

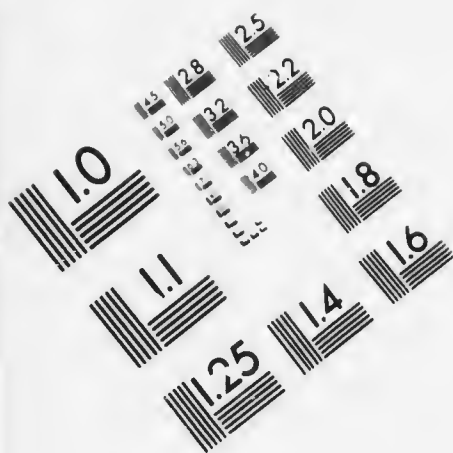


IMAGE EVALUATION TEST TARGET (MT-3)

28 25 22

**CIHM/ICMH
Microfiche
Series.**

**CIHM/ICMH
Collection de
microfiches.**



Canadian Institute for Historical Microreproductions / Institut canadien de microreproductions historiques


© 1987

Technical and Bibliographic Notes/Notes techniques et bibliographiques

The Institute has attempted to obtain the best original copy available for filming. Features of this copy which may be bibliographically unique, which may alter any of the images in the reproduction, or which may significantly change the usual method of filming, are checked below.

- ☐ Coloured covers/
Couverture de couleur
- ☐ Covers damaged/
Couverture endommagée
- ☐ Covers restored and/or laminated/
Couverture restaurée et/ou pelliculée
- ☐ Cover title missing/
Le titre de couverture manque
- ☐ Coloured maps/
Cartes géographiques en couleur
- ☐ Coloured ink (i.e. other than blue or black)/
Encre de couleur (i.e. autre que bleue ou noire)
- ☐ Coloured plates and/or illustrations/
Planches et/ou illustrations en couleur
- ☐ Bound with other material/
Relié avec d'autres documents
- ☐ Tight binding may cause shadows or distortion
along interior margin/
L'oreliure serrée peut causer de l'ombre ou de la
distorsion le long de la marge intérieure
- ☐ Blank leaves added during restoration may
appear within the text. Whenever possible, these
have been omitted from filming/
Il se peut que certaines pages blanches ajoutées
lors d'une restauration apparaissent dans le texte,
mais, lorsque cela était possible, ces pages n'ont
pas été filmées.
- ☐ Additional comments:/
Commentaires supplémentaires.

L'Institut a microfilmé le meilleur exemplaire qu'il lui a été possible de se procurer. Les détails de cet exemplaire qui sont peut-être uniques du point de vue bibliographique, qui peuvent modifier une image reproduite, ou qui peuvent exiger une modification dans la méthode normale de filmage sont indiqués ci-dessous.

- ☐ Coloured pages/
Pages de couleur
- ☒ Pages damaged/
Pages endommagées
- ☐ Pages restored and/or laminated/
Pages restaurées et/ou pelliculées
- ☒ Pages discoloured, stained or foxed/
Pages décolorées, tachetées ou piquées
- ☐ Pages detached/
Pages détachées
- ☒ Showthrough/
Transparence
- ☐ Quality of print varies/
Qualité inégale de l'impression
- ☐ Includes supplementary material/
Comprend du matériel supplémentaire
- ☐ Only edition available/
Seule édition disponible
- ☐ Pages wholly or partially obscured by errata
slips, tissues, etc., have been refilmed to
ensure the best possible image/
Les pages totalement ou partiellement
obscurcies par un feuillet d'errata, une pelure,
etc., ont été filmées à nouveau de façon à
obtenir la meilleure image possible.

This item is filmed at the reduction ratio checked below/
Ce document est filmé au taux de réduction indiqué ci-dessous.

