

REMINISCENCES OF A FAMOUS MAGICIAN.

THE WONDERFUL FEATS OF DR. LYNN.

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OF all the most ingenious and clever modern magicians not even one has excelled the witty, original and famous Dr. Lynn, known in all countries as the "Talkee-Talkee" man.

Little is known of his early youth or his birthplace, it has been claimed that he was of American birth and that his real name was Simmons. He himself states in his naive manner, that his home was the world and he was known by everybody everywhere. Like the heroes of all romantic stories he went to sea, entering the British Navy, and added to his store of experience by the knowledge of many new tricks picked up in divers lands. He soon became such an acquisition on board, that his brother officers would keep the watch for him at any time, in return for the exhibition of a conjuring trick, such as "disappearing a watch" for them.

After leaving the Navy in 1862, he started on a tour of the world, commencing his performances in Melbourne and playing in all the cities of Australia, China and Japan. At Shanghai his chief pianist, Mr. Chisholm, first saw the famous Chinese giant Chang and afterwards brought him to this country.

Dr. Lynn reached San Francisco from Japan in December, 1863, and opened at the Metropolitan Theater, performing to immense audiences for three weeks. At San Francisco while staying at the Russ House he first met the renowned Mr. Charles Browne, "Artemas Ward," and his manager, Mr. E. P. Hingston. Artemas Ward was then on a lecture tour and while touring the country they were often together, and consequently became great friends. They both arrived at Salt Lake City in February 1864. Dr. Lynn had not been there long before he had a visit from Mr. Hiram Clawson, son-in-law of Brigham Young, and manager of the theater.

As the fame of the Doctor had preceded him, the Prophet wished to see him, and an appointment was made to call on him the next day. He called at the time appointed and spent nearly three hours with the President, finding him a very affable gentleman. He gave the Doctor the free use of his immense theater, where the entertainment was given to nearly 4000 Mormons. Brigham Young sat in a rocking chair in the center of the parquet, and his numerous wives and a good percentage of his family occupied a fair share of the auditorium.

During the performance our conjurer borrowed Mr. Young's hat for the purpose of covering the flower pot in the trick of "instantaneous growth of flowers," but on reaching the stage turned round and asked Mr. Young if he was a married man. He replied "Rather," amidst universal tittering, whereupon the Doctor immediately produced a large baby from the hat, much to the amusement and astonishment of the audience.

Artemas Ward and Dr. Lynn had the use of the theater on alternate nights, and on the last evening in the course of his lecture, Artemas made allusion to the Doctor's tricks, and explained to the people that what he had done was nothing to what he could do, assuring them that he had seen the Doctor climb up a pole, and then pull the pole up after him and swallow it. Referring to this on a subsequent occasion, the Doctor said: "I had Artemas Ward upon the stage of one of the cities I visited recently, and took the top of his head off and removed his brain which I forgot to replace, this being the cause of his many eccentricities. Brigham Young jumped up and said we must not quarrel, as we might meet again. I told Artemas about this the next time we met, and we had a hearty laugh."

During the sojourn of these two famous entertainers in Salt Lake City something occurred that gave the Doctor an opportunity to produce a most astounding trick, the secret of which Brigham Young was never able to ascertain. We will let our conjurer tell it in his own words:

DR. LYNN'S STORY.

One morning, Artemas, Hingston, and myself called, according to appointment, to spend a short time with Brigham at his house. We were ushered into a well furnished room, the walls being plentifully supplied with pictures. We had a long conversation with the great Prophet. He appeared much struck with many of

my tricks, and I endeavored with my accustomed readiness, to show him "how it is done."

Brigham Young has a habit when talking with any one, of leaning on the back of a chair, while one knee rests upon the seat of it; he then swings backwards and forwards until the leg upon which he is standing is tired, when he places that one upon the chair, and, standing upon the other, resumes his swinging motion and his conversation. While I was busy explaining(?) to the Prophet one of my illusions, Hingston and Artemas were examining the numerous pictures upon the wall, until Hingston's innate love of mischief prompted him to lay the foundation for a capital practical joke. Brigham had on a new pair of patent leather boots, the clean sole of which was invitingly displayed as he knelt with one leg upon the chair. Hingston took up a pen from the table, and, motioning to Artemas that he was going to write something on the "Prophet's sole," he came and stood beside Brigham Young, apparently to watch more particularly what I was doing, but actually to cover Hingston's operations. Seizing the exact moment, Hingston wrote in red ink my name upon Brigham's boot, upon the clean leather between the sole and the heel, and waiting till the Prophet changed his knee, he accomplished the same feat upon the other boot. It was not until we left the Mormon's reception room that I was aware of what had been done; so telling Hingston that I would have some fun about it on the following day, requested him to keep the affair secret. The next day I called upon the Prophet, sending a message that I had a most important matter to consult him upon, and requesting an immediate audience. With some surprise Brigham Young invited me in, and asked the cause of my sudden visit.

