



MAGIC AND MENTAL DISORDER
SIR HANS SLOANE'S MEMOIR OF
JOHN BEAUMONT
EDITED BY MICHAEL HUNTER

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Sir Hans Sloane's memoir of the Somerset virtuoso and occultist, John Beaumont (c.1640–1731), is here published in full for the first time in annotated form and with an English translation. Sloane wrote it in French in 1740 and sent it to his French contact, the abbé Bignon, whose comments on it survive and are also reproduced here. The text is revealing not least for the brutally reductionist attitude towards magical belief that it displays in relation not only to Beaumont but also to others with similar commitments, including such luminaries as John Dee and Simon Forman whose manuscripts Sloane collected. Its implication is that a major and neglected impulse to Sloane's activity in collecting magical manuscripts was a wish to illustrate the proneness of his fellow humans to delusion from which they might be saved by enlightened attitudes like his.

The editor, Michael Hunter, is Emeritus Professor of History at Birkbeck College, University of London, and author of *Boyle: Between God and Science* (Yale University Press, 2009).



Frontispiece. Mezzotint portrait of Sir Hans Sloane by John Faber jun. after Thomas Murray, 1728. British Museum 1902,1011.1877.

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JOHN BEAUMONT

Edited by Michael Hunter

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INTRODUCTION

Sir Hans Sloane had a major impact on European cultural life through his massive collecting activity and the extensive contacts associated with this, while posthumously his collections were to comprise the foundation holdings of the British Museum and its dual offspring, the Natural History Museum and the British Library. Intellectually, however, Sloane remains a somewhat elusive figure. Apart from his epic *Voyage to the Islands Madera, Barbadoes, Nieves, St Christophers, and Jamaica*, published in two volumes in 1707 and 1725, Sloane's published writings are meagre and unpublished treatises by him hardly more profuse.¹ This means that his objectives and rationale in both his intellectual and collecting activity often have to be divined from scattered comments – for instance, Sloane's own in the introductions to the *Jamaica* volumes, or those of his visitors.² It is therefore remarkable to find a text like the one that is here published in full for the first time, which makes explicit Sloane's opinions on topics which would otherwise be hard to divine, and which is especially important since it illustrates his views on significant items in his collections. The text in question is a memoir of the Somerset virtuoso, geologist and occultist, John Beaumont (c. 1640–1731), that Sloane wrote in 1740 for the French savant, the abbé Jean-Paul Bignon (1662–1743).³ What is important about it is not least that, in it, Sloane extrapolated from Beaumont to give his broader views on intercourse with the spirit realm of the kind in which Beaumont believed that he indulged, thus throwing light on Sloane's attitudes to magic more generally.

Sloane's subject, John Beaumont, was, as the present text tells us, an acquaintance of Sloane's for nearly fifty years, thus taking us back to the period in the late seventeenth century when Beaumont was actively involved in the geological studies with which Sloane's account of him opens.⁴ The text refers to geological specimens which Beaumont provided for Sloane's cabinet, and their shared interests are further revealed by Beaumont's extant letters to Sloane. Thus in 1730 Beaumont sent Sloane another specimen, while in 1702 he reported on the collection of the Bristol naturalist, William Cole; in 1722, he

¹ For studies of Sloane, see especially Arthur MacGregor (ed.), *Sir Hans Sloane, Collector, Scientist, Antiquary, Founding Father of the British Museum* (London, 1994), and Alison Walker, Arthur MacGregor and Michael Hunter (eds.), *From Books to Bezoars: Sir Hans Sloane and his Collections* (forthcoming).

² For a good example, see the essay by James Delbourgo in *From Books to Bezoars*.

³ The memoir is noted and its first five paragraphs transcribed in Jean Jacquot, 'Sir Hans Sloane and French Men of Science', *Notes and Records of the Royal Society*, 10 (1953), 85-98, on pp. 94-6.

⁴ For the fullest account of Beaumont hitherto see Jonathan Barry, 'John Beaumont: Science, Spirits and the Scale of Nature', in id., *Witchcraft and Demonology in South-west England 1640-1789* (Basingstoke, 2012), pp. 124-64 and 298-304. See also Scott Mandelbrote in ODNB.

asked to borrow books from Sloane's library for use in his research for his last published book; while the letter of 1730 also shows him seeking Sloane's medical advice.⁵ This therefore bears out the implication of Sloane's account that his relationship with Beaumont was partly that of doctor and patient, while the memoir also illustrates social contact between the two men by noting how Sloane invited Beaumont to dinner to meet savants with overlapping interests, in the course of which Beaumont showed notable erudition regarding ancient and modern poets.