10X	12X	14X	16X	18X	20X	22X	24X	26X	28X	30X	32X
					/						

The copy filmed here has been reproduced thanks to the generosity of:

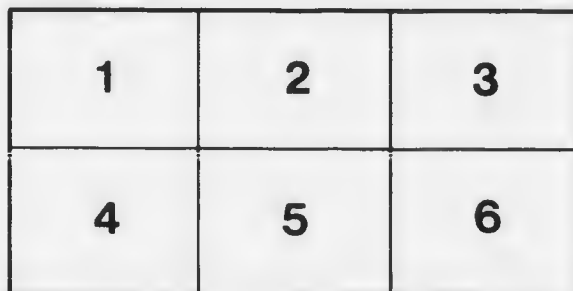
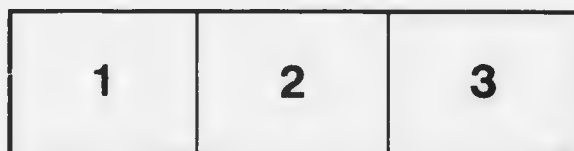
Harold Campbell Vaughan Memorial Library
Acadia University

The images appearing here are the best quality possible considering the condition and legibility of the original copy and in keeping with the filming contract specifications.

Original copies in printed paper covers are filmed beginning with the front cover and ending on the last page with a printed or illustrated impression, or the back cover when appropriate. All other original copies are filmed beginning on the first page with a printed or illustrated impression, and ending on the last page with a printed or illustrated impression.

The last recorded frame on each microfiche shall contain the symbol $\rightarrow$ (meaning "CONTINUED"), or the symbol ∇ (meaning "END"), whichever applies.

Maps, plates, charts, etc., may be filmed at different reduction ratios. Those too large to be entirely included in one exposure are filmed beginning in the upper left hand corner, left to right and top to bottom, as many frames as required. The following diagrams illustrate the method:



L'exemplaire filmé fut reproduit grâce à la générosité de:

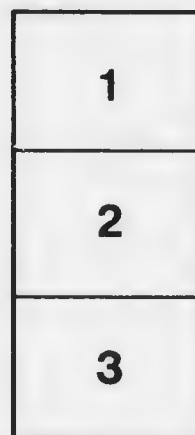
Harold Campbell Vaughan Memorial Library
Acadia University

Les images suivantes ont été reproduites avec le plus grand soin, compte tenu de la condition et de la netteté de l'exemplaire filmé, et en conformité avec les conditions du contrat de filmage.

Les exemplaires originaux dont la couverture en papier est imprimée sont filmés en commençant par le premier plat et en terminant soit par la dernière page qui comporte une empreinte d'impression ou d'illustration, soit par le second plat, selon le cas. Tous les autres exemplaires originaux sont filmés en commençant par la première page qui comporte une empreinte d'impression ou d'illustration et en terminant par la dernière page qui comporte une telle empreinte.

Un des symboles suivants apparaîtra sur la dernière image de chaque microfiche, selon le cas: le symbole $\rightarrow$ signifie "A SUIVRE", le symbole ∇ signifie "FIN".

Les cartes, planches, tableaux, etc., peuvent être filmés à des taux de réduction différents. Lorsque le document est trop grand pour être reproduit en un seul cliché, il est filmé à partir de l'angle supérieur gauche, de gauche à droite, et de haut en bas, en prenant le nombre d'images nécessaire. Les diagrammes suivants illustrent la méthode.



A
523
#16.

NEW MATERIALS
FOR THE HISTORY OF MAN,

DERIVED FROM

A COMPARISON OF THE CUSTOMS AND SUPERSTITIONS
OF NATIONS.

READ BEFORE THE NOVA SCOTIAN INSTITUTE OF NATURAL SCIENCE.

BY

R. G. HALIBURTON, F. A. S.
V. P. of N. S. Institute.



HALIFAX, N. S.
PRINTED BY THEOPHILUS CHAMBERLAIN,
1863.

11

INTRODUCTION.

WHEN a school of Ethnologists, who include in their number the illustrious name of Agassiz, dispute the truth of revelation, maintaining that the African, American, and other races sprang from different "centres of creation," any arguments that can overthrow so dangerous a theory are entitled to great consideration, no matter how trivial or absurd may be the subject to which they refer. It is hardly necessary to premise that, if the view of the American Ethnologists is correct—that certain branches of the human family were created in the countries which they now inhabit,—there can be no similarity in the customs and superstitions of *all nations*, excepting in those which the common wants, impulses, or perceptions of men would necessarily suggest to them in all countries, and at all times.