"Sir," I began, "I have debated with myself for a considerable time as to the propriety of my visit, and in order to do nothing rashly, I have taken the advice of my friends, the gentlemen who were with me yesterday. . . ."

"Just so," said Brigham.

"Therefore you will pardon me, I am sure, if it appear strange to you. The object of my visit—the—in fact—the boots."

"The what," cried he, "the boots?"

"Yes," I continued, "I may as well come to the point at once; I have lost a pair of boots, and I think I lost them in this house."

"How could you?" asked the chief of all the Mormons.

"That's where I seek an explanation," said I. "The boots I had with me when I came yesterday, and I could not find them when I left you, and as, you will remember, you were busy when

we left, I did not trouble you about the matter. But now I shall require the boots to wear this evening, as I want to send these I now have on to be soled."

"But surely you can buy or borrow another pair," said the Prophet.

"That's not the point, it is the principle I look at. I had the boots; I haven't them now. Where are they?"

"I'm not a Lost Property Office, nor yet a Spirit Medium," added he, significantly, "and you are a great deal more capable of discovering the whereabouts of your boots than I am. What sort of boots were they?"

"Why quite new; patent leather, worn once." (Here I pretended to examine his boots very minutely.) "In fact, as much like those you have on as any other pair, not the incidental boots in question, could be."

"Oh! these ain't them," said Brigham quickly.

"I wouldn't suppose for a moment they were," I exclaimed, apologetically; "still, the more I look at them, the more I feel convinced they are the boots."

"Sir," said Brigham warmly, "these boots were made for me. I was measured for them. There is not another pair like them in Utah."

"If they are *mine* I'll back the truth of your last remark against any prophecy you can invent. My boots had *my name written on the sole in blood red writing.*"

"Then one minute will suffice to prove the fallacy of your assertions," said Brigham, bringing down his heel with a bang upon the fender, and sending the boot flying to the other side of the room. "I am sure you'll not want to see them both," he continued, as he stooped to pick it up, "when I show you your mistake." Here his eyes opened, and his jaw dropped, as he gazed at the writing upon the boot. For fully a minute not a sound was heard. Then he sat down, and crossing his leg over his knee, he examined the sole of the other boot.

"This is a miracle, nothing less than a miracle. You are a wonderful man. You are beyond my comprehension. I could make you most valuable to me. Let me persuade you to embrace our faith. I see that your powers are miraculous, and, if turned into a proper channel, might be the means of assisting the Church very significantly. What can I offer you to induce you to stay? You shall have a high post near me. I will create for you a position of honor and profit. I will at once bestow three of my daughters upon you

for wives, and if you answer my expectations, and are deserving, you shall have as many more as you please in three months."

This was too, *too* much. The Prophet spoke in strict earnestness, but I was not to be led away by these inducements(?).

I battled long and furiously against his temptations, and cannot call to memory one-half the good things he promised me if I would, to use his own words, "stay and work miracles for the glory of God and the good of the Church."

And this was the man who, a few days after my departure from Salt Lake City, as I was informed, called a special prayer meeting at the Tabernacle, and publicly thanked the Lord that he was rid of the Devil."

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So far Dr. Lynn. He remained for some time in Salt Lake City after Artemas Ward and his manager had departed, but again met them at Denver. By traveling the same route as Artemas, it appeared that he was following their footsteps, and raised a little professional jealousy, which made his then firm friend Hingston a little sarcastic and quarrelsome, so that they were anything but friendly for some time, and Artemas on one occasion threatened to become a "blood-red writist" himself if the Doctor followed him so persistently.

On reaching New York Dr. Lynn put up at the Metropolitan Hotel, and held spiritual seances in all parts of the city during the time the Davenport Brothers were creating their great sensation at the Cooper Institute. One evening, while he gave his performance at the Broadway Theatre, Mrs. Gordon Bennett occupied a box, and was accompanied by the famous supposed spirit medium Chas. Foster and Mr. Colchester. Mrs. Bennett wrote a name on a piece of paper, and challenged the conjurer to read the name without the paper leaving the box, which the Doctor did; it was "Daniel Webster." Of course this feat gained him considerable applause.

