

from the seed beds, too many stalks were planted together, the plants were not in even rows, little if any weeding was done and harvesting was as wasteful and primitive as any that I have seen anywhere. Harvesting was done by large groups of children and adults using a tiny blade held between the first and second fingers; one stalk was cut at a time and there was a great deal of handling of the harvested stalks. It has been estimated that on the average of about 10 percent of the entire rice crop is lost through inefficient harvesting methods, especially by excessive handling of the stalks. If that is true, then harvesting must waste more than this amount in Maloco.

When asked about the Masagana system, the farmers admitted that they had heard about it from the agricultural agent, but they did not believe that the system could work in Maloco. "After all, he has only told us about it; he has never shown us how to do it. The system may work in Luzon but conditions here are different." Farming practices remain primitive and yields extremely low.

The avowed policy of the present administration is to strengthen the barrio farmer and to raise his level of living. To date little has been accomplished at Maloco. Perhaps if the government could see its way clear to investing more heavily in agricultural extension work the situation could be improved.

Many of the answers I heard in Maloco led me to believe that if the farmers could actually see better methods of farming demonstrated and proven effective in their own area these men of the soil would be only too glad to change their methods. I believe that farmers in the Philippines are more receptive to new ideas and progressive methods than are the farmers in other parts of Southeast Asia. However, they must be shown and this demonstration can best be done through large scale agricultural extension work similar to that which was done in India under her first Five Year Plan.

What do the farmers in Maloco hope to achieve in the future and how would extra income be spent if it were available? These interview questions will become more important once agricultural development begins in earnest. Most of the interviewees stated that if they had 100 extra to spend they would buy rice or clothing for the family. In several cases the money would be put into further education for the children. Two families wanted to buy radios and one farmer said, "If we had 100 extra right now we would go to Manila to visit relatives and go to a first class air conditioned movie house."

In answer to the question, "What should the government do to help farmers in this area?", almost all farmers mentioned the building of an irrigation system. Others thought that the government should do the following: 1. provide free fertilizer, 2. provide free insect sprays to cut down the loss of grain to pests, 3. provide banks which could loan money to the farmers at a low rate of interest, 4. put up better markets, and help support the price of palay, and 5, improve roads in the area so that palay could be moved easily into the market.

The question, "What kind of a job do you want your children to have?", brought out very clearly that the farmers of Maloco hope their children will be able to do some job, *other than farming*. Of the forty families questioned only four said that their sons should become farmers. Eight families hope to have their children work in government offices, five look

toward the engineering field, four aim at school teaching, and most of the others want any kind of job, even laboring, which will provide a *steady* income. One farmer expressed his views thus: "I'll prefer them to be doctors and nurses so that they can be of great help to the rural farmers."

The farmers of Maloco want to improve their lot in life; they aim toward higher levels of living, but they do not know how to achieve this. Oral advice from visiting agriculturists obviously has not helped in the past. I believe the farmers would be receptive to new ideas if they could actually see new methods of production being used in their own area under conditions similar to those in Maloco. Right now their farms provide such a marginal existence that they dare not try new methods for they are afraid they would fail and one year of failure would mean total ruin.

THE CORN RITUAL IN LEYTE AND SAMAR

By The Rev. Fr. RICHARD ARENS, SVD

For certain sections of the population in Leyte and Samar corn mixed with rice has become the primary part of the diet. The provinces of Leyte and Samar due to the evenly distributed rainfall throughout the year have become high ranking in the production of corn. In the whole Philippines in 1949-50: 853,212 hectares were planted with corn; the production was 10,847,029 cavans.¹ Leyte planted in 1949-50: 56,632 hectares with corn, with a yield of 472,978.6 cavans of corn. In the same period, 1949-50, Leyte planted 90,367.5 hectares with rice and yielded a production of 2,503,366.8 cavans.² Rice is still the main food item for the Leyteño; corn follows second.

In the same period 1949-50, Samar planted: 3,612 hectares with corn yielding 50,867 cavans; 55,601 hectares with rice, yielding 165,475.8 cavans.³

Since corn is the second biggest crop for the two provinces, a corn ritual has developed which is similar to the rice ritual in its main characteristics, although simpler in form; its symbolism is different due to the peculiar qualities of the corn.

