

NEPALESE
CUSTOMS § MANNERS

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To
MyMother

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Nepalese Customs and Manners

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INTRODUCTION

Every society has its own customs, manners, beliefs and superstitions. I have attempted to bring together in this book some of the common beliefs and practices prevalent in the Kathmandu valley and elsewhere, in the hope that visitors to this country will understand the Nepalese people and their behaviour.

As elsewhere in the world, the people of Nepal are divided into diverse ethnic groups and castes and have been conditioned by geography, history, religion and tradition into different life styles. With better communication among themselves and with the rest of the world, resulting in breakdown of old social barriers, some of these beliefs have lost their importance.

The rigidity of Nepalese society as a whole is giving way to a new flexibility and new ideas are being accepted. Modern education has also played a part in it. As a consequence, the traditional ideas have different values even within one single family. The older members might be found trying to

live according to the traditional rules. To the younger generation, however, these rules have lost much of their relevance in their lives.

The origin of, or the reasons for, some of Nepalese customs and manners are obvious and need no explanation, but the same cannot be said about others.

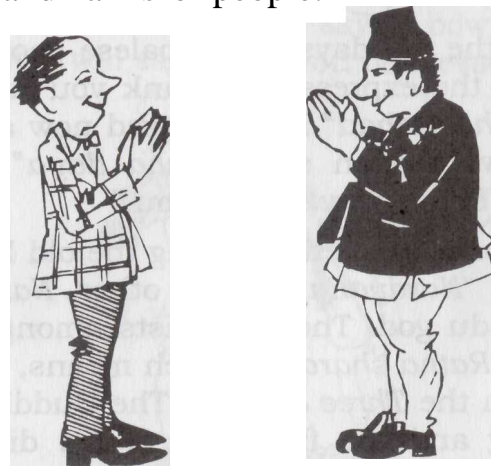
To all my friends, who have helped me in writing this book, I am thankful. I am specially grateful to Miss Tirtha Laxmi Pradhan and Mrs. Susan Quainton.

K.L.

Kathmandu,
November 30, 1975.

COMMON COURTESY

The most common form of salutation among the Nepalese is to join the palms of both hands and to say “*namaste*” or “*namaskar*.” Both are Sanskrit words that mean, “I bow to the God in you.” This is an appropriate form of greeting between all castes and ranks of people.



Among the Sherpas it is customary to present a white scarf called *khata* when one calls upon a Lama or any other person to whom one wants to show respect. The scarf is also presented to a person going on a journey.



In the old days the Nepalese people did not use the expression "Thank you" but the word "*dhanyabad*" is often used now a days. Old Newars often said "*maha daya*" which meant, "It was very kind of you."

A form of greeting among the old Newars is to say "*Narayana*" to each other. *Narayana* is a Hindu god. The Buddhists among them say "*TriRatna sharana*" which means, "I seek refuge in the *Three Jewels*." The Buddha, his teaching and the fraternity of his disciples are called the three jewels.

Yet another form of greeting when one meets a friend is to ask, "Where are you going?" or "Are you well?" People may ask each other, "Have you eaten?" When one arrives at a place, one is greeted with the

expression, "So you have come'." At the time of departure, one may say: "Let me go. Don't bother to see me out."

Five virgin girls with wreaths of flowers greet very important persons upon their arrival. They represent five famous women of Hindu mythology -- *Ahalya*, *Draupadi*, *Tara*, *Kunti* and *Mandodari* - whose sight is supposed to be very auspicious.

When the Newars meet their priest, they will lower their heads and say, "I bow to you." The priest will say, "May you be blessed."



A *Brahman* is usually addressed as *baje*, which means grandfather. His wife is *baje* or grandmother. To show respect to a *Brahman*, a person lowers his head. The *Brahman* places his right hand upon the person's head in benediction.

Respect is shown in other ways too. It is common to address an older person as *daju* (elder brother) or *didi* (elder sister). Depending upon the relative difference in age, an older person is addressed as uncle or aunt, grandfather or grandmother.

Every morning before breakfast a wife touches the feet of her husband and mother-in-law with her head. To other senior members of the family, she merely lowers her head and says, "I bow to you." And they will say to her, "Now, that's all right"

If by any chance a wife touches her husband or mother-in-law with her foot, she must immediately bend herself and touch his or her feet with her head.

All junior members in a family must bow down to their elders in the morning or whenever they meet. A virgin girl must not, however, touch the feet of anyone, including that of her parents, with her head.

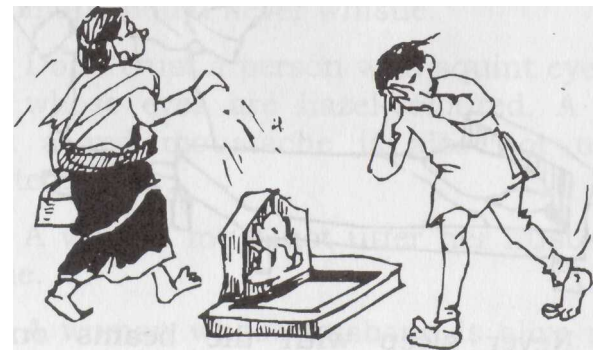
It is a social offence and a sin to step over an older person, or, for that matter, anyone else. Nor should one touch a person with one's feet. If an offence is committed inadvertently it must be expiated at once by touching the person with one's hand, which is then placed on one's own head. At the

same time one may say "*Narayana*" or "*Bishnu*", implying that the person was as sacred as either god was.

In many Nepalese houses the stairs are placed one over the other. To prevent someone from going overhead as one climbs the stairs, one calls aloud "*binhabi*," which means, "Get out of the way." Similarly, a person going down the stairs will give the same warning to anyone that might be coming up.

When one goes to visit a new-born child, one must greet the child by presenting a rupee or a few coins.

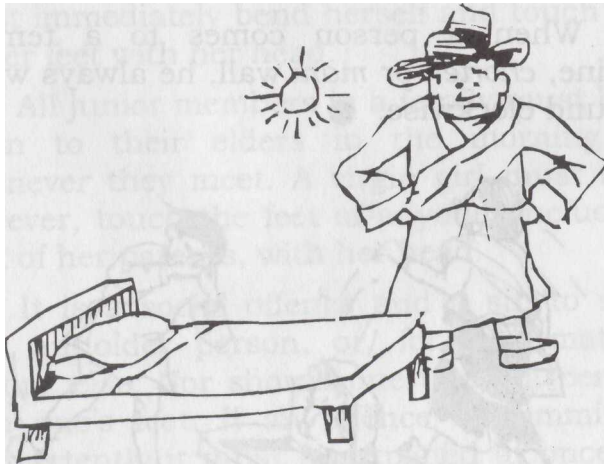
When a person comes to a temple, shrine, *chorten* or *mani* wall, he always walks around clockwise. •



DO'S AND DON'TS

Don't blow out a lamp with your breath. It is being disrespectful to the light. Some people bring their palms together and hold them up in reverence to a lamp in the evening. Also don't light a cigarette directly from a lamp.

Don't leave your shoe overturned. One must not take more than six steps with only one shoe on.



Never sleep with the beams on the ceiling in your room crosswise to your bed. In

a Sherpa home, people do not sleep with their heads to the south or towards the door.

Don't keep a pen standing on its nib in an inkpot.

Whenever you touch your throat, you had better blow over your fingers; otherwise you will grow a goitre.

