

AUTOMATIC WRITING.

THE

SLADE PROSECUTION

VINDICATION

OF THE

TRUTH

By ROBERT H. COLLYER

Original discoverer of the anæsthetic process in rendering surgical operations painless, original discoverer of induced mental hallucation, commonly called electro biology, original discoverer of phreno-mesmerism, and other phenomena connected with an exalted state of the nervous system, special commission to the Paris Exhibition of 1867 from the London Anthropological Society, special commissioner to the patent congress held in Vienna, 1873, from the Inventors' Institute of Great Britain, &c. &c

LONDON:

H. VICKERS

1876



AUTOMATIC

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THE

SLADE PRACTIC WRITING.

VINDICATION

OF THE TRUTH.

TRUE

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By ROBERT H.

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Original Discoverer

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LONDON

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Price 5s. 6d. sious other mental phenomena, during
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AUTOMATIC WRITING. THE SLADE PROSECUTION. VINDICATION OF THE TRUTH.

“ All this, said David, the Lord made me understand *in writing* by his hand upon me, even all the works of this pattern.—1 Chron. cxxviii., v. 19.

I do not believe in the spiritualistic explanation of the mental phenomena presented during certain abnormal states of brain.

These phenomena, in all their various phases, have occupied my serious attention for the last thirty-five years.

When I first advocated the necessity of abolishing pain in surgical operations in the years 1840, 1841, 1842 and 1843, I was met by jeers, scoffs, ridicule, contempt, and every species of insult; there was not a disrespectful epithet in the whole vocabulary which was not applied to my efforts to relieve mankind from the suffering attendant on a surgical operation! Nor was it until June 11th, 1870, that my claim—as the original discoverer—was publicly recognized by the London *Lancet*, which in the “History of Anæsthetic Discovery,” says—

“ *Dr. Collyer is, to our minds, the true pioneer after all—the man who ran first.*”

I am therefore prepared and well-seasoned in the abuse and calumny which awaits this vindication of the truth—as shown in automatic writing, and various other mental phenomena, during exalted states of brain function.

When otherwise intellectual and really sensible men talk of jugglers, conjurors, legerdemain performers, tricksters, and other falsifiers, as being able to imitate some of the phenomena, my reply is most simple. Is it because a forger imitates a bank-note so adroitly that it requires an expert to detect the fraud, that there are no real bank-notes? Is it because a pyrotechnist produces a meteoric display that there are no meteors? The common-minded man, be he professor or doctor of medicine, cannot raise above *trickery* in explanation of phenomena which his brain power cannot grasp or comprehend. It is a summary and most expeditious process in bringing in the aid of a notorious trickster, or order to extricate oneself from a dilemma. It is also a cheap method of *advertizing* oneself. Who could, having the least refinement and delicacy, have dragged his mother to a police-court to give evidence on a subject with which both were ignorant? I never saw so much animus or prejudice displayed by all concerned in this most unjust prosecution. The time is not far distant when the prosecutors will feel ashamed of their conduct. I am as satisfied of the genuineness of the

AUTOMATIC WRITING

presented by HENRY SLADE, of the United States, as I am of my own existence, or that the sun gives light, or is the cause of light, or of any other physical phenomenon, universally admitted. I do not find fault with the learned magistrate, who defined "palmistry" to be analogous to these new recondite mental phenomena. Nor do I blame Mr. Henry Slade for believing that the phenomena are produced by his deceased wife's spirit. I am firmly convinced that if he had not *this belief* the phenomena would not be produced. BLIND FAITH is essential to the exercise of WILL POWER.

It is the WILL POWER, during an abnormal or exalted state of brain which produces all these varied phenomena, no matter how diversified or apparently complicated.

Absolute blind Faith (not exerciseable during the normal state of

existence) is necessary to the full development of WILL POWER. Doubt your own capacity and it ceases to exist. *Conviction of power* is the surest road to success—"he who hesitates is lost." It is really ridiculously funny to find men of the most *ordinary* mental faculties writing of the "Common Course of Nature."