Sloane's account was written for the abbé Bignon, the leading figure in the Académie des Sciences in Paris at this time, one of the most important of Sloane's French contacts and arguably the dominant one in his later years.⁶ Bignon's epistolary contact with Sloane went back to 1709, following on from Sloane's earlier contacts with such savants as Joseph Pitton de Tournefort, Etienne-François Geoffroy and Pierre Bonnet-Bourdelot, and Bignon provided a conduit between Sloane and the Académie des Sciences, taking receipt of writings by Sloane which were published in the Académie's *Memoires*, including a paper on the fossil bones of prehistoric elephants which constitutes perhaps Sloane's most significant publication after his writings on Jamaica.⁷

The idea of writing a memoir of Beaumont is first mentioned in letters between Sloane and Bignon shortly after Beaumont's death in 1731 in connection with Bignon's interest in the *Weekly Memorials for the Ingenious* that Beaumont inaugurated when the Royal Society's *Philosophical Transactions* were in abeyance in the early 1680s. At that point Sloane explained his intention to write such a piece, adding: 'but because it is a matter which requires the recollection of various particular facts for which it will be necessary for me to search in my cabinet, I find myself obliged to postpone it to another occasion'.⁸

⁵ British Library Sloane MSS 4038, fols. 336, 343 (2, 14 May 1702); 4046, fol. 234-5 (27 April 1722); 4051, fol. 70 (13 July 1730). The research referred to in the 1722 letter was for his *Gleanings of Antiquities* (London, 1724), esp. pp. 55ff.

⁶ See Jacquot, 'Sir Hans Sloane'; J.A. Clarke, 'Abbé Jean-Paul Bignon: "Moderator of the Academies" and Royal Librarian', *French Historical Studies*, 8 (1973), 213-35, and id., 'Sir Hans Sloane and the Abbé Jean Paul Bignon: Notes on Collection Building in the 18th century', *Library Quarterly*, 50 (1980), 475-82; David Sturdy, *Science and Social Status: The Members of the Académie des Sciences, 1666-1750* (Woodbridge, 1995), esp. ch. 22. For a list of letters between the two men in the Sloane MSS see E.J.L. Scott, *Index to the Sloane Manuscripts* (London, 1904), s.v. Bignon; see also Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Fonds Français 22,229, fols. 253-71.

⁷ Sloane, 'An Account of *Elephants Teeth and Bones* found under Ground', *Philosophical Transactions*, 35 (1727-8), 457-71 and 497-514, and id., 'Sur les dents et autres ossemens de l'éléphant trouvés dans terre', *Mémoires de l'Académie Royale des Sciences*, 1729, pp. 305-34. See Jill Cook, 'The Elephants in the Collection' in *From Books to Bezoars*. For Sloane's letter to Bignon of 5 October 1727 with which he enclosed the text, see BNF Fonds Français 22,229, fol. 266.

⁸ Sloane to Bignon, 27 October 1731, Sloane MS 3322, fol. 137: 'Je n'oublie pas la promesse que je vous ai fait Monsieur touchant Mr Beaumont auteur de <Mem. Hebdomad.> [replacing 'surdit Livre' (said book) deleted; 'de' (of) is also altered from 'des'] mais comme c'est une matière qui demande le ressouvenir des plusieurs faits particuliers, pour les quels il me faudra fouiller dans mon Cabinet, je me trouve obligé de la remettre a une autre occasion'. See also Sloane MS 4068, fol. 181v (Sloane to Bignon, July 1731), where Beaumont's authorship of the *Weekly Memorials* is mentioned but the passage in question is deleted. The letter in which the idea of writing a memoir of Beaumont was first mooted does not seem to be extant.

