

It is not a little remarkable that the earlier views all ascribed tornadic action to electricity, and it would seem as though the time were not far distant when we would be forced to return to this agent for explaining the phenomena. What are needed are careful experiments in this most enchanting field of research. An attempt has been already made to test the question of the transmittal of moisture through the air by electric action. A Holtz machine was run for fifteen minutes in a rather large room; and most careful measurements of the amount of moisture at the machine and at a point twenty feet away, before and after the machine was in action, showed an increase at the machine. When we consider that it was impossible to measure the moisture contents just at the plate of the machine, and also what an extremely slight charge could by any possibility enter the air from the machine, we can but be surprised that any effect at all was observed. With improved methods of observation by which the exact hygrometric state of the air can be easily and accurately determined, and with very accurate tables of reduction which we now have, all that is required is an observer for investigating these phenomena. The expense for apparatus need not be great.

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#### CUSTOMS OF COURTESY.<sup>1</sup>

Few ceremonial customs have originated in recent times. Their forms, whether now trivial or still important in sociology, are vestiges of the past, and only by anthropologic studies are traceable to their genesis and early form. All authorities, unswayed by a religious or theorizing bias, agree that in the origin of these ceremonies there was nothing designed or intentional; that is, they were not directly invented with definite purposes. A thing is not now and never has been customarily done because it is intrinsically right, but is considered to be right after and because it has been habitually done, whatever its origin or the circumstances in which it prevailed.

The rules of courteous behavior as they now exist are not the immediate effect of deliberate conventions, but are the natural and slow product of the forces gradually developing social life, and they exhibit the laws of evolution with as great distinctness as is demonstrated in the physical realm. Men have not fabricated though they have framed rules for themselves. They have fallen into the customs from which rules were framed, and then by unintended modifications have deviated into novelty and new rules.

To the query "Why do nations and peoples do any thing as a custom?" the optimist answers, "Because it is right;" which assumption yet further confuses the vexed question whether, in the nature of things, there is an absolute right and an absolute wrong; for customs vary even unto opposition in different parts of the world, and not only in different, but in the same, periods of history; so that they cannot all be absolutely right. In matters large and small, vital and trivial, what is esteemed as virtue and merit at one place and time, is condemned at others as vice and crime. Explanation has been attempted on the theory, that, there being distinct races of men, each of them has its idiosyncrasy; indeed, that by primordial decree each of them had the mission to do certain things, and no others. By such theory, fatalism is omnipotent, and all men are marionettes. But this explanation depends upon a conceded classification of men into races, which has failed. A few years ago, school-boys glibly recited the titles of the races of men, with their characteristics; but now students who have devoted long lives to the subject find such classification to be so difficult that no two writers agree. This does not indicate the proposition that there are no distinct races of men; indeed, it is possible that once there were many more

races than have ever been recognized, the present condition being one of amalgamation. But the plot of the marionette show becomes confused when there is no agreement about its personages.

The chief justice of a high court lately declared that no race of men was good for any thing which had not believed in only one God, and allowed only one wife. As all the races of men have at some time believed in many gods, and have allowed a plurality of wives, this dictum would condemn all; but it is an example of hysteron proteron, or "the cart before the horse." If the statement had been that polytheism and polygamy were outgrown before the attainment of high culture, it would have been historically true; but as made, it is as inaccurate as to assert that no race is good for any thing in which the men have not always worn trousers,—a useful but recent invention of civilization. Instead of seeking an explanation of customs in race, it is more practical, as well as more scientific, to look for it in habitat and history; i.e., in environment.

An apparent exception occurs in the arbitrary edicts of fashion, styled very properly by Borachio as "a deformed thief;" but a distinction may readily be made between custom and fashion. Fashion is imitation and transitory. It is most commonly noticed in details of dress or ornament designed by some influential person to conceal a defect or display a beauty; sometimes, however, in latter days, by a conspiracy of manufacturers, tailors, or milliners. With the cessation of the special influence, the imitation gradually declines, unless, indeed, genuine merits are discerned in the invention, in which case it is assimilated through the vital catalysine faculty. The method of human progress is empirical. The good and useful, when ascertained by experiment, are retained for further improvement throughout the ages, while the noxious or useless are sooner or later rejected.

