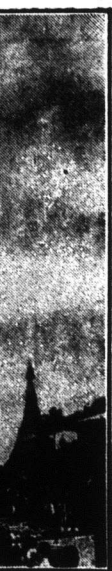


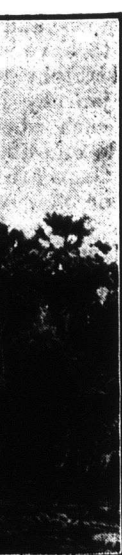
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A.D. 631, was the founder and originator of this religion. During the first years of his life when no one but his wife, Kadijah, had any faith in his preachings, Mohamet only made thirteen converts in three years, and after offending all the rich people of his land in order to escape being murdered he fled to Medina when over fifty, and there organized an army to combat with those who were against him. Carlyle's "Heroes and Hero-Worship" is worth referring to on this subject, and he there regards Mohammedanism as a bastard Christianity, but Islamism, originating perhaps with the old banner of Mohammed's army on which was designed the words, "God is Great," is now professed by over two hundred millions of the human race. The memory of Mohammed's flight in A.D. 622, has been kept alive ever since Caliph Omar based that date as the beginning of the Mohammedan Calandar, and to-day pilgrimages are made to Mecca by good Mohammedans who then become entitled to prefix the title "Haji" to their names.

Very little more can be said in this article about this religion except briefly that it is largely derived from the old Judaism and certain Christian ideas have also been incorporated with it. It would doubtless surprise many of our most earnest Christians to see every Mohammedan wash and pray five times a day no matter where he may be—by the roadside or the verandah of your house, he will produce his strip of carpet and turn his face towards where the small black stone—probably a meteorite—lies in the Caaba in Mecca, and then on his knees perform his devo-

zealots who introduced many obnoxious things into the religion long after the death of Buddha, and of course, when the evil had once crept in, it required another Buddha to remove them. It is known that Buddha himself composed no sacred writings, but three centuries after his death his teachings were compiled in three canonical books called the Tripitaka and made up of the Sutras on discipline—the Vinaya on doctrine and the Abidharma on Metaphysics. These books are written—at least so far as Burmah is concerned—not in the ordinary Burmese but—imagine it—in a special sacred language called Pali. It is hoped that in another article a few interesting details may be given concerning this religion and certain forms and ceremonies of worship and doctrinal principles.

Merely a handful, compared with the other religions, of the followers of Zoroaster are to be found in India and indeed they are confined mainly to the Bombay Presidency—a Presidency corresponding somewhat to our Canadian Province. Generally speaking, the Parsees (which is a corruption of the word Persia where the founder of the religion lived) are a wealthy community and may be easily distinguished by their style of dress—the men especially wearing a peculiar headgear looking somewhat like our own silk hats for height but bent down at the back towards the centre of the head, and made of some shiney material very much like American cloth.

Zoroaster (although he is also referred to by other names) it is known was born in Bactria but the details—

as a religious people. They were founded by Baber Narak in the Fifteenth Century and the beliefs they adopted were those of the Hindus but a purified form of the older religion and one in which the existing superstitions and grosser practices were eradicated. The Sikhs have always been England's most faithful allies and the history of the Indian Mutiny shows how well they stood for us against their own colour.

It will be seen from the above very brief outlines of the most prominent of the Indian religions the tremendous differences of thought and the relationship in which each division regards itself to the unseen world. It will scarcely need pointing out that the diversities of belief are as wide apart as the poles and this is a most important factor to take into consideration when reviewing the Government of India. It possibly has occurred to but few people that the ruling of three hundred millions of people has only been at all possible by the knowledge that an insurrection of the devotees of one religion would immediately set those of another against them. Most people are aware that the recent troubles in India were brought about in the first instance by the partition of Bengal, but further reference to this subject will have to be made at some other time. As a conclusion to this article one would desire to give an example of what the Indian poetry is like. An anthem which was resurrected—it might be said—at the time of the trouble and which was on the lips of perhaps millions of Bengalis—"Bande Mataram" or "Hail Mother-

land" has been translated by a member of the India Civil Service and runs as follows:—

"My motherland I sing
Her splendid streams, her glorious trees,
The zephyr from far off Vindyan heights
Her fields of waving corn,
The rapturous radiance of her moonlit nights,
The trees in flower that flame afar,
The smiling days that sweetly vocal are,
The happy, blessed, motherland.
Her will by seventy million throats extolled
Her power twice seventy million arms unhold,
Her strength let no man scorn.
Thou art my head, thou art my heart,
My life and soul art thou,
My song, my worship and my art,
Before thy feet I bow,
As Durga, scourge of all thy foes
As Lakshmi, bowered in the flower,
That in the water grows,
As Bani, wisdom, power;
The source of all our might,
Our every temple doth thy form uphold.
Unequaled, tender, happy, pure,
Of splendid streams, of glorious trees,
My motherland I sing,
The stainless charms that oer endure
And verdant banks and wholesome breeze,
That with her praises sing.

And after reading this, believe me, to thoroughly appreciate its beauty one must hear it in the stirring grandeur of the original language in which it is written.



A Pwé or Burmese dance

tions, first bending his head this way and then that and then forwards so that his forehead touches the ground.

We now have to consider Buddhism which numbers in the whole of the East, it is estimated about three hundred and fifty millions of adherents. Sakya—Muni or Gautama Buddha was a Hindu born about the 5th Cent. B. C.—the son of a King and the founder of what was undoubtedly originally a true and beautiful form of ethics. Buddha, we understand, was a man of high and lofty ideals and one who set his mind in contemplation of the vanity of existence and in considering the future of man's soul. Despite many temptations set to lure him away from these paths of thought he worked out under the Bodhi-tree, after he had set himself apart from the world, a code of morals which had as their object the salvation of mankind. Briefly, Buddhism as practised at the present day relieves the mind of speculation regarding God and the end in view is the ultimate merging, by a series of transmigrations of the soul of man in the unity of the Being. And the doctrines of the religion teach that the trend of the soul must be ever upward and onward or else destruction will follow. The final home of the individual spirit is Nirvana to which no one can hope to attain until every passion and desire have been mortified, but sadly to relate these beautiful beliefs have to a large extent become mere formalities and much has grown up within the religion itself which might very well be extirpated. Without question those who have learnt anything of the religion itself will know that these more modern cancerous growths may be laid at the door of

even as to the date when he flourished are very meagre. It is thought, however that he lived about 800 B. C. and then established a purely Monotheistic religion though some believe his beliefs were Manichaistic in nature—that is a dualistic doctrine having for its foundation the idea that the universe was made of two antagonistic principles, the one good as God and the Light—the other evil—as the devil and darkness. But be that as it may the majority of people believe that this dualism was a mere corruption of the Zoroastrian principles and not those of the founder himself. The religion of the Parsees as it exists to-day is undoubtedly deistic having the sun as its centre and fire as emblematical of it. It is an interesting sight to see the male Parsees in Bombay walk up and down on the sea shore and pay their homage and carry out their devotions to the rising and to the setting sun. Most people have heard of the Towers of Silence in which the Parsees throw their dead until their bones are picked clean by the swarms of vultures which are for ever ready—although far beyond the sight of mortal eye—to come down from the blueness in clouds to carry out this gruesome work thus left to them. It is true that when nothing but the skeleton of the departed is left the bones are removed and buried in some subterranean cavern but those who have seen the Towers of Silence and the great red-headed cruel-looking vultures must always remember the sight and recall the Biblical reference of "where the body is there will be eagles be gathered together."

And, lastly, there are the Sikhs, who are essentially a military people as well

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