When people see someone yawn, they will flip their middle finger and thumb or utter a pious word.

Never receive anything across the door. You must not drink water while standing across the threshold or under the eaves of the roof or while climbing a staircase. You must not bathe under the eaves of the roof.

One must not whistle inside a house, especially in a Sherpa's. Only thieves whistle. A woman should never whistle.

Don't trust a person with squint eyes, or one whose eyes are hazel-coloured. A man with a red moustache is also not to be trusted.

A woman must not utter her husband's name.

A woman whose husband is alive must always wear glass bangles. She must not

break them upon her wrist, because that is done only after her husband's death. She must not cut a pumpkin.

When a woman combs her hair, she must spit upon the hair that has come off before throwing it away. This is to "prevent a witch from taking possession of the hair with the intention of doing her some harm.



A girl must comb her hair in the morning. If she does so in the daytime, she will become lazy and if she does this in the evening she will become a whore. She must not comb her hair while standing up.

If a girl has to look at a looking glass in the evening, she must tell it that she is going to a dance. The glass should not be broken.

A girl who keeps on playing with rice will get a husband with pockmarks on his face. If she cries for a long time, she will marry a man who lives far away from where she was born.

A person who watches the cloud may lose his memory.

Whoever eats a pigeon's head will have an unsteady head.

A man who beats his sister's children will have unsteady hands.

After sundown, the house must not be cleaned nor the trash and dirt thrown away. The Sherpas have a similar belief; they will not permit salt and *ghee* (clarified butter) to be taken out of their house in the evening.

GOOD DAYS, BAD DAYS

Sunday is a good day for the worship of the sun. Never ridicule anyone on this day, lest you become ridiculous yourself. A married woman should not bathe on Sundays, nor is it a day for her to wash clothes. A Sherpa will not lend money on Sunday.

Monday is a bad day to buy cloth as well as to put on new clothes. A Sherpa will not sell *ghee* on this day.

Tuesday is a good day to visit the shrine of *Ganesh*. It is, however, a bad occasion to call on people, especially for the first time. A married woman must not visit her parents on Tuesday. Or, if she has been staying with her parents, she must not go to her husband. If it rains on Tuesday, it may continue for a whole week.

A married woman must not stay overnight at her parent's home on Wednesday. It is a good day to go to a doctor.

It is very bad for a married woman to bathe on Thursday. She might lose her husband. This is also a bad day for a married

woman to stay overnight at her parent's home.



On Saturday, nothing made of iron may be brought home, as it may cause a quarrel in the family. On this day, a married woman must not grind mas (black pulse); she must get someone else to do it before she can cook it. To take a bath, she must get her husband's permission. She must not stay overnight at her parent's home. A rain on Saturday will continue for a whole week. It is a good day to visit the shrine of the goddess, *Bhaqpati*. It is the weekday in Nepal and an official holiday.

A married woman must not stay overnight at her parent's home on the last day of the Nepalese month. She must not do so either on Mother's Day or on Father's Day. She must not go anywhere else for an overnight stay during the festival of *Tihar*. On the other hand, a married woman must not eat at her husband's home on *Maghe Sangranti* the first day of the month of *Magh* (the tenth Nepalese month), specially if she has had no child. She must take her meals at her parent's home on that day.

One must not wash clothes on the first day of the month, on the eighth and eleventh days of the light and dark fortnights, on the last day of the dark fortnight and on full-moon days.

No animal may be killed during the month of *Gunla* (July-August), on the eleventh day of the light and dark fortnights, on the last day of the dark fortnight and on the birthdays of the Buddha, *Ram*, Krishna and the King of Nepal.

Note:

The people of Nepal use two calendars all the time. The official calendar known as *Bikram* era is solar. The months are *Baisakh*, *Jyestha*, *Ashad*, *Shrawan*, *Bhadra*, *Aswin*, *Kartik*, *Marga*, *Poush*, *Magh*, *Falgun* and *Chaitra*. For religious celebrations, weddings, death anniversaries and many other holidays, a lunar calendar is used, in which a month consists of two fortnights, dark and light.



ON TRAVELLING

Before going on a journey, it is customary to consult an astrologer about the proper time for departure. The traveller takes some rice, one betel nut and a coin in a piece of cloth to ensure a successful journey. If, for any unavoidable reason, he is unable to leave, this bundle is sent out of the house at the auspicious time as determined by the astrologer. Or, he may leave his house at the proper time and stay overnight at a friend's house before going on his journey. At the time of departure, a brief ceremony is held by his family to wish him good luck, in which the traveller is given a hard-boiled egg, dried fish, meat and wine or curd.



Relatives and friends bring flowers,

spices, and fruits like orange, banana, or coconut to see off a traveller.

Two pitchers full of water are placed on either side of the doorway when the traveller is about to leave the house. When he comes out, he drops a few coins into the pitcher. It is inauspicious to see an empty water-pot when one comes out of the house. It is unlucky to hear a crow or see a window or a pregnant woman.

It is not good to go out of the house at midday or dusk. If someone sneezes when you are about to go out, wait a few moments before you leave the place. If you stumble while walking, it is an indication that a member of your family has suddenly remembered you.

Among the Sherpas, when a member of the family is out, some food, salt or rice is kept on a plate until his return.

One should not return home after an absence of eight nights and nine days. If one must return at all, one can do so only after the stars have come out.

Upon returning from a visit to the *Tarai* or India, it is customary to drink a glass of water in which a twig of *chiraita*, an anti-malarial herb, has been soaked overnight. •

CLEANLINESS AND PURIFICATION

Both personal and household cleanliness are important. The first thing for a person to do every morning before breakfast is to wash the hands, face and feet with fresh water. Some people may go to the rivers for their bath. Among *Brahmans*, it is imperative to have a bath before breakfast.

The housewife's first duty in the morning is to sweep the house from the ground floor up, not from the upper floors downwards, because that is done only on the day that a death has occurred in the house. She next cleans her water pots and pitchers and fetches water in them. She uses ash, not soap to clean the brassware as soap is considered impure. This is also the time when she will wash herself.

Water must be brought fresh every morning because what is kept overnight is unfit for drinking and cooking rice. When water is brought for the worship of the household deities, the woman takes extra care so that no one touches her.

Every now and then, especially when there is a ceremony or feast, the mud-floor all over the house is washed with a mixture of cow-dung and red earth. In the *Tarai*, the *Tharus* do it every day.

Among the *Brahmans*, the men change their *dhoti* and the women take off their *choli* (blouse) when they sit down to cook rice.

At the time of her menstrual period, a woman is considered unclean. She must not come into physical contact with anybody in the family. She must sleep by herself. She can neither cook for the family nor go to the kitchen. She must not visit a temple nor touch a tree or flower plant. At the end of the period, she must bathe and change her clothes before she can resume her normal household chores.



There are varying degrees of pollution when a death occurs, which requires purification ceremonies consisting of fasts, baths and sacrificial fires, and the presentation of gifts to the priests. At the ritual baths a piece of oil cake is symbolically used as soap. After the death of one's parents, one must wear pure white clothes for a whole year. No leather should be used during the mourning period. A widow will not put on red clothes for the rest of her life.

