

James M. Peebles, M.D., M.A., Ph.D.

Half the human race dies before ten years of age. Dr. Peebles lives young and healthy at ninety-five.

Half the world is deep in slumber when the early morning chorus of birds begins. Dr. Peebles is breakfasting and out in his garden at work.

Half the world is rushing and groaning under its burden of work, Dr. Peebles—serene, happy, alert—wroks, writes and lectures with a buoyancy and vigor to be envied by a man of fifty years his junior.

"Coffins," says Dr. Peebles in his recent book, *How to Live a Century and Grow Old Gracefully*, "cost from \$125 up to \$1000, which financially considered, makes it exceedingly expensive to die * * * Dying early is a bad habit, and disease not inherited, is sinful," and hale, hearty, and afire with intellectual vigor at ninety-five, he "marches cherrily on toward the hundredth milestone."

Dr. Peebles looks back upon a long and varied career as physician, author, preacher, debater, scholar and lecturer.

Five times has he traveled around the world, and plans to go again—but not until California goes "dry," he says. Eighty years ago he made his first temperance speech and stood on the platform with John B. Gough; seventy years ago he began a vigorous campaign for the emancipation of women; eighty years ago he strenuously opposed slavery and lectured on



Dr. Peebles

the platform with William Lloyd Garrison, at a time when it cost something to befriend the black man.

He is the only living one of the seven initial organizers of the Independent Order of Good Templars, and was their first Right Worthy Grand Chaplain. He was sent by President Grant as the United States Consul at Trebizonde in Asiatic Turkey, now being besieged by the Russians. He was several times Peace Commissioner, once to the European Peace Congress at Paris, and again among the American Indians of the Northwest. He has been associated in various ways with a host of famous people—Emerson, Carlyle, Walt Whitman, Theodore Parker, William T. Stead and Professor William James, Victor Hugo and Longfellow, and a long list besides. From a wealth of experience, he has written fascinating travel tales and many more volumes. As a student of the occult, his writings on psychic research and phenomena are internationally known. And today he is busy in his regular contributions to thirty magazines, seven of which are in India.

A rose-covered bungalow in York Valley is his retreat. Roses everywhere stand as sentinels, or climb their way on trellis or arbor or latticed wall in the garden. Tall, erect, with snowy locks and flowing beard, he walks among them, touching lovingly and calling each by name. Two hundred and fifty colors and kinds nod and bloom to crown his labors and love.

A cosy home it is that shelters the Doctor and his housekeeper with his faithful secretary and adopted son, Robert Peebles Sudall. One room, a veritable museum in itself, is packed with curios and relics breathing an Oriental atmosphere. Here on the wall hangs a framed document in Turkish hieroglyphics—an appreciation of his Consulate—from the old Sultan; there, a pair of strange drumsticks that a little Hindu boy gave him in India as he paused to make friends with the group of children playfng just outside a Buddhist Temple.

His study with its two thousand volumes lining the walls, is a student's den indeed.

"Books feed me, while parlor talk and babble starve me," says the Doctor. "There is nothing like the turning, whirling grindstone of toil to put an edge on the steel of humanity. Laziness I abhor, and consider industry the best stuff for the making of saints. I have no conception of tottering down the decline of life. I expect to work on the very morning of my departure and sleep into the better land of Immortality at the sunset of the same evening."

And here in this crowded little workshop, Dr. Peebles is the living demonstration of these ideas.

Coming from an old Scotch family, Dr. Peebles was born in Whitingham, Vermont. From earliest boyhood he was fond of books. At sixteen he was teaching the district school, graduating later from the High school and Oxford Academy, New York. A period of preaching in the Universalist church was followed by graduation from the Philadelphia University of Medicine and Surgery, and the years of a long and varied course in the school of life.

Five years ago he sought Los Angeles for his home, choosing her climate above all others in his world-wide travels. Among the first friends to greet him were Dr. and Mrs. T. J. O. Volkman. Dr. Volkman, he had seen in far away New Zealand and again in London, at the time he was asked to read his famous paper on Immortality before the Royal Philosophical Institute of Great Britain. Ten years had passed since seeing Mrs. Volkman in Scotland. But a crowded Garvanza street car brought them together once more in Highland Park.

Dr. Peebles is the founder and Honorary President of the Centenarian club, probably the only organization of its kind in the world, with its fifteen or twenty members whose ages range from ninety years to a hundred and five. Their aim is to live a century and grow old gracefully. Once a month they banquet at Christopher's with an added feast of thought and discussion based on experience ripe. But that is a story in itself as is each of the many interesting facts of his life.

Now as always he is full of original and progressive ideas and in his terse pointed, vigorous and ofttimes humorous way, he points ahead to coming reforms, as in early days he fought for reforms now wide spreading or already accomplished.

Child Labor, Vaccination, Vivisection, Vegetarianism practiced by him for sixty years, problems and abuses of Diet, Health and Hygiene all demand his attention.

To the question ever confronting him, How did you live so long and so well, he has this ready answer:

"It is because of my undoubted faith in God, in the eternal Christ of God, in the ministry of angels and the brotherhood of humanity, together with a persistent will power, determined life-purposes, constant cheerfulness, frequent bathing, deep breathing, vigorous mental and physical activities, with the strict avoidance of animal flesh eating, tobacco and such stimulants as liquors, wine, tea and coffee. Briefly stated, I behave myself and am determined to live a century and grow old gracefully."

LUELLA RICE.