The views submitted dissent, though meekly, from some details in the work of that great writer and thinker, Herbert Spencer. No one can deny his comprehensive grasp of intellect, his brilliance of style, and his wealth of illustration, but more especially the wonderful and far reaching suggestiveness by which he has awakened and guided modern thought. Yet he is more beneficent as an educator of the mind than as an instructor in facts. In particular, his most admiring student must lament the Zoroastrian phantasy or dual antagonism of good and evil that mystifies his principles of sociology. To him militancy is Ahriman, and industrialism is Ormuzd, and their conflict is forced to explain all the myriad problems of human life. But the known causes and effects are too numerous and diverse to be disposed of by one universal solvent. The complex knots must be patiently untied, and cannot be severed by the rusty sword of a vamped and varnished Parsee dualism. Nor does history confirm this prosopopeia of good and evil. Industrialism began very early, and among the most cultured nations is now in a high state of development; yet it exhibits within itself strife and turmoil, selfishness and cruelty, equal to all the similar crimes ever charged against militancy. The latter has by no means passed away, though the human race has surely advanced. In fact, an evolutionary advance is manifest in militancy itself parallel with that seen in other lines of thought and action. Militancy, therefore, is not the cacodemon by whose overthrow alone the world has grown better.

The verbal forms of salutation may be divided into (1) those of a purely religious character, (2) those equivalent to a prayer for the health and temporal good of the person saluted, (3) those simply wishing health and prosperity without direct invocation of a deity, and (4) those expressing personal or official affection or respect.

1. The Israelites, both in meeting and parting, used a word meaning "blessing," and the person addressed was thereby commended to God. The expressions "Blessed be thou of the Lord!" and "The Lord be with thee!" are traditional.

The Arabian often says, "God grant thee his favors!" also "Thank God! how are you?" and the Turk, "My prayers are for thee," or "Forget me not in thy prayers." In Poland a visitor to a house will cry out, "The Lord be praised!" to which the hostess will answer, "World without end, amen!" The "sweet girl

<sup>1</sup> Abstract of the leading article in the American Anthropologist for July, 1890, by Garriek Mallory.

graduates" of conventual schools in this country involuntarily answer a knock at their doors by the word "Toujours!" instead of "Come in!" through the habit formed when the sister at the convent dormitory door uses a formula in praise of the Virgin Mary, to which the obligatory response was, "Forever!" Very lately a similar custom prevailed throughout Spain by which the visitor ejaculated "Maria purissima!" the reply being "Sin pecado concebida!" On other occasions the Spaniards say, "Vaya con Dios!" ("Go with God!") In the Tyrol, people exchange the formula "Praised be Jesus Christ!" and the Neapolitans, that of "Increase in holiness!"

2. The forms of greeting that pray for the health and well-being of the friend addressed are distributed generally. Indeed, our term "salutation" is derived from the Latin *salus*, and similar etymologies are found in other languages. The Ottoman cries, "Be under the guard of God!" In Arabia, on the first meeting of the day, the proper phrase is, "May God strengthen your morning!" or "May your morning be good!" The Persian begins his polite address with "I make prayers for thy greatness." The return to a salutation in the Orient is sometimes not only religious, but non-committal. If an Arab is directly asked about his health, he responds, "Praise be to God!" leaving his condition to be inferred from the modulation of his voice. If the form of the query is, "Is it well with thee?" the answer is, "God bless and preserve thee!" The Zuffi exchange the prayer, "May the light of the gods rest with thee!"

