
PROBING THE COMMUNAL MIND

The Peirce Project depends on specialists from many fields for help in preparing our critical texts and editorial annotations. Although the heaviest burden falls on our regular contributing editors and advisors, we hope that through the newsletter we can significantly extend the scope of communal involvement. If you can answer one of our questions, or offer some guidance, please reply in writing or by e-mail to Associate Editor André De Tienne at adetienn@iupui.edu.

Previous question:

We are still looking for an answer to **Question 10**: who is Kirchheis/Kirchheiss? In 1891 Peirce wrote a letter to the editor of the *Nation* (reprinted in Ketner & Cook I:115–17) in support of F. E. Abbot, whose *Ways out of Agnosticism* had been fiercely attacked by Royce. In his letter Peirce noted that “philosophers of the highest standing” had spoken highly of Abbot’s work, and he gave three examples of such philosophers: Renouvier in France, Seth in England, and Kirchheiss in Germany. We have been successful with respect to the first two (Seth wrote a review of Abbot’s *Scientific Theism for Mind*), but so far have been unable to find any reference to the German philosopher Kirchheiss.

New questions:

Question 16. In his 1892 review of Sidgwick’s *Distinction and the Criticism of Belief* for the *Nation* (reprinted in Ketner & Cook I:167–69), Peirce concluded with a discussion of one of Sidgwick’s examples that was derived from the British House of Commons. In the last paragraph Peirce added:

Until our “G. B.” has his way, it may be feared we shall not hear debating like that in the House of Representatives. In this country we have not time for such reasonings, nor for the other argumentations which Mr. Sidgwick is occupied with refuting, nor for the closely similar ones with which he would replace them.

One question that has puzzled us for some time, and for which we have not found an answer, is who is this G. B.? Presumably he was a public figure so familiar to the average *Nation* reader that mentioning his initials was enough (like L.B.J. or

C.S.P.). One possibility could be George Bancroft, in which case our question becomes whether Bancroft was known for peculiar debating habits.

Question 17. An isolated sheet with the letterhead of the Century Club in New York (7 West Forty-Third Street) contains the following ciphered poem in sixteen lines. The poem is signed “C. S. Peirce” and is handwritten very carefully with only four corrections. It was probably composed around 1893 given the paper and handwriting. Could anyone help us decipher this poem or shed light on the seemingly syllabic principles underlying its ciphering? Peirce is likely to have ciphered some well-known poem.

Smeyf oysachelpowsk erjorpapaupho psil helghey
 Stelsmey bien ohau ciesnau fohaushelbie skirth
 Aphar skoborshuo haubulfilsk a skolbilghiefar gorbif
 Ohaujor ghorfasm iwshelghelpau olshiwchiebelp
 Ohau snilstauborjaud osnil gorpsi dath ops arbuo
 Diwsmey helsk ayshaubopsorsk olpsurfsh ajoysiebuo
 Bild olsnalnelskeyfoy jil fulforth iebild
 Ohau stiwshirsk iwg aph anijehoth eybild
 Oypsiwph ask ahau fulfiljilgh ayhadausk olshauspajie
 Smeyf ipsiwph obmausk ows ohau stiwpharshiwsnoy smanau
 Bild iljehonuo smiw smeyf iejoysmauphelpe farshoh
 Orfaysowphosk ohau skopsorth iwg eyfor aljorsmey
 Steyjief anie smeyf oyemashoy¹ smeybo shiwsnild eyfor cowshil
 Bild anie smeyf olnaphausmay jil smeyfelsh osnorph
 Aypsilgelshi smeyf smeldelphesk ask smeyth alsnorph
 Aphar skolshanbar² smeyf oshowsmey gorpsi surnau³ smiw sienau.

1. This word could also read “oysmashoy.”

2. Or “skolshaubar.”

3. Or “siwnau.”

“Carolyn Eisele Collection” continued

expected to greatly facilitate finalizing the annotations for Peirce’s History of Science Lectures, which will be published in volume 9. As for the papers, our first intern, Cinda May, has organized Eisele’s personal correspondence, as well as the material associated with her late husband, Morris Halpern. Our second intern, Marcia Caudell, is currently working on Eisele’s professional papers.

The wealth and diversity of the material we have obtained is staggering. It includes, besides drafts of her own papers and recordings of her opera lessons, a few fragments of original Peirce manuscripts, a plate for Peirce’s quincuncial world map, old photographs of Arisbe, and copies from Peirce manuscripts at the Houghton Library that precede the microfilm edition. In addition to their use for the Peirce Edition Project and for the study of Peirce in general, Eisele’s papers contain material on her own life, her tenure at Hunter College, her voice lessons, and on the

American opera scene in the 1930s (her husband worked as a voice coach). The material also gives detailed insight into her involvement with professional organizations like the New York branch of the American Mathematical Society, and of the day-to-day operations at the mathematics department at Hunter College, where she began teaching in 1924.

Provisionally, the collection is being divided into twelve series: (1) Correspondence; (2) Writings; (3) Research; (4) Speeches and Lectures; (5) Courses; (6) Department and University Affairs; (7) Professional Organizations; (8) Personal; (9) Printed Materials; (10) Music; (11) Art; and (12) Morris Halpern Papers. It should be added, though, that this is very much a work in progress and that there is still much to be done to make the collection accessible.

Cornelis de Waal
 Assistant Editor