Any very marked identity in this particular is a difficulty in the way of Professor Agassiz and his friends. But the difficulty becomes greater, if the identity exists in the observance of a custom, that is of a nature so trivial or absurd, as not to be likely to be suggested by nature to all men in all countries; and the argument against their view becomes irresistible, when we find a large number of superstitions and customs common to all men, identical in their meaning and mode of observance; and still more when there is a marked resemblance in the very time when these customs are observed, especially when the range of the custom extends from far north of the Equator to the most southerly portions of the world, and is found encircling the globe, existing in all latitudes and in every climate.

It is needless to say, that if such customs exist, and cannot be supposed to have been borrowed, we are inevitably driven to the conclusion that they were *inherited*, and, if inherited, it must have been from a common origin.

My attention has consequently been devoted, during the past nine years, to the existence of certain popular customs and superstitions, the

antiquity of which has for centuries been a subject of wonder ; their universality, however, has never yet been the subject of regular investigation.

To attempt to trace them to their origin has been regarded by all, who have treated of them, as being a hopeless task ; and they have been viewed as curious *antiquarian* subjects, instead of being regarded as the most singular *historical* memorials in the world.

The principal works on the subject are "Brand's Popular Customs," edited by the late principal Librarian of the British Museum, Sir Henry Ellis ; "Hone's Every-day Book ;" Brady's "Clavis Calendaria ;" and Mr. Robert Chambers' "Book of Days," the first volume of which was published last year.

Brand says : "The prime source of these popular superstitions is absolutely unattainable. We must despair of ever being able to reach the fountain-heads of those streams, that have been running and increasing since the very commencement of time."

I turned my attention to this subject merely for the purpose of procuring materials for an amusing lecture ; but the more I became familiar with the subject, the more convinced I became, that the identity in the customs of nations was deserving of the most careful inquiry, and that their origin was not as unattainable as had been supposed.

I accordingly wrote to Sir Henry Ellis respecting my investigations, which I was then commencing, and, in reply, he evidently intimates his conviction of the hopeless task that I had undertaken :—

"To trace such customs back even to the beginning of the Christian era is a work of difficulty, requiring much time and labor ; and the tracing them back to a more remote antiquity is a still more difficult task, and one in which we can derive but little aid either from books or individual knowledge."

Mr. Prescott, who very kindly furnished me with some information respecting the subject as respects America, was evidently very sceptical as to my ultimate success. Early in 1857 he wrote to me :—"I have had the pleasure of receiving your very interesting note, in which you give me an account of the curious and highly important researches in which you are engaged. They are as important as they are difficult, as I have learned from the late experience I have had in similar investigations."

That the subject has hitherto not been investigated, will be apparent from a passage in a letter from Mr. Robert Chambers, who is now publishing an antiquarian work entitled the "Book of Days," giving an account of popular customs, but not going into the subject of their universality or their origin :—

"Your view is a very startling one ; but one cannot but see something remarkable in the community of customs between America and the Old World, as evidencing at least the original connection of those families of mankind."

Had I not been already convinced that the undertaking I had commenced was not only practicable, but also comparatively easy, I should have been effectually deterred from any further investigations into a field regarded by all, who had treated of it, as beyond the range of enquiry. But I felt assured that the difficulty that had previously appeared so great, arose from the mode in which the subject had been handled.

None can question the accuracy of Sir Henry Ellis' remark, that "to trace back" customs to their origin is a hopeless task. Philology would have made but slow progress, if students of that science had been compelled to trace back languages to their origin. I have adopted, therefore, exactly the same principles of investigation as Professor Max Muller and other philologists have made use of, viz., a *comparison* of customs.

Philologists find Sanscrit, Greek and German sister languages, not by feeling their way through the mists of antiquity, that veil the wanderings of the wide-spread Indo-European races from the home of their Arian ancestors, but by a *comparator* and analysis of *existing* languages; the results have opened up an era in the life of our race long anterior to the birth of history or even of tradition.