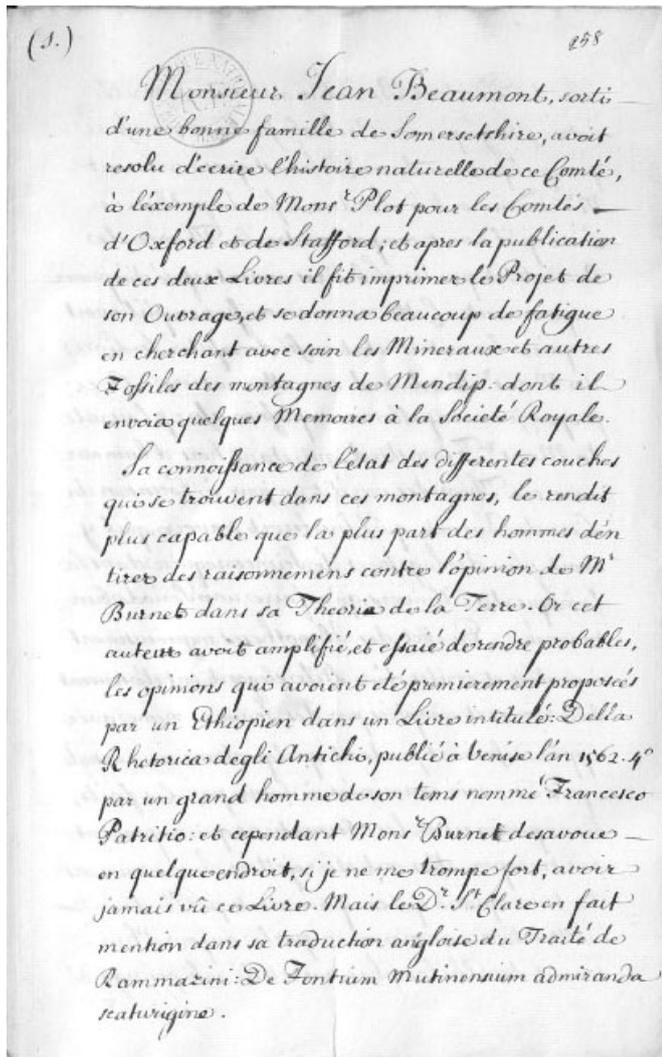


Fig. 1. The first page of the fair copy of Sloane's Memoir of Beaumont, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Fonds Français 22,229, fol. 258.

Bignon replied expressing enthusiasm for the piece – ‘these kinds of anecdotes are always curious, but they acquire a wholly different value when one receives them from a person of your merit’ – while several months later he reiterated the fact that he awaited the piece in question, though ‘without impatience’.⁹

In his covering letter to Bignon when finally sending him the memoir of Beaumont on 16 October 1740, Sloane referred to his earlier offer, going on to explain how he considered Beaumont's life ‘very curious... and I hope that it will not be displeasing to a learned man endowed with universal knowledge in all genres of literature’.¹⁰ Bignon's response is extant and will be referred to below in connection with the thrust of Sloane's interpretation of Beaumont.

⁹ Bignon to Sloane, 8 March, 16 June 1732, Sloane MS 4052, fols. 83v, 131v: the phrases in question are ‘ces sortes d'anecdotes sont toujours curieuses, mais elles deviennent d'un tout autre prix, quand on les reçoit d'une personne de votre merite’, and ‘j'attendrai sans impatience les Memoires de M. de Beaumont’.

¹⁰ BNF Fonds Français 22,229, fol. 254: for the complete text see Appendix 1.

Sloane's account of Beaumont contains some significant information about Beaumont's Roman Catholic faith and the lawsuits in which he was involved with his wife's family, bearing out the evidence of legal records in the latter connection.¹¹ Sloane also refers to Beaumont's planned natural history of Somerset, which never came to fruition despite a prospectus being issued for it, along with his published refutations of the geological views of Thomas Burnet and John Woodward, and such more miscellaneous publications as the periodical, *Weekly Memorials for the Ingenious*, that Beaumont produced in 1682–3, and his *Present State of the Universe* of 1694.¹² The account of Beaumont's geological views provided Sloane with an opportunity to give a rare statement of his own opinion on the origins of fossils and to report a remark of John Flamsteed's concerning the views of Thomas Burnet in his *Sacred Theory of the Earth*, on which he also added his own reflections.¹³