Securing the seeds:—During the harvest time of the preceding season the farmer selects the stalks for seeds. Before he does this, the farmer of Dulag⁴ prays one Our Father, Hail Mary, and the Credo; then he proceeds gathering the stalks without saying a word. He takes the stalks home for drying and places them in a secure and safe place, usually close to the stove.⁵ A few days before planting, the farmer separates the grains from the cob and soaks the grains in fresh water until they become soft and ready for planting.⁶

Planting ceremony:—In the evening before planting the farmer of Dulag gathers his helpers for a celebration. They proceed to the field

¹ Cavan Philippine measurement of 75 liters.

² Office of the Provincial Agriculturist, Tacloban City.

³ Office of the Provincial Agriculturist, Catbalogan, Samar.

⁴ Dulag: Town in Eastern Leyte.

⁵ Practice in Gamay (Samar).

⁶ *Ibid.*

and build a bamboo structure with 4 poles and a platform on which young coconut leaves are placed.⁷ When this is done the farmer leads his helpers around the field singing hymns and praying to God to give a good harvest. After this a "calipavan" brush is planted in every corner of the field that all who eat this corn might be happy and attain success in all their undertakings. Thereafter they sing other hymns and pray; then the party returns home and enjoys eating, drinking, and dancing at the farmer's expense until late at night.

In the early morning hours at 3:00 a.m. the farmer goes alone to the field and crosses its length and width three times. He plants a few grains; with the seeds he places the manure of rats, so that rats would have no appetite in eating the fruit during its period of maturation. Digging a second hole he places with the corn seed the manure of a bird called "balinsasayau". The Dulag farmer believes that this will protect him against strong winds and typhoons. In a third hole he places with the corn seed the manure of a strong animal for example carabao, hoping that the corn grows as vigorous and strong as the animal. He then silently prays again the Our Father, the Hail Mary, the Credo, and a prayer to San Roque, a patron of farmers. After the prayer he goes home.

At home meanwhile the helpers have gathered. He takes them to the field; some carrying the seeds. The farmer goes to the center of the field and burns "kamangyan", a kind of incense together with the petals and leaves of palm trees gathered during Palm Sunday, in order to drive away the evil spirits that might bring destruction to the corn.

In Alangalang (Central Leyte) the farmer sees to it that all his planters have a complete and perfect set of teeth. In Gamay (Samar) the planters during actual planting do not open their mouths. Their lower and upper teeth are firmly closed together. It is the belief that in this way they influence the growth of the corn, so that at harvest time the corn cob is compact and nicely arranged in form of a perfectly closed set of teeth.

The planting corn ritual is in its major characteristics the same in Leyte and Samar; although there are local variations with regard to the "charms" used. A bamboo stick about 2 meters in length is planted in the middle of the field in most municipalities of Leyte and Samar. This bamboo stick represents the symbolic growth and strength of the corn stalk. Sugar is also quite often used as a charm to give the corn a sweet taste.

Three weeks after the planting of corn, that is when the planted corn has developed leaves, the farmer of Dulag carries three whole pieces of Bamboo at 1-1/2 meters in length to the field. In the center of the field he digs a hole of about 20 centimeters and firmly grounds one bamboo stick in order that the plants grow healthy, strong, and tall. The other two bamboo pieces are placed at the side of the field. The selected bamboo has the blue color of the sky which is one distinctive characteristic of an healthy plant. In those two bamboo sticks at the side of the field the farmer now inserts alternately bamboo branches of about 50 centimeters of length. The symbolic meaning is that the plants will bear pieces of corn of the same size and length as the bamboo branches.⁸

⁷ The bamboo used for this structure is "mcarangas".

⁸ Practice in Dulag.