3. The general wish for health and prosperity, of which the English "farewell" as distinguished from "good-by" is an example, is often only implied in the query showing interest as to their present possession. The Arabs reiterate the query "How are you?" for some minutes, and, when well brought up, afterwards interrupt the subject of the conversation by again interjecting "How are you?" many times. Our "How d'you do?" has almost lost significance, as it is seldom answered except by reproduction, no one supposing it to be a *bona-fide* request for information. Many other salutations, abroad as well as at home,—e.g., "Good-morning!" "Hot day!" "Cold day!" or other meteorologic comments,—are now mere watchwords or countersigns, to indicate that the parties meeting are on good terms. Indeed, the origin of many old forms is the distinct declaration of peace, which was practically useful in the turbulent days when an enemy was more frequently met than a friend. This "passing the time of day" is now common at the occasional meeting of good-natured persons, by which the inane words form the friendly recognition of one of the same race.

The North American Indians do not have many conventional forms of salutation. Their etiquette generally is to meet in silence, and smoke before speaking, the smoking being the real salutation. But a number of tribes—i.e., the Shoshoni, Caddo, and Arikara—use a word or sound very similar to "How!" but in proper literature "Hau!" or "Hao!" Most of the Sioux use the same sound in communication with the whites, from which the error has arisen that they have caught up and abbreviated the "How are you?" of the latter. But the word is ancient, used in councils, and means "good," or "satisfactory." It is a response as well as an address or salutation.

An interesting point in this connection is the objection of some peoples to being praised for flourishing health, which is never admitted. For instance: to the Cingalese the expression "You look well," or "You have become stout," is very annoying, the reason being that the notice of malign deities would be attracted to their fortunate condition, upon which it would be destroyed. This illustrates the old story of the jealous gods, and the power of evil being the most important deity, and recalls many classic fables, among others that of the ring of Polycrates, in several lands and languages.

That this dread survives among some of the peasantry of Europe appears in their invariable refusal to respond that they are perfectly well, and a similar superstition has recently been reported from the mountains of North Carolina. The Chinese, in greeting, not only depreciate their own status, but exaggerate that of the party of the other part. The established ritual averages thus: "How is the excellent health enjoyed by your wealthy

and accomplished highness, and that of the brilliant full moon his spouse, and of the strong lions his sons, and graceful gazelles his daughters?" The obligatory response would be, "The ignorant beggar whom your benevolence deigns to notice is in his usual condition of dirt and disease, and the sow his wife, and pigs his offspring, starve in their old filthy sty." Perhaps the elegant expressions of response by cultured persons in absolute health, "Quite well, thank you!" "Passably," "About the same," and the like, considered to be a polite avoidance of boasting, have their origin in high antiquity.

Persons of general intelligence in the most civilized nations yet show relics of the dread of demons when an epidemic prevails. It was lately noticeable in Washington that the response about freedom from the grippe generally contained some qualification,—“Haven't got it yet,” or the like.

The wish of salute is often specific, connected with the circumstances of environment. The people of Cairo anxiously ask, "How do you perspire?" a dry skin being the symptom of the dreaded fever. In hot Persia the friendly wish is expressed, "May God cool your age!" that is, give you comfort in declining years. In the same land originates the quaint form, "May your shadow never be less!" which does not apply, as often now used in Europe, especially in Ireland, to the size and plumpness of the body as indicating robust health, but to deprecate exposure to the noon sun, when all shadows are least.

The Genoese, in their time of prosperity, used the form "Health and gain!" In some of the Polynesian isles the prayer for coolness is carried into action, it being the highest politeness to fling a jar of water over a friend's head. According to Humboldt, the morning salute on the Orinoco is, "How have the mosquitoes used you?"

The old religious wishes of the Persians are found in their wishes, "Live forever!" and (still retained in Spain) "May you live a thousand years!" They believed only in this life, and that through divine favor it might be unlimited.

4. The terms of affection in greeting are too numerous to be now recited. The following are mentioned as unhackneyed and of interest. Some Orientals say, "Thou hast made me desolate by thine absence from me;" and the ordinary form of greeting among the Zulus is simply, "I see you, and I am glad."