I have pursued precisely the same mode of investigation, which is a comparatively easy and simple one.

Once establish that a large number of arbitrary customs, such as could not have naturally suggested themselves to all men at all times, are universally observed, and we arrive at the conclusion that they are *primitive* customs, which have been *inherited* from a common source; and if inherited, that they owe their origin to an era anterior to the dispersion of the human race. Hence a comparison of customs leads us at once to their origin without the hopeless task of "tracing them back" through that vast period when history is but an unsafe guide.

Adopting, then, the principle of a *comparison* of customs, I have found that there is a peculiarity in man never yet duly appreciated, viz.: a *marvellous perpetuity of customs, and superstitions* among the common people. Religions may change, and civilization may be developed or decline, but they cannot affect the existence, though they may slightly modify the meaning of those memorials of primitive man which are perpetuated in the manners of the people.

I have found festivals, still mentioned in our Calendar, observed in all parts of the world. Thus a primeval festival in honor of the dead. (*of three days duration* in Europe, Asia, and Japan,) known to our Calendar as Halloween, All Saints and All Souls (Octr. 31st, Novr. 1st and 2nd), is observed, at or near the beginning of November, in Europe, Asia, Polynesia and America. The Spaniards were very naturally surprised at

finding that, while they were celebrating a solemn mass for *All Souls* on the 2d of November, the heathen Peruvians were also holding their annual commemoration of the dead.

The uniformity in the time of the year when the Festival was observed, affords strong grounds for assuming the existence of two primitive calendars during the Stone age, probably one, if not both of which, like the year of the Pleiades of the Pacific Islanders, divided the year into two equal parts; one of these having probably a Southern origin, dividing the year in November and May, the other in February and August. Thus this festival is observed at the beginning of November by the Polynesians, the Peruvians, the Hindoos, the Celts, &c., there being some traces (though rare) of its having been observed in some countries in May. Among the Algonquins, the Persians and the Romans it was held in February, and by the Japanese, &c., in August. This will, however, be treated of in a paper on this festival, which is now in course of preparation.

Although the universality of this festival has hitherto escaped the observation of the learned, it is unquestionably the most ancient religious commemoration in the world, dating back to the earliest era of the Stone age, and to a date anterior to the first migration of nations from the parent stock.

When memorials of primitive man are perpetuated in festivals, the labor of identification is but slight; the similarity in the mode, the manner and the time of observance, aid us in establishing them as identical, and as derived from primeval antiquity; but when we deal with mere superstitious fears or trivial observances, the difficulty of identification becomes greater; for as all such superstitions are necessarily vague, the results must be equally so, no matter how plainly we ascertain their common source and their original meaning. If the identity in the customs and superstitions of nations were limited to a few points of resemblance, the coincidences might be regarded as accidental; but when I state that there are a vast variety of customs common to all nations, and that some of these customs are observed every where in the same peculiar manner, how can we suppose that accident can have brought about such startling results.

Having once established the universality of a custom or superstition, there is but little difficulty in arriving at its original meaning. Among civilized nations it may exist unknown to the educated, and lingering only in secluded districts among the most ignorant part of the community and even among them it may have entirely lost its significance and become a senseless irrational observance, which is merely retained because their fathers observed it before them. But there are portions of the human

race that have been for thousands of years secluded from the influence of development and change—that are probably the same now as they were in the days of the patriarchs; that use the same rude flint axes as are now found buried deep in the drift in Europe, or covered up by the gradual growth of peat, by the changes of rivers, and the various agencies that have altered the aspect of Europe since the remote age when the races that used them existed. Simple in their ideas and unchanged in their habits, they have but few festivals, and the meaning of their religious rites is simple and apparent. Once identify one of their customs or festivals with the superstition of civilized nations, and what is inexplicable in the latter case, can be, with but little difficulty, investigated in the former case, and identified as a rude creation of a rude and simple faith. The conclusion thus arrived at receives a very significant confirmation, when we turn from one nation of savages to another in a different part of the world, and are led to precisely the same conclusion. Hence we establish, by a comparison of the customs of all nations, what are *universal customs*: and we arrive at their primeval meaning, by making the simple religious custom of the unchanged savage a clue to the otherwise inexplicable popular superstition of civilized nations.