All the world believed the postulates advanced by Aristotle, and these were defined as "The Laws of Nature," until Galileo and Newton demonstrated to the contrary. As to the laws of falling bodies and gravitation, for two thousand years the whole world had spoken of the "Common course of Nature." "*Common* enough would poor Nature be if interpreted by such conjuring mechanics. What is that which we entitle a Law of Nature? Is it, as generally conceived an abstract sovereign rule of Divine authority before the beginning of the world's existence? Or is it only a synthetical epitome of Nature's operations such as human experience and assiduity has found out, human ingenuity has arranged? Here, on this very topic, is an error most prevalent, even amongst the men best versed in science. They are too apt to confound scientific theory, conventionally *stamped*, as a "law of Nature," as an original principle, established by the fiat of Omnipotence. The poor wretch who has the temerity or foolish hardihood to question its validity is denounced as an heretic to the order of Nature herself. Roger Bacon was excommunicated by the Pope for such a crime, and imprisoned ten years, accused of having dealings with the Devil. At that period, the 13th century, professors were bound, under oath, to follow no other guide than Aristotle. "There is a wide difference between *the idols* of the human mind and ideas of the Divine mind."

"The laws of Nature" must not lead us astray, against the delusions towards which the mind constantly yields, of giving to human construction of Nature's revelations themselves. No doubt the true elements of all philosophy are identical with those of the History of Nature, distinguished only by scientific arrangement. On the converse it must be admitted that the FACTS OF

NATURE, not the theories of man, are the only certain tests of the verity of alleged discovery.

It was in the year 1843 that I published a work entitled "The Embodiment of Thought." My researches since then have confirmed the opinions there first enunciated, that all mental operations were the reflex of the impressions which had been received through the senses.

In 1862 I published an article in the "Spiritual Magazine" entitled "Phrenography; or, Mind Writing"—"The embodiment of thought, or the formation of mental pictures, as a consequence of mental operations during an abnormal or exalted state of brain, is corroborated by many curious phenomena which accompany a diseased condition of that organ." The brain substance, on examination with a powerful microscope, is found to consist of minute globules. These during every mental act are brought into active motion; in fine, motion of the brain globules is essential to thought."

The medium, or nervous fluid, is so etherial that it pervades all things, it is the vital element. It is the accumulation of this organised vital element which produces all the varied phenomena incidental to cerebral function, when embodied during a condition of semi-mesmeric or trance state, there is then in "the Medium" the power of guidance and direction under the *will power*. The image of an object powerfully impressed on the brain through the sense may be *projected* from the brain on to a sensitive surface, as in the case of a pregnant woman frightened so as to swoon, which ensures the necessary condition, for *the projection*, on to the body of the child *in utero*. Now if the projection from the brain of an *embodied idea*, without any immediate nervous connection, where is the limit of the brain's power of *projection* under conditions favourable and under the guidance of *absolute blind faith and will power*?

The AUTOMATIC WRITING exemplified in David's receiving the *specification* and details of the Temple from the Lord, who made

him "understand in writing by his hand upon me all the works of the pattern," also the handwriting on the wall at Belshazzar's feast. The spasmodic twitchings which invariably accompany the *exalted* state of brain power were mistaken by the astute experts in the discovery of truth. Oh! shade of Diogenes, where art thou? As to muscular movements which accompany ordinary writing on a slate! the explanation, as will be fully shown hereafter, is too supremely absurd to admit of a moment's consideration. Henry Slade actually leaves the United States and arrives in London to exhibit the fact that he can write on a slate when on his *knee!!!* This is, in fact, the explanation of these Daniels come to judgment, these *wonderfully clever* young men, who cut the Gordian knot by a sudden impulse of seizing the slate, and then immediately indulging in such low, vulgar epithets as "gross scoundrel," "impostor," "liar," which I pronounce to be indications of ill-breeding, conduct not consistent with what is usually expected of persons professing to be gentlemen. The only charitable explanation is, that these young men thought it a fine opportunity to obtain notoriety. From their mode of procedure at Slade's it is quite evident that two more incompetent or ignorant young men could not have assumed to investigate so really important a subject as the subjective and objective phenomena connected with the exalted conditions of the brain during abnormal states of that organ. The melancholy ignorance is only equalled by the audacity of supposing that the *nervous twitchings* which invariably accompany these conditions of brain, were indications that Slade was moving his arms in the act of writing on the slate placed on his knee. Had they reserved their impulsive ill-conceived speculations until they had investigated the subject they so arrogantly denounced in such a summary manner on false conclusions, and without any experience of the subject to guide them, it would then have indicated some intellectual capacity to become original investigators, or searchers after truth. If violence and vulgar abuse is to be substituted for patient, painstaking examination, then we must give these young

men credit for their having revolutionized *scientific* modes of investigation. They will some day recognize the necessity that he who ventures beyond his depth should first know how to swim.

