

**MOHAMMEDANISM.**

A RELIGIOUS SOLUTION OF THE SOUTHERN NEGRO PROBLEM.

Such, It Is Suggested, May the Teaching of Mohammed Webb Prove—Something About the Religions of Other Lands, Buddhism and Hindooism.

A very amiable and lovable man, Mr. Mohammed Webb, is in this country looking over the field to decide whether or not the United States is a promising field for the exploiting of the Mohammedan faith. He does not undertake to make proselytes to his religion without giving the faiths already in the field fair notice of his probable intentions. This is certainly reasonable, though it is more than we of the Christian churches do when we send missionaries to India and Central Asia. The Mohammedan religion has probably 135,000,000 believers and has many very charming features. There are objections to it likewise that we shall not attempt to defend. It is true that in our highly civilized land we do not prohibit a man from marrying four or five times, but we insist that he shall have been legally released from previous matrimonial obligations. The religion of Islam, mindful of the uncertainties of life and the vagaries of human happiness, winks at polygamy, while it does not enjoin it. To employ the simile synthetically, we drive tandem, while the Mohammedan harnesses up four or more in hand.

Among the features that ought to commend Mohammedanism to a large proportion of our citizens is its staunch devotion to abstention from strong drink. Belief in God is admitted and enjoined. As in Buddhism, kindness to all animals is commanded. Its conception of purgatory is picturesque, for good and bad souls alike have to cross the bridge Al Sirat, that spans hell and is described as finer than a hair and sharper than the edge of a sword. Many a believing Christian will take considerable comfort in the thought that the Mohammedan finds it quite as difficult to attain the kingdom of heaven as does he. Predestination was a cardinal doctrine of the prophet, but we Christians have been wont to ascribe its promulgation to the political motive of rendering his followers contemptuous of danger and suffering.

The Mohammedan religion is simple enough and is divided into faith and practice—the latter including prayer, almsgiving, fasting and a pilgrimage to Mecca. Taken by and large, it is a thoroughly practical religion for the races who lead nomadic lives, and one prominently calculated for propagation at the sword's point. It is the latest of all the great faiths of the world, only dating back to 622 A. D., while Buddhism is probably of 1,200 years earlier origin and Hindooism 600 years earlier still.

There is just one field in this country for the introduction of the simple and trusting faiths of the east, and that is the great negro population of the south. The hearts of the lowest types of the colored races are receptive and naturally religious, and any faith new to them that will supplant Voodooism ought to be welcomed by the staunchest Christian. There are today 1,500,000 of believers in that strange and disgusting mysticism.

The southern negro must have a religion of pure credulity, with plenty of rewards and the mildest possible punishments. Buddhism, whose adherents today number more than one-third of the human race, might suit him did it only promise a heaven or some equally attractive future abiding place. But it offers nothing better than extinction; no God, no soul, no hope—save annihilation! It is a dream of peace—of eternal sleep, Nirvana coming to the believer like the snuffing out of a taper. Buddhism never has been a religion of fanaticism, but has always been charitable and tolerant.

If the millions of negroes in the gulf states, who are today in the grossest intellectual and moral ignorance, could have formulated for their use a new creed uniting some of the beautiful teachings of Gautama and Mohammed, they might be guided in the direction of purer and nobler lives. Christianity could come later if they felt the need of it, but we do not believe that any man or woman who knows the facts regarding the class to which we refer will deny that Mohammedanism or Buddhism, properly introduced and preached, would advance the condition of that part of the negro race. Great schools like the Vanderbilt and Lincoln universities and the institution at Raleigh do not reach the ricefields of Georgia, the cotton plantations of South Carolina or the swamps of Mississippi and Louisiana.

Here are great missionary fields, and, without prejudice, they can be honestly recommended to the advance guard of the beneficent missionary hosts that may be expected to flock to this country if a Mohammedan or Buddhist propaganda be decided upon.—Julius Chambers in New York Recorder.

**The Discovery of Glass.**  
Though the Egyptians claim to have been taught by Hermes the art of making glass, it may be stated upon the authority of Pliny that its discovery belongs to the Syrians, or rather Phoenicians, who obtained it accidentally. A small number of sailors who had landed upon the coast of Spain built a fire upon the sand and supported their cooking utensils with stones which they had found near the shore. After finishing their meal one of the party accidentally raked the ashes, and the action of the heat having combined the niter and sand he found a crystalline substance—the glass of the present day.—Boston Herald.

**The Growth of "Ism."**  
Hypnotism, spiritism, theosophy and many other things pertaining to psychology and biology are occupying the attention of brainy men and women. We may pool pooh these as much as we please, the fact remains that they are steadily forcing themselves on our attention.—Edgar Lee in Arena.

**The Carelessness of Brothers.**

The girl who has a brother knows how careless a brother can be about sweet little notes and long, affectionate letters. She knows how many he receives of them, and this is a knowledge that would surprise the other girls. They have such dainty stationery—the other girls—with monograms and all that sort of thing, and they seem to like so well to use it in writing to the brother, and he is rather proud than otherwise of these communications.

Why should he care if people know that the prettiest, sweetest girls on the avenue begin their letters to him in rather a familiar style and end them in a manner even more so? So it happens that he often leaves specimens of his correspondence lying about in a way that would surprise and grieve their fair and trusting writers.

The girl who has a brother gives her messages to her gentleman acquaintances by word of mouth when possible. Otherwise she writes a note that the world is free to read.—Chicago News-Record.

**An Exalted Idea of One's Native City.**

Philadelphians have an exalted idea of their city, but not many of them go to the extreme reached by a little daughter of one of the residents. She has been duly instructed in Biblical lore and regularly attends the Sunday school connected with an up town church. She had been very much interested in the movements of the comet and the possible result if it were to strike the earth in its erratic wanderings. One evening, after having asked many questions regarding the heavenly stranger, she inquired with all a child's naivete, "Well, mamma, does the Lord look after all the planets and the stars and everything up in the sky?" "Yes, dear," replied her mother. "Why do you ask?" "Oh, nothing, only I thought he only just cared for Philadelphia."—Exchange.

**Homing Pigeons at the Inauguration.**

An interesting incident of the inauguration parade which occurred directly in front of the grand stand was the setting free of a basket of homing pigeons. The birds as soon as liberated circled round and round in the air in front of the president and then taking their bearings flew off to the southwest.

**Curious Mode of Catching Turtles.**

A curious mode of catching turtles is practiced in the West Indies. It consists in attaching a ring and a line to the tail of a species of sucker fish known as the remora. The live fish is then thrown overboard and immediately makes for the first turtle he can spy, to which he attaches himself very firmly by means of a sucking apparatus arranged at the top of his head. Once attached to the turtle, so firm is his grip that the fisherman on drawing the line brings home both turtle and the sucker.—Exchange.

**A Creature From the Fire.**

Aristotle believed that some creatures were capable of supporting life even though confined to the devouring element. He says: "In Cyprus, when the manufacturers of chalcitis (lime) burn it many days in the fire, a winged creature something larger than a great fly is seen emerging from the stone and leaping and walking about in the fire. These creatures perish immediately upon being removed from the furnace."—St. Louis Republic.

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