MAINLY ABOUT FOOD

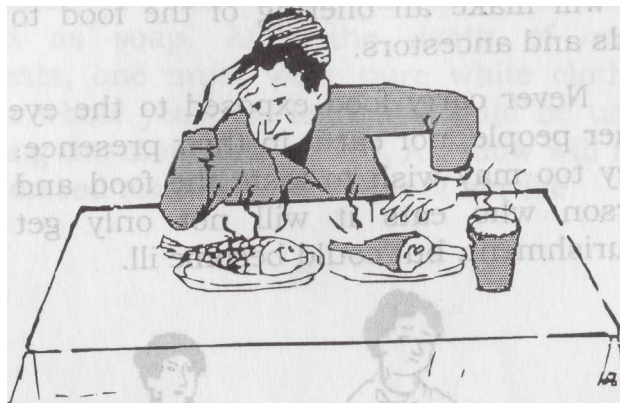
Before a man takes his morning meal, he will make an offering of the food to his gods and ancestors.

Never carry food exposed to the eyes of other people, nor eat it in their presence. For they too may wish to taste the food and the person who eats it will not only get no nourishment, but could become ill.



Ginger is not used in the preparation of a pumpkin dish, for it is believed to cause leprosy. Ginger that has gone bad should not

be used in the preparation of food, because the ginger is supposed to say, "May he who eats me become as bad as I am." In the Sherpa homes in Helambu, leek must not be carried near the hearth.



Do not drink milk and eat meat or fish at the same time. Jackfruit and betel nut should never be eaten together.

Some people like to chew betel nuts after their morning meal; some like clove and some prefer cardamom. These help to digest the food.

Stale betel leaves should not be eaten. Women may take milk turned sour but not by men.

Only a widow may eat the *bael* fruit.

Don't place a red pepper over hot coals in the evening nor on the night of *Laxmi Puja* during the *Tihar*, or when a child has been vaccinated against smallpox. In the last case, even those related to the child should not do it. A red pepper should not be given to a person in his hand; it may lead to a quarrel.

Whoever steals and eats elephant's ears will get a headache. He who eats burnt rice will become foolish.

Food must never be cooked under the eaves of the roof. A fireplace should not be built facing south, because only on the seventh day of a death rituals, rice is cooked on a fireplace facing south. A fireplace should face either east or west.

Vegetables cooked without oil should not be taken. It is very bad if the cook forgets to put water into the pot in which rice is being cooked. Rice should not be served directly from the cooking pot.

Among the Sherpas, if a housewife breaks the wooden spatula while stirring the corn meal, she is not allowed to eat the corn meal. Sherpas do not roast meat on burning coals, nor spill soup containing meat over the fire. Incense must be burnt to appease the gods if soup is spilled over the fire.

The milk of the goat is considered better than the milk of other animals, but as the goat does not give much milk, the animal is mostly kept for meat.

Taboos

Beef is prohibited among the Hindus, except for the *Sarkis* who are cobblers by profession. Buddhists do not eat beef either. Some people would not have anything to do with the slaughter of an animal, but nevertheless they take meat. No female animal is killed for food.

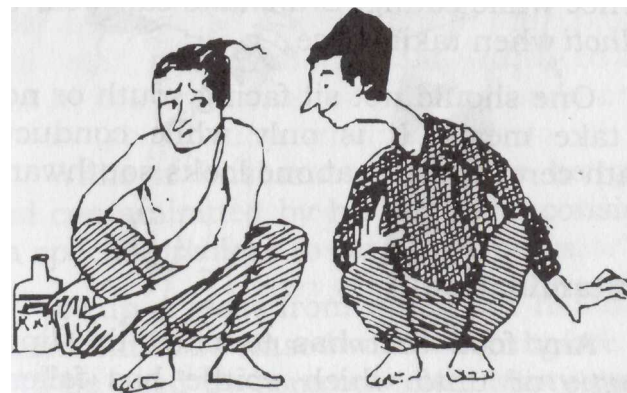


Brahmans, *Chhetris* and *Magars* do not take the meat of the buffalo; they however

drink buffalo milk. *Brahmans* do not take either chicken or duck. Many people do not take the pig. Wild boar is a delicacy to some, while others will not touch it.

Some Newar Buddhists do not eat chicken but they will take duck. Once the Buddha had an infected toe and it was cured after a hen had picked the maggots out of the wound. Thankful for the service done to the Buddha, his followers decided to spare all chickens.

Liquor is prohibited among *Brahmans* and *Chhetris*. *Brahmans* must not take onion, leek, mushroom or tomato. Religious Sherpa men do not eat leek, nor do they take it inside their *gumba* or temple.



Stale food containing salt should not be offered to the gods. *Brahmans* and *Chhetris*

do not eat stale rice. Unmarried *Brahman* girls are not allowed to cook for her family.

During the yearlong period of mourning after the death of one's mother, one should not drink milk, and during the mourning for one's father, one should not take curd.

Milk is not usually taken during *Ashad*, the third Nepalese month.

There are people who will not eat with Westerners, because of the difference in their ideas of pollution and taste in food. Some will eat only fruits with them. There are yet others who will not sit down with anyone else at a table and will only eat what they have cooked for themselves. Some will observe silence while eating. *Brahmans* can wear only a *dhoti* when taking rice.

One should not sit facing south or north to take meals. It is only while conducting death ceremonies that one looks southwards.

Contamination

Any food that has touched the lips or tongue or unto which spittle has fallen is considered *jutho* or contaminated. It would be humiliating to a person if such food were

offered to him. Nor should the dish containing such food be used again without being properly washed. Only the younger member in one's own family may eat the *jutho* food. In the ancient law books, the lowest untouchables were described as those who ate the *jutho* of all other castes.



While a husband may never be given food contaminated by his wife, she considers it a special privilege to eat his leftovers.

A cup of glass from which one has taken a drink must be rinsed with water before it is fit to be used by someone else. Many people pour water from a pot directly into their mouths without letting the pot touch their

lips. In the *Tarai*, however, drinking like this is frowned upon, for, to the people there, it amounts to contaminating the water.

It is necessary to wash one's hand and rinse the mouth after taking rice. The plate of rice should be placed on the ground and not on a mattress or board, because after meal the place where one has eaten has to be cleaned with water. If something other than rice is taken, it is enough to sprinkle water over the ground.

Cooked rice and pulse must not be touched by anyone else other than the members of the family, for that is also a form of contamination. Before and after touching cooked rice, or the pot in which it has been cooked, the hands must be washed. Rice cooked with *ghee*, however, is free from contamination, and so is rice cooked in milk and by steam. In many households, no one but the cook may enter the kitchen. One should not wear shoes while eating, and leather goods are not permitted in the kitchen and the dining room.

Beaten rice mixed with curd is *jutho* among some people, specially in the *Tarai*. Any preparation containing peas is also considered so by *Brahmans*.

Note:

Most Nepalese eat two principal meals a day, once before noon and once in evening. In between, they take simple snacks.

HOME CURES

The Planets may cause an illness. In such a case, it is useful to make a boat from the leaf of a *sal* tree and float it down the river. The boat should contain some barley, mas (black pulse), linseed and a lighted wick. If the current carries the boat away, rejoice, for the patient will soon recover. If it sinks or describes circles in the water, alas! There is little hope of recovery.



A promise is often made to a god to offer the sacrifice of an animal to effect a cure for an illness. Offering a handful of rice may cure a minor illness. Take a handful of rice, move

your hand from the patient's head towards his feet, pull a hair from his head and a thread off his clothes and then throw the rice, the hair and the thread over the roof, saying they are for the gods who need them. The holy water from a temple or family shrine is often given to the sick to drink in the belief that it will do some good.