As I have witnessed many persons having, in various degrees, this brain power, and have examined most carefully all the conditions when the manifestations took place, I will briefly narrate my experience with Mr. Henry Slade. I will confine my remarks to the *automatic writing*, leaving the various other phenomena for another occasion to describe. On the 6th day of October last, at 7 p.m., I called at 8, Upper Bedford Place. I was shown into the drawing-room, where I found Mr. Henry Slade, Mr. Simmons, and two young ladies. After some few minutes, Mr. Slade and myself went into a small back room. There were two gas-lights turned on to their full extent, making the room as light as gas could make it.

Mr. Slade took hold of my hands, and after a few moments he was in "*the state*." This transition was accompanied by the usual *nervous twitchings*. He told me to clean the slate which lay on the table. I did so, both with a sponge and then with my handkerchief. I never *let go* of the said slate, which he placed under the corner of the table. A small piece of slate pencil was placed on the upper surface of the slate. In less than ten seconds the said slate WAS WRITTEN ON, and in ten seconds more eight lines of *writing*, filling up the entire upper surface of the slate, WERE WRITTEN.

As I have before stated, Mr. Slade believes that this was written by his wife's spirit. What he believes is quite beside the fact of writing occurring under circumstances that none of your *wiseacres* and tricksters could imitate. It was Slade's *blind faith* that the writing was spiritually produced, that enabled his Will power to *embody the thought*. Having attended the trial at the Bow-street Police-court, I heard the childish propositions of chemical pencils, sympathetic inks, and so forth. I cannot here omit to admire the dexterity of Mr. George Lewis in writing, and the pure English and unexceptional smile of self-gratification when the audience

applauded his wondrous works. I, accordingly, to meet all such objections, purchased of a stationer in Holborn two white porcelain slates, 7 inches long, 5 broad; these I took with me to Slade's rooms on Friday, Nov. 2nd, at noon. We retired into the same room as on the previous occasion. Mr. Slade was full twenty minutes, but entirely failed, and said he *had no power*. I was not in the least astonished, as I have known persons for weeks to lose all power. On the following Sunday, Nov. 5, at noon, I again visited Mr. Slade. I untied the slates myself, broke off a piece of Cumberland lead, one-eighth of an inch in length, which I placed between the slates, and re-tied them together with the tape I had brought with me. The slates were then placed on the *top* of the table, Mr. Slade's fingers being in contact with the frame of the upper slate, his other hand was on my own. I distinctly heard the writing going on or being made. On opening the slates these words were written:—

“We cannot write with this point of pencil.”—A. W. SLADE..”

I re-tied the slate, and the original piece of pencil.

An ordinary slate, which I carefully cleaned was placed on the *top* of the table, on the *under* surface of the slate, I heard the writing taking place. I had my elbow on the slate all the time. On turning the slate I found 49 words written in less than three minutes by *my watch*. On returning to the drawing-room I found a gentleman who had brought a folding-slate with him; this was written on both sides, that is, the upper and lower surface, inside the folded part of the slate. There were 64 words. At page 94 of my work, “Exalted States of the Nervous System,” Renshaw, 356, Strand, I use these words: “Faith and Will.—The power of the Will, in the ordinary normal state, is confined to the immediate acts essential to the functions of life; but it may be educated (during an abnormal state) so as to be directed out of or beyond the ordinary channel, so that brain phenomena, or abnormal states, may be induced at the will of the individual. In order to arrive at perfect control of the organs not normally under the influence of the will much time is required.”

At page 106 I state: "The embodiment of thought is the cerebral representation or production of the figure thought of. If there be sufficient nervo-vital fluid at the command of the medium, he is enabled to PROJECT *an embodiment* which will, for the time being, under the direction of the Will-power, manifest all the conditions of *an independent existence*."

The medium must necessarily be an extremely sensitive person—even morbidly so. How, then, is it possible that he can be calm and self-possessed, exercise mental concentration or will-power, if he is purposely rendered irritable; his sensitiveness wounded by wanton, puerile opposition? It cannot be expected that if the necessary conditions to success are destroyed that successful results can follow. It would be as unphilosophical to break your watch and then to grumble because it ceased to keep time.

No man is a greater admirer of pure philosophy and close inductive reasoning than myself. I also abhor with detestation and contempt those upstart parvenus in science who imagine that by *coup de main* they can solve the most recondite revelations of brain function. It cannot be forgotten that the College of Physicians of London ignored both Harvey and Jenner. It should not be forgotten that the Royal Society of Great Britain received the report of Benjamin Franklin's experiments, showing the identity of lightning with other electrical phenomena, *with a shout of laughter*.