The main focus of Sloane's account of Beaumont, however, is the latter's belief that he had intercourse with spiritual beings. This section opens by explaining how it was on the advice of fairies who visited him that Beaumont courted the member of a local gentry family who became his wife, and Sloane also tells of an extraordinary encounter between Beaumont and a group of savants including a figure who may be identified as Dryden's friend, John Sheffield, 3rd Earl of Mulgrave and 1st Duke of Buckingham and Normanby (1647–1721), in which Beaumont regaled them with stories about his conversations with spirits but was somewhat disconcerted by Sheffield's sceptical request for a kind of ethnography of the spirit realm which Beaumont was not able to furnish. (Sheffield appears to have been something of a free-thinker, so it is perhaps unsurprising that he took the line that he did regarding supernatural beings.¹⁴)

In addition to information that he states that he obtained from Beaumont in conversation, Sloane also refers to Beaumont's 'account of his actions with spirits', evidently as reported in his *Historical, Physiological and Theological Treatise of Spirits, Apparitions, Witchcrafts and other Magical Practices of*

¹¹ See *The Case of Mr Thomas Long, Upon a Writ of Error in Parliament brought in the Name of William Darbison on the Demise of the said Mr Long Plaintiff, Against John Beaumont Gent and Dorothy his Wife Defendants* [1713] and *In Error. William Darbison, Lessee of Thomas Long, Plaintiff AND John Beaumont Esq; and Dorothy his Wife, Defendants* [1717], copies in British Library 19.h.1 (23-4) (also 816.m.5 (46)). For a full account of the extant documentation see Barry, 'John Beaumont', pp. 132-3 and 300 (n. 23).

¹² Beaumont's prospectus for his natural history of Somerset is reprinted in R.T. Gunther (ed.), *Early Science in Oxford* (14 vols., Oxford, 1923-45), vol. 12, pp. 274-8. The other publications referred to here are *Considerations on a Book Entitled 'The Theory of the Earth'* (London, 1693); *Gleanings of Antiquities*, pp. 17-40; *Weekly Memorials for the Ingenious* (London, 1682-3); and *The Present State of the Universe* (London, 1694). See also Barry, 'John Beaumont'.

¹³ For the rarity of such expression of his views on Sloane's part see J.M. Levine, *Dr Woodward's Shield* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1977), pp. 85 and 315 n. 22. Sloane quotes Flamsteed to similar effect in the introduction to vol. 2 to his *Voyage to... Jamaica* (London, 1725), p. xiii. For background see Frances Willmoth, 'John Flamsteed's Letter concerning the Natural Causes of Earthquakes', *Annals of Science*, 44 (1987), 23-70, on pp. 42-3.

¹⁴ This is evidenced by his annotations to his copy of Cudworth's *True Intellectual System of the Universe* (London, 1678), now British Library 676.g.17. I am indebted to Dmitri Levitin for drawing my attention to this volume. See also M.D. Sankey in ODNB. The fact Sloane refers to Sheffield as Duke of Buckingham may be a dating clue, as he only acquired this title in 1703: however, Sloane would probably have referred to him thus in retrospect even if the encounter had taken place when he was still Earl of Mulgrave.

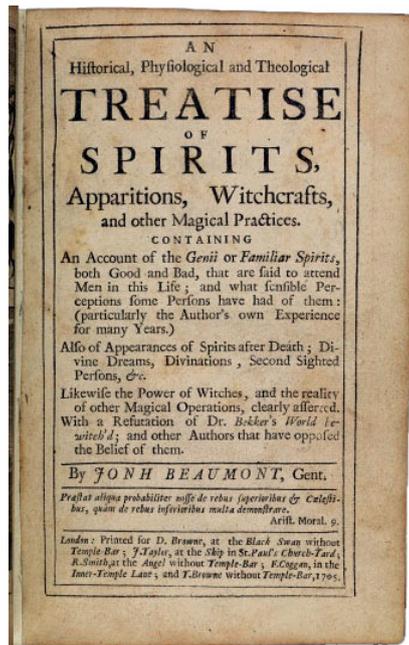


Fig. 2. The title page of John Beaumont's *Historical, Physiological and Theological Treatise of Spirits, Apparitions, Witchcrafts and other Magical Practices* (1705). Wellcome Library, London, 12783/B.