When the corn starts to bear fruits, "Awog" is placed in the center of the field. This is composed of dried banana leaves which are placed on a stick. In placing the "awog" prayers are recited. The purpose of "awog" is to refrain other people from stealing the young corn. The people believe that after placing the "awog" only the owner can get the corn without suffering harm. If someone steals and eats the corn he either becomes very pale or his stomach swells.⁹

Harvesting corn:—When the corn is ripe, the master of ceremonies (paratikang) begins at either side of the corn field which he thinks appropriate. While harvesting he recites some prayers. After choosing some twenty big and good ears he brings them home and places them near the stove for seeds in the next season. Thereafter helpers join in the harvesting.¹⁰

In Gamay (Samar) the first ears of corn are thrown to the edges of the cornfield as an offering to the spirits. Then the whole family with relatives and friends build a big fire in one corner of the field to roast some corn. It is a thanksgiving meal with plenty of merriment, story telling, singing, and dancing.

⁹ Belief in Tabontabon, Leyte.

¹⁰ Tabontabon, Leyte.

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AZCARRAGA, MANILA

CEREMONIES IN CONNECTION WITH THE DEAD IN MALOLOS, BULACAN

By DEMETRIO R. AGUSTIN

INTRODUCTION

The subject which I am going to discuss has been exposed to heavy criticisms by Professor Macaraig in his work "Readings in Philippine Social Condition." The professor says that our death ceremonies are the manifestations of our social inconsistencies, that is instead of having a sad and serene atmosphere surround the home at the time of the death of a member of the family, a happy mode prevails, where humorous riddles are solved by the old people to their amusement while the younger set amuse themselves with the *duplo*, *juego de prenda*, and other games.

Perhaps the professor is right in his denunciations, but may we not be right just the same in making such merriments so that the grief and sadness suffered by the relatives of the dead be somewhat alleviated by the presence of those happy people at the house? Thus, such diversions perform the function of making the grief more bearable. Even less restrained activities characterize other cultures—i. e., the "wake" of the Irish.

The discussion of that question is not my concern. I am to deal with the presentation of the different ceremonies occasioned by the death of a person.

DEATH TOLL

When a person dies, a member of the family or anyone who is in close touch with that family, reports the event to the Church authorities. Thereupon, the bells of the tower of the Church ring. Such ringing is locally called the *agonias*. The *agonias* is also an index as to whether the dead person is a man or a woman. If the dead is a man, the lower tones of the bells are sounded first. The reason may be due to the general fact that any big and dull sound is a sign of a masculine type, while that of a sharp and penetrating sound is associated to women. Therefore, when the bells sound for the death of a woman, the higher tone is struck first. The subsequent tones and succession of ringing is the same both for men and women. The difference lies in the first tone as stated.

What could be the purpose of such ringing of the bell when a person die? Technically speaking I don't know it, but so far as I can see the practical purpose of such *agonias* is to announce to the whole parish that one of its members passed away. Consequently upon hearing the death toll, some very pious people of the town say a prayer for the benefit of the soul of the deceased. Among the old people, such offering of prayer is very common.

Even at death distinction still persists. The death toll varies with the standing of the person. The poor class has only the *agonias*. Those families who have fair means of financial resources are able to pay a more elaborate tribute to the departed member by ordering the church to ring the *plegaria* which is very distinct from the *agonias*. The latter is rung at the report of the death of a person. So it applies both to the rich and to the poor alike. But the *plegaria* on the other hand is the subsidiary ringing

to signify the death of a person. Hourly the *plegaria* is rung and for each ringing a corresponding payment is made to the church. Here we can see right away that only the rich can afford to have the *plegaria* because of the big financial stress imposed on the family. The *plegaria* continues to be rung until the time of burial.

WATCHING THE CORPSE

Seldom is a dead person buried the very day that he has passed away. In majority of cases, the body is laid at rest in the house for a solid day, that is including one night. It is in the night that most of the series of ceremonies are practised in our town.

Humble as the condition of the family of the deceased may be, it is the practice in our locality to make some feast or *handa*. The night of watching, as that first night is usually called, is passed with groups of people on the watch. Strictly speaking those people are not really watching but are spending the night by having some lively amusements and games. The watchers are the sympathizers of the family, who may come both from the immediate neighborhood and from distant places. For such a crowd, it is but pertinent for the family of the deceased to provide some sort of feast. Because it has been the custom to watch the dead body for the entire night, amusements and other games that will make the watchers enjoy night is provided for. Those time-killing games will be discussed later.