Napoleon referred the subject of *steam navigation* to the Academy of Science. The result was, that the Academy pronounced the idea to be "a *ridiculous notion*." When George Stephenson first proposed railroad travelling, how was the idea treated by the British House of Commons? Did not his distinguished son, Robert Stephenson, with all England, ridicule the French project of digging a canal at Suez? Still, the British nation a few years subsequently gave four millions sterling for an interest in the same canal! Who, fifty years since, would not have been pronounced a madman if he had had the temerity to state the practicability of

holding in a few minutes, communication with his friends in Australia? Cases could be multiplied showing the ignorance of the most intellectual on matters which are beyond their knowledge. The universe abounds in mysteries, exciting only the barren wonder of the desponding observer, but stimulates the philosophical to untiring and earnest research. To contradict past experience is a certain indication of error; to march beyond it is the truest indication of genuine discovery. If ignorance is punishable with three months' hard labour, who could escape having the amusing task of continually walking up stairs?

Slade is not responsible for his want of knowledge as to the *modus operandi* of the most recondite phenomena connected with cerebral function. All he knows is, that these phenomena do occur under certain conditions. It is not because he verily believes that they are produced by the spirit of his late wife, that such a belief comes within the sphere of criminal jurisdiction. I am not responsible for Slade's ideas. I am thoroughly convinced he is honest in his belief. What concerns myself is the production of these cerebral phenomena. Of the fact that they are produced without the least attempt to trickery or fraud, is a conviction arrived at after thirty-five years' investigation. That many persons having partially developed powers, have *resorted to deception* I am equally convinced of. I have discovered on many occasions false representations, but these do not militate against the genuine phenomena. There is scarcely a subject with which the human mind is conversant that may not be simulated or imitated so closely as to deceive and betray the unsuspecting. That the tricks of conjurors and sleight-of-hand performers should be admitted as evidence to disprove truthful phenomena is simply preposterous, and shows how weak must be the cause which calls in such spurious aid for its support. The presumption and audacity shown by this class of persons in Slade's case, is compatible with their entire want of mental training in philosophical research. The self-sufficient arrogance of one is so great ^{that} tends to

understand the whole subject of cerebral function during an altered state! Unconscious cerebration, mental transfer, somnambulism, hysterical coma, magnetic coma, epileptic coma, mental hallucination, and all the varied phases of abnormal brain function, are ignored with a stroke of the pen.

When I first advocated the truth of the state of somnambulism, induced by what is known as the mesmeric agency, and the phenomena connected therewith, no one at the time (1841) gave the least credence to the subject, yet most people exhibited a deep interest in a subject which opened out an explanation to many conditions of brain, which had been classed as belonging to the miraculous. The present subject, falsely called "Spiritualism," I am convinced, is another and higher phase of the mesmeric phenomena.

Let jugglers, conjurors, legerdemain performers, tricksters, and falsifiers of truth, have their petty triumph; no doubt they will gratify that portion of the public who are "pleased with a rattle and tickled by a straw," people who never, by any accident, think for themselves, who are prone to laugh at a funny saying, or who call names and use strong denunciations in lieu of reason, men who imagine that personal abuse and vindictive ribaldry are substitutes for argument.

The conjurer never fails; he is, in season and out of season, ready to deceive and falsify. No mental conditions are essential to his success. When I called on Slade, on November 3rd, he had no power to produce the Automatic Writing. Like an honest man, that I firmly believe him to be, he said—"To day I have no power." I must not fail to state that he made an effort for full twenty minutes without producing the least result.

My only object in writing this letter is to vindicate the character of a stranger in England who came with the intention of demonstrating to the scientific and learned, certain phenomena which he had the power of manifesting. He is open at all times to meet fair and dispassionate investigation.

The theories which he conscientiously believes to be produced by departed persons, no one is compelled to endorse; let every investigator judge of the phenomena presented, abstractedly or independently of any dogma propounded.

I feel convinced that if the investigator approaches the subject with the spirit of a true philosopher, taking time and using every judicious precaution to satisfy his mind of the genuineness of the phenomena, he will come to the conclusion, like myself, that "there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in his philosophy."

Since writing the foregoing, I am much pleased to find that my esteemed friend, Captain Richard F. Burton, has been brought into the Slade controversy. No man in the whole sphere of my acquaintance possesses a clearer intellect or is less clouded by the fogs of prejudice, bigotry, or superstition. What he states relative to Mr. Lane's experience of the Cairo magician is strictly correct. I will make a full extract, as the subject is so pertinent to the one under consideration.