1705. The work in question does indeed overlap with Sloane's account of Beaumont in what it says about such matters, not least its organisation in terms of the evidence for spirits of each of the five senses, which thus echoes Beaumont's response to Sloane's expression of scepticism about his supposed intercourse with such beings by stating how he was convinced of their reality by the evidence of four of his five senses (he had never tasted them).¹⁵ Sloane specifically cites the *Treatise* for Beaumont's denial in it that he used conjurations to make spirits appear, and this is in fact the final point that he makes about Beaumont himself before moving onto various ancillary cases of supposed intercourse with spirits and their implications.¹⁶

Indeed, ironically, the bulk of the text is not directly about Beaumont; instead, it acts as a gloss on Sloane's diagnosis of Beaumont by giving details of other cases of occultism that Sloane saw as germane to his.¹⁷ These stories range from

¹⁵ Beaumont, *Historical, Physiological and Theological Treatise* (London, 1705), p. 395 and passim. It is perhaps also noting that in his later *Gleanings of Antiquities*, pp. 189ff., Beaumont seems to echo Sloane's diagnosis of such experiences as representing a state of dreaming while awake, providing his own defensive rationale of the ecstatic state of mind involved.

¹⁶ Beaumont, *Treatise*, p. 394. On the same page he also notes that the spirits dissuaded him from drinking too heavily, which may be the source of Sloane's comment that 'he confesses somewhere that he was fond of the bottle'; Beaumont's assertion that his temperament was sanguine rather than melancholic, also cited by Sloane, appears in *ibid.*, p. 396.

¹⁷ Jonathan Barry has suggested to me that Sloane included some of these cases because the figures in question had links with Beaumont: see below p. 12, n. 71, for the possibility that Hatton, Sloane's informant on Ashmole, was present at Beaumont's encounter with the Duke of Buckingham; pp. 15-16 for Sloane's reference to Tyson, who had contact with Beaumont (see Barry, 'John Beaumont', pp. 136-7 and 162-3); and p. xvi, n. 29, for Beaumont's interest in runic almanacs. There may be some truth in this, but it is equally likely that Sloane included these instances because they seemed to him germane to the matter in hand, as with others which have no link with Beaumont at all.



Fig. 3. Engraved portrait of the Moroccan ambassador, Muhammad ibn Haddu, by Robert White after Sir Godfrey Kneller, 1682. British Museum 1849.0315.97.

the séances with spirits of John Dee and Edward Kelly in the Elizabethan period, through the occultist practices of Simon Forman and William Lilly, to reminiscences about their successor Elias Ashmole and other contemporaries of Sloane's who participated in magical rites but whose names are unfortunately not divulged. In the case of Ashmole, it is interesting that Sloane here gives crucial information which Ashmole himself failed to divulge in his autobiographical notes about his encounter with Muhammad ibn Haddu, the Moroccan ambassador who was widely feted when he visited England in 1682, being elected to the Royal Society, having his portrait engraved and being courted by Unitarians who sought irenic links with Islam.¹⁸ In addition to

¹⁸ For Ashmole's account see C.H. Josten (ed.), (*Elias Ashmole (1617-92): His Autobiographical and Historical Notes, his Correspondence, and Other Contemporary Sources Relating to his Life and Work* (5 vols., Oxford, 1966), vol. 1, p. 246, and vol. 4, pp. 1702-6. For a general account of Haddu's visit see E.M.G Routh, *Tangier: England's Lost Atlantic Outpost 1661-84* (London, 1912), ch. 12. For the ambassador's election to the Royal Society, see Michael Hunter, *The Royal Society and its Fellows 1660-1700* (2nd edn., Oxford, 1994), pp. 208 and 274 n. 11. For the portrait print by Robert White see fig. 4 (there is also a mezzotint by John Lloyd: BM 1902.1011.3105). On the planned address by the Unitarians see J.A.I. Champion, *The Pillars of Priestcraft Shaken* (Cambridge, 1992), pp. 110-11, 113.

noting the ambassador's interest in native and exotic plants at Ashmole's house at Lambeth, Sloane also explains how Ashmole's demonstration to him of Dee's and Kelly's books and instruments led the ambassador to ask Ashmole to raise spirits for him – a rather unexpected display of religious eclecticism on his part which may have nonplussed Ashmole, who declined the request on the grounds of the disturbances that might result.