Backache

Rub yourself where it aches against the staircase early in the morning without anyone seeing you.

Boils

Boils may be cured by painting them over with the soot from the bottom of an earthen pot from the kitchen.

Cold

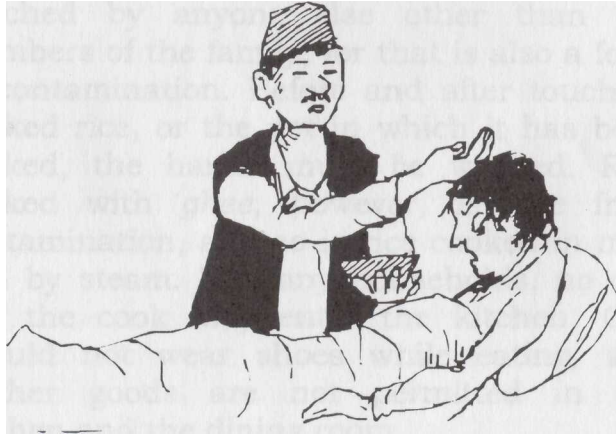
A good remedy for a cold is to drink hot water with a pinch of rock salt or common salt before going to bed.

Earache

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as to enclose the eruption within the outline of the animal.

Skin Diseases

A burning sensation felt all over the body is caused by a serpent. The cure lies in making a cotton serpent and leaving it at the water tap or a place where a serpent is said to live.

Skin diseases may be cured by a bath at the tank of *Sapantirtha* at the foot of Shivapuri hill on Nepalese New Year's Day. Baths in Hot Springs are good for such diseases.

Smallpox

It may be cured by the worship of *Sitala Mai*, the goddess of smallpox.

Toothache

In a street known as *Bangemuda* in Kathmandu, there is a big block of wood protruding from a wall, into which thousands of nails have been driven. This is the Toothache God. If you have a toothache, take a nail and drive it into this block of wood.

Tuberculosis

A cure for a child afflicted with tuberculosis is to take his clothes and a clay

water-pot and to hang them at the foot of a *pepal* tree. Then a life-size likeness of the child is made upon a wall near the tree with cow dung, with soap-nuts for eyes and seashells for the mouth. The image is then worshipped with rice, water and flowers. If the image dries up in a day or two, the child will recover. It is believed that the illness will pass on to the image.



Wart

To remove a wart, take some rice, touch the wart with it, and then throw the rice away when a funeral is passing by.

Worms

On the morning of the fourth day of the light fortnight in the first Nepalese month, it is customary to give a seed of *palabbi* (*butea semina*) to children. A seed is also worn around the neck for a day or two. This is a cure for worms. Meat is not eaten when worm medicine is taken, nor any medicine for worms administered during the rainy season.

PRENATAL CARE

A woman who has given birth to a stillborn child should take a bath in a stream at Banepa on the full-moon day of the first Nepalese month to prevent such a mishap again.



Everybody is supposed to have a small black spot as a birthmark. It is believed that someone's mother touching her own body during her pregnancy at the time of an eclipse formed this black spot. A pregnant woman must therefore be careful during an eclipse, for, if she touches her face, her child will carry the mark on her/his face.

A pregnant woman must not take part in any ceremony with the dead. She will have a miscarriage if she visits the shrine of *Guheswari* in Kathmandu or watches the chariot procession of *Machhendranath* at Patan. She must not visit the sick.

When a woman is pregnant, her husband must not step over a rope with which a buffalo or goat or any other animal is held, as this will make it very difficult for her to give birth. If her husband is suspected to have done so, a rope is tied to an animal and then cut with a knife. The husband must not touch a dead body.

It will help a woman with labour pains if some rice, a betel nut and a coin are offered to the god, *Narayana*, in a small clay pot along with five lighted wicks. Some oil is also poured over the image of the god. If the oil goes down on the right side of the image, a son will be born if it goes down the left side, it will be a daughter.

If a woman experiences difficulty in passing the placenta, a shoe belonging to her husband is placed upon her back.

CHILD CARE



After childbirth, a woman is treated with special care. Three times a day for a month, she is fed rice, molasses, ghee and meat. She is massaged with mustard oil. A month later she is taken to her parents' home, and treated in the same way for another month. The body is massaged with oil for several months.

When no child has survived in a family, the next born child is taken to the drain in the house and kept there, a woman other than the mother immediately picks up the baby. The mother then makes a token

payment to the woman and receives the child back. An alternative to this practice is to hand over the child to a woman whose children are living. But, few women will volunteer to accept it for the fear that their own children will die. The child may also be given to another family to be brought up. An astrologer determines the period for which the child is given away and it may last from several months to years.

In a family where no male issue has survived, the right ear of the next son born is pierced and he is made to wear an earring.

Some parents who have too many children may be willing to give up one child to those desirous of adopting a baby. As soon as the birth takes place, the child is handed over to the foster parents, who make a token payment to the mother.

A child must not be nursed in the presence of other people; s/he may become ill. A sleeping child must not be left alone without being covered with a piece of cloth. When a child is a month old, the ears are pierced and threads inserted in the hole to keep them open. Among *Brahmans* and *Chhetris* it is customary to pierce the nose of a girl.

To protect a child from unseen harms, it is customary to place a knife under her/his pillow. A witch may cause a child to cry all the time. To protect her/him, a piece of fisherman's net is tied to her/his clothes. When a mother takes her child out, she will wet a finger with spit from her mouth. She then rubs the sole of her foot with the finger. Next she places the finger on the child's forehead, imprinting a *tika* made of the dirt from her foot. This process will protect the child from the evil eye.

A child must not be touched by a pregnant woman or by one who has recently given birth. Sometimes, even her shadow is enough to make the child cry all the time. To cure constant crying, water must be brought from a tap "before the crow has crossed the sky" (that is, early in the morning) and poured over the child without her/his clothes being taken off. This is done on Sunday and repeated until the child becomes normal. The child may also be bathed with holy water from a temple or with curd.

If a child does not learn to talk in time, he should be taken to one of the three shrines of *Ganesh* - one located near *Hanuman Dhoka*, one at *Swayambhu* hill in Kathmandu, and one at *Bhaktapur*. Two

sweetmeat balls are presented to the god; one of them is taken back and fed to the child. A child may fail to talk or toddle if an ornament s/he has been promised is not given to her/him.

To help a child to walk, his father may massage him with mustard oil on both his legs.

If a child has diarrhoea because of a fright, sprinkling with water early in the morning for a week may cure her/him. Care must be taken not to touch anybody when bringing the water. To cure this ailment, one may also take a hair and a nail from the child, wrap them up in a piece of cloth and make her/him wear the bundle around her/his neck. •



MAINLY ABOUT FLORA

The first harvest of paddy is received into the house with due ceremony, with rice, curd and a lighted wick.

Fruits and flowers may be stolen but whoever steals a pumpkin will grow goitre.



Don't point at the fruit in a tree with your finger; the fruit will go bad.

The bachelor's button is essential for ceremonies during the Tihar festival. Because the flower keeps fresh for a long time, it is a symbol of longevity.

The red rhododendron is Nepal's national flower. It is found in the hills at an altitude of about 6,000 feet from sea level. The colour of the flower changes to a light pink in higher altitudes.