Mr. Lane says:—

"A few weeks after my second arrival in Egypt, my neighbour 'Osmán, interpreter of the British consulate, brought him to me; and I fixed a day for his visiting me, to give me a proof of the skill for which he is so much famed. He came at the time appointed, about two hours before noon; but seemed uneasy; frequently looked up to the sky, through the window, and remarked that the weather was unpropitious. It was dull and cloudy; and the wind was boisterous. The experiment was performed with three boys, one after another. With the first, it was partly successful; but with the others it completely failed. The magician said that he could do nothing more that day, and that he would come in the evening of a subsequent day. He kept his appointment, and admitted that the time was favourable. While waiting for my neighbour, before mentioned, to come and look at the performances, we took pipes and coffee; and the magician chatted with me on different subjects. He is a fine, tall, and stout man, of a rather fair complexion, with a

dark-brown beard ; is shabbily dressed ; and generally wears a large green turban, being a descendant of the Prophet. In his conversation he is affable and unaffected. He professed to me that his wonders were effected by the agency of *good* spirits, but to others he has said the reverse : and his magic is satanic.

“ In preparing for the experiment of the magic mirror of ink, which, like some other performances of a similar nature, is here termed ‘darb elmendel,’ the magician first asked me for a reed-pen and ink, a piece of paper, and a pair of scissors ; and, having cut off a narrow strip of paper, wrote upon it certain forms of invocation, together with another charm, by which he professes to accomplish the object of the experiment. He did not attempt to conceal these ; and on my asking him to give me copies of them, he readily consented, and immediately wrote them for me ; explaining to me, at the same time, that the object he had in view was accomplished through the influence of the two first words, ‘Tarshun’ and ‘Taryooshun,’ which, he said, were the names of two genii, his ‘familiar spirits.’

“ Having written these, the magician cut off the paper containing the forms of invocation from that upon which the other charm was written ; and cut the former into six strips. He then explained to me that the object of the latter charm (which contains part of the 21st verse of the Soorat Káf, or 50th chapter of the Kur-án) was to open the boy’s eyes in a supernatural manner, to make his sight pierce into what is to us the invisible world.

“ I had prepared, by the magician’s direction, some frankincense and coriander seed, and a chafing-dish with some live charcoal in it. These were now brought into the room, together with the boy who was to be employed : he had been called in, by my desire, from among some boys in the street, returning from a manufactory ; and was about eight or nine years of age. In reply to my inquiry respecting the description of persons who could see in the magic mirror of ink, the magician *said that they were a boy not arrived at puberty, a virgin, a black female slave, and a pregnant woman.* The chafing dish was placed before him and the boy ; and the latter was placed on a seat. The magician now desired my servant to put some frankincense and coriander-seed into the chafing dish ; then taking hold of the boy’s right hand, he drew, in the palm of it, a

magic square. The figures which it contains are Arabic numerals. In the centre, he poured a little ink, and desired the boy to look into it, and tell him if he could see his face reflected in it: the boy replied that he saw his face clearly. The magician, holding the boy's hand all the while, told him to continue looking intently into the ink; and not to raise his head.

“He then took one of the little strips of paper inscribed with the forms of invocation, and dropped it into the chafing-dish, upon the burning coals and perfumes, which had already filled the room with their smoke; and as he did this, he commenced an indistinct muttering of words, which he continued during the whole process, excepting when he had to ask the boy a question, or to tell him what he was to say. The piece of paper containing the words from the Kur-án he placed inside the fore part of the boy's tákeeyeh, or scull-cap. He then asked him if he saw anything in the ink; and was answered, ‘No’; but about a minute after, the boy, trembling and seeming much frightened, said, ‘I see a man sweeping the ground.’ ‘When he has done sweeping,’ said the magician. ‘tell me.’ Presently the boy said, ‘He has done.’ The magician then again interrupted his muttering to ask the boy if he knew what a ‘beyrak’ (or flag) was; and being answered ‘Yes,’ desired him to say, ‘Bring a flag.’ The boy did so; and soon said, ‘He has brought a flag.’ ‘What colour is it?’ asked the magician; the boy replied, ‘Red.’ He was told to call for another flag, which he did, and soon after he said that he saw another brought, and that it was black. In like manner he was told to call for a third, fourth, fifth, sixth, and seventh, which he described as being successively brought before him, specifying their colours as white, green, black, red, and blue. The magician then asked him (as he did, also, each time that a new flag was described as being brought) ‘How many flags have you now before you?’ ‘Seven,’ answered the boy. While this was going on, the magician put the second and third of the small strips of paper upon which the forms of invocation were written, into the chafing-dish, and fresh frankincense and coriander-seed having been repeatedly added, the fumes became painful to the eyes. When the boy had described the seven flags as appearing to him, he was desired to say, ‘Bring the Sultan's tent, and pitch it.’ This he did; and in about a minute after, he said, ‘Some men have

