythun* from the husband on account of a *man*.

Once this ceremony has been performed, the price is only returnable in the event of a girl divorcing her husband.

A big Chief has many incidental expenses besides the pigs and blankets ; for example :—

Lyen Mo of Sangte held this ceremony for his daughter Shwe Nāk, who married Tyer Hlei of Wantu, and the pigs and animals killed by him were distributed through the village, one pig to every two households ; besides this, each household received eight viss of meat, Re. 1 worth of grain (rice), one needle, one piece of sugar, thirty dried fish and Re. 1 in cash.

For the *v wawh a* and *ruan pa* ceremony, on her marriage day, he took away to Wantu three *mythun*, five buffaloes (the equivalent of five pigs each, total forty) and one hundred and sixty pigs together with two hundred blankets—the former varied from three fists (Rs. 5) to eight fists (valued at a big *mythun*), the latter ranging in value from Rs. 1-8-0 to Rs. 10 each—those spread on the ground did not consist entirely of blankets, but women's coats, skirts, waist cloths and puggries for men—a spear and sacrificial knife (valued at Rs. 5) ; besides Lyen Mo gave his daughter a silk blanket valued at Rs. 80 to wear on the occasion.

Pa Oi of Haka, as *ta* (his grandfather and Lyen Mo's grandfather being brothers), contributed a buffalo, a pig and ten blankets to the ceremony—he is due a big *mythun* for this from Tyer Hlei on account of a *man*.

Tyer Hnin of Haka, receiving *shalpa man*, contributed a buffalo, a pig and one skirt—a big *mythun* is also due to him on the same account.

Shwe Sum, who is due *ar at man*, contributed a bullock, a pig and one skirt—he is due nothing on account of this, but would receive a big *mythun* for *ar at*.

Further for *puan pa kai pi*, Lyen Mo made his daughter a present of two slaves, one gong of ten spans valued at Rs. 60, one *maihum* of nine spans valued at Rs. 40, one pony price Rs. 100, one pair of *sumshell* (cymbals) value Rs. 19, one small gong value Rs. 15, and two geese Rs. 10 the pair.

The elders of Wantu village killed a large and small *mythun* for the Haka elders, who had escorted Shwe Nāk there ; they also gave Ra Zin, the *kwa au* (village crier) of Haka, Rs. 10 worth of property.

Love Match or Elopement (Fan).—It sometimes happens that a girl may go to her sweetheart's house and live with him, when he kills a pig in her honour called *mwè kum* and, in recognition of her position, he will hold a feast, in which he kills a second pig and hands it over to her relations—this is

known as *ar sa tat* which makes him liable to pay the price for her, agreed on with her relations, and, unless he chooses to perform this ceremony, he can send her back to her family at any time, without having incurred liabilities. In the event of a girl giving birth to a child under these circumstances, the latter would be taken by her brother or nearest male relative.

Once the *ar sa tat* has been performed, the girl's relatives are at liberty to call the girl back to her house, until part or whole of her price is paid, which action on their part is designated as *man klau*.

In the same way, if a man goes to live with his sweetheart in her house, her nearest relatives cannot raise any objection, unless they are willing to pay him a pig valued at Rs. 5 and a blanket valued at Rs. 2. It is customary for the man to bring his bag with him and to hang it up in her house.

Examples :—Yongte, a woman of Sangpi, went to live in the house of Non Hmōn of Sangpi, wishing to keep her as a *nupi shun*, he performed *ar sa tat* and has paid up some of her price.

Neo Tè, sister of Sai Hrè of Sangte, lived with Van Lin in his house; although he performed the ceremony and agreed as to price, he could not pay same: Neo Tè gave birth to a daughter, who was taken by Tyo Ling, her brother's son.

Sai Doi of Klarseowsung, Kodon, lived with Hlun Sāng for one or two months, but he refused to hold a feast or kill a pig, on account of *mwè kum*, and she eventually returned home.

Compensation for Breach of Promise (Let Man).—When the hand of a girl has been demanded in marriage and the price fixed, a fowl is killed (*ar at*) in the presence of those concerned in token of the agreement. The breaking of this contract makes either party liable to pay compensation of a big *mythun* or its value in cash or kind: in the case of very poor people, a small *mythun* or its value is substituted. As a rule, the amount payable is arranged on the *ar at ni* and is the same as the *pun tau*.

In the event of either party dying, between the killing of the fowl and the consummation of the marriage, the other would contribute a blanket and *su* towards the funeral feast; if in poor circumstances, the latter only would be given.

Example :—The hand of Tyer Tsin, sister of Shwe Lyen of Sangpi, was demanded in marriage by Man Kōn, of Sangte, and the fowl was killed; the contract was broken by Shwe Lyen, who paid *let man*, a big *mythun*, to Man Kōn.

CHAPTER V.

Divorce.

Divorce by Husband (Māk).—*Divorce by Wife (Kir).*—Amongst the Chins, divorce is easily obtained—a woman may be divorced by her husband, if he is not satisfied with her work, incompatibility of temper, if she is barren and other lesser reasons, besides the greater one of adultery. He has only to say "I divorce you," after which she would return to her brother's house or that of her nearest male relative: this latter would then perform *kla klau*, which consists in killing some animal and distributing the flesh through the village; by this ceremony the disgrace is wiped out and is a sign that she has been divorced and may now be demanded in marriage again—before this had been done, no one would think of asking for her hand.

If, either before or after this ceremony, the husband wishes to take his wife back, she being agreeable, he would be liable to pay compensation (*mai klam*) varying from Rs. 10 up to a large and small *mythun* and also the balance of marriage price outstanding on her account.

When a wife had been beaten by her husband and run away to her relations, he would merely send somebody to call her back: if he had assaulted his wife badly and she had been called back by the elders and placed in his house again, the husband would kill some animal and the flesh would be eaten—this is known as *sa ti lon*; if he repeatedly assaulted her, her relations might become angry and perform *man klau*—that is, call her back home until her husband had paid up the balance of price outstanding or made some kind of satisfactory amend—(this however does not prevent the husband from cohabiting with his wife in her relation's house)—for this they would probably set a time limit, after the expiration of which, it would be considered that he did not want her and had divorced her; then the *kla klau* ceremony would be performed, after first warning the husband, and she would take another one.

Now-a-days, a husband does not call back his wife after divorce, as much as was done in former times.

In the event of a man proving impotent, he would forfeit all prices already paid on behalf of his wife; if the pig had not been killed in relation to the *pu man*, he would not be liable for this price, but if it had been, he would be.

Before the advent of Government, a man committing rape on a married woman of good social position would probably have been killed by her relations: if a married woman committed adultery, her marriage price would be returned and the husband might take vengeance by slitting her ears and nose. Now-a-days, a man having connection with a married woman, is liable to pay compensation to her husband of a large *mythun*; her husband has the right to divorce her, when her price is returned to him.

A man could divorce his wife, if she were fined for theft, although he would have to pay this fine, but would forfeit marriage price paid.

If a husband is sentenced to imprisonment, and during this time his wife takes another husband, the former, on his release, can demand return of the marriage price.

When either a husband or wife become lepers, they may divorce by mutual consent, but the former cannot claim the return of any price paid; he would however be entitled to this, if he had become a leper and his wife had returned to her home refusing to live with him.

A girl is at liberty to leave her husband and refuse to live with him (*kir*); her relations might remonstrate with her, but if she persisted, the marriage price would be returned.

If a wife commits adultery under the influence of liquor it would remain with her husband to divorce her or not as he pleased.

When a man has pardoned his wife for committing adultery and agreed to take her back, her brother, or nearest male relative, would have to kill some animal to wipe out her disgrace and the flesh would be distributed through the village.

Examples:—Tat Sin of Sangte divorced his wife and married another; he then divorced the latter and called back the former, paying a big *mythun* on account of *mai klam* as well as the balance of *manpi*.

Lyen Mo, of Sangte, beat his wife and she ran away to her brother Tyer Ling's house, she was recalled and, on account of *mai klam*, Lyen Mo paid a big *mythun* to Tyer Ling. He again assaulted her and she was unwilling to return to him but the elders forced her to do so and, as Lyen Mo had paid up *mai klam*, they made him kill a bullock (*sa ti lon*).

Pa Oi, of Sangte, assaulting his wife frequently, her relations became angry, called her home and performed *man klau*; before she returned to him, the balance of *manpi* was demanded and paid up by him.

Klong Err, of Kenlawt, married Ni Hngel of Sangpi—violent quarrels ensuing, she returned to her relations, who performed *man klau* and fixed a time limit of one year for him to pay up balance of her price; at the expiration of that time, they threatened to do *kla klau*: the case was brought to Court and a further time limit of six months was fixed: Klong Err failed to pay up and was thus considered not to desire his wife back and to have divorced her—*kla klau* was then performed.