What is perhaps most remarkable about these passages is the frequency with which Sloane notes his possession of manuscripts documenting the very magical encounters on which he here comments: this means that, through this text, we obtain some precious clues to Sloane's rationale in owning material of this kind. Thus of Dee's account of his and Kelly's seances Sloane writes: 'The original manuscripts relating to this, as far as I know, or authentic copies at least, are in my library', and this evidently alludes to one of the gems in Sloane's collection, Sloane MSS 3188 and 3191, which had fascinated Ashmole when he acquired them in 1672, when he had studied them at length: indeed, the reason why these key items came to rest among Sloane's manuscripts rather than among Ashmole's own is not entirely clear.¹⁹ Sloane similarly states of the manuscripts of Simon Forman that 'I have bought several of his books', though also noting one 'which seemed to me to deal with necromancy', involving the resolution of questions by the throwing of dice; this was evidently a text on geomancy, which he had seen but 'have not managed to obtain'.²⁰ In connection with a more recent case of spirit-raising which he recounts, when the landlord foreclosed on some occultists who tried unsuccessfully to find hidden treasure by such means, Sloane explains how he himself purchased the manuscripts involved, including 'a very well-written English copy of a book entitled *Clavicula Salomonis*', and it seems likely that this can be identified with an item that is now Sloane MS 2731.²¹ Clearly we here see the background to a significant part of Sloane's collecting activity.

Yet what is equally remarkable is the tone in which Sloane recounts the phenomena in question, and the explicit scepticism that he expressed with regard to them. He tells us in connection with the manuscript by Forman on necromancy to which he refers that it 'would be worth procuring to see the madness contained within it'. He was equally explicit in telling Beaumont concerning his supposed visions 'that what he believed to be real with regard to the fairies was only imaginary, or a strong impression of a dream'; he comparably spoke of how people 'have been deceived regarding hidden treasure'. Moreover, this makes sense of the almost flippant, tongue-in-cheek,

¹⁹ See Michael Hunter, 'Elias Ashmole, 1617-92', in id., *Science and the Shape of Orthodoxy* (Woodbridge, 1995), pp. 21-44, on p. 29. For an edition of Sloane MS 3188 and for speculation on the descent of the MSS in question see Christopher Whitby (ed.), *John Dee's Actions with Spirits* (2 vols., New York, 1988), vol. 1, pp. 3-7 and passim.

²⁰ For Forman MSS in Sloane's collection see Sloane MSS 99, 2550 and various items in 3822. For MSS on geomancy by Forman see Bodleian Library MSS Ashmole 354 and 392, though presumably the one that Sloane saw was a different one, now lost. I am grateful to Lauren Kassell for her help in this connection.

²¹ This is a self-contained copy of the work in landscape folio format with rubrication and elaborate diagrams, dated 18 January 1685/6, and it fits Sloane's description better than such volumes as MSS Sloane 3648, 3825 or 3847, which combine this text with other writings (MS 3847 was in any case acquired at the Jekyll sale in 1739).



Fig. 4. Engraved portrait of Jean-Paul Bignon, by Gérard Edelinck after Lucrèce-Catherine de la Roue, 1700. British Museum R,6.231.

manner in which the various episodes are recounted, one being introduced as ‘something rather entertaining that happened here several years ago’. Though this slightly disdainful tone regarding the various stories that are told has led one commentator on the text to dismiss it as ‘a series of amusing anecdotes and some interesting, but not very deep, remarks on the differences in the brain structure of the sane and the insane’, what is surely significant is that this was the manner in which Sloane considered it appropriate to deal with matters of this kind.²²

For what is equally striking is the brutally reductionist explanation of this whole class of phenomena that Sloane puts forward, as a type of mental disorder which was susceptible to therapeutic treatments which he and other doctors had tested. He explicitly states that ‘I have treated several kinds of disorders of the mind or the brain and I believe that some of them stemmed from the fact that these people dream while awake’: his method was to use ‘very strong, powerful and harsh purges’ in an attempt to restore his patients’ health, and he compared the results with cures for ‘pleurisy, colic or other similar illness’. In this

²² Jacquot, ‘Sir Hans Sloane’, p. 96; this is paraphrased by Clarke, ‘Sir Hans Sloane’, p. 478.

connection Sloane cites the practice of the Restoration physician, Peter Barwick, and he also notes both his own experience and that of the eminent anatomist, Edward Tyson, concerning the difficulty of finding physical differences 'between