brought the tent—a large green tent: they are pitching it'; and presently he added, 'They have set it up.' 'Now,' said the magician, 'order the soldiers to come, and to pitch their camp around the tent of the Sultan.' The boy did as he was desired; and immediately said, 'I see a great many soldiers, with their tents; they have pitched their tents.' He was then told to order that the soldiers should be drawn up in ranks; and, having done so, he presently said that he saw them thus arranged. The magician had put the fourth of the little strips of paper into the chafing-dish; and soon after he did the same with the fifth. He now said, 'Tell some of the people to bring a bull.' The boy gave the order required, and said, 'I see a bull: it is red; four men are dragging it along; and three are beating it.' He was told to desire them to kill it, and cut it up, and to put the meat into saucepans, and cook it. He did as he was directed; and descried these operations as apparently performed before his eyes. 'Tell the soldiers,' said the magician, 'to eat it.' The boy did so, and said, 'They are eating it. They have done, and are washing thier hands. The magician then told them to call for the Sultán; and the boy, having done this, said 'I see the Sultán riding to his tent, on a bay horse; and he has on his head a high red cap: he has alighted at his tent, and sat down within it.' 'Desire them to bring coffee to the Sultán,' said the magician, 'and to form the court.' These orders were given by the boy; and he said that he saw them performed. The magician had put the last of the six little strips of paper into the chafing-dish. In his mutterings I distinguished nothing but the words of the written invocation, frequently repeated, excepting on two or three occasions, when I heard him say, 'If they demand information, inform them; and be ye veracious.' But much that he repeated was inaudible, and as I did not ask him to teach me his art, I do not pretend to assert that I am fully acquainted with his invocations.

"He now addressed himself to me; and asked me if I wished the boy to see any person who was absent or dead. I named Lord Nelson, of whom the boy had evidently never heard; for it was with much difficulty that he pronounced the name, after several trials. The magician desired the boy to say to the Sultán—'My master salutes thee, and desires thee to bring lord Nelson: bring

him before my eyes, that I may see him, speedily.' The boy then said so; and almost immediately added, 'A messenger is gone, and has returned, and brought a man dressed in a black suit of European clothes: the man has lost his left arm.' He then paused for a moment or two; and, looking more intently, and more closely into the ink, said, 'No, he has not lost his left arm, but it is placed to his breast.' This correction made the description more striking than it had been without it: since Lord Nelson generally had his empty sleeve attached to the breast of his coat: but it was the right arm that he had lost. Without saying that I suspected the boy had made a mistake, I asked the magician whether the objects appeared in the ink, as if actually before the eyes, or as if in a glass, which makes the right appear left. He answered that they appeared as in a mirror. This rendered the boy's description faultless.*

"The next person I called for was a native of Egypt, who has been for many years resident in England, where he has adopted our dress; and who had been long confined to his bed by illness before I embarked for this country. I thought that his name, one not very uncommon in Egypt, might make the boy describe him incorrectly; though another boy, on the former visit of the magician, had described this same person as wearing a European dress, like that in which I last saw him. In the present case the boy said, 'Here is a man brought on a kind of bier, and wrapped up in a sheet.' This description would suit, supposing the person in question to be still confined to his bed, or if he be dead. The boy described his face as covered; and was told to order that it should be uncovered. This

Whenever I desired the boy to call for any person to appear, I paid particular attention both to the magician and the 'Osman. The latter gave no direction either by word or sign, and indeed he was generally unacquainted with the personal appearance of the individual called for. I took care that he had no previous communication with the boys, and have seen the experiment fail when he could have given directions to them or to the magician. In short, it would be difficult to conceive any precaution which I did not take. It is important to add that the dialect of the magician was more intelligible to me than to the boy. When I understood him perfectly at once, he was sometimes obliged to vary his words to make the boy comprehend what he said.

he did, and then said 'His face is pale; and he has mustaches, but no beard,' which is correct.

"Several other persons were successively called for, but the boy's descriptions of them were imperfect, though not altogether incorrect. He represented each object as appearing less distinct than the preceding one, as if his sight were gradually becoming dim: he was a minute, or more, before he could give any account of the persons he professed to see before the close of the performance; and the magician said it was useless to proceed with him. Another boy was then brought in; and the magic square, &c., made in his hand; but he could see nothing. The magician said he was too old.