Kwe Hmōn of Dongvar married Rè Tè of Sangpi and they lived in the same house for five years during which time he paid up all prices due; it was known immediately after the marriage, by his wife's relations, that he was impotent; he demanded time to propitiate the *Nats*, but after five years she divorced him and he lost all the prices paid:

Ni Long, of Nabwè village was married by a Lōhnam man, she committed adultery while intoxicated; she was pardoned by her husband and her brother killed a *mythun* for him, while the man, with whom she had committed adultery was fined a *mythun* and a pig by the elders.

About the time of the advent of Government, Ram Karr of Kabè slit his wife's ear for committing adultery with Tawk Tang of the same village.

CHAPTER VI.

Inheritance.

Ro So.—It was the invariable custom among all the Haka families, that the youngest son should inherit the *Hmunpi*, the Family Dwelling house, until the time of Lyen Non of Sangte, who bequeathed it to his eldest son; this change was followed by the families of Sangpi, Sangte, Darkwangsung, Nguntwelsung, Vainumsung, Hranglungsung; Kenlawt and Klarseowsung, however, have not yet departed from their original customs. With these latter, the youngest son only fails to inherit in the following contingencies:—

(a) If, for any reason, he waives his claim; once having done so, he cannot retract.

(b) If he is on openly bad terms with his father, the latter can bequeath the *Hmunpi* to whichever son he chooses.

(c) If the youngest son is a leper or mentally affected, it passes to another son.

The youngest of three brothers, having inherited his father's *Hmunpi*, dying without offspring, it would pass to eldest brother, unless this latter had forfeited it by unbrotherly conduct, such as the invocation of a curse or violent assault, in which case the middle brother would inherit.

In the case of five brothers, where the eldest is married and living in a house of his own and the other three are unmarried, living in the *Hmunpi* with their youngest brother, on the death of this latter, the fourth brother inherits the *Hmunpi*—the eldest brother having married and left the *Hmunpi* loses all claim to it.

Where there are five brothers all unmarried and living in the *Hmunpi*, it is inherited by the youngest and, he dying without heirs, it passes to the eldest and after him in serial order from the youngest to the eldest living.

In the case of the four elder brothers being married, without offspring and living outside the *Hmunpi*, on the death of the youngest, it would pass to the eldest brother and so on down to the fourth.

Where the first, second and fourth brother had married and left the *Hmunpi*, leaving the third and fifth there unmarried, on the death of the fifth, the third brother would not inherit, but it would pass to the first.

Property bequeathed *Ro*.

With the Klarseowsung and Kenlawt families, where the property is extensive, two-thirds are inherited by the eldest son and the remaining third, together with the *Hmunpi*, by the youngest son. If the property be too small for division, it all goes to the eldest.

As regards landed property (*lai ram*), situated within the Haka Tracts, two-thirds is apportioned to the eldest and one-third to the youngest son. If there were but two pieces of land in the out-villages (*kwel ram*), the eldest would take the best piece and the youngest the other; but should there be a large quantity, the eldest would have first choice and take two-thirds and the youngest one-third; dues and taxes are divided in the same proportion as property.

In these two families, if the inheritance is not worth dividing the eldest gets all; but where it is considerable, he collects all marriage payments due, pays his own marriage price and that of all his younger brothers and, of any balance remaining, he takes two-thirds and hands one-third to his youngest brother. Failing sufficient for his brothers' marriage prices, they would have to furnish their own, but if he possessed any means, he

would have to help them to the value of one large *mythun* each for *pun law*.

The laws of inheritance in Sangpi, Sangte, Darkwangsung and Nguntwelsung are as follows :—

The eldest son inherits the *Hmunpi*.

Of three brothers, if the eldest dies without heir, the second brother would succeed, if still living in the *Hmunpi*, whether married or unmarried ; but should he have married and left the *Hmunpi*, the youngest brother would inherit it.

Van Mang and Ral Err of Sangte, together with Kuk Hnin of Sangpi say that the eldest gets two-thirds of all the various kinds of property and the youngest one-third ; while Sher Mang, Sang Kōn, Lal Err, Tan Nyer of Sangpi, Pa Oi of Sangte, Ni Kwel, Tyer Ling, Tai Um of Darkwangsung and Do Kul and La Tseen of Nguntwelsung state that the property is divided in the following manner—the eldest has first choice, the youngest has second, and so on alternately.

If there are five unmarried brothers in the *Hmunpi*, which is in the possession of the eldest brother, on his death, the second brother inherits, and so on down to the youngest.

In the case of five brothers being married, and the four youngest having left the *Hmunpi*, on the death of the eldest the youngest would succeed, provided the former died without heir ; the youngest dying without offspring would be succeeded by the second brother—he dying in like case would be succeeded by the third.

Where the second and third brothers are married and living away from the *Hmunpi*, while the fourth and fifth are unmarried and living with the first in the *Hmunpi*, on the death of this latter, without offspring, the *Hmunpi* and property would be inherited by the fifth brother ; if he died without marrying, he would be succeeded by the fourth—he dying without heirs would be succeeded by the second. If, however, the fourth had married prior to the death of the fifth brother, the second would succeed.

The following is an illustration of the last mentioned custom.

In the Sangpi family there are five sons, namely as follows : Shwe Lin, Kuk Hnin, Daw Te, Sher Mang and Lyen Sum ; hereafter these will be referred to as Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5.

No. 1 married a *Nupi Tak* during his father's lifetime, as also did No. 2. No. 3 married afterwards.

At their father's death No. 1 inherited the *Hmunpi* and property ; Nos. 2 and 3 on their respective marriages left the *Hmunpi* : Nos. 4 and 5, being unmarried, resided with No. 1.

At the death of the last mentioned, he was succeeded by No. 5, who died unmarried; there then ensued a dispute as to the inheritance between Nos. 2 and 4. The matter was finally referred to sixteen representatives of the principal families in Haka and Kotarr villages; of these twelve said that No. 4 should inherit the *Amunpi* and property, while the other four were of the opinion that No. 2 should do so.

Herewith are appended the names of the twelve and four—

<i>Sangpi</i>	<i>Sangte</i>	<i>Nguntwelsung</i>	<i>Kenlawt</i>
Tan Nyer	Ral Err	Do Kul	Rang Err
Ra Kwe	Pa Oi		Rang Non
Sang Kōn		<i>Klarseowsung</i>	
Lal Err		Van Hai	
Mang Sum		Kan Tyo	

and the undermentioned favoured the second brother's claim

<i>Sangte</i>	<i>Nguntwelsung</i>	<i>Darkwangsung</i>
Van Mang	La Tseen	Tyer Ling
		Tai Um.

Owing to this difference of opinion over the division of property, on June 29th, 1915, in the presence of the Assistant Superintendents of Falam and Haka, the Lai custom for division of property was once and for all established, after due consideration, by the following representatives of the Kohlun and Kotarr villages:—

<i>Sangpi</i>	<i>Sangte</i>	<i>Nguntwelsung</i>
Sher Mang	Ral Err	La Tseen
Tan Nyer	Van Mang	Do Kul
Ra Kwe	Pa Oi	
Sang Kōn		
Kuk Hnin		
Lal Err		
Mang Sum		
<i>Darkwangsung</i>	<i>Klarseowsung</i>	<i>Kenlawt</i>
Ni Kwel	Van Hai	Rang Err
Tyer Ling	Kan Tyo	Hrang Non.
Tai Um		

The division of property agreed upon by the above is as follows:—

When there are two sons, the property should be divided into five shares, three of which should be apportioned to No. 1 and two to No. 2.

In a family of three, they would divide the property into four shares, No. 1 would get two parts, No. 3 one and a-half and No. 2 the remaining half.

With a family of four, the property would be divided into four shares, No. 1 receiving two of these, No. 4 one and a-half, and Nos. 2 and 3 a quarter share each.

Where there are five sons, it would be divided into five shares, two shares going to No. 1, one and a-half to No. 5 and a half share each to Nos. 2, 3 and 4.

If there were seven brothers, the property would be divided into ten shares, of which No. 1 would get three, No. 7 two, the other five brothers receiving one share each.

Any special property which the owner has, by public notice to the elders, requested should not be sold or otherwise disposed of by his heir, should always go with the *Hmunpi*.

If a son marries below his social status with the consent of his parents, he can inherit the *Hmunpi* and property, but if he does so contrary to their wishes, he is only entitled to a middle son's share and cannot inherit the *Hmunpi*. When such a marriage is entered into after the death of his parents without the approval of his relatives, he loses his inheritance and the *Hmunpi*.