It is hardly necessary to state that if it can be proved that there are relics of primitive society inherited by all nations, it is apparent that they constitute the most remarkable historical memorials in the world. While the researches of the Geologist have enabled him to discover with what extinct animals man has been coeval, and with what weapons he contended with his gigantic foes, and while the ancient homes of extinct races in Europe have disclosed to the eye of the enquirer the nature of the food that they ate, and the rude implements that they used, the study of universal customs, if my conclusions are correct, may do far more; it may open up to us the social and religious life of primitive man, his festivals of rejoicings and his days of mourning,—his vague belief in the existence of spiritual beings, and his dim glimmerings of a future existence.

Carrying us back to an anterior to the dispersion of man, it may give us a new ground upon which to investigate many questions as to the religions of civilized nations which have eluded the enquiry of the ingenious and the learned. It may give us a basis upon which we may assume that civilization and superstition, hand in hand, constructed the strange creeds and mythologies of ancient nations.

Conscious that the conclusions to which I had been led were of great importance, in throwing light on the history of our race, and on ancient history, I have avoided prematurely bringing them before the public. In 1859, although my name was put down by the Society of Antiquaries

for a paper to be read at one of their meetings at Somerset House. I felt that even the labor of five years was scarcely enough to warrant me in bringing the matter to the notice of the public.

Having during nine years collected a large amount of material illustrating the subject, and being encouraged by finding that, on some points, recent geological investigations have borne out my conclusion, I have written a short paper on one of our popular customs. It would, however, be hardly fair to the subject, to let these brief preliminary remarks, be considered even an outline of the subject, or the short paper on the custom I have selected—a custom the most difficult of explanation of all that I have studied—as anything but an illustration of the singular duration of customs, and of the mode of investigation adopted by me.

The enormous field over which the enquiry extends, will be indicated, when it can be shown that some universal customs and superstitions belong to an early, and others to a late era of the Stone age; that we can still find in certain customs relics of the Bronze age, some belonging to an earlier period of it than others; and that traces of almost all these rites and festivals of primeval society are still preserved in the religious rites, or popular customs and superstitions of nations.

To outline a subject so extensive would require greater space than this paper will afford; while to put into form the large mass of new materials collected by me would require a work not less voluminous than Sir Chas. Lyell's "*Antiquity of Man*."

I have therefore written, merely as an indication of the mode of these investigations, a paper on a ridiculous superstitious custom found everywhere, respecting sneezing. I have selected it, because, though trivial in itself, it has been alluded to by Homer, and has puzzled Aristotle, Pliny, Sir Thomas Brown, and a host of other writers in ancient and modern times; yet although it has excited more speculation than any other custom, up to the present hour not even a plausible conjecture has been offered as to its origin and meaning. I have also purposely selected it, because it is so absurd that no one can pretend that nature could have suggested it to all men at all times and in all countries; nor can it be assumed (even if such a thing were possible) that all nations in Europe, Asia, Polynesia, and America can have borrowed from one another a custom that has apparently so little to recommend it to the common apprehensions of men. Ridiculous as it may appear, we should remember that nothing which tends to illustrate the history of man is unimportant; to use Bunsen's words, "above all we should never condemn, or overlook, even the most seemingly trivial and unpromising object, within the range of primitive monumental history."

No. 1.

THE UNITY OF ORIGIN OF THE HUMAN RACE, PROVED BY THE UNIVERSALITY OF CERTAIN SUPERSTITIONS CONNECTED WITH SNEEZING.

Τοις πταμοι θεον γρομεθα.—Arist. in Problem.

A century ago, in fashionable society, to omit to say, "God bless you," when a person sneezed, was regarded as a gross breach of etiquette. Most persons who have travelled in secluded parts of the United Kingdom, or even in the British Colonies, have noticed that this custom still survives among the humbler classes. It is to be found throughout Europe, as well as in other parts of the world.