WEARING OF BLACK CLOTHES

There is no need of a detailed discussion of this phase of the narration, because wearing black clothes in connection with the death of a person is a very common sight everyday. Some general facts regarding this question may be advantageously mentioned. Beginning at the time of the death of a person, all his relatives must wear black garments. The common people wear a simple black camisa-chino together with a black trouser. When coat and pants are worn, they likewise must be black. However white coats and pants may be worn with the addition of a black band around the left sleeve of the coat and with tie also in black. Shoes must be black but white are allowed. Ox-blood and tan shoes are as much as possible avoided.

BURIAL

After passing the whole night mentioned before with a continuous watch, some of the watchers may take a short sleep at five in the following morning. There may be a tendency to sleep longer but they possibly could not do so, because by eight o'clock the whole house is again active with another force of helpers and sympathizers making the necessary preparations for the burial which is about to take place. Breakfast with a trace of something different from the ordinary one, is served to the guests.

When burial takes place in the morning, the time is set at about 10 o'clock. If in the afternoon the hour preferred is between four and five o'clock. It may be of interest to say there is a prevailing belief that if the dead body is buried later than six in the evening, the spirit will come back to the house.

THE BIER

The coffin containing the dead body may be carried in different ways. The simplest is to equip the coffin with brass handles screwed along the sides to provide sufficient gripping points for the persons who will carry the coffin to the cemetery. Rich families hire the service of an undertaker using specially constructed cars to carry the coffin to the cemetery. The poor people usually makes a rough frame, consisting of bamboos crossing each other and forming a rectangular frame which provides a snug seat for the coffin. Thru the four corners of the frame, project four levers each lever coming out from each corner. These levers rest on the shoulders of the persons carrying the coffin. This method is generally adopted when the dead body is coming from a distant place to the cemetery. When such a rectangular frame is used, the carriers are able to carry the load easier due to the fact that the weight rests on the shoulders of the carriers. Furthermore this method provides an easier way of shifting the weight from one shoulder of the carrier to the other.

THE CEREMONIES TO BE MADE

Now that the dead has been buried, we come to the discussion of the different ceremonies to be held in honor of the spirit of the deceased. I shall enumerate them only without any detail in order to give the reader the names the ceremonies yet to be made. In the order of their occurrences, we have the following: (1) *Tatlong Gabi*, or the Third Night; (2) *Tapos* or the End; (3) *Pasiam* or nine days of continuous praying; (4) *Pagubis Nang Luksa*, or the Discarding of the Black Clothes.

THE TATLONG GABI

The observation of the third night varies. Some celebrate this ceremony on the third day since the death of a person, while others observe it on the third day from the day of burial. And because the burial does not take place the very day when death occurs, the difference, therefore, becomes apparent.

There is a belief in our place that on the third night the spirit of the departed returns to the house and watches over the affairs taking place. Of course he is unseen, but the spirit can see everything.

In this celebration the principal feature of the night is the praying done by the relatives of the deceased and by other old women. A special supper is prepared. Old and young sing together and their merriments last until midnight when the guests begin to go home. With regard to the *tatlong gabi*, it is the belief that proper ceremonies must be made because on that day the soul of the dead person has already reached its destination. In other words it takes three days for the spirit to travel to its final resting place.

THE TAPOS

A strict translation of the word *tapos* to English means the End of the final. The *Tapos* takes place on the ninth day either counting from the day of the death or from the day of the burial. As it is the name *Tapos* is quite misleading, because it may denote that no more ceremonies are to be held judging from the meaning of the work itself which signify the end or the final. Like the *Tatlong Gabi* the principal feature of the celebration

is the praying offered by the direct relatives of the deceased or by the old women of the community. Such a long period of nine days devoted to praying is believed to be sufficient to influence the status of the spirit in the other world, that is if the spirit is in hell or the purgatory, his sufferings and hardships will be greatly alleviated as affected by the praying done in this earth by his sympathizers. On the ninth day and especially on that night, another feast is prepared to feed the people who may come and help in the praying.