The son of a minor wife cannot inherit either his father's property or the *Hmunpi*; the father may though, in his lifetime, make gifts to such a son, which he may retain after the former's death—such gifts may not include heirlooms.

Sons of the *nupi tak* always take precedence over the sons of the *nupi klai*, even though the mother of the former had been divorced; but the sons of the *nupi klai* would be entitled to inherit any property collected during the time their father lived with their mother.

If the sons of a *nupi tak*, were of weak intellect and there were no relations to inherit, then the son of a *nupi shun* could be heir to the property and *Hmunpi*.

In the case of a man marrying a *nupi shun*, who bore him daughters and a son and he afterwards married a *nupi tak* and by her had sons, the latter would only be entitled to the *pun tau* of the eldest daughter of the *nupi shun*; failing male offspring by this *nupi tak* or *nupi klai*, his heir would take that *pun tau*. The balance of prices due on account of the other daughters would be inherited by their brother—if they had no brother, it would then go to their father's heir.

If two brothers were on unfriendly terms, in the event of one dying without male offspring by his *nupi tak* or *nupi klai*, but having a son by his *nupi shun*, he could, before he

died, bequeath the property collected during his lifetime to this latter son, but not heirlooms or any property inherited from his father; failing a special bequest, all his property would go to the brother with whom he had quarrelled.

The sons of a *nupi klai* and a *nupi tak* take the prices due on their respective sisters—the latter having no claim on the daughters of a *nupi klai*.

When a brother quarrels with his sister, she can choose another male relation to whom her marriage price shall be paid—this is only in the event of her not being the aggressor in the quarrel; also, if he endeavoured to make friends and she refused, he would be entitled to the price.

A man only having daughters by his *nupi tak* and *nupi klai* can, in his lifetime, bequeath their marriage prices to the son of a *nupi shun*, or to any other male relative he chooses. *Nupi Tak*—Chief or real wife.

Nupi Klai—Real wife to take the place of *nupi tak*, on the latter's death or divorce.

Nupi Shun—Minor wife or concubine.

The difference between a *nupi shun* and a *nupi tak* or *nupi klai* is, that when the former is married, the *ar hman* ceremony is performed in the front of the house, with while, the latter, it is done inside the house, the *ko le keng* (*Nat* propitiating utensils) being used; with the *nupi shun*, ordinary pots are used—once the *ko le keng* have been used, the wife has been received into *Nat* propitiation of her husband: if a man divorces his *nupi tak* or she dies, he is at liberty to make his *nupi shun* into a *nupi klai* by performing the *ar hman* ceremony using the *ko le keng*; but this being done, when performing *Nat* propitiations in the future, his relations can take part in them—he cannot take part in theirs, having married beneath him and broken his caste.

CHAPTER VII.

Funeral Rites.

Rawk Hnāk.—An ordinary man dying, if a *mythun* (or any animal above a pig) is killed at the funeral, the corpse is dressed up in his best clothes and will sit up in state for about a day and be buried the day after—before the burial, the body would be placed in a sleeping posture before it can be placed in this position the *ieng art* has to be killed—the idea of this is to provide food for the spirit of the man on the way to *Mi*

Ti Kwa—the flesh of this fowl is not eaten by the relations and is thrown away on the *hmun shir* together with the pot it was cooked in.

A villager, dying one day, where they cannot afford to kill a *mythun*, is buried the following day, without state.

With a person who had performed the *boi'e boi* and *kwang soi*, the body would be kept in a sitting posture, even if only a pig had been killed for the funeral.

There is no difference for the very big Chief and the person who can afford to kill a *mythun* for the funeral—two nights is the most the body is above ground.

It is customary to put into the grave a blanket, waist-cloth, puggie, a bag and knife—no agricultural implements—according to the means of the deceased, so property is put into the grave for his use in the other world—such as a gun, beads, gongs, brass pots, etc. A big Chief will take his pony with him, at least the saddle is placed in the grave, while the pony would be killed by his slave.

Children dying within 10 days of birth are buried in a pot in the ground without ceremony, but for a first born child, dying after 10 days, a big pig is killed and feast held.

Parents can mourn their children up to three years—during that time they must not grease their hair or wash, but if a child is born during that time, it would be considered unlucky not to do so, so they must grease their hair again.

A widow will mourn her husband up to three years—some have a hut built on his grave in which they reside—others remain in his house, while some, after two or three days mourning, return to their relations—during the period of mourning, while she is in her husband's house, she will daily prepare meals which she will set aside—the idea being that the spirit of her husband returns from his abode and if hungry, might want food—once she has returned to her relations, she can cease mourning if she wants to. While mourning, widows must neither wash, grease, nor comb their hair.

Within three years, the relations perform what is called *lām shèr* (death dance)—*zu* is broached and animals killed—to what extent depends on means—it lasts three days—the first day a bullock, buffalo or *mythun* is killed and food prepared (*rawk hnāk*) a few people begin to collect and *zu* is broached—the next day is called *Lām Tè*—during the day, all people who have lost relations collect in a ring—they carry on their backs all their good possessions in the way of clothes and beads—a drum is beaten by a man in the centre and they slowly go round in a circle in two groups—one singing death

songs and the other jovial songs—one at the house end and the other at the end of the compound near the gate—they cross—this performance is repeated nine times and very slowly, so as to last the whole day—the idea of all this is that the deceased, in whose honour this is performed, returns from *Mi Ti Kwa*, (Dead Man's Land) in spirit and is present and the songs being sung will be heard by him or her—the clothes and property are brought as an offering to the deceased—this procedure is performed that day and the next—when finished, needless to say, all the fine clothes and beads are taken home by their owners.

If the feast is in honour of a male, the second and third day wrestling is held, but if the deceased is a woman the women folk dance, that is to say, pieces of bamboos are placed across two pieces of wood and the woman or women dance in and out between the bamboos—it is not an easy dance and all women do not excel at it, as the pieces of bamboo going up and down are liable to trip them up—this is called *raw karr klāk*.

Where well-to-do, the relations hold a further feast in honour of the deceased called *nga suk*—the relations, and those who choose to, go to the jungle near a stream—the men then build a large lean-to—there a bullock, buffalo or *mýthun* is killed and *zu* broached. All the company dance, wrestling is held, if the deceased is a male; and the *raw karr klāk* is performed, if the deceased is a woman; this takes place the first day—the following morning early, everybody helps to poison the stream and the fish are caught—the people return in the evening.

In the case of the deceased being a male another ceremony is performed, that is *sa ryek taw* (hunting expedition). The person who is going to hold it will give notice some two or three days previous. The day before, in the evening, he will call together nine men from the various families—before this, he will send away his females from the house—he and the nine men will then assemble—no man whose wife is pregnant may take part—between them a female pig (*vwarwk rhil*), who has not had a litter is killed—the person holding the ceremony repeating a formula over it—the flesh is eaten by them, and part is thrown away outside the village. These men are not permitted to talk to anybody.

The next morning at dawn, all ten of them will proceed out of the village and there a fowl will be killed and the flesh and that of the pig killed the night before is eaten. They must converse with no one. After this, they proceed to the

jungle, where they are joined by other villagers—a beat is then held in which the ten men take part, nine can carry guns, but the *kla sam pa* must not and is only armed with bow, arrows and spear. During the beat, the ten men, *bang tu*, may only converse amongst themselves and not with outsiders. After the first beat, the nine men may converse with the other villagers, but the *kla sam pa* may not, and as long as the hunting trip lasts, he must eat by himself, but as soon as it is decided that the hunting is over, he may talk to others.

Formerly this ceremony was only held on account of big Chiefs and influential men, but now-a-days that guns are scarce, it is held in honour of any one.

The hind leg of any game killed is taken by the person holding the ceremony—during the hunting nobody may speak to strangers or go to the house of the man performing the ceremony.

It is the belief that if the *sa tau* is not held the deceased will be angry and that, in consequence, pigs, fowls and *mythun* will die.

At entrances to villages, piles of stones are found—often with a post and a *mythun* or buffalo skull on it—this is put up in honour of the departed—if he has captured prisoners they will be shown by cross pieces of wood (*Hreng*). If the deceased is a man of property and has died a violent death, gongs and pots are often found pierced through on the post.

Those dying an ordinary death, are buried in the village in the compound, but those that died a violent death are buried outside the village.

It is useful to make a note of this for the reason that, if a person was murdered and evidence was tried to be kept from Government, the fact that the man was buried outside the village, would be sufficient to show that the deceased had died a violent death—or again, for fear of Government, a person might be buried in the garden adjoining the house—no Chin (in Haka) would dare to bury a person, that had died a violent death in the compound—further, anybody burying a person by stealth in the garden would surreptitiously afterwards divide that bit off with a fence.