From New York our conjurer proceeded to Boston, where he settled down to the study of medicine, and obtained his degree, afterwards going into partnership with Dr. Perce. He still kept up his magic and gave many entertainments. He took the Tremont Temple for a season, and was to open there the very day that Abraham Lincoln was shot. The bills announcing the performance were all pasted over with brown paper, and a notice put up that instead of the entertainment a prayer meeting would be held in the place. Of course both doctors attended the meeting, and Dr. Perce was indiscreet enough to remark in his usual dry manner, but loud

enough to be overheard by some of the audience, "I guess I'd have given Booth five dollars to have postponed this affair till next Monday," the result being that he was compelled to leave the hall, as popular feeling ran very high. This incident caused Dr. Lynn much annoyance, as he always made it a rule to conceal his political opinions from every one. It was the cause of a disagreement with Dr. Perce, and they parted at once and forever.

The Doctor then made another extended tour of the States, after which he proceeded to Great Britain, then to Paris, where he invented and first introduced the famous Sphinx illusion. About the same time this was brought out in London by the well-known Professor Pepper, by whom it was afterwards introduced in this country with much success.

In later years Dr. Lynn made a tour of the Orient, returning to London where he was for many years one of the most popular conjurers. Among his other noted inventions was the famous Indian Box trick, still being shown by nearly all magicians, from the performer in the side show or on the dime museum stage, to the elegant performer in the drawing room or on the stage of the leading theater, but in these instances it is usually shown as a Trunk Mystery, yet the effect is the same. His last invention was the illusion known as Thaum, which had a long and successful run in all countries. While traveling in the West in company of Artemas Ward, Dr. Lynn asked him to write out a program for him, which the genial humorist did. It was a very original one and was used by the conjurer for many years. The following is the program just as written by Artemas and used by the Doctor:

The Grand Performance of
The Renowned
BASILICONTHAUMATURGIST,
In his Marvelous, Magical, and Mystical Feats of
NECROMANCY,
And Terrific and absolutely confounding
PARADOXES.

The Professor has recently performed in all the cities of China, Cochin China, Japan, Siam, Tibet and Australia, BEFORE The Emperor of China at Peking. The Tycoon at Yeddo. The Foutai and Toutai of Shanghai. Prince Satsuma and Suite at Nagasaki. The Governors and Princes of Japan at Yokahama. The TWO Kings of Siam at Ofuslo. The Grand Llama of Thibet. The Khan of Crim Tartary. The Mofussolite of Cochin China. The Dyaks of Borneo. The King of the Gorillas in Central Africa. All the Governors of Australia. The Sentries of Alcatraz at San Francisco. Maximilian,

Emperor of Mexico, at Acapulco, Buffalo Jim, the chief of the Pi-Utah Indians. Artemas Ward and the Twelve Bannick Robbers who were executed at Bannick City. The Select Men of Waterford, Maine, and the Presidents of the various Banqueting Halls east of Bridge.

The following will be the great Weird, Wondrous basiliconthaumaturgical and Invincibly Incomprehensible PROGRAMME. Previous to the rise of the curtain there will be an Enharmonic Prolegomena by the Orchestra.

Mystery No. 1. The Magic Wove Handkerchief of Othello's Mother, "That handkerchief did an Egyptian to my mother give, there's magic in the web of it." Or the Transposing Textile Problem.

Mystery No. 2. The Columbian Paradox, or the Ornithological Labyrinth of Perplexity.

Mystery No. 3. Peculiar Conversation, or very Dollar-ous intimations from articulate Silver Sibyls.

Mystery No. 4. The Perplexity of a Pomaceous Puzzle, or how one apple can be grown to be of the value of twenty dollars, and made to ripen on a frosty night better than in the laughing sunlight of a sunny clime.

Mystery No. 5. Christopher Columbus' own hat, and the completeness of repletion, as illustrated by how anything can be placed where nothing can go, and nothing can be compressed until it becomes something considerable.

Mystery No. 6. Plum-pudding Problemalities, or a very familiar illustration of the applicability of woven textures to the construction of coquun-terial stores for the providing of Basiliconthaumaturgical Banquets.

Mystery No. 7. The Great Japanese Papiilonaceous Puzzle, taught the Professor by the principal juggler to the court of Prince Satsuma of Japan.