THE PRAYING

As will be noted in all those ceremonies so far held, the praying is the principal and important feature of the celebrations. Praying may be done by the nearest relatives of the deceased, by old women who come voluntarily to offer prayers, or by beggars who upon receiving a gift of say twenty centavos given by the relatives of the dead person will devote plenty of his time in praying at a church or at a *visita* for the benefit of the soul of the departed person.

The method employed in the offering of prayer done at the home of the family of the deceased may be worth mentioning in some details. First of all, praying is done in groups. Each group may consist of from two to more than five persons at a time. Each group may begin praying at any convenient time. For example one set of a person who are willing to pray may come to the house. This set if it chooses can begin to pray right away. If after twenty minutes another group arrives that group begins praying independent of the praying being done by the first set. In other words, each group must have to perform a series of prayers. It follows therefore, that because each group starts differently from each other, some will finish earlier than the other.

Thru out the whole period of praying, each person engaged in that business is on his knees. The persons praying are in front of the image of a saint. Directly beneath the picture of image of the saint a table is placed upon which several candles are burning.

THE PASIAM

After the *Tapos* no other ceremony of great importance is made with the exception of the *Pasiam* given nine days prior to the All Saints' Day.

The *Pasiam* is really a duplicate of the *Tapos*, with the distinguishing feature that the *Pasiam* is held in such a way that the ninth day of praying fall on All Saints' Day. All these nine days are characterized by praying done by the relatives of the deceased either in their house or at the church. Again if the praying is jointly done by some volunteers, it is but proper for the family to make some preparation for a small feast. However, this feast is not so expensive nor as elaborate as either the *Tatlong Gabi* or the *Tapos*. In some instances only the simplest refreshment are given, like bread and coffee. Like all former ceremonies, the *Pasiam* is offered so that the soul whose status is unknown to the living in this world may be helped in his sufferings. Because this particular ceremony is made just before the All Saints' Day, the belief is that when the day of the dead comes the soul of the person in whose sake the *Pasiam* is offered, be made as pure as possible for the coming Saints' Day.

"PAGIIBIS NG LUKSA"

Pagiibis Nang Luksa means discarding the black clothes. It is to be remembered that since the death of the person in whose benefit all the foregoing ceremonies are offered, all his near relatives are wearing black clothes. The time when those black clothes may be cast away is called *Pagiibis Nang Luksa*. Taking the literal meaning of this local phrase we have the following—*Pagiibis* means laying down; *Nang* is a preposition meaning of; *Luksa* signifies the black clothes. Putting together these separate translations the local phrase reads "putting down of the black clothes."

As to when that day of discarding the black clothes comes, the practice is not uniform. Generally speaking the family of the dead person lays down the black garments one year from the death of the person. This is the most conservative practice. Others who cannot maintain wearing the black clothes for such length of time may discard them at an earlier time. Those people decide to get rid of the wearing of the black garments earlier because of the discomfort resulting from the usage of such garments. Such is especially true during the hot weather, when even the lightest clothes do not minimize the heat of the day. However the minimum period during which time discarding may take place is 6 months. The time we are discussing applies to adult persons who die. In the case of the death of children less than 7 years old, black clothes are seldom worn by the relatives.

The time for discarding the black garments is another occasion for some feast. Visitors coming from distant places, as well as those coming from the immediate neighborhood, are sure to be satisfied with a sumptuous dinner and *merienda* at the house of the family of the dead persons.

GAMES AND AMUSEMENTS

When we note down that the large number of persons who may come to the house to attend any of the above mentioned ceremonies will have to stay far into the night to take part in the watching of the dead body during the first night or to share in the general merriments, then we can see right away the importance of providing the guest with some form of games and amusements that will make them enjoy the night. To get away from the drowsiness that are likely to overcome the guests and to kill the monotony of a night watching, the following local games and amusements are practiced during the celebration of the different ceremonies already mentioned before: (1) *Bugtong*, or riddle; (2) *Duplo*, or dialogue in poetry; (3) *Juego de Prenda* or the Game of Pledge; (4) Miscellaneous card games.