After anybody meeting a violent death or committing suicide in the village, this has to be wiped out by a big *mythun* being sacrificed to the village *Nat* (*kwa ten*).

In the same way, if *mythun*, bullocks, goats, pigs or fowls die of rinderpest in a village, a big pig and fowl has to be sacrificed for *kwa ten nāk*. During this period, all fires in the houses must be put out and fresh ones lighted, the ashes

of the old fire being thrown away outside the village—further, the first day all dried smoked flesh in the house is eaten and the balance must be thrown away outside the village—which is closed for three days.

Before any *Nat* propitiation, the elders inform the village crier the day settled and he calls out the orders on the subject.

Murder (Mi Tat).—Anyone causing the death of another accidentally or intentionally, in olden days, had, as a purification, first to proceed to Bwetet and there eat food—if caught by these villagers he was liable to a fine—from there he had to go to Laitet and wash his hands in a well, called *shia pān lai*, though also entailing a fine if caught. On returning home, he had to kill a red fowl, then a large pig and finally a big *mythun*—in which all the villagers would participate—this is called *kut kol*.

If a man were murdered and his relations wished to take revenge, one of their number would transfer to a village hostile to that of the murderer and carry out his intentions from there.

Had the avenger not transferred for this purpose, ill luck would have followed his family for two or three generations.

Death Due (Shè).—A comparatively new custom, having only been in force for the last seven generations; it is responsible for more litigation than any other; it arose in the following way—about seven generations ago, a villager of Aiverr, Du Mang by name, married a woman called Da Dim and had to proceed immediately on a journey to Burma without cohabiting with her; during his absence, she died and, on his return, he said “my wife has died and I have not had intercourse with her”—he then wished to be allowed to do so with the corpse, but her relations would not agree to this unless he paid compensation; this he agreed to and ever since then, *shè* or death price has been demanded.

In the event of a violent death, when a person is buried outside the village, *shè* is payable on his or her behalf, but seldom demanded; death during incarceration in jail is not considered a violent one, unless by hanging.

Before a male child puts his hair up, no *shè* is payable, but after this, whether married or no, it can be demanded: none is payable for a woman until she is married, but should *hlawn* have been paid on her behalf, the brother has the option of demanding her *shè* or return of her *hlawn*.

It will, as a rule, be demanded on the day of death, but is payable after any lapse of time. If there is only one male offspring, he will be responsible for the *shè* of both his father

and mother ; but if there is more than one, the eldest will pay for his father and the youngest for his mother.

When being demanded, the inevitable pig or some other animal is killed ; in the case of the father's death, it is demanded by his maternal uncle, that is, recipient of his mother's *pun taw*.

The mother's *shè* is demanded by the brother, who took her *pun taw*.

The amount of *shè* varies according to the deceased's social standing and the feasts performed :—For an ordinary villager, it is from Rs. 5 to Rs. 30 and for a Chief it starts at a small *mythun* ; with this, three beads (*puntèk*) are also payable on account of *fangvarr ar sa ei nāk* and *sa lu sum*. After a *kwang soi* an ordinary man's *shè* becomes a big *mythun* and three beads, but when a *Boi* (Chief) has performed a *kwang soi*, his *shè* increases to a big *mythun* and a half, three beads for *fangvarr* and two for *ar sa ei nāk* and *sa lu sum*.

The *shè* of a woman is the same as that of a man, unless her husband has performed the *kwang soi*, when it consists of a big *mythun* and a half and seven beads on account of *fangvarr, ar sa ei nāk* and *sa lu sum*.

If a woman's *shè* is not paid, her *hlawn* will return to her brother, only if she has no children, but where *pun taw man* has been paid, her brother is only entitled to the return of half her *hlawn* ; when paid, the *hlawn* is divided up amongst her daughters, if any ; otherwise, it will be kept by the person who paid her death dues.

When *shè* has been paid up in full, *ngal twom* (price of dressing corpse) is payable by the person receiving it to the person paying it : when a big *mythun* and a small one have been received, a blanket is handed over, varying from Rs. 2 to Rs. 10.

Reopening of grave (Klan Hlai).—When a Chin dies, male or female, property (but not agricultural implements), according to their means, is placed in the grave, for the use of the deceased in *mi ti kwa* (Dead Man's Land) ; children under three months and before their heads are shaved have nothing buried with them. When the grave is re-opened to receive the corpse of the next relation, the former property is taken out and passes to his sisters : failing sisters to the daughters, the largest share would go to the eldest, while the middle sister (or daughter) or sisters (or daughters) would receive the smallest portion. If the property were too small to be divided, it would pass to the eldest.

Any usurping of their rights in this matter, by the male relative, would be disputed and they could retaliate by forbidding him to take their *shè* (death due) or *pun tau* (price of individual), in the event of him being the one entitled to these.

Parting (Tāng Ten).—In the event of a man predeceasing his wife, his heir is liable to pay anything from a pig to a big *mythun* and small one to the person who received the widow's *pun tau*. When demanding this price, he would kill a pig, as, otherwise, he would not be entitled to receive two beads, on account of *ar sa ei nāk* and *sa lu sum*.

The *Tāng Ten* varies—with an ordinary villager, it would be a pig; if he had performed the *boite boi* or *kwang soi* ceremonies during his lifetime, a small *mythun* would be payable: with a man of good family, ordinarily, a small *mythun* would be paid: if he had performed *kwang soi*, this would be increased to a big *mythun* and for a very big Chief a *mythun* and a half, in the event of his having performed *kwang soi*.

Now-a-days, some Chins dispute it, while others pay. It is fast going out of custom and probably within another ten years will have disappeared entirely. *Tāng ten* is only another way of attempting to claim an extra *shè* (death due). For this reason it is not officially recognised.

CHAPTER VIII.

Feasts.

Promotion to small Chief (Boite Boi).—Every Chin is anxious to increase his social importance and the holding of this feast is a means of so doing and is merely a matter of being able to afford it. The procedure is as follows:—

One night a red pullet is killed by the husband and wife, while they repeat a formula, in the presence of their family (*klang ar*). Then, at any convenient time afterwards, a *vwawk rhil* of two fists is slain, likewise with a formula—no outsiders may be present at this, but relations may be called and once having arrived, they must sleep in that house for two nights—on the next day, children are invited to partake of the flesh and then depart—no *zu* is broached. One month later, *zu* is broached and at dusk a *zin vwawk* of not less than five fists is killed and the meat eaten by the family and the father's relations. The mother's relatives have another animal killed

for them, the legs of which are given to the father's sisters. It is considered necessary to have all one's relatives present, so this becomes a time of settling quarrels and debts.

The pig having been killed, its head is cut off and cooked (*sa lu klāk*) and a formula repeated.

Again a month elapses, when another *vwawk rhil* is killed, on account of *ko keng tol* (washing of pots that are used for *Nat* propitiation).

After an interval of a month or two, for *kwa dang nāk* (Feeding of *nat*), a *vwawk rhil kwa kla*—black, with a white patch on the forehead—is killed with the same procedure as the first *vwawk rhil*. After a month, a pig of 5 or 6 fists is killed, on the same account—this is slain early in the morning and every one that has been invited will sleep in that house that night—they will be fed, but no *zu* will be broached: the following morning, others will be called and *zu* distributed and pork eaten—these may depart, but the former visitors must sleep there one more night. In the event of a quarrel arising at this feast and blood being drawn, a fresh animal must be slain, as the offering of the first will have been made null and void. No one outside the village, except for relations, must attend the feast.

The next ceremony is *shia shun* (stabbing of a *mythun*)—a small *mythun* cow is tied up in the compound on the preceding night—in the morning, it is shot by arrows by the holder of the feast, the animal being held with ropes by his relatives or some one above him in the social scale—otherwise his caste would be broken and quarrels would ensue—this feast lasts two days and *zu* is broached. *Boite boi* can extend to three years in its complete performance, but if longer time ensues, it must be started again from the beginning.

The last feast before the *boite boi* is the *Yan Shun*—the night previous to this, a small bull *mythun (zin kla)*, that is the last born of a *mythun* cow, is tied up and the next evening, killed—in the event of there being any quarrels outstanding, it is slain as soon as these are settled—if no settlement is arrived at in a quarrel, then that relation cannot hence forward come to the house of the holder of the feast, once the *mythun* has been slain, in the same manner as the previous one. These quarrels may be on account of marriage price and debts.

On the day of the *yan shun*, the sister or sisters of the holder of the feast will each provide a pig, the flesh of which will be eaten by his family only—this is called *ar sa tat*—unless they have done so, the wife's garments will not be made over to them at *boite boi*.

The next day, *boite boi* starts and lasts five days—all those in the village who have previously performed this feast and *kwang soi* will be invited—five special pigs—or, if, funds permitted it, a buffalo, will be slain and five special pots of *su* broached, which things must only be eaten and drunk by those above mentioned—this is called *sa hreo*.