The *pepal* tree is sacred, as it is believed to be the god *Narayana*; only a *Brahman* may pull it out. On all the main trails in many parts of the hills, platforms known as *chautara* are built and a *pepal* and a bar tree planted together to provide shade for travellers. The construction of the platform is more than a public service; it is the joining of the two trees in sacred wedlock. The *pepal* is also the haunt of the goddess *Kumari*.

Neither banana nor bamboo should be grown near a house. The man who plants these must not let his shadow fall on the plant, for if he does, the plant will not grow. On the other hand, if the man steps into the shadow cast by the plant, he will die. If a bamboo bears flowers, the man who owns it will die. The bamboo must not be cut down on Sunday.

The tamarind tree must not be grown near a house either.

The palm tree is sacred at Patan. It was brought to the town centuries back along

with *Machhendranath*, the patron saint of the town. This tree must not be cut down, but it may be killed by driving a nail into it. It must be allowed to grow wherever it takes root. If it grows inside a house, a hole is made through the roof so that it can grow unchecked.

When a tree has to be cut down in a forest, it is customary to worship *Ban Devi*, the goddess of the forest.



The *tulsi* (*balsam*) plant is sacred and is grown in a pot or on a specially raised platform in the courtyard in many homes.

The *kush* is a sacred grass needed for certain religious ceremonies. The *dubo*, used as an offering to the gods, is evergreen

because the crow is said to have wiped its beak upon the grass after taking *amrit*, the elixir of life.

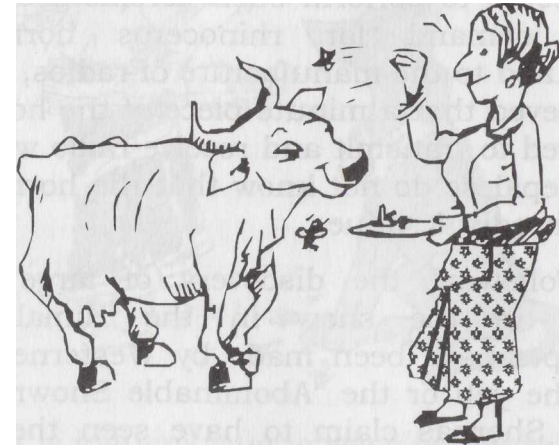
The seeds of the *rudraksha* tree (*eleocarpus ganitrus*) are used to make rosaries. A seed without crinkles is very rare. There is believed to be only one seed in Kathmandu - in the temple of *Pashupati*. To test if the seed without crinkles is genuine, pour some water upon it and it should rise up with the stream of water.

The lotus is the seat of some gods.

The *Kalpabriksha* is a mythical tree that bears anything, one wish for.

ANIMALS, BIRDS, REPTILES AND INSECTS

The cow is considered to be *Laxmi*, the goddess of wealth. She is sacred and protected by law. She is Nepal's national animal. *Kamadhenu* is a mythical cow that gives milk forever.



The bull is *Mahadeva's* steed and law also protects it. All the temples dedicated to *Mahadeva* have an image of the bull before them. Newar farmers do not use the plough in Kathmandu valley in the belief that it would incur *Mahadeva's* displeasure to put his steed to work. They use only a hoe to dig

their fields. It is customary to let young bulls go free in the streets in the name of *Mahadeva*. The cow and the bull are worshipped during the festival of *Tihar*.

A tray of rhinoceros hide is used in ceremonies connected with the dead, for it is believed that the offerings put onto the tray will reach the dead one. Kings and princes used to sit on the carcass of a newly killed rhinoceros to perform such ceremonies. The great demand for rhinoceros horn is attributed to the manufacture of radios, for it is believed that a minute piece of the horn is required to transmit and receive radio waves. The Nepalese do not know that the horn has an aphrodisiac value.

Following the discovery of large foot prints in the snow in the Himalayas; attempts have been made by Westerners to find the yeti or the "Abominable Snowman." Many Sherpas claim to have seen the yeti and they are terribly afraid of it. The yeti has been variously described as resembling an ape or a bear that walks upright on its hind legs or as a creature with the face of a dog. A yeti scalp is kept in the monastery of *Pangboche*, a village at the foot of Mt. Everest. According to local belief, the scalp

belonged to a yeti that frequently visited a Lama. When the yeti fell off a cliff and died, the Lama preserved the scalp, but a scientific examination revealed it to be a fake.

During the festival of *Tihar*, dog is held sacred and it is fed and garlanded.



It is inauspicious to see a cat cross one's path when one is going on a journey. The death of a cat in the house is very bad; a ceremony for a dead cat has to be gone through as in the case of the death of a person. It is said that while dogs like to take part in a marriage feast, cats prefer the food served after the rituals for the dead.

The fox is said to have a horn which appears only when it howls.

To some people the pig is unclean and a person is required to take a bath if he accidentally touches the animal.

Buffaloes, sheep and goats are sacrificed at certain shrines, especially during the festival of *Dasain*. The gelded goat, which is much preferred for the table, is, however, useless for a sacrifice. An all-black goat is good, but not one with patches. Female animals are never slain in a temple. A goat may be let loose in the streets in the name of god.

Before an animal is slaughtered, it is sprinkled with water until it shakes its body. The animal is then supposed to have given its consent to be killed. It is not necessary to do so to kill a buffalo.

The male members of a Newar family according to their age share the various parts of the head of an animal sacrificed at a shrine or killed on certain festive occasions. The right eye belongs to the eldest member of the family; the left eye goes to the second eldest, the right ear to the third in the line; the fourth gets the left ear, the right jaw goes to the fifth person; the left jaw to the sixth;

the snout belongs to the seventh and the tongue goes to the youngest member in the family. If there are less than eight male members, the women get the various parts. If a duck or chicken is used, the head is given to the eldest member, the right wing to the second man, and the left wing to the third member of the family.

Because *Ganesh*, who is *Mahadeva's* son, has the head of an elephant, the animal is held sacred. Whenever an elephant passes in the streets, some people take the dust from its footprints and put it as *tika* on their forehead. The elephant is said to have a pearl embedded in its head.

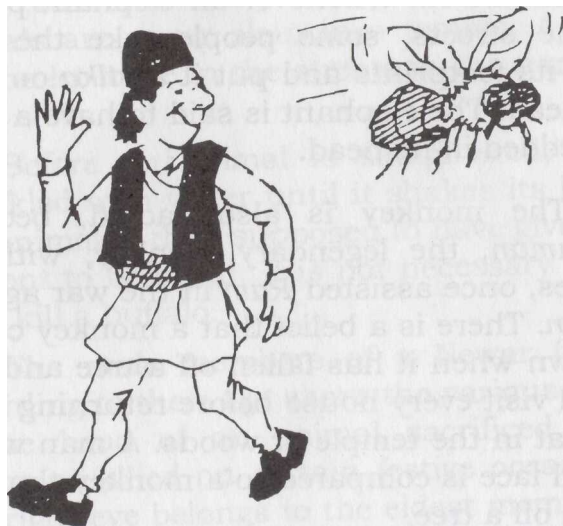
The monkey is also sacred, because *Hanuman*, the legendary monkey, with his hordes, once assisted *Ram* in the war against *Ravan*. There is a belief that a monkey comes to town when it has fallen off a tree and that it will visit every house before returning to its habitat in the temple or woods. A man with a rueful face is compared to a monkey that has fallen off a tree.

The frog is not sacred, but once a year, the Newar farmer will feed the frogs in his field.