"BUGTONG"

Bugtong is an inherent amusement of any of the ceremonies made in connection with the death of a person. In fact the old people forbid the younger set to indulge in *bugtong* when there is no dead person in a house. They think that *bugtong* must only be played in a house where someone died, otherwise if played in the house where no body had died, it will be very soon when a member of that family will die.

Bugtong is similar to a riddle in English. To explain more specifically I am going to take an example. One person among the guests may say, "one deep well filled with swords," "What is it?" (This question when uttered in our dialect is very beautiful because of the existence of rhyme.

In Tagalog the above question reads "*isang balong malalim, punong-puno ng patalim.*" Notice the rhyme of the word *malalim* and *patalim*.)

If to the given riddle, someone among the crowd knows the answer, then this person must order the one who gives out the riddle to make a *dalit*, a local name for a sort of punishment. When a person is asked to make a *dalit* he must speak of anything in the form of a poetry, the essential element being that the end of each line must possess a good rhyme. The subjects that may be taken is immaterial, but the common topic is about love. To make a *dalit* is sometimes very embarrassing, because the person ordered to may not be able to make one, or if he tried he makes serious blunders to the merriment of the people assembled.

We assume before that someone among the crowd knows the answer to the riddle on the table. And for this reason, this person punishes the one who asks the riddle by ordering the latter to make a *dalit*. When the *dalit* is finished, it is expected that the answer to the original riddle will be made by the person who gives the punishment. If his answer is correct then everything goes smoothly. If on the other hand, the answer given is wrong, then he in turn is punished by the original maker of the riddle. And such punishment takes the form of another *dalit*. And this exchanges of punishment between the one who asks a riddle and the one who is supposed to answer is a great source of laughter among the guests.

"DUPLO"

Duplo is another literary game. It requires skill and versatility in the language. *Duplo* is nothing but a debate among several persons over a certain subject. However, the speeches are not in the form of prose, but rather in the form of a poem.

So popular is this game that the audience when this game is being played is very silent. They are so pleased in the beautiful passages that frequent repetitions are requested from the persons engaged in the game.

A *duplo* may last for only a short period. But when the players are good, this same game may last for several hours—hours which are filled with beauty, satisfaction and joy to the spectators and to the hearers.

"JUEGO DE PRENDA"

This game is one of the funniest as well as the most refined game indulged in by the visitors. *Juego de Prenda* when translated into English reads as the Games of Pledge.

The number that may engage in this game is not limited. It varies from a small group consisting of five people to a big group that may be composed of thirty and even more people. From among the players a "king" is selected to preside over the ceremony of the game. Once the king is selected, this king proceeds to naming every partaker in the game with a flower's name. For instance, Pedro may be given the name of a Cam-pupot, Arsenio may be named as the Sampaguita, Anita may have the name of Sampaga, Amparo may have Jazmin as her name in the game, etc. But it must be understood that every one who takes part in the game should have a flower's name.

The game begins when the king says, "The butterfly flies away. It alights on the Sampaguita." In reality there is no butterfly. It is only

being presumed that a butterfly is flying around the different flowers in the room, so that game may be held.

In the above paragraph the king states that the butterfly is on the Sampaguita. Immediately upon hearing that term, the person who possesses the name of the Sampaguita must quickly respond by saying "No, the butterfly is not on the Sampaguita. It is on the Campupot." On the other hand, the person designated as the Campupot must at once respond by saying that the butterfly is not here, but it is on another flower. It is up to him or to her as the case may be to say the name of the flower to which she may like the butterfly to alight. If the name Jazmin comes to his or to her mind, she or he must say "It is on the Jazmin." The whole process of shifting and reshifting the butterfly from flower to flower continues until some mistake has been committed.

Sometimes, the flower last named as the place where the butterfly is, may stall in shifting the butterfly to another flower. For such stalling, corresponding punishment should be levied. How do mistakes come about? Let us take a concrete example, as before. When the butterfly is on the Sampaguita, the flower Sampaguita must immediately respond that the butterfly is not here but is on the Jazmin. Now it may happen that Sampaguita may be slow in naming the next flower, or she may be caught unaware that she may not be able to answer right away, or she may forget her flower's name so that the butterfly may be on her already, yet she does not notice it because she fails to remember her own name. Those are the instances when punishment must be levied.