Another buffalo is killed this same day and the flesh is cut up and sent round to the whole village.

On this day, the husband and wife have to go to the jungle with the *klang boi*, the person to repeat the formula, to the *Sasang Byek* Rock, below Sangte Quarter, where the *nat* is propitiated and there a big red cock is sacrificed. For this part of the ceremony, the brother of the wife has to give her a blanket, a skirt and a coat, each from Rs. 5 to Rs. 10 in value and these same she will wear. On their return, she must give these garments to her husband's sisters and, if he has more than three sisters, he must furnish the balance.

As recipient of her *shè*, the wife's brother will, on the night of the *yan shun* kill a pig, according to means, and demand *sam pir man*, which consists of a small *mythun*—this compliment will be returned in kind by the holder of the feast and his wife and, for the eating and cooking of this animal, the brother will receive two beads for *ar sa ei nāk* and *sa lu sum*, the price varying from Rs. 5 to Rs. 10 for the former and Rs. 2 to Rs. 5 for the latter, not more than Rs. 15 in all.

In the same way, on the third night the uncle, or recipient of the husband's *Shè*, will kill an animal, according to his means, and demand *rāng zin man* which will be as much as a small *mythun*, provided the animal he has killed is not less than a pig—the husband in return kills an animal, according to his means for *ar sa tat* and for the eating (*ar sa ei nāk*) and cooking of the head (*sa lu sum*) the uncle will receive two beads—the former Rs. 5 to Rs. 10 in value and the latter from Rs. 2 to Rs. 5, not exceeding Rs. 15 together.

Both men authorised to receive the *sam pir man* and *rāng zin man* can make this duty over to another man, who is willing.

During the thirty days following the completion of the feasts, the *boi* must remain within the village—he may attend feasts, but not a funeral and may not do any work.

Within the next three years, he must kill a pig of five fists and hold a feast, else terrible ill-luck would befall him—this is called *boi kil*.

Anybody from an outside village entering a house when the *kwa dang* ceremony is being performed (previous to *boite*

boi) is liable for a big *mythun* as fine, for spoiling the propitiation, in which case that ceremony would have to be repeated over again.

Lifting of Box (Kwang Soi).—A Chin can gain no greater glory than by holding the *kwang soi*—first of all a large *mythun* cow must be killed, the procedure being the same as in *boite boi*—this is *shiapi shun*—followed by *sa kwa tum tat*, for which three animals are killed, namely a male *mythun*, a pig and a white fowl; the first mentioned is eaten by those who attend the feast and some of the flesh is sent to the more important people in the village—this is done before the two latter are killed—the pork and fowl are only eaten in the house itself. When this part of the ceremony has been carried out, the holder of the feast must not go into any house, where there is a corpse lying, or a funeral or a wedding being held. Also, during this feast and the final *kwang soi*, a man must not eat the grain of that year, but last year's.

During three months the *kwang soi* is held—on the first day a pig is killed and the second night a small *mythun* is slain for *yan shun*, but for the *sa hreo* on the third day only one pig is killed and *zu* broached—the following day a large bull and cow *mythun* are slain for *kla sam nāk* and on that night a pig is killed for *kwang kum* also, on this day, any other animals are killed—they should not be less than five and must not exceed ten in number for a first *kwang soi*. Like the *boite boi*, this feast carries with it the *sam pir man* and *rāng zin man*, except that the price is a large *mythun*, instead of a small one—the beads are the same. The former is due on the first night and the latter on the second or third night. The fifth day, *klang zam*, is employed in cutting up and distributing the flesh in the village. On the sixth day, the wife's brother has to prepare the platform and the *kwang* (bamboo framework) in which she has to be lifted up nine times. He has also to furnish presents, cash, pots, etc., which she throws out to the crowd from the *kwang*, when being lifted—small things are scrambled for by the children, while pots and property of value are taken by her sisters.

The following day, the seventh, the *kwang soi ni*, the wife is adorned in her best garments and jewels, her hair plaited, by her brother if he is able—she then mounts the *kwang*, which is fixed on to two cross bamboos—the guests then seize the poles and jerk her up with a swinging motion, nine times during the day. The day after this, comes the *murr lè torr lām*, a dance performed by Lushais or Torrs (*Rawwān*) and the next day is called *rem ni* that is a settle-

ment with these dancers. This feast, as is *boite boi*, is followed by *boi kil*, but for 50 days, when a large *mythun*, a pig and a fowl are killed.

After the *kwang soi* has been twice performed, the next ceremony is that of the *long tuk*, that is, erecting a fence to celebrate same, when the least number of *mythun* killed is four—this also carries with it *sam pir man* and *rāng zin man*, on account of both of which a small *mythun* and *ar sa ei nāk* and *sa lu sum*, two beads are payable. This *long* or fence is cut by the relations and others—and if the holder owns villages, they will do it—the Haka villagers, for bringing the wood in from the jungle, will receive a small live *mythun*; another small *mythun* and a pig of five fists will be killed and the people feasted—with this grain must be given: until the holder has settled all his money debts, none of the villagers will partake of his fare.

The third *kwang soi* also carries with it *sam pir man* and *rāng zin man*, a big *mythun* and two beads for *ar sa ei nāk* and *sa lu sum*—likewise for the next *long tuk* and thus *ad libitum*. The *sam pir man* and *rāng zin man* are known as *kwang soi man*.

Deceiving of a tiger (Sakè Fim).—According to tradition, a man shot a tiger—another tiger hearing of this said that, if the hunter were a woman, no revenge could be taken but, if a man, he was to be killed—this reached the ears of the man who had killed the tiger and so, when celebrating the feast, *som tuk*, in honour of the event, he dressed up as a woman and had his hair plaited like one—these proceedings were watched by the tigers and on seeing that a woman (as they thought) had killed one of their number and not a man, did not take revenge on the hunter by killing him in return.

No Chin, unless he has held the *kwang soi* ceremony, can perform this feast in honour of having killed a tiger: in the same way, no one who has not reached the scale of *boite boi* in the social standing can hold this ceremony with regard to a panther or leopard.

To this day, when the *sakè fim* ceremony is performed, the man is dressed up as a woman in a coat and skirt with plaited hair and holds in his hand *la klur*, an article used by a woman for spinning thread—he also pours water and sprinkles pounded rice cakes on the skull—the idea being, of course, to cheat the other tigers who are supposed to be watching the proceedings into the belief that it is a woman.

Anybody performing the *sakè fim* goes up in the social scale as a big hunter: however, if a tiger is shot or even a

panther, and there is nobody in the village who has performed the *kwang soi* or *boite boi*, the carcass has to be left where it is and not be brought back to the village.

It must be noted that the person performing the feast must be of the same family as the man who shot the tiger—if killed by a Sangpi the feast must be held by a Sangpi. If, however, there was nobody in the Sangpi family who was high enough in the social scale, it could be demanded by one of another family of high enough social position, but they would have to ask for same with *zu* and make a present of a *mahooya* bead to a person, who had killed the animal.

After the ceremony, the man holding the feast, accompanied by everybody, will proceed to a spot outside and bury the skull in marshy ground—there is a spot always kept for this purpose—the party are escorted out with musical instruments. It is considered that ill-luck might ensue if the skull were hung up in the ancestral halls. It seems out-villages south, etc., only hang the skull up outside the village and do not bury it.

According to custom, neither the skull nor the skin of a tiger can be taken to anybody else's house before the ceremony has been performed—they are liable to a fine up to a big pig—if pitied, only a fowl will be taken.

Anybody shooting a tiger or panther, while out in the district, cannot take the skull or skin into a village but must leave it outside—the idea being that other tigers would take revenge and kill pigs, etc., in connection with those villages.

Chins are very superstitious in regard to tigers and firmly believe ill-luck is attached to them, until the ceremony is performed—for instance, if a man kills a tiger and brings it home and can perform the feast he will immediately proceed to the *bwel*—this is a place in the village especially for the purpose of this feast, but say, for instance, he would be able to perform the feast the following day, he would leave it in the compound and not take it into the house—if unable to perform the feast—instead of proceeding to his house, he would immediately take it outside the village and leave it there until such time as he was in a position to do so. Did he keep the skull and skin in his house, it is supposed that wild animals being aware of this, would vent their vengeance on his cattle, pigs, etc.

Chins have no shame and a Chief, who had never shot anything, but had performed the necessary feasts, would not hesitate to accept a tiger shot by one of his relations, who had not performed the *kwang soi* ceremony, and perform the *sakè fim* feasts, the honour and glory goes to the latter.

Now-a-days the man shooting it receives the Government reward for the skin.