It is inauspicious to see a chameleon cross the path.

A spider is called a quarrelsome creature because its presence in a room will lead to a quarrel among the people there.

The sight of a bumblebee is very welcome, for it is a sacred insect. If a bee hovers near a person, it is believed to be a portent of good fortune.



A hen should not be given any food containing salt. A crest fallen person is said to be behaving like a hen that has taken salt.

The *danphe* (*lopophorus*) is Nepal's national bird. A bird of the pheasant family with plumage of different colours, it is found in the forested mountains in western Nepal.

The crow is supposed to live forever, because it has tasted *amrit*, the elixir of life. There is an annual festival for the crow during *Tihar*. Some people feed the crow before they eat their rice in the morning. The crow is, however, considered a harbinger of ill tidings and it is not a sin to kill one.

Of the winged creatures, ducks and chickens are offered as a sacrifice. Sometimes, eggs may be offered as a substitute for them. No sacrifice may, however, be made in a Buddhist temple, nor eggs and meat taken inside it.

The *garuda* is a mythical bird with a human body that lives in the skies and feeds upon snakes. The god *Bishnu* rides upon it. Finding a snake lying across the road, a person may call upon the *garuda* for protection.

Saraswati, the goddess of learning, rides upon a swan, while Kumar, brother of *Ganesh*, uses a peacock. *Ganesh* himself rides a mouse.

During the seventh Nepalese month, the serpent is referred to as "a long reptile." In Newari, it is also called "one whose name ought not to be taken." It is inauspicious to see a snake cross one's path. If a Sherpa sees a serpent above him while walking along a trail, he will run away because it is a bad sign. If he sees one below him, it means no harm.

The naag *kanya* is a mythical mermaid. The scene of a naag *kanya* rising from the sea is depicted in wood- block prints that are pasted over the doors on Naag *Panchami*, a day sacred to the serpent. The naag is a mythical serpent with great powers. It has a jewel in its head. There are many stories about it. In mythology the valley of Kathmandu was known as *Naagbasadaha*, or the serpent's lake, and *Karkotak*, the naag king lived in it. He is believed to be still living at *Taudaha*, a small lake south of Kathmandu. *Shesha-naag* is the serpent upon which *Bishnu* rests. Many farmers in Kathmandu leave a small piece of their field untilled which is meant for the naag

FORTUNE TELLING

The astrologer plays an important role in social and religious affairs. When a baby is born, the date, hour and minute of its birth are noted down and this information is given to an astrologer, he then prepares a horoscope for the baby. He will also give a name to the baby. This name must not be disclosed to anyone.



Before the celebration of a person's birthday, the horoscope is taken to an astrologer for a reading. The astrologer may prescribe specific rites to be performed or gifts to be offered to temples to keep the person from harm.

The same procedure may be followed

when a person is ill or is faced with misfortunes. The astrologer will prescribe rites to be performed to ward off misfortunes.

Before a wedding takes place, the girl's horoscope is sent to the parents of the prospective bridegroom. They will get an astrologer to read the horoscope of both their son and the girl. If the boy and girl are found compatible, a proposal is formally made for the wedding.

When a person dies, the horoscope is placed on the head and burnt with the body.

When a man wants to buy some property, he takes a piece of soil from the land or house to an astrologer whom after divination will say whether it is good to buy. Before a family would move into a newly built house, an astrologer must be consulted to find an auspicious day.

If a person is unfriendly to you without any apparent reason, know that the stars under which you and he were born were antagonistic to each other.

Every person is supposed to have his fate written across his forehead at the time of his birth.

SIGNS AND OMENS

When a person sees the King of Nepal he is absolved of the sins he has committed in the course of that day.

If a person makes an appearance when the name is being mentioned, it is said that s/he will have a long life.

If the soles of your feet itch, it is to tell you that you will soon be travelling. If you itch in your right palm, you will be spending money. On the other hand, if there is an itch in the left palm, you will get money. If a man feels an itch in his right ear, he will hear good news; if his left ear itches, the news will be bad. In the case of a woman, it is just the reverse.

A white spot in your fingernail is a sign that you will get new clothes. If it is on your toenail, you will get a new pair of shoes.

It is very unlucky to lose one's cap.

When cats quarrel in a house, it indicates that a woman in the family will soon be pregnant. A caterwaul brings ill luck.

When children quarrel among themselves about the possession of anything, they

will ask each other to prove that it belongs to one of them by biting it so that it bleeds.

It is very unlucky to be licked by a cow.

If you drop the comb while doing your hair, know that you will have guests in the house. A noise on the hearth when rice is being cooked in the morning means the same thing, if it happens in the evening, know that a witch will call at the house.

Sometimes, before the death of a member of the family, a strange noise may be heard in the house.

If a man sees the breasts of an unmarried woman, it will bring him ill luck during that day.



To put on clothes with the wrong side out brings bad luck.

The crow is a bearer of ill tidings. To watch a crow take a bath brings ill luck. If a crow flies over-heads and flaps its wings when a member of the family is away, know that he has become ill or that an accident has happened to him.

If a hen crow like a cock, she must be decapitated at once over the portals of the house and the head thrown over the roof.

It is very bad if a vulture perches atop the house. Priests must be called and a special ceremony performed to ward off the evil.

If a jackal is heard in the town, it is bad for all the people there.

A dog howling in the night is an indication that someone in the neighbourhood is going to die.

Moles often follow each other, one holding onto the tail of the one preceding it. Whenever one comes across such a sight, a member of the family will die.

It is unfortunate to be hit by a house lizard.

It is very bad to smoke the hookah without tobacco.

A comet is to be dreaded, for it is a harbinger of national calamities. •

OF NUMBERS

A person will not receive payment in round figures, especially for the sale of property or in settlement of debts.



The Sherpas will not serve only one cup of tea or *chhang*. Newars will not serve wine and curd only once. A wedding or any ceremony having religious or social significance for three sons or daughters must not be done in a row. Three persons should not go together on a journey; they will not succeed in their mission. It is wrong for three persons to walk with their arms across each other's back because that is the way mourners follow a funeral.

Seven pieces of bread should not be baked, nor rice served at once in seven plates, because it is only on the seventh day after a person's death that everything required for a dinner for the dead is prepared in sevens.

The eighth year in a person's life is very bad. All the years having eight, as eighteen, twenty-eight and so on are bad. The eight and eighty-eight years are especially so. When there are eight members in a family it will result in the loss of a member of the family, or alternatively the family will become poor. Twelve in a family is not good either.



One hundred and eight is a good number. A rosary has this number of beads in it.

THE WORLD OF SPIRITS

The spirits of the dead ones are apt to return to their homes, usually immediately after death. Some may return as shadows while others can be heard, knocking at the door, climbing the stairs or doing some work. On the seventh night after the death of a person, a dinner is laid out in a basket and hung out of a window during the night. The spirit will come and eat the food.

After the death of one's parents, one must always lay aside a small portion of the morning meal in their names.

People who come out of their houses very early in the morning without a word to anyone may be led astray by a creature called *jhumi*. No one knows how this creature looks like.

If you ever come across a very pretty young woman in an attractive dress at midnight, you had better be careful. She might be a *kichkanni* if her toes are turned backwards. If you ever encounter a man

without his head, know that he is a *murkatta*. These are spirits from the dead.

The *kawan* is a very large human-like skeleton that may be heard walking about in the dark lanes and alleys at midnight.