"Though completely puzzled, I was somewhat disappointed with his performances, for they fell short of what he had accomplished, in many instances, in presence of certain of my friends and countrymen. On one of these occasions an Englishman present ridiculed the performance, and said nothing would satisfy him but a correct description of the appearance of his own father, of whom, he was sure, no one of the company had any knowledge. The boy, accordingly, having called by name the person alluded to, described a man in a Frank dress, with his hand placed to his head, wearing spectacles, and with one foot on the ground, and the other raised behind him, as if he were stepping down from a seat. The description was exactly true in every respect; the peculiar position of the head was occasioned by an almost constant headache; and that of the foot or leg, by a stiff knee, caused by a fall from a horse, in hunting. I am assured that, on this occasion, the boy accurately described each person and thing that was called for. On another occasion, Shakespeare was described with the most minute correctness, both as to person and dress; and I might add several other cases in which the same magician has excited astonishment in the sober minds of Englishmen of my acquaintance. A short time since, after performing in the usual manner, by means of a boy, he prepared the magic mirror in the hand of a young English lady, who, on looking into it for a little while, said that she saw a broom sweeping the ground without anybody holding it, and was so much frightened that she would look no longer.

“I have stated these facts partly from my own experience, and partly as they came to my knowledge on the authority of respectable persons. The reader may be tempted to think that, in each instance, the boy saw images produced by some reflection in the ink ; but this was evidently not the case ; or that he was a confederate, or guided by leading questions. That there was no collusion I satisfactorily ascertained, by selecting the boy who performed the part above described in my presence from a number of others passing by in the street, and by his rejecting a present which I afterwards offered him with the view of inducing him to confess that he did not really see what he had professed to have seen. I tried the veracity of another boy on a subsequent occasion in the same manner ; and the result was the same. The experiment often fails ; but when the boy employed is right in one case, he generally is so in all : when he gives, at first, an account altogether wrong, the magician usually dismisses him at once, saying that he is too old. The perfumes, or excited imagination, or fear, may be supposed to affect the vision of the boy who describes objects as appearing to him in the ink ; but, if so, why does he see exactly what is required, and objects of which he can have had no previous particular notion ? Neither I nor others have been able to discover any clue by which to penetrate the mystery ; and if the reader be alike unable to give the solution, I hope he will not allow the above account to induce in his mind any degree of scepticism with respect to other portions of this work.”

Mr. Lane evidently was not the man to be deceived—he took every precaution to satisfy himself that the experiments were genuine, and honestly performed. Had he, when the magician *failed*, knocked over the mirror of ink, seized the chafing dish, and called the magician “a liar,” “a scoundrel,” and an “impostor,” it is not likely that he would have been gratified with any subsequent experiments.

“The Embodiment of Thought,” or the production of the image or figure of the object thought of, was evidently transferred from Mr. Lane’s brain to that of the boy’s brain, which had been rendered abnormally sensitive by the inhalation of the fumes from the

frankincense and the coriander seeds; besides, as the magician said, the medium should be "a boy not arrived at puberty, a virgin, a black female slave, or a pregnant woman."

We recognise here that there are certain absolute conditions necessary to a successful result. So there is with every *human contrivance*. What would be thought of men who took a sledge hammer and broke some of the delicate parts of a locomotive engine, and then commenced abusing the engineer because he could not start the train? Such men would get three months' hard labour, and *serve them right* would be the verdict of the public.

It is only two centuries since *innocent persons* were tortured — made *to confess* themselves guilty of sorcery, witchcraft, palmistry, and then *executed in England!!* On one day no less than ten persons were led to the gallows, the evidence being based on the mere assertions and incoherent babblings of children. Sir Matthew Hale, Sir James Altham, Sir Edward Bromley, Barons of the Exchequer, were the Judges !!!

In fine, history is replete with the dreadful tragedies that have grown out of *false accusations* and FALSE PROSECUTIONS FOR IMAGINARY CRIMES.

We are now in the Christian period 1876, a period when electric telegraphs encircle the globe—when mind holds intercourse with mind—no matter how distant the locality apart. The wondrous achievements of the steam engine have been developed in manufacture and travel. Still, an American citizen in the centennial year of his country's independence, is brought to trial in England, and sentenced to three months hard labour by the Police Magistrate of Bow Street, London!! What for? it will be asked by those who are not the victims of popular prejudice, having *conscientiously*, as I believe, made the mistake of attributing the manifestation of abnormal brain phenomena to "the spirit of his departed wife" *is his crime*. And because these phenomena are beyond the comprehension of a class of persons who not having the power of philo-

sophic investigation, raise the hue and cry, "Imposture!"—"Mad dog—mad dog!!"