Anybody shooting a bison or *tsaing* cannot hold the *som tuk* ceremony until he has reached the *boite boi* in the social scale—it would be celebrated by one of his relations, who had done so. So, to see a lot of bison heads hung up in a Chief's house, is no criterion that he actually shot them himself. Formerly, the Hakas would not shoot a *tsaing* believing that ill luck would be attached to it, but this is changed now.

The Hakas have other superstitions in regard to shooting—for instance, if a bear shot in a tree does not fall to the ground, it is considered unlucky to climb up and take it down—it is left there: in the same way, if a barking deer, after being shot, gets caught up in the jungle it cannot be taken—again, with a *gyi* after it is shot, if the breath rattles in its throat like that of a man being hanged, it cannot be killed outright or the flesh eaten.

CHAPTER IX.

Taxes and Propitiations.

Village Taxes (Kwa Shia).—This is a form of royalty payable to a Chief who has founded a village. It is also payable to a Chief who has conquered a village—by way of acknowledging his rule—it is often found that this tax is shared by the Chief and his assistants who helped to found, conquer or govern the village. The correct translation of this word in Burmese is *Mindaing*. Under this head are included the following taxes :—

Rawl Rêl	...	...	Tax on grain.
Lo Hlaw	...	...	Tax on labour.
Vwawk Kyo	...	...	Tax on litter of pigs.
Ar Kyo	...	...	Tax on brood of fowls.
Maw Rang	...	...	Tax on indigo.
Fu Ring	...	...	Tax on sugar-cane.
Banhla Ring	...	...	Tax on plantains.
Um Ring	...	...	Tax on pots.
La Ring	...	...	Tax on cotton.
Sa Kwa	...	...	{ Tax on In Sa (domestic animals) killed.
		...	{ Tax on Ram Sa (wild animals) killed.
Nga Sa Kwa	...	..	Tax on fish caught.
Rawk Hnâk	...	...	Taxes to help towards Chief's funeral.
In Sak	...	...	Building of Chief's house.

Once a generation, a small *mythun* is presented to a son of a Chief by all his villages, when he commences his rule.

There are other dues such as *fanu at*, *nupi tit* and *kwang soi*, but these are more in the nature of extortion and

should be discouraged for the reason that, as it is, Chiefs receive more than their villagers can afford to pay.

Cultivation tax (Lo Hnga).—An owner of a *zo lo* (far cultivation) will take tax from the man working it at the rate of one measure of grain for every twenty—this is paid after the crops have been gathered—a measure of grain on twenty, on account of every kind of cereal grown in that cultivation;—if the yield was sixty *rèls* each of millet and Indian corn, the owner of the cultivation would receive three *rèls* of each as tax. If crops were a failure no tax would be paid.

A *zo lo* is worked for one year only—a new one is cut yearly.

The life of a *lai lo* (near cultivation) is anything from one to ten years—as tax the owner would receive anything from annas 4 to Rs. 20 as his *lo hnga*—it depending on the quality of the land. As a rule this is paid after the first year's crop has been gathered in, but really it is a matter of arrangement. Tax has to be paid whatever the result of the crop.

Another kind of cultivation is the *tuk bok*—it is the land near a *lai lo* cultivation, which is not considered good enough for an actual *lai lo*. It is only worked for a year at a time—the tax is the same as that paid on a *zo lo*—it is used for the cultivation of millet and sulphur beans.

Propitiation of Nat in new cultivation (Lo Pyil Nam).—First as regards a *lai lo*—when this is originally cut by the whole village, a bullock is killed half way there, the price being borne by all those working that land, for if this is not done, the spirit residing there will cause their death and the owner would be angry. A poor man, of weak intellect, is employed to repeat the formula (*kla sam*) receiving as wages Re. 1 to Rs. 2 and permission to eat as much of the flesh as he could, but he is not allowed to carry any away.

Anyone working a holding on this newly cleared land must perform *hring ken*, a propitiation against enmity and jealousy, when a red cock is killed. He must further perform *zer sher*, which entails the killing of an animal, varying in value to what the spirit of that land claims—this may even have to be propitiated three times during the working, *i.e.* a pig, a goat, and dog—and with each of these a fowl—sometimes as much as a bullock must be offered—this is all to ensure good health for the worker.

If a man hired a cultivation from another and, for *zer sher* only killed a pig, when a bullock was accounted necessary, he would surely die, but if *vice versa*, the owner would be angry

and could insist on the worker buying the land from him, on the score that he had needlessly increased *ser sher*, entailing more expense.

At the cutting of a *zo lo*, a pig would probably be killed half way, the procedure being the same as that for a *lai lo*. After the crops have sprouted, a red cock and male dog are killed half way—this is called *klang hring ken*, a propitiation against rats and animals; the price is borne by those working it, the formula is repeated by some man who has performed the *boite boi* or *kwang soi* and the flesh of the fowl is eaten by him and his family.

The body of the dog and feathers of the fowl are stuck up at the place of killing.

House closed for Nat Propitiation (In Shia).—This is performed once yearly and the fact is signified by a small branch of leaves being hung up at the entrance to the compound or in the front of the house and no outsiders may then cross the threshold and the inmates may not speak to any but neighbours. It consists of the *ar hman* ceremony—the husband kills a medium sized red fowl at dusk, repeating a formula at the time, and the flesh must be eaten by him and his wife before early next morning: if, however, a death occurs in the village that night, this ceremony is made null and void. On the following day, no propitiation is performed, the man and wife may enter the village and the house is open to visitors. On the third evening, the process is repeated by the wife—these *ar hman* ceremonies refer only to the case of a *nupi tak*—when they are performed with a *nupi shun*, the ordinary utensils, not the *ko le keng*, will be used and she herself, will only repeat the formula outside on the front verandah.

Anybody violating the *in shia* would be liable to be fined a big pig—however, if he be a relation, of the same social status as the householder, and enters after the fowl has been killed, he must remain there for that night.

If a village *nat* propitiation is violated, the fact having been notified by green branches at the entrance, the offender would be liable for a big *mythun*.

With the first born child, the *hnei hnei* (opening propitiation) is held—the house is closed for one night; the fact being signified in the usual way and the inmates may not speak to anyone outside—a bamboo rat and a red cock are killed at dusk; if it is the offspring of a *nupi tak*, the father will repeat the formula and he alone will eat of the flesh of these animals, throwing away what he cannot finish; if it be that of a *nupi*

shun, she will repeat the formula, while he will eat the flesh. In the event of the mother having been divorced, or it being a posthumous child, she will throw away the flesh, after having repeated the formula.

The *nau rai* will be performed for any child but a first born: the ceremony starts early in the morning of one day and the house is closed thence onwards until dusk the following day, but the participants may talk to their neighbours—it consists in killing first a red hen and then a black one and there may be a lapse of time between the killing of these. If it is for a child of the *nupi tak*, the flesh is eaten by both parents; if of a *nupi shun*, she repeats the formula, and the flesh is eaten by the father.

On the birth of a second child, the elder will participate in the *ar hman*, but an extra fowl will be killed for him—this applies to the second child, when a third is born.

Kwahring tan takes place four times in a generation—for this a red cock is first killed, next a *wawak rhil* (i.e., a sow that has not had a litter), then a black fowl and a red cock again and, finally, a red hen.

Once in a generation the *hmun tat* ceremony must be performed—this is the propitiation of the spirit of the house site; it lasts one day and night; the first animal to be killed is a female dog and, a year after that, a goat—the flesh of these is cooked by a person of weak intellect and then thrown away as the Hakas do not eat either of these animals. Afterwards a *wawak rhil* is killed and, the year after that, a big pig—in the 9th year, a *mythun* is slaughtered.

Another sacrifice to this same spirit is carried out by the burying of an egg (*arti kum*)—then, in another spot, a small live chicken is pierced in the eye with a sharp piece of bamboo, staked down and buried alive (*ar ngun kum*), and the same process is performed with a live female puppy—this is so unpleasant that Chins will often employ a friend or relation to do it for them. It is customary for this to be held once in a generation, but more often in cases of sickness. If a man rebuilds his house, the whole process is gone through a second time.

Effigies in clay (*Shia Shal*).—In cases of illness, effigies in clay, in the forms of men, *mythun*, pigs, beads, gongs and pots, are made and placed on the road, to buy off the ill-will of the jungle spirits, to whom the illness is attributed.

When rinderpest is rife, all villages near the infected area will kill a dog, cut it in half and hang the entrails across the road, to prevent the disease attacking their cattle.

