

SLOW TO ACCEPT BUDDHISM

People of Japan Loath to Embrace Faith Introduced into the Country by Korea.

Buddhism was introduced into Japan by Korea in the year 552. It was first embraced by the higher classes, particularly in scholarly circles, but the lower classes still clung to their old faith of Shintoism. The doctrines of Buddhism were written in the Chinese language and the believers offered their prayers in that tongue.

At one time Buddhism made such strides as to become the state religion in Japan, but the people still opposed it with a determination of upholding their own Shintoism, until the statesmen and priests invented an ingenious way of explaining and interpreting the religious principles of Buddhism. They adopted the theory of monotheism as well as polytheism by saying that there is only one supreme power which is personified in the form of various gods and goddesses, according to the different countries and different institutions.

The principles of Buddhism and Shintoism were thus reconciled and, in order to convince the popular mind of this theory, Emperor Shomu patronized a movement to erect a large bronze statue of Daibutsu or Buddha at Nara, the statue being completed in the year 752 after 14 years of casting and construction.

LIKE SWORD OF DAMOCLES

How Many Others Have Unwittingly Sat in Peril of Which They Were Ignorant?

It may have chanced that some of us have unwittingly sat under a sword of Damocles and "through good luck rather than good management" have escaped its fall. Damocles himself was happily ignorant of his danger for a brief time.

The story, with its perfectly obvious moral, is that in the reign of Dionysius the Elder as the ruler of Syracuse in Greece, years before the Christian era, one Damocles, a member of the court, wishing to establish himself securely with the monarch, flattered him unduly. Being a good deal of a man and believing that "flattery, like cologne water, is to be smelled of, not swallowed," Dionysius decided to teach the courtier a lesson.

He invited him to a wonderful banquet, which Damocles enjoyed greatly until he perceived above his head a sword which was held by one single hair. How soon he was able to leave his perilous station is unrecorded, but his feelings during the rest of the feast may be imagined and need not be described.

Matrimonial Oddities.

In bygone days in India women were sometimes allowed to choose their own husband. One of their old fairy tales tells of a fair princess, who, after a tournament, placed a garland around the neck of a knight who had won her heart.

Among the Eskimos of the east coast of Greenland a man captures the girl he wants, but from that time on the usual order of things is reversed. He has to exercise the greatest vigilance to prevent her from eloping with any other man whom she may prefer, as this seems to be her privilege. In the northern New Hebrides a bride who is unhappy seeks the earliest opportunity of running away from her husband and seeking a home with some man she likes better. If her parents cannot induce her to return to the injured husband they usually send him a pig to soothe his wounded feelings.—National Geographic Society Bulletin.

Still Make Use of Blowgun.

The blowgun is still popular for hunting birds among the Kossati Indians in Louisiana. This weapon consists of a tube, usually of cane, about six feet long, rubbed smooth on the inside with an implement made for the purpose and carefully straightened with the aid of fire. Slender, pointed darts about eight inches long are used as ammunition, each one wrapped neatly along a third of its length with thistle-down or cotton to make it fit the inside of the tube. The hunter places a dart in the tube, which he raises to his lips and with which he takes careful aim at his game; then with a quick puff of breath he drives the little dart flying with a sufficient force to impale and kill a small bird or squirrel.

America Land of Tobacco.

America is still the greatest producer of tobacco and also the greatest consumer of it, the greatest exporter and the greatest importer, too. She keeps her association with it which began with the discovery of the new world. It was the riches of tobacco as well as gold and fountains of youth that drew hither the adventurers who penetrated the new continents. Later tobacco was so precious a thing among the first English colonists that they plowed up the streets of Jamestown to plant it.

The Trade.

Extra—I hear you swapped autty-mobiles with Si Skinner yesterday. Who got the wust of the bargain, Hi? Hi—W-a-h, the one I got thrust on me is sufferin' horribly from ague, an' talks quite a lot 'bout 'vint missin' on each and every cylinder off an' on, but I heered this mornin' that Si is huntin' for the justice up the peace in order to swear out a warrant for somebody.

Aviators' Qualifications.

In England airmen were apt to be ardent hunters of the fox and to have what horsemen call "hands"—a quality which as aviators enabled them to know instinctively, as it were, what an airplane was going to do before it did it. And, what will be shocking to some folk, to keep the aviator in best condition for his work and for enduring its terrible stresses, he seemed, according to these authorities, to need "a really riotous evening at least once or twice a month." The older men were found to use alcohol freely, but the younger ones required no such stimulants, and they all avoided excess, being well aware that for them the penalty was sudden death. Marriage deteriorated the aviator by increasing his sense of personal responsibility for others. Courage he had, of course, and a touch of recklessness is not undesirable from the standpoint of achievement in war.—Exchange.

Machinery in Japan.

Japan's rapid industrial progress during the past five years is nowhere more conspicuous than in the development of the machinery trade. Japan imported in 1914 machinery to a value of somewhat more than \$12,000,000; in 1918 more than \$29,000,000. In 1914 the United States furnished 20 per cent of the total imports of machinery; in 1918 80 per cent. Japan's exports of machinery, chiefly to far eastern countries, have increased from \$684,000 in 1914 to approximately \$7,890,000 in 1918. Exports include electrical machinery, spinning and weaving machinery, lathes and printing machinery.

The Lucky Cuss.

"Unfortunate man!" we said, as we stood by the bedside and drew our head still farther down in the collar of our overcoat, after the manner of a turtle retreating in his shell. "You have our profoundest sympathy in your affliction, and—"

"Sympathy—the dickens!" chortled the invalid. "Why, dodgast it, when everybody else is shuddering and shaking with the cold I have a raging fever and am as warm and comfortable as if it were the good old summer time. Hi-he! hi-lee!"—Kansas City Star.

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