Mystery No. 8. The Great Abracadabro Secret of Confucius which after having lain dormant for 2000 years, was resuscitated in China specially for imparting it to the Doctor.

Mystery No. 9. The Chronological and Panistical Inexplicability, or the intimate association of watches and hot rolls.

Mystery No. 10. Thomas Zwipldildethzý, the learned traveller, who can travel much faster than the lightning stages from Salt Lake to Denver.

Mystery No. 11. How to make Artemas Wards by the wholesale without immaterially co-mingling the co-ordinate tangential forces with the primum mobile, except so far as regards the Sumptuous Banquets of the Overland Mail.

Mystery No. 12. The great Foster feat of Writing on the Arm in Letters of Blood, or the Incarnidined Chirography.

Mystery No. 13. The Calculator, which admits of no more adding, dividing, or multiplying; being the great Mathematical Puzzle which occasioned the building of the Pyramids and the short route over the Sierra Nevadas.

N.B. The Doctor will perform his feats *velocious quam asparag co-quunter*. Prices as usual. Babies in arms 10 dollars extra.

Dr. Lynn was also famous for his clever and really wonderful performances in the mediumistic and thought-reading line. We will explain two of his best feats, with first remarking that in the hands of a clever performer it is absolutely impossible for a novice to tell how they are produced. The Doctor generally called these

two effects "Dr. Lynn's Marvelous Thinkphone and Blood Writing on the Arm." In introducing these he generally addressed his audience as follows: "It is a matter of considerable surprise to me that, in this enlightened nineteenth century, there should be so many well educated persons ready to believe in a supernatural power being exerted for the purpose of bringing about the most ridiculous ends. I have traveled in all parts of the civilized globe, have had much experience and seen many curious phenomena; but, although I am ready to imitate the feats of any so-called spiritualist, and produce precisely similar results, I ascribe my success to no spiritual manifestation whatever. *The only spirit hand I recognize is the hand of Providence, visible everywhere.* The blood writing upon the arm is certainly to the uninitiated a most startling affair. Upon numerous pieces of paper, distributed among the audience, names of deceased persons are written in any language—Greek, Hebrew, Japanese, Chinese, Latin, Persian, French, Russian, or English. It is a matter of supreme indifference to me what foreigner you desire to honor. The papers containing the names so written, are folded to prevent inspection and placed in a hat, and one from the audience is invited to select the papers singly from the hat, and hold them up. I will then proceed to read out, letter by letter, the name upon the paper so held. This I will do to every paper in the hat, if time permit, and then one shall be selected at hap-hazard and placed upon my coat sleeve. A smart rap with the hand upon the paper will cause the name written upon it to appear in blood upon my bare arm, as will be seen when I turn back my sleeve."

In performing this trick the artist should be expert in sleight-of-hand. After making his address to the audience, he requests some gentleman to step upon the stage and assist him during the performance. He then introduces a number of slips of blank paper, about two inches long by three-quarters of an inch in width, and hands them to the gentleman on the stage to distribute among the audience. While they are being distributed, the artist addresses his audience and requests them to write any particular name upon the slips of paper that their fancy may dictate, but to be sure to write each name *plainly* and *distinctly*, so that they will be readable, and after having done so, to fold each paper up very small to make a small square of it. Those who have written upon the papers are then requested to place them in a hat or goblet, which the gentleman who handed out the papers has in his hand. After all the papers are collected in this goblet, the gentleman returns with it to the stage, and the artist looking in the goblet, places *two fingers* in it,

and draws the attention of the gentleman to the fact that some of the papers are not folded correctly. He then withdraws his *two* fingers from the goblet and requests the gentleman to turn all the papers out on the table, and then to roll each one of them up into a little ball or pellet. While he is doing so the artist either leaves the stage or retires to the rear of it, first telling his audience he does this "for fear of being accused of trying to read the papers." When all the papers are rolled up into little pellets, the gentleman on the stage states that he is ready, and then the artist comes forward. He now requests the gentleman to hand him one of the papers, which he receives with the fingers of the right hand, and immediately walks down amongst the audience and hands the paper to one of them, with the request that he will open it, read the contents, fold it up again as before into a pellet and place in the palm of his right hand, and when ready call out. The artist immediately returns to the stage until he hears the word "ready," when he again comes forward and requests the person holding the paper to raise his hand containing the paper, well up, with back of hand towards the performer who looks at it very intently for a few seconds, and then calls out the name written on the paper, correctly, even describing the manner in which it is written, and also giving any peculiarities there may be in the shape of the letters or on the paper. The person holding the paper will of course at once declare the word to be correct; the performer then requests the person who wrote the name on the paper to ascertain if it is his own, which it proves to be. Our magical artist now requests the gentleman on the stage to hand him a second paper, which, when handed him, he immediately hands to some one in the audience with the same request as was made of the person holding the first paper. This paper the performer reads in the same manner, and so on with the others until all are read, but either always leaving the stage, or retiring to the rear of the same each and every time a paper is handed to any person in the audience, until the signal word "ready" is said, when he immediately comes forward and stands at the front of the stage until he has read the word and described the writing accurately. It is of course necessary for the performer to be very quick and expert in all his movements, and above all to have a remarkably good memory.