Covered with long, woolly hair, the *khya* haunts dark rooms. He is good-natured but sometimes he may tickle people to death. A person may wake up from his sleep and find himself unable to make a move; a *khya* may be holding him down. If you cannot find your

way about in a dark place, a *khyā* may be blocking your path. He guards treasures and is depicted in pictures alongside of *Laxmi*, the goddess of wealth, with a bag of money in his hands.

The *bhut* is a glutton who devours all the food that he can get his hands onto. The *pret* is a restless, troubled soul. The *pishach* is also a spirit, troubled and restless. These spirits are usually found during the night at crossroads and cremation grounds. They may follow a man and make him sick.

The will-o'-the-wisp is known as *mipoalakhe*. It chases people who come across it.

OTHER NEPALESE BELIEFS

The Sun and the Moon are brothers. The moon is older. An eclipse is caused by the demon *Rahu* by devouring the Sun or the Moon. During an eclipse people do not work, nor do they eat. A solar eclipse is an official holiday so that people can go to the rivers and bathe and pray. At this time, people also give gifts to certain persons who go about crying "*ganki*". The gift usually consists of a few coins, paddy, salt and a garment that one happens to be wearing at the time.

It is customary to raise a hue and cry when an earthquake occurs. If the women are unable to get out of their house, they will sit down and press the ground with their thumbs.

Lightning comes in various shapes - as fire, as an axe, or as a cock. The fire-lightning burns up anything it hits while the axe-lightning splits up an object. The cock-lightning just makes a loud noise.

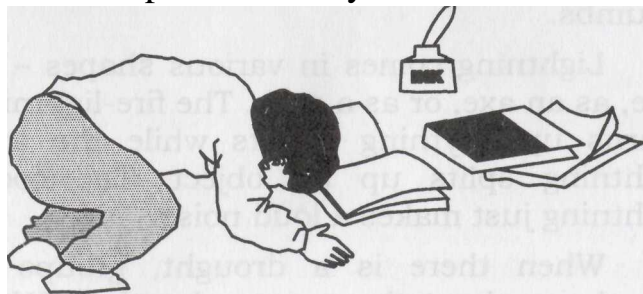
When there is a drought, groups of people go about the streets chanting, "*Hara hara Mahadeva, pani de, aiikati pugena, dherai de.*" It means, "*Mahadeva, give us*

water. A little water is not enough, give us more." Housewives pour water from their windows upon the men.

A *Shaligram* is a stone containing a nugget of gold, found in the *Gandaki* river in western Nepal and believed to be a symbol of the god, *Narayan*. It is kept in the family shrine and worshipped. It is not considered a sin to steal a *Shaligram*.

If anything is lost, promise a small coin to *Ganesh*; then look again and you will find what you have lost.

On a birthday, it is customary to distribute flattened rice mixed with curd to the children of the locality. Rich people will feed and give gifts to the poor. A person should not cross a river on his birthday, nor should he speak ill of anyone else.



A book is a sacred object since it is a symbol of *Saraswati*, the goddess of learning.

In the old days, students touched their books to their heads before and after reading them. It is a sin to touch a book with one's foot.

The driver of a car will touch the steering wheel with his right and then touch his own forehead to ensure safety while going over a bridge.

During the festival of *Dasain*, goats and fowls are sacrificed to the vehicles to prevent accidents.

Before a football game, the goalkeeper will touch the posts with his hand and then touch his own head, a gesture made in the hope that the goal posts will help him in defending the line.

In Kathmandu, a cannon used to be fired at mid-day since 1901 A.D. Some people would touch the earth and their own forehead when they heard the gun. Others used to say "*Narayana*" at the same time. The system has now been discontinued.

One must not let other people tread upon the shadow cast by one's head.

Among the *Brahman* and *Unnetri* women, red powder upon their forehead and beads around their necks indicate marital status. No Newar woman ever wears a ring or stud in her nose, because she must not

pierce her nose.

Some people write "74" across the flaps of an envelope after it has been sealed. Figure "74" is said to represent 74 mounds (6,068 lbs) of sacred thread collected from Hindus at one time during the Muslim invasion of India. If any person other than the addressee opens the letter, it will be a sin as great as that massacre.

When *Sita* was kidnapped and *Ram* was looking for her, he came upon a tailor. "Have you seen my wife?" he asked, but the tailor did not pay attention to him. So *Ram* laid a curse upon the tailor and that is why his thread gets knotty.

The washerman, on the other hand, was a gainer by the event because he cared enough to tell *Ram* about *Sita* being taken away by *Ravan*. *Ram* blessed the washerman and told him that he would get extra clothes for himself whenever he washed clothes. That is the reason a washerman is always calling *Ram* while washing clothes.

A visitor sprinkles himself with water before speaking with a sick person and when he leaves he will not say good-bye. Returning home, he will sprinkle water again before speaking with his own family.

SOME NEPALESE PROVERBS

1. A lion at home but a jackal in the forest.
2. The tiger eats the vain cow.
3. The tiger that eats you will not spare me.
4. He who eats the buffalo's calf will not spare the cow's.
5. He who cannot face a live tiger will pull its whiskers when it is dead.
6. It is not the tiger in the forest but the one in the mind that eats up a man.
7. A young jackal cannot compete with an old tiger.
8. Even a calf chases a run-down deer.
9. When a tiger becomes old, he hunts for grasshoppers.
10. A jackal's roost in a tiger skin.
11. Will a cow die because of the cobbler's curse?
12. The crow does not care how it hurts the cow.
13. You have to keep up with the kicks of milkcow.

14. One cannot turn an ass into a cow by bathing it.
15. It makes no difference to a blind bull whether it is the full moon or the dark moon.
16. A leopard has a thousand pens.
17. To lose a goat when the leopard was heard.
18. Read the gospel to a bear.
19. The buffalo to pray to the butcher for mercy.
20. He who cannot see a buffalo on his own body finds a louse in others.
21. A crowd gathers when a buffalo is felled but there is no one when a man falls down.
22. The buffalo is scared of the mendicant just as the mendicant is afraid of the buffalo.
23. How can the horn be a burden to the buffalo?
24. An elephant eats as much as it is worth.
25. An elephant's tusks are never withdrawn.
26. An elephant eats with teeth different from those it shows.

27. A gnat can make an elephant cry.
28. The grass is trampled when the elephants fight.
29. The elephant went through but its tail got caught.
30. Ask him, who has promised an elephant, for a goat.
31. He who rides the horse falls, he who works, errs.
32. A vain dog barks every evening.
33. There is no need to call but he comes wagging his tail.
34. A beaten dog always bares his teeth.
35. A dog stricken by a bolt is frightened of the lightning.
36. A dog's tail does not become straight even if it is held in a trap for twelve year.
37. To lend meat to a dog.
38. A pet dog bites its master.
39. The cat is gone and the mouse rules.
40. There comes a mouse to govern when everyone else has failed.
41. Too many cats kill no mice.
42. The sheep will go with the sheep and the goat with the goats.

43. Give the goat the load of a goat.
44. If a goat will do, why is the ox needed?
45. Don't sacrifice a goat when a chicken becomes ill.
46. A pumpkin that does not go into a goat's mouth.
47. A man the size of a goat would talk as big as a basket.
48. The monkey's tail is neither a stick nor a weapon.
49. Only a serpent sees the legs of another serpent.
50. The mouse digs the hole; the snake lives in it.
51. The cuckoo is more cunning than the crow.
52. The crow and the cuckoo can be told by their sound.
53. The crow does not talk like the magpie.
54. The crow is neither pleased nor sad because the *bel* fruit has ripened.
55. If there is food in a plate, there will be no dearth of cows.
56. The black crow lays white eggs.
57. An insect can destroy a diamond.