Probably no custom has excited more fruitless discussion in all ages, among the learned. Homer mentions it in his *Odyssey*; Aristotle wrote on the subject, and in vain endeavored to explain its existence among his countrymen, who, he tells us, revered it as something sacred,—*Τοις πταμοι θεον γρομεθα*, and used to exclaim, *Ζευ σωσσαι*, Jupiter preserve you! Apuleius refers to it, and Pliny has a problem on the subject, "*Cur sternutantes saluantur.*" Tiberius observed, and rigidly exacted the custom. The Jewish Rabbies were equally puzzled by its existence among the Hebrews, who to this day exclaim, "*Tobim Chaim.*" (a long life to you!) on such occasions. The Rabbies invented a fable as to Jacob, in order to solve the mystery, in the same manner that Greek philosophers, who were almost equally imaginative, gravely announced the origin to have been in an incident connected with Prometheus. The explanations are too absurd to be referred to here. But this custom was not confined to Europe, or to Judea. It is found to this day on the most remote parts of Asia, and among the most secluded nations of Africa.

But even these three continents are not the limits within which we find this singular and irrational custom.

I have been surprised at finding that it is observed by the natives of the new world. De Soto, in his wanderings in Florida, which he discovered, noticed that when a Sachem sneezed the savages around him bowed down, and invoked the Sun to save him. But we may find it even in the secluded islands of Polynesia. It is the custom in Otaheite to invoke the protection of heaven when a person sneezes.

I was much struck, in reading the adventures of Mariner in the Tonga Islands, a group near the Feejee Islands, at finding almost a second edition of what happened almost three thousand years ago to Xenophon and the "immortal ten thousand."

Xenophon tells us in his *Anabasis*, that when the Greeks were about to commence their celebrated retreat after the death of Cyrus the younger, and just as Xenophon was addressing them with these words, "we have many reasons to hope for *preservation*," a soldier unfortunately sneezed, upon which the whole army invoked Jupiter the *Preserver*; Xenophon, proceeding on, said, "Since at the mention of your preservation, Jupiter has sent this omen," &c., an ingenious turn, by which he converted an evil into a good omen.

I ought here to mention, that in all ages, and in Hindostan as well as in Greece, it has been always considered an unlucky omen for any one to sneeze at the commencement of an undertaking. The existence of this belief among the Hindoos is referred by Lutfullah in his memoirs, p. 62, "A sneeze in an opposite direction will prevent a man from going to any place, or commencing any undertaking."

Mariner tells us that when Finow, a Chief in the Tonga Islands, was about to proceed on a warlike expedition, some one sneezed. Instead of shewing the ready wit of Xenophon, the Chief regarding it as an ill omen from the gods, defied them to do their worst.

"Finow (the late King) was an impious person in many respects, but we have already seen how much the people wondered at his success. The same King was one day prevented from going out upon an expedition against the enemy, by one of his Chiefs happening to sneeze, which is considered a bad omen. Finow, in a sudden, greatly exasperated, with raised arms, and clenched fists, exclaimed, in a loud voice, "Crowd all ye gods to the protection of these people, nevertheless I will wreak my vengeance upon them tenfold!" but this impious exclamation was heard with horror by everybody."

Mariner himself almost lost his life, from sneezing when Finow and his followers were about to commence a religious ceremony. "Immediately everyone present threw down his club for who would proceed on so important an expedition after so dire an omen! Finow's eyes flashed with the fire of rage. Directing them full on Mr. Mariner, he cursed him with the most bitter curse, "Strike your God!" In a note it is stated, "To sneeze at the moment of setting out on an expedition, argues in their opinion the most fatal result." Mariner having by a prudent retreat saved his life, Finow consulted with his men on the subject of Mr. Mariner's sneezing, and resolved, that as he was a foreigner, and had

different gods, his sneezing was not to be considered of any consequence."

Hence we find that in all ages and in all countries, 1st., a sneeze is supposed to be an omen of impending evil to the person who sneezes, or to an undertaking which he may at the time be commencing,—and 2ndly, that an invocation of the Deity, is a preservation from the danger which a person incurs by sneezing.

Struck by these remarkable identities in the observance of so irrational a custom, I felt convinced that it must have taken its rise in some religious fears and superstitions of primitive man, the common parent of those by whom it has been so long preserved.