This game requires alertness on the part of the partakers and also quick thinking power so that at an instant the partakers may be able to name the flower to which she or he likes the butterfly to alight.

For every mistake committed by a player, a corresponding pledge is given to the king. The purpose of the pledge is to serve as evidence that its owner is subject to some punishment. Such pledges are necessary in order to remember those flowers who must be punished. In this connection it should be noted that the game continues as usual after pledges have been offered to the king. The levying of punishment comes afterwards when the game is temporarily stopped to give time to the execution of the punishment of the different flowers who possess pledges in the hands of the king.

Things to be pledged are of various kinds. A ring, a *panuelo*, a handkerchief, a comb, an earring, etc. are acceptable as pledges or *prenda* as commonly known. Only one pledge is asked for each mistake committed. All those pledges coming from the different guilty flowers are placed together before the king. A need therefore arises that proper identification of those different pledges be made by its true owners.

It is up to the king to suspend the games and turn to the levying of the punishment. The king is the sole power who can dictate the kind of punishment that must be given to any guilty flower. Generally the punishment takes the form of some humorous actions on the part of the party punished. The idea is to incite laughter from the guests.

Some of the most typical punishments levied are: If the guilty flower is a young woman and at the same time she is beautiful, the king may ask her to frown and to make herself appear ugly. Really this is very ludicrous and the whole crowd burst into a loud laughter when they witness a beautiful damsel making herself appear ugly. Should the young woman refuse

that punishment, other kind is imposed on her. She may be asked by the king to raise her skirt in order to show her beautiful ankle. This one is very embarrassing especially to a girl just blooming into a beautiful womanhood.

When the offender or the guilty flower has fulfilled the punishment imposed on her, she takes her pledge thus clearing herself from any other punishment. If she partakes in the games that follow and she commits another mistake, then it is natural that she must offer a pledge thus subjecting herself at the mercy of the king for the second time.

(From the Beyer Collection of Original Sources in Philippine Ethnography: Tagalog Series, Volume 18, paper no. 684 — March 1927.)

TAGALOG FOLKTALES FROM PINAMALAYAN, MINDORO

BY CARIDAD C. MORENTE

CREATION MYTH

In Pinamalayan, Mindoro, it is believed that the earth came into existence in the following manner:

There was once no earth but only a great, vast, blue sky and a deep, fathomless, blue sea. For millions of years these two alone were present in the universe and remained for that length of time in perfect harmony. But as it is said, "everything has its end" and so, not long afterwards, there ensued a bitter quarrel between the sky and the sea. Storms at sea became frequent the waves rose high, often drenching the sky above. These occurrences irritated the sky beyond limit, and soon the sky decided to avenge itself upon the sea. It so happened that a bird came flying in the air looking for a place to settle down. The sea then tried its best to gain the favor of the tired bird. So it raised itself in storms and sent its waves still higher towards the sky. This behavior of the sea made the sky finally decide to punish the long time enemy. The sky, therefore, dropped an enormous bulk of earth whose weight hurt the sea and whose immense expanse provided ample place for the tired bird to live in. The sea remained peaceful yet always wishing to take revenge upon the sky. Nevertheless, the sky became so high that it was impossible for the sea to challenge it again. From that time, too, the birds became allies of the sky so that until the present time the birds always tend to fly sky-wards as a sign of gratitude to the benefactor of their progenitor.

This is the creation myth which is so common among our old folks at home that many children love to hear and even believe it.

THE MIRACLE OF STA. CATALINA

In a town of Negros Island, Sta. Catalina is a very well-known patron saint. During the days when piracy was at its height of destruction, a band of pirates ransacked a town of Negros. Among the prisoners whom they captured and robbed of their belongings, was a pious young girl. From the time that she fell into the hands of the pirates, she did nothing but pray and uttered not a word at all. When the vinta that was taking the pirates and the prisoners to Mindanao was nearing port, this girl jumped into the