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SECRETS OF BLACK ARTS!

ANONYMOUS

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Secrets of Black Arts! by Anonymous.

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prowling through the lanes and yards of the remoter country districts; still we have our mediums, who call up the dead from their graves to talk to us more trivial nonsense than ever they talked while living, and who reconcile us with humanity by showing us how infinitely inferior is spirituality; still we have the unknown mapped out in clear lines sharp and firm; and still the impossible is asserted as existing, and men are ready to give their lives in attestation of what contravenes every law of reason and of nature; still we are not content to watch and wait and collect and fathom before deciding, but for every new group of facts or appearances must at once draw up a code of laws and reasons, and prove, to a mathematical certainty, the properties of a chimera, and the divine life and beauty of a lie. Even the mere vulgar belief in witchcraft remains among the lower classes. And indeed so long as conviction without examination, and belief without proof, pass as the righteous operations of faith, so long will superstition and credulity reign supreme over the mind, and the functions of critical reason be abandoned and foresworn. And as it seems to me that credulity is a less desirable frame of mind than skepticism, I have set forth this collection of witch stories as landmarks of the excesses to which a blind belief may hurry and impel humanity, and perhaps as some slight aids to that much misused common sense which the holders of impossible theories generally consider it well to tread under foot, and loftily ignore.

THE END

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