58. The lost fish is big.
59. Can a hog muddy the sea?
60. To live in the water and to make an enemy of the crocodile.
61. The python is provided by providence.
62. The river makes a louder noise than the sea.
63. No one lives in a bare tree.
64. You will be safe from the rain for a while under a large tree.
65. Will the whole forest become sour because a tree is sour?
66. The forest is gone and so is the tiger.
67. Touch not the leaf of a bitter plant, leave not even the root of a sweet one.
68. Rice bends when it grows tall, the millet becomes straight.
69. The grown-up bamboo bends.
70. Every spring has a different taste, every man a different idea.
71. He who needs a drink must find the spring.
72. Give a drink of water, but do not point out the spring.

43. Give the goat the load of a goat.
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73. Pulling at a creeper can bring a landslide.
74. He aims at the log but the axe hits his knee.
75. To destroy an axe to make needles.
76. The knife forgets but the wood remembers.
77. You cannot put two knives in one sheath.
78. Enter a needle and out comes a spade.
79. To pour butter onto a blazing fire.
80. No one sits by a burnt-out fire.
81. Sit by a log fire; listen to an old man.
82. There will be no shortage of ash if you burn down your house.
83. The children are the wealth of the poor.
84. The child of the well-to-do is spoiled.
85. The daughter of a good family is like spring water.
86. One good son is better than a hundred bad ones.
87. Will a son be born by being impatient?
88. To sell a son to buy a slave.
89. They forgot to ask for the girl in a hurry to get the wedding over.

90. A beggar wants his son to wed.
91. The mother loves her daughter; the daughter loves a stone.
92. To scold the daughter to frighten the daughter-in-law.
93. Sometimes it is the mother-in-law's turn, sometimes the daughter-in-law's.
94. The mother-in-law died last year and now come tears.
95. While every man has his care, a man who stays with his in-laws thinks only of his food.
96. There is none so grateful as a dog and none so ungrateful as a son-in-law.
97. When brothers fall apart, the villagers rob them.
98. The old man is dead and the past is gone.
99. When an ox becomes old, he seeks the precipice; when a man becomes old, he seeks an enemy.
100. The old man's secret is known to the old woman.
101. The old woman went for a piece of meat and was drowned in the gravy.

102. The woman who goes about loving has ten different husbands; but there is no one when she is about to die.
103. When it becomes night, the old woman begins to hurry.
104. The man who has no child loves his money; the leper loves his body.
105. The poor have no money and the rich no mind.
106. Everybody becomes friendly while you have money; when you have no money, there are only strangers.
107. Friendship with a good man is like inscription on a stone; it lasts forever. Friendship with an evil one brings on ruin.
108. A devious friend is worse than an open enemy.
109. Good advice should be taken even if a slave gives it.
110. He speaks not one word when he sits in an assembly but at home his moustache gets no rest.
111. The hungry wishes to eat here in this hill, the well fed says he will eat beyond the hill.

112. The day is spent in playful pranks, the grain is taken out to dry in the moonlight.
113. To be in a hurry to go to the field before the gate is open.
114. What takes a whole year for a man to decide takes but one moment for a woman.
115. The vine blossoms but bears no fruit.
116. A knot tied with a laugh is untied with tears.
117. There is a market where the merchant lives.
118. Opportunities come but do not linger.
119. Farming is best, trade comes next, and service is the worst of all.
120. A guest for a day, let him eat the best on the second day, let him go elsewhere.
121. A mendicant comes as a guest in a hermit's hut.
122. Where there is peace, there is God.
123. While the holy men die of starvation, rogues live on rice and milk.
124. Even the god is afraid of the wicked.
125. Even a ghost will run away if he is beaten up.

126. There is no medicine for forgetfulness.
127. There is a cure for everything except for shamelessness.
128. A country by hearsay is a happy place; a country in which one must live is not.
129. Ask not the way to the village where you do not intend to go.
130. In the land of the blind, close your eyes; in the land of the lame, walk with a limp.
131. Eat whatever you like but put on clothes to please others.
132. Put on the clothes to suit the land.
133. A temple in the neighbourhood is neglected.
134. To depend upon others is to fast for ever.
135. The unfortunate gets angry when it is time to eat.
136. He who spits at the sky gets it full in his face.
137. To describe the heaven to its king.
138. The sun cannot be covered with the band.
139. When the sun comes the stars disappear.

140. To hold a lamp to the sun.
141. That is no hindrance to an honest man.
142. One hundred lies are required to hide one lie.
143. Progress and regression go together.
144. Sow with one hand and reap with both.
145. Give with one hand and take with the other.
146. He who deals in coal dirties his hand.
147. Man is known when there is work to be done.
148. He who eats would not be stopped by his moustache.
149. Every one can teach but not learn.
150. A man does not become a hermit because of his ochre clothes.
151. He who steals is a thief whether he steals a radish or a horse.
152. A thief catches a thief.
153. An unknown thief is as honourable as a father.
154. He who steals shouts aloud.
155. Fear the upstart and the great become low.

156. An unkind word is sharper than a sword.
157. It is best to speak less.
158. When the day is bad even an unloaded gun fires.
159. What is earned in sin is spent in repentance.
160. The stomach makes a man do many things.
161. Repentance is good; not to sin is better.
162. Love and smoke cannot be hidden.
163. No oil will come out of the sand by squeezing it.
164. There is nobody without an illness, not a family without a stain.
165. An enemy is never idle.
166. Treat no enemy as insignificant.
167. Sadness is a disease of the heart.
168. Content is great wealth.
169. Greed brings gain, gain brings sorrow.
170. The goldsmith beats a hundred times, the blacksmith hits but once.
171. Keep your purse closed, blame no one else.

172. One who cannot dance finds the stage uneven.
173. To look down the well when there is a mirror.
174. When the brave comes in, out goes misfortune.
175. He who lives alone has neither quarrels nor complications.
176. He who cuts the honeycomb licks his hand.
177. He who answers the call must open the door.
178. The unfortunate gets into trouble; the lucky learns a lesson.
179. Even the devil slaves for the fortunate.
180. If you are lucky, even an ox will give birth.
181. A man falls into the hole he has himself dug.
182. The priest throws the god out of the temple.
183. To be in a hurry when one can scarcely walk.
184. Will the sun rise at night because the washerman is in a hurry?

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185. Think of your throat before you swallow
a bone.
186. He who thunders brings no rain.
187. The carpenter's staircase is broken.
188. She who can work becomes a slave; she
who can talk becomes a leader.
189. He is perfect in everything except that he
is blind of one eye.
190. He who can talk becomes a god; he who
can work becomes a slave.
191. He who cannot walk tries to run.
192. He comes last but wants to sleep in the
middle.
193. How can you have both meat and
sweets?
194. Gold may be weighed many times; a
man is weighed but once.
195. Gold needs no glittering.
196. The mouth is nice but the heart is black.
197. There was no need to use a broom; the
wind swept it away.
198. An insignificant stream can carry away.
199. He who is thirsty often goes to the
stream.
200. Give the devil his due.