Now for the explanation: When the papers are collected in the goblet or in a hat, and returned to the performer, he places two fingers in the glass—if a glass is used—as though to steady it while he looks down into it, but in reality to secure one of the papers which

he draws out of the goblet between his fingers as he withdraws them from the glass. This paper he conceals immediately in the palm of the same hand, at the same time requesting the gentleman to roll the papers up into pellets; and while this is being done the artist goes off the stage, or retires to the rear of the same as above mentioned. The moment he is off the stage or his back is turned to the audience he opens the paper he has secured possession of, reads the name thereon and also notices any peculiarity in writing and shape of letters, which he must remember. He then folds the paper up small as before and conceals it between the first and second fingers of his right hand; and when the gentleman on the stage calls out "ready," the artist comes forward. A paper is now handed him, which he takes and *apparently* hands to one of the audience, but in reality he hands the other paper which he had concealed, and which is secretly exchanged for the one just handed him by the gentleman. All this is the work of only an instant and is done as the artist walks from the stage to the audience. The artist at once retires with the paper just handed him by his gentleman assistant, and immediately opens the paper, reads name and notes other marks, rolls it up small again and conceals it as before between two fingers of the right hand. When he receives his signal he comes to the front of the stage and of course reads the name on the first paper handed out to the audience and which is the one he first secretly obtained possession of. This performance he repeats each time a paper is given him, not handing *that one out*, but substituting the paper which he had concealed, the contents of which he had already mastered. He must take care and not confuse names and descriptions, or the trick would lose half its interest.

It often happens that when papers are handed out to be written on, that some person, wanting to be more clever than the rest, will return his paper without any writing on it, but with some peculiar mark, such as a stroke, a circle, or even prick a hole in it, therefore the artist must be as clever as he and describe everything, even to a dirty smudge made by a finger. Some performers, particularly among mediums, are very expert in "ringing the changes" of the papers without having them rolled up, but simply folded together into a small slip that can be easily concealed lengthwise between the fingers.

BLOOD WRITING ON THE ARM.

There are several methods in use of producing this weird effect. The following are the ones generally used and are the

simplest. As soon as the performer has obtained the name on a piece of paper that he wishes to have appear on his arm, he rolls back his sleeve on his left arm, and taking a piece of sharp pointed hard soap, writes the name upon his left arm, as much like the original writing as possible. He then pulls down his sleeve, and having received his signal, comes out upon the stage and reads the name upon the paper, which is already out in the hands of the audience. Hence the next paper he hands out is the one he intends to produce on his arm. He leaves the stage and upon again entering and coming to the front, reads out the name and then requests the paper to be handed up to him and informs his audience that he will produce that particular name upon his bare arm, at the same time turning back his coat and shirt sleeve, shows the arm, to all appearance perfectly clear from writing of any kind. He now takes the candle, lights the paper, lets it burn to ashes, these he collects, and when they are cool enough rubs them upon his bare arm, first showing his right hand perfectly clear of any preparation, then by rubbing ashes gently up and down, the name will appear perfectly distinct and legible, in letters almost a fac-simile of the original writing.

To make the letters or name have the blood-red tinge, the performer simply writes the name on his arm with a smooth-pointed end of a common match, pressing on quite hard, this causes no pain, then quickly and rapidly rubs the palm of his hand over it a few times and he is ready to show it as above mentioned, but this time does not burn the paper; he simply bares his arm and rubs his hand along it a few times and the writing is seen in red letters, this motion causing the skin where the writing was to swell up and turn red.

If the reading of the papers is done in a clean and expert manner, and without any blunders, and the "Blood-Writing" is introduced into the trick, the artist will find that this trick will give entire satisfaction to the general public, more so than all the attempts at real thought reading will do.