On looking at those nations that present the most primitive type, we find a strange uniformity of belief.

The North American Indians, the natives of the Indian Archipelago, as well as the Polynesians, believed, not only in the existence of some supreme and beneficent power, but also in the existence of inferior spiritual beings, or little gods, strongly resembling the Fairies of Northern Europe. They also believed that all nature had a soul as well as man, and that the soul is peculiarly liable to the agency of spiritual beings. Thus the "Medicine Man" of the North American races is always a necromancer. His patient is not affected by natural, but by supernatural causes, only to be removed by counter-charms. The "Medicine Man" works himself into a singular state, sometimes ending in convulsions; he then becomes inspired, and proceeds, with certain ceremonies, *to bring back* the patient's *soul*, or to expel the evil spirit.

The same belief and practice are observable among the savages of Borneo, and of Central Africa. Among these simple and primitive races, there is a belief that man has a double form, the one corporeal, and the other spiritual, and that even in life the spirit or soul and the body are not necessarily united, but that sickness or evil spirits may deprive the body of its spiritual companion.*

* The belief among the Jews, as to idiots or insane persons being "possessed of evil spirits," may be connected with these ideas. It is remarkable that sickness and death are, in the Arctic regions, in Australia, and in Central Africa, attributed by the natives to the influence of spirits, who have been employed by enemies to injure them. Thus among the Arctic Laponenx, whenever a person dies, his relatives kill some one belonging to a neighboring tribe. In Australia exactly the same thing occurs, the natives fancying that some one has by supernatural means stolen the "kidney fat" of the deceased. They accordingly knock on the head a native of another tribe, and take from him his kidney fat, while he is still alive.

See Sir John Richardson's "Arctic Expedition in search of Sir John Franklin, ch. 12." See also Report on the Aborigines, by the Committee of the Legislative Council of Victoria—Session 1858-9.

The belief in Scotland and in Equatorial Africa, is found to be almost precisely identical respecting there being *ghosts even of the living*, who are exceedingly troublesome and pugnacious, and can be sometimes killed by a silver bullet, or great skill.

In Polynesia, not only man, but also inanimate objects, are supposed to be liable to lose their spirits, or soul.

The little gods sometimes steal the souls or shadows of those articles to which they take a fancy. (See "Westminster Review" for April 1862.) There is a Polynesian legend "in which they (the little gods) carry off the shadows of Ter Kanawa's jewels, leaving the costly substances behind them, the souls of the fairies being quite contented with the shadows alone."

In the Highlands of Scotland, and among the Irish peasantry, the same superstition prevails, excepting that the fairies appear to be even more exacting, only leaving behind a worthless substitute or semblance of the article pilfered by them. These superstitions have crossed over the Atlantic with the Irish emigrant. Many a cow, on the peninsula of Halifax, has, by being chalked with a cross, escaped from the pilfering hands of the fairies, who apparently are supposed to have a *penchant* for new milk.

But it would be fortunate if the fairies of the Celtic race confined their depredations to the milk pail. It is asserted and believed by many of the Scotch and Irish peasantry, that not only infants, but also grown up men and women, are liable to be stolen by the fairies.

Major Tidd, of the 76th Regt. told me that within the past twenty years, while he was stationed in Ireland, a child was actually burnt to death by its parents, under the impression that it was only a "fairy child," the real child having been carried off by the fairies. Traces of this belief are to be found even among the Highland emigrants and their descendants in Cape Breton.*

This being, then, so wide-spread a superstition, regarding the influence of fairies or subordinate deities, can we in any way obtain from it a clue to the habit of saying "God bless you!" to a person who sneezes? Have the fairies anything to do with the mysterious danger caused by a sneeze, and does the invocation of the Deity protect the person who sneezes from the influence of the fairies?

This I believe can be conclusively established by the traditions and superstitions of the Celtic race.

I need hardly refer to the mysterious protection which the name of the Deity is supposed to afford against the agency of evil spirits. There is, however, a well known story which will illustrate the belief of the Celtic race as to the effect, which the habit of saying "God bless you!" has upon the fairies.