Breaking up of village. (*Tyo Nāk*).—The village may *tyo*, break up, on account of epidemic, bad crops, loss of *mythun* from rinderpest, etc., and this may happen as often as once in four generations. The whole village will transfer to the other side of the Trong Var, the stream below Haka village: as the Kenlawt family were the original founders of Haka, very early the next morning an elder from that family, with another man of good birth, is sent back to report on its state: he will return part way and call out across the khud that all is well; it is customary for the villagers to demur; he will then use persuasion, assuring them that the calamity has passed and they will finally return. However, they must propitiate all the spirits, as in founding a new village, and for this, a big *mythun* will be killed—this process takes some three or four years, during which time about nine *mythun* and twenty pigs are sacrificed.

Village Priest (*Klang Boi*).—This office is hereditary from representatives of the best families, that is, they must have kept their social status intact and suffer from no physical infirmity.

In Haka (*Kholun*) there are five men to perform the *nat* propitiation ceremonies and for this each receives a double portion of all meat killed; they are:—

- (1) Seo Lwe of Hranglungung.
- (2) Sum Hnin of Kenlawt.
- (3) Lwe Tang of Kingbawl.
- (4) Keo Ling of Kenlawt.
- (5) Hrang Err of Kenlawt.

The first named is the most important of these and would, on his marriage, be given from the village a big *mythun*—the others do not receive this—the wife would have to be approved by the elders.

Anyone who has lost caste by marrying beneath his own social status, may not sit near the abovementioned men, when they are performing the rites.

The following villages propitiate the same *nat* as the Hakas:—Kotarr, Nabwè, Kwabè, Byoate, Lunghnam, Faron, Firthi, Dowsim and Mignu. When Haka village is closed for propitiation, these must do likewise.

Seo Lwe is always called upon to officiate at *boite boi* and *kwng soi* ceremonies in these aforementioned villages.

CHAPTER X.

Miscellaneous.

Borrowing (Soi).—It is only by previous arrangement that interest is charged on any form of borrowing among the Chins—*mythun*, buffalo and cattle are invariably exempt.

When a pig is borrowed, if some of its value is paid at the time, as good-will or interest, no further interest can be demanded up to twelve months or whatever time limit has been arranged. *Eg.*, the pig borrowed is one of three fists, valued at Rs. 5; if Re. 1 is paid at the time of borrowing, when a year has elapsed the original price of Rs. 5 will be due: if the borrower is unable to repay, fresh arrangements will be made between them—probably the payment of a further Re. 1 yearly and, failing which, interest on the pig at the rate of one fist for the first year, *yun tum* (three fingers) for the second and *yun hui* (two fingers) yearly, for the third, fourth and fifth year and *yun kat* (one finger) for the sixth year, by which time it will have increased to a six fist pig, valued at Rs. 30; if the debt had been of such long standing as to increase to this extent, further interest would probably be impossible to obtain. Before the advent of Government, the debtor and his household would be liable to be classed as slaves, if the amount were not paid up, in that, part of the marriage price of the female relatives would be taken and continue for generations.

No interest is charged on pigs under three fists.

According to Standing Orders, Courts will take no cognizance of debts (not to do with marriage prices) of more than eighteen months old.

If interest is agreed upon, it has to be paid at the following rates and not at the will of the lender:—

For first year	...	...	Increase of one fist.
For second year	...	...	Increase of three fingers.
For third year	...	...	Increase of two fingers.
For fourth year	...	...	Increase of two fingers.
For fifth year	...	...	Increase of two fingers.
For sixth year	...	...	Increase of one finger.

One month's grace is allowed in the repayment of a pig.

In Haka village, pigs are valued approximately as follows:—

	Rs.	A.	P.		Rs.	A.	P.
One fist	to	1	8	0
Two fists	to	3	0	0
Three fists	to	5	0	0
Four fists	to	8	0	0
Five fists	to	15	0	0
Six fists	to	25	0	0

There are three forms of interest commonly used in the borrowing of grain: either an equal measure (*hlei pa*) to that lent or half (*tum hre*) or quarter (*kip seo kan*) of the quantity, in compound interest.

A case from Haka village will illustrate the first form:—Pun Seo, of Kodon Quarter, borrowed two *rèls* of grain (*hlei pa*) from Ya Feng, of Klang Um Quarter; therefore, at the end of a year, he was liable for four *rèls*—at the end of three years for sixteen *rèls*: it is customary for the interest to lapse for twelve months, every three years and, in the fourth year, Pun Seo repaid the sixteen *rèls* of grain. Had he not done so, it could have accumulated to the amount of three hundred *rèls*, the value of a big *mythun*, where it would cease, as further calculation would be too complicated for a Chin.

Monthly interest is usually arranged on cash loans, generally at the rate of two annas to the rupee per mensem—this is not unalterable, sometimes a lesser rate is fixed, very occasionally a higher. The common rate of interest is annas 8 to Re. 1 on Rs. 10 per mensem.

Demand of Reparation (Saw Hnol).—This is a peculiar custom: anyone who considers he has been insulted by another, either by false accusation or action, may present that latter with certain property, when he must immediately pay compensation in proportion to the insult or defend himself before the village council.

Pig Breeding (Vwawk Vul).—Anybody looking after a sow while it is with young, is entitled to half the litter—the owner receiving his animal back and half the litter—any extra going to the former. In the case of a sow having a litter for the first time (*vwawk rhil*), the owner would receive his sow back, while the litter would be taken by the person who had looked after it.

Cowherd's Due (Shir Kāl Sa Hnong).—When any *mythun*, bullocks or buffaloes are killed, the boys who have been accustomed to look after same are entitled to the flesh of the neck divided between them.

Price for Penning (In Klung Man).—In the same way, people that have sheltered animals underneath their house are entitled to *in klung man*, which is the *agnai za w*, part of the thigh. If one of the animals is sold, the house owner would demand from annas 4 to Re. 1 from the seller—this is called *kom tya*.

Inspect Face (Hmai Hoi).—Whenever a *mythun*, bullock or buffalo is paid on account of a price or sold, the person taking it over is supposed to *hmai hoi*, which means he must

inspect it or see its face—once having done so, he is its owner. If, however, a man taking over an animal refuses to do *hmai hoi* and asks somebody else to look after it for him, the latter, if it dies or is killed, should inform the owner and, not only this, produce part for the inspection of the owner or his agent.

Ill Omens (Shiat Hmu).—It is considered extremely unlucky for a Chin to come upon two snakes copulating and, to avoid ill-fortune, he must remain outside the village that night, without eating cooked food; the next morning, he may proceed to his house, but, on arrival there, must kill a fowl and, if within his means, hold a feast. If a man omits these precautions and is found out, he is liable to pay compensation of a big *mythun*, a pig, one blanket and one bead, whatever his means, to the first man he brings ill-luck to by talking to him.

Before the British occupation, if the man, for any reason, could not pay the compensation, the other might make a slave of him, by claiming a pig whenever one of his daughters married: to ratify this compact, however, the injured man would have to kill a pig on account of *ar sa rhom* and they would partake of it together; thenceforward at the marriage of each daughter or sister of the other man, he would be entitled to receive a pig of three fists, but on the other hand, on account of *shalpa man* (slave's price), the master would have to pay the slave a small *mythun* when the former's daughters or sisters married.

Example:—Ye Pow, Ki Mang and Vai Hnin, of Kodon, saw two snakes copulating near the Trong Var and mentioned the fact to Paw Ki, a woman of Klang Um, and, in consequence had to pay up a big *mythun*, pig, blanket and bead between them on account of *shwel man* (price of mistake).

The Evil Eye (É Tiam).—This power is attributed to Lushais, Tiddim Chins and the Chins in the Unadministered Tracts—by this they are able to cause frogs, porcupine quills, hair, hide, snakes, dogs' teeth to enter the stomach of the person on whom they cast a spell—this is proved, in their estimation, by the fact that persons have been known to vomit these articles—this is a firm belief with them.

Being possessed of an Evil Spirit (Nam Ngei).—These also have the power of casting spells on others and generally belong to the poorest class—in their sleep they are supposed to dream of eating human flesh.

Chins are prone to accuse any person against whom they have a grudge, of this possession by evil spirit, in order to get them outcast from society—this should be strongly discountenanced.

CHAPTER XI.

Diseases.

Lepers (Mi Shi Lo).—Haka Chins believe that leprosy is due to an evil spirit and speak of it with bated breath; nobody would dare kill a leper—they may be abused and even struck, but no blood must be drawn or else the person responsible would, in turn, become one. They do not consider it an infectious disease and, therefore, have no qualms about eating or drinking with them, or even sipping their tobacco juice—sexual intercourse will be continued, if it develops after marriage, but no marriage would take place with a person known to have the disease. They say that there has been no case known of both husband and wife being afflicted and that the disease cannot be passed on to their children.

A childless couple, one of whom is a leper, are not allowed to participate in the village *nāt* propitiations, but once a child is born to them, they may do so on its behalf.