The variant phrases of respect are also multitudinous. Perhaps the most distinct form in which the common and ancient expression of the East, "I am your slave," survives in western Europe is in the Piedmont district of Italy. The Spaniards, through the influence of Moors and Jews, have many relics of Orientalism. It becomes colloquial in the form *Usted* contracted from "Veustra merced;" "your mercy," "your grace," often appearing in the phrase "I kiss my hands to your grace."

But the forms of respect and subservience, more than those of affection, have become established into titles of honor and nobility, therefore can be presented with some defined system not boundless as are the epithets poured from the ardent imaginings of friends and lovers.

It is not, however, possible now to attack the grandiose division of human vanity to which Selden alone devoted one thousand printed folio pages. Perhaps the only civil title of ceremony, as distinct from official designation, legally existing in this country, is that of esquire, which has almost fallen into disuse, being chiefly employed by attorneys-at-law. But they have a right to it. An esquire was originally an attendant on a knight; but later in England the title was given to all officers of the crown, which included attorneys, who are officers of the courts. Hence the English jest of the last century, that attorneys were only "gentlemen by act of Parliament." Such acts, being in force in our colonial period, applied to attorneys here, also officers of court.

"Sir," which has ceased to be a title in becoming the general form of address, has been generally derived directly from "sieur," the abbreviation of "seigneur," implying the lordship of land so essential to the feudal system that the legal maxim ran, "Point de terre sans seigneur;" but the derivation of "sieur" and "sire" was from the same root, originally signifying "senior," i.e., "elder," with the synonyme of "father." The form "sire" ante-

ceded that of "sieur;" and undoubtedly the term of respect involving the concept of "elder" and "father" long preceded the ownership of land. Terms of rank and gradation founded on seniority and paternity are fundamental in the sociology of the North American Indians, prevailed among the founders of Rome, and, as terms of respectful address, are still common in Asia and eastern Europe. Therefore, when you address a man as "sir," you etymologically imply that he is your father.

The subject of titles in the United States presents some amusing features. The Constitution prohibits titles of nobility; and of course the people insist upon all other kinds of titles, thereby proving the accuracy of the Roman poet's oft-quoted lines about the futility of casting out nature with a pitch-fork. Not only does a day's possession of any office baptize the possessor with a title for the remainder of his life, but often official or professional titles are bestowed in taste or discretion; so that "colonel," "judge," and "doctor" only imply some peculiarity in form, manner, or clothing. In this multiplicity and plethora it is strange that some men confer titles upon themselves without authority, as it is far more dignified and distinguished not to bear or allow any. This is not on the principle, often too broadly asserted, that "the post of honor is the private station," but because all titles of honor and distinction are degraded by misuse; e.g., that of "professor," now the perquisite of balloonists and jugglers. But there can be no argument with a superstition. The best treatment of the folly would be that advocated to settle the liquor question,—by high license and strict inspection. Let every man take what title he may choose, but pay for the privilege. The result would be that either the craving would diminish or the revenue increase from the taxation of a useless luxury, either of which is a desideratum.

All relations to addresses, titles, and ceremonial vi-its involve the assertion of, contention for, and regulation of, precedence. These are of immemorial antiquity, being traceable to the principle of the struggle for existence and survival of the fittest, and have diminished with the decreased operation of that principle among men, not with the discontinuance of militancy. The extent of the surviving attention to precedence in England, as gathered from the mere literature on the subject, would be misleading. In the heraldic catalogues there are eighty-nine distinct sets of men above the rank of a burgess, who have their specified places in processions and even at ceremonious dinner-parties, but every-day life is little affected thereby; always, however, remembering Thackeray's dictum, that an "Englishman does love a lord." As regards ceremonies at dinner-parties, the compliment of being served first has its disadvantages. Unless the guest thus distinguished exhibits greediness, the food placed before him will become either too cold or too warm before the others of the company can be ready. This is another case where the mean is golden.

