

"Ma'am," "Mam," "Mum,"—we find that the "Yes'm" of Sally to her mistress is originally equivalent to "Yes my exalted," or "Yes, your highness." Throughout, therefore, the genesis of words of honour has been the same. Just as with the Jews and with the Romans has it been with the modern Europeans. Tracking these every-day names to their primitive significations of "Lord" and "King," and remembering in aboriginal societies these were applied only to the gods and their decendants, we arrive at the conclusion that our familiar "Sir" and "Monsieur" are, in the primary, and expanded meanings, terms of adoration.

It is the same with the ordinary polite forms of address. In writing an every-day letter to a stranger we unconsciously begin by using a word of reverence or worship—"Sir" or Lord, and we end our letter by the ordinary phrase of "Yours faithfully," which originally meant, "your slave," or, in the Eastern phraseology, "All I have is yours." Sometimes we conclude with; "Your most obedient servant," which is only another way of saying the same thing,—little as we may mean it. The words, though now mere barren forms were once living facts. They originated in complete submission to the lord, the sir, or master. Afterwards, they were used as terms of propitiation; and now they have become mere unmeaning forms of politeness. The use of the word "you," as a singular pronoun, infers the same supreme power on the part of the individual addressed,—being equivalent to the imperial "we" assumed by themselves,—though the "we" is now used by editors and many other small fry, and the "you" is addressed to everybody. The Quakers in their revolt against established forms, discarded the "Sir," the "you," and the "yours, faithfully," in addressing their correspondents and others; and it will be observed from what we have said that there was some sense in their proceeding.

The same difference as will be found to exist if one proceeds to analyze the bow of salutation and the familiar nod which friends now ordinarily throw to each other across the street,—and he traces this in like manner to early religious practices. The

Eastern form of salutation is to take the shoes from off the feet—a mark of reverence originally paid to a god or king, but now extended to all persons, and become an ordinary form of salutation. Our form of obeisance is derived from the Romans, who in worshipping their gods moved their right hand to their lips, and then, "casting it as if they had cast kisses," to use the words of Selden, "they turned the body round on the same side." This soon became an ordinary form of salutation to emperors, rulers, persons in power, and finally to ordinary people. This form of reverence we have inherited. The village schoolboy who awkwardly raises his hand to his forehead, and describes a semi-circle with his forearm, is not aware that he is employing a Roman form of reverence and worship, and yet it is so. And so, in like manner, was our wave of a hand to a friend across the street originally a devotional act.

The inclination of the body in a bow is a form of obeisance derived from the East. Entire prostration is the aboriginal sign of submission. The Assyrian sculptures show that it was the practice of the god-kings of that nation to place their heel upon the necks of the conquered. And to kiss the king's feet was an act of total submission, as it still is to kiss the toe of the Pope. The Russian serf still bends his head low to the ground in presence of his superiors, but in Western Europe we have very much abridged the act of prostration. We have shortened it into a bow, which, however, we generally make low in proportion to the dignity of the party addressed: and we have still further abridged it into the nod of familiar recognition. The bow is also still preserved as a religious act, and is made by Catholics before their altars, as well as by Protestants at the enunciation of certain words.

The curtsy, or courtesy, was originally, too, an act of reverence or worship. It signifies the falling down upon one knee—once a common obeisance of subjects to rulers. The curtsy of a village girl is so low that she seems almost as if down upon both knees before she rises again. What we call the "bow and scrape," such as the stage sailor makes, and the schoolboy sometimes tries, is