When it happens that the leper is a person of influence, he may retire into seclusion, as he chooses, or attend all feasts the same as usual.

The last day of the waning moon is set aside by lepers as their special time for *nāt* propitiations: they give warning of the event and, during that period, the other villagers are supposed to remain at home and do no work; now-a-days, however, this is often evaded by people pleading ignorance and going off to their cultivations and other duties.

No death dues (*shè*) are payable for a leper and no funeral ceremonies are held, although no objection is raised to inheriting his property. When it happens that one dies within the village, a *nāt* propitiation (*kwa ten*, i.e. purification) is held by the nearest relation; if a pig is killed, the other villagers have to keep within the bounds for five days—if a fowl, for three days—and during that period they must do no work.

Outside every village, there is a site, or sites, reserved for the burial of lepers—this is called *hmun shir* (unholy ground)—much held in dread and carefully avoided by everyone.

When a leper is dying, he is carried to the vicinity of the *hmun shir*; in inclement weather, a shed will have been put up beforehand to shelter him and a special person summoned

to dig his grave; the relations will remain near until he is in death throes and then return home. This grave-digger will bury the body in a sitting posture, which is always done with lepers; after closing in the grave, he must discard his old clothes and change into fresh ones supplied by the relatives of the deceased.

The work is undertaken by none but a poor man of low caste or weak intellect; if there is no such person available in Haka village, somebody from an out-village would be called for the purpose, he would be paid anything from Rs. 5 to Rs. 20.

The widow or widower of a leper may marry again, provided he or she has gone through the purification ceremony—*ten nāk*, which consists of killing a pig to propitiate the house *nat*.

If a person gathers firewood or plucks leaves of a tree from the burial ground of lepers (*hmun shir*) and brings it to anybody's house, dire calamity may result.

Examples:—Ra Kwè of Sangpi is supposed to have contracted leprosy the year before last (1913) because a woman brought some firewood to his house, some five years ago, that had been collected on a *hmun shir*. He held the *hmun ten* ceremony last year, that is, "cleaned his house site" and propitiated the *nat* and afterwards became well.

In the month of June 1915, some Kwarang villagers, who put up in the house of Sang Kōn of Sangpi, Haka, plucked the leaves of a *tur zam* tree, for the purpose of cooking, from a *hmun shir*—for this they killed a pig for the *ten* ceremony, besides giving Sang Kōn Rs. 65 on account of *shwel man*.

Syphilis (Kwazin Hmā).—This is held in great dread by the Chins and is supposed, by some of them, to have originated in Vomkwa: from there it spread through Wantu and so on to Haka—of course this origin may have been yaw, which closely resembles syphilis in appearance. Formerly, those afflicted in this way had to make it known, but now-a-days this is not done, which is much to be regretted, as it has led to the disease becoming more common—half the village of Firthi is suffering in this way.

They used to practise severe segregation with sufferers—they were not permitted to eat, drink or sip tobacco juice with others and were given separate utensils to use.

The leaf of a shrub called *ting hna shir* is supposed to be a cure for this disease, but it must be plucked by the sufferer himself; the juice is crushed out and applied locally.

A Chin will only come to hospital for treatment of this trouble, if really inconvenienced by it.

Abortion (Fa Rawk).—This is never procured by means of drugs, but only through violent exercise or massage. Any woman practising this and the fact becoming known to her relations, she would lose caste in their eyes and not be permitted to take part in their *nat* propitiations: even did she afterwards give birth to another child, they would consider her under a curse, in that it would be still-born or die young.

Epidemic (Klang Rai).—On an outbreak of cholera or small-pox, Chins voluntarily leave that village and take to the jungle or their cultivations—leaving the affected ones behind, with some aged person to supply their wants.

Measles, chicken-pox and dysentery are not considered so serious—a matter of luck and no precautions are taken. Vaccination is not popular with them, as they do not believe in its efficacy, and if the lymph takes, they are prevented from manual labour for a time. Chins say fever is becoming more prevalent now—formerly only those who went down to Burma or worked cultivations in the Trong Var, below Haka, were subject to it.

Dysentery appears each year, in greater or less degree, about July and August, that is, when the rains have set in—it is during these months that there is most sickness.

After an epidemic for which they have left their village and returned, the *kwa ten* ceremony (purification) is performed and a large *mythun* killed.

CHAPTER XII.

Notes.

Lac (Ta Rit).—The Haka villagers themselves attach no superstition to the collecting of lac, but the people of Hanta, Vanha, Rimpi, Rientè and Haipai dare not bring it into their villages, for fear of ill-luck befalling them in the death of their fowls and pigs: if brought into the village by any one, the elders would fine the culprit a fowl or pig, with which to propitiate the village *nat* (*kwa ten*). This superstition does not appertain to lac that has been cooked—in fact, the Vanha villagers use a good quantity for fixing their knife handles, they being a community of blacksmiths.

In former times, they would not even collect the lac, but having realised its commercial value, they sacrifice part of

their scruples. Its local price is Re. 1 per viss, but, if traded in Burma, it goes by the market rate.

A large percentage is purchased by the Daidin villagers, from Gangaw, who come up yearly for that purpose.

Blankets (Puan).—Blankets, of a kind, have been woven for generations, but it is only in the last three that patterns have been introduced into them—the dyeing of the thread was learnt from the Burmans: there is a fable that a woman of Bōndwa village, in a dream, learned the art of weaving patterns; when she awoke, she put this into practice and then taught others.

For dyeing purposes, they use lac, which produces a vivid red, and home-grown vegetable dyes: when silk thread is used, it is purchased in skeins from Burma and then dyed to the requisite colour. The raw cotton is cultivated, spun into thread and then dyed—this work is all carried out by women.

Mahooya Beads (Pumtèk).—Tradition says that a man possessed a goat and, according to the food he gave it, so its dung became *pumtèk* beads—good food produced good beads and *vice versâ*. *Mahooya* beads are highly prized. Now-a-days they come from Gangaw in the Pakōkku District, but, where they are bought, the Chins do not know: some of the modern ones are of just as good quality as the old beads: there are ten varieties—round, flat and cylindrical—they are of a black and white—black background with white stripes. They vary from annas 8 to Rs. 100, but heirlooms are priceless and cannot be bought. Lyen Mo of Sangte possesses the most, but the best specimens belong to the Sangpi family. Lyen Dun, Chief of Klang Klang Tribe, also possesses many beads.

It is customary for Chiefs owning very special beads (or property) of good quality to hold a feast, and, in front of the assembled company, to forbid his heirs to part with certain beads and gongs and order that they must be kept in the *hmunpi*: the result is that no Chins will dispose or part with these heirlooms—if he did so, ill-luck would befall and he would die and, further, his wife become barren.

Chins give an example:—Van Lin of Nguntwelsung gave away a family heirloom in the shape of a gong for his wife's marriage price—the couple were childless—the elders then ordered the return of the gong, saying that Van Lin would die—this was done, after which Van Lin's wife gave birth to four children.

Illiterate (Sa Tyam Lo).—Chins account for their not having a written language by the following story. In former ages, a spirit presented one of their number with letters inscribed on leather, while for a Burman they were scratched on some leaves: attracted by the smell, a hungry dog ran away with the former, since when the Chins have been illiterate, while the more fortunate Burman remained in possession of his and thus is able to read and write.

Diviner (Kwa Vāng).—In every village, there are one or more of these—they are considered to have the ear of the spirits and can therefore foretell events: they are summoned in illness, to prophecy whether the patient will live or die. Likewise they are able to divine what propitiation will be favourable to the *nats*, what animals shall be killed and even offences that have been committed. Now-a-days, they are losing their influence with the people, who consider they only follow their profession, in order to accumulate property.

Sharing of Zu (Zu Rhom).—It generally takes place once a year, sometimes twice, according to the means of the parties—and is invariably held immediately previous to a girl's marriage. The *zu* is contributed by the unmarried girl and her sweethearts, and her brother will kill an animal, large or small, according as he can afford. The feasting and singing will last for three days, if the good cheer holds out as long. These feasts are attended by the young men and women from the other quarters, and it is a point of honour with the holders of the feast to make their guests as intoxicated as possible; for this purpose, those in charge of the *zu* pots may tie a rope round the pot, which they hold over the neck of the person drinking, thus forcing him or her to swallow the apportioned measure. Part of the flesh of the animal killed is sent to the house of the girl's sweethearts.

Promiscuous wrestling is undertaken by the young men, as they feel inclined—no display of bad temper is permitted, and a broken limb is treated as a piece of ill-luck. Wrestling competitions between the various quarters are only arranged at *Lām Shēr Nāk*, *Kwang Soi* and *Sakè Fim Nāk*.

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