The most illustrative notes on precedence appear in diplomatic history. Once at the court of France the envoys of Genoa and Brandenburg, being unable to agree as to which should present himself first to the king, stipulated that whichever first reached the palace on the day appointed should have the precedence. The prudent Prussian sought to make himself safe by sitting down on a bench in the hall of the palace all the night before; but the treacherous Italian, arriving near the proper hour, and seeing his adversary half asleep on the bench, slipped by into the royal bedroom. Precedence must be maintained for mere dignity, without any direct object: so two ambassadors who met face to face on the bridge at Prague were obliged to stop there for the entire day because neither of them would disgrace his country by letting the other pass.

In cases of milder action it was usual to stipulate, by previous arrangement, for absolute and exact equality in every detail. This was the plan pursued when Mazarin and Don Louis de Haro met to settle the conditions of the marriage between Louis XIV and Maria Theresa. The two ministers stepped together, with the right foot, side by side, into a council-chamber hung in corresponding halves with their respective colors, and sat down at the same instant precisely opposite each other at a critically square table on two mathematically equivalent arm-chairs.

The last connected chapter of Macaulay's "History" shows amusingly the waste of time and energy in which Kaunitz and Harlay watched one another's legs at the Congress of Ryswick, lest a priority in muscular action should jeopardize, as it did delay, the peace of two continents. One of the most stupidly arrogant assertions of precedence was made by Napoleon in 1808. The Almanach de Gotha had just been printed for that year with the regular alphabetical arrangement of the reigning houses, beginning with the Anhalt duchies; but the parvenu emperor suppressed the edition, and required the whole to be printed with his name in the first page.

"Giving" or "taking the wall" in passing, so frequently alluded to in Shakspeare and other authors of his time as an indication of rank, had tangible loss or advantage; as in the narrow and crowded street, destitute of sidewalks, proximity to the wall was safer and more convenient. But the same precedence on entering or leaving a room or passing through a doorway was contended for in vanity and pretension. A happy example of the modern politeness in which, both in form and fact, egotism has yielded to altruism, is in the rivalry, now so frequently shown, when two men accidentally meet at a door or other passage, by which each presses the other to advance, thus showing a survival in reverse of the old contention for precedence.

Upon a general summary of the whole subject of salutation, it is obvious that it was once a serious tax upon time. Both in the Old and New Testament injunction was given, whenever expedition was required, "to salute no man by the way." The minute, tedious, and verbose politeness of the East was an insuperable impediment to rapid travel; and this is still the case among such people as the Araucanians, whose formalities of meeting and greeting occupy at least a quarter of an hour.

The greatest abbreviation of such forms appears among the most cultured of modern peoples, and is directly in the evolutionary line of utility through saving of time; but it has still further significance. The forms of ancient peoples and of existing savages and barbarians show intention to accomplish something definite by the special act of salutation. They are generally limited to classes and individuals, are sometimes with petition for or in declaration of peace, are made in personal placation, or are the exchange of supplications to whatever deities or demons may be credited with power. Cultured people do not now regard these objects to be appropriately connected with salutations of courtesy. They now use a brief, nearly meaningless formula almost indiscriminately, so that it has no special relation to the persons saluting and saluted or to their respective status. It is the recognition by one human being of another, and is the best mark of real culture, its absence characterizing the savage or the boor. Its spirit is found in Talfourd's lines:—

"It is a little thing to speak a phrase  
Of common comfort, which by daily use  
Has almost lost its sense; yet . . . 'twill fall  
Like choicest music . . .  
To him who else were lonely, that another  
Of the great family is near and feels."

But it is not a little thing that a simple, kind recognition from man to man, even if often perfunctory, should replace the terms of elaborate egoism and stupid superstition. It is a sign of the evolution in which

"Love took up the harp of Life, and . . .  
Smote the chord of Self, that, trembling, passed in music  
out of sight."

#### NOTES AND NEWS.

In January of the present year two samples of compressed or tablet tea were presented to the Museum of the Royal Gardens, Kew, by Col. Alexander Moncrieff. In the new number of the *Kew Bulletin* the letter with which these samples were accompanied is printed, and much interesting information as to the making of compressed tea is brought together. Repeated attempts have been made to introduce compressed tea into this country, but never with complete success. "A few years ago," says the