No man should be punished or made amenable to punishment because of his mode of faith. His religious *belief*, as a rule, is a matter entirely beyond his choice or control—a mere geographical accident—as to the place of his birth, his parentage, and early education. This fact must be universally admitted. It follows that we ought to expect liberality, charity and good will amongst those professing different ideas or dogmas as to the best road to travel. It is, however, a notorious fact that no subject excites such acrimony, hatred, and bitter animosity, as a difference of some speculative or vague mythical notion relative to the creed we have been accidentally taught in our youth!!

One of the bloodiest wars that ever disgraced the human race arose out of a ridiculous dispute, as to which leg should first enter the Temple—the right or the left! The present difficulty in the East of Europe has for its origin the hatred between the Christians of the Greek Church, and the Mahomedans.

"Man's inhumanity to man has made countless millions mourn."

The Christians are split up into three great divisions—the Roman Catholics, the Greek Church, and the Protestants, and numberless subdivisions—each fancying themselves right and the other wrong. These differences have been the cause of carnage, persecution, torture, instead of brotherly love and good will as taught by Christ: "A new commandment I give unto you—that ye love one another."

It was Slade's misfortune in this case to have been taught that there was another, or spiritual, state of existence, which he, like many other people, has a firm conviction, is true. He believes that the brain phenomena, called "Spiritualism," emanate from his wife's spirit. Here is the essence—"the head and front of his offending"—in fine, it is **THIS BELIEF** which constitutes his criminality!!!

Mr. Slade has presented to myself phenomena which are not susceptible of any explanation based on trickery or fraud. Being thoroughly convinced that the phenomena are genuine, I should be alike untrue to my own sense of independence, truth, and honour if I did not vindicate his honesty of purpose.

What do I care for the smiles or frowns of that class of common-minded, ill-bred men, who settle every controversial subject in their own minds by resorting to making *a wager*? "I will bet you any amount of money Slade is found guilty" is the ordinary phrase. There is another class whose brain-power or calibre, whose range of thought does not extend beyond the feats of the trickster and the conjuror. It is men of this quality, order, and degree, who at this moment are making capital out of the Slade prosecution, and the general public ARE DECEIVED by their clumsy tricks and *false* explanation of the genuine phenomena I have on several occasions witnessed at Mr. Slade's residence. It is most illogical and irrational to give credence to the testimony of young men—I mean ignorant on this subject—who evidently have committed a most serious mistake as to the *modus operandi* by which these phenomena are produced.

If this evidence is admissible as against Slade, surely those who have a much superior claim to the public attention and respect—who have carefully examined the identical phenomena presented by the identical individual—would not the evidence of the latter outweigh and counterbalance that of the former, who have had no experience with regard to so recondite and abstruse a subject *they assumed* to investigate?

There are hosts of cases presented to the Courts which involve the absolute necessity of an expert giving evidence because of the want of knowledge on the part of the jury, and oftentimes of the Judges themselves. This is more particularly the case when the case at issue involves a complicated chemical or mechanical problem. If this is so, how much more necessary should the witnesses who give

evidence on a topic involving so much thought and previous investigations as abnormal brain conditions, be experienced experts. It must not be forgotten that if Mr. Slade were not in *an abnormal state*, he could not exercise BLIND FAITH, and consequently would not be able to use WILL-POWER in PROJECTING the EMBODIMENT of THOUGHT, which, for the time being, possesses all the attributes of an independent existence.

To combat ignorance and incapacity is a fruitless Sisyphean task. If the prosecutors had been competent to have been investigators, they never would have done as they did. They ignored the truth, and actually gave credence to a ridiculous absurdity—namely, that Slade “*wrote when the slate was on his knee.*” It reminds one of the old lady who believed her sailor son when he said that there were rivulets of rum in Jamaica, because her palate had long familiarised her to Jamaica rum; but when he told her that there were *flying fish*, she rolled up her eyes in Holy horror at what she believed to *be a falsehood*. As Slade has the power of producing the *automatic writing* without trickery or fraud, what object would there be in his not always doing it *genuinely*?

The conclusion is irresistible that the prosecutors were *mistaken*, which error, at some future time, they will, no doubt, acknowledge, when they have matured their capacity to become original investigators.

I am preparing for the press a full explanation of the *subjective* and OBJECTIVE states of brain during abnormal states of that organ.

In conclusion I must with St. Austin, say—

“Let them laugh at me for speaking of things which they do not understand, and I must pity them while they laugh at me.”

ROBERT H COLLYER.

London, Nov. 1876.

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