* See Halliwell's Fairy Mythology of Shakespeare as to the prevalence of this belief in the Isle of Man and in parts of England and Ireland p. 310. The subject opened up respecting our belief in fairies, &c., is only glanced at here—a series of amusing papers might be written on this subject alone.

Pat once went to sleep at a place frequented by the fairies; and in his sleep was carried down to their palace. He was about to drink some of their ale, which would have forever prevented his return, when fortunately one of the fairies happened to sneeze, upon which Pat, in a courteous mood, exclaimed very innocently, "God bless your honor!" Wonderful was the effect of thus invoking the name of the Deity in their presence. With terrible imprecations, and in great dismay, the fairies fled away, and Pat awoke once more upon earth.

I could cite many such stories to prove the fact, that the Celtic race believe that from Satan down to the mildest form of evil spirits, the name of the Deity has the effect of rendering them, for the time, powerless to do harm.

Can we then find any clue to the question why we should wish to keep off fairies and evil spirits when a man sneezes? I have discovered the explanation, in the superstitions of the Highlanders. The following tradition as to a Highland Chief's family in Perthshire, related to me by the Rev. Dr. Robertson, a native of that county, shows that when a person sneezes, he is supposed to be *liable to be stolen by the fairies*, unless protected by some one invoking the name of the Deity.

Several centuries ago, an ancestor of the present Chief was engaged to be married to a young lady in France, who, he learned, had grown fickle, and was about to be married to a rival. In great distress, the Chief applied for aid to the King of the Fairies, who offered him a fairy horse, mounted on which he accompanied his Majesty to France. When they arrived at the house of the bride, the wedding was just commencing. The King of the Fairies, unseen by the guests, entered, and seeing the bride for a moment withdraw into a room alone, he followed her. Just then she sneezed—there was no one present to say "God bless you!" and in a moment the fairy had stolen the bride, whom he carried in triumph over to the Highlands, where she married the chieftain, and became the happy mother of a long line of illustrious Mac's. It is needless to add that his rival, the unhappy Frenchman, unconsciously married "*a fairy woman*."

This, then, is the explanation of the custom among the Celtic race: but as their belief as to fairies, is *precisely similar* to that of the Polynesians, and as both have inherited, in common with all nations, the custom of invoking the Deity when a person sneezes, we may very naturally infer, that what is an explanation for the custom in the Highlands, is also a solution for it among the people of the Tonga Islands. But it is manifest that if *all nations* possess the custom, they must have inherited it from a common source; and if so, that the custom must have been in

existence *prior to the dispersion*. If, then, the solution I have conjectured for this enigma be correct, man, prior to the dispersion, must have believed in a supreme protecting Deity, who listened to the prayers of men—also in the existence of subordinate malevolent Deities. Primeval man, it is self-evident, must have held that he was possessed of a spirit, which was liable to the attacks of spiritual foes; and he must have regarded the act of sneezing, as in some way, peculiarly exposing the soul to the influence of its unseen enemies.

If, then, this trivial, ridiculous custom, which for more than 2000 years has puzzled philosophers, can be traced back to an era prior to the dispersion, it is of far greater historical value, as regards the history of man, that all the monuments of Egypt. It must have existed many thousand years before they were built—at a time when the common ancestors of the Egyptians, the Hindoos, the Greeks, the Celts, the Latins, were like the Polynesian Islanders, and the savages of America.

Professor Agassiz and his friends point to the early monuments of Egypt for one of their strongest proofs in support of their views, as we there find the negro type represented as precisely similar to what it now is; and they endeavor to convince the world that all the varieties of man sprang from different "centres of creation," that American man, Australian man, Arctic man, African man, all are indigenous to the countries which they now inhabit.

It would certainly be an amusing, if not a most profitable task to refute the speculations of American Ethnologists by arguments derived from sneezing.

Before they can expect us to deny the truth of revelation, and to accept their theories, let them answer the questions, how did all men, in all countries, arrive at the same singular conclusion, as to the mysterious dangers attendant on a sneeze, if this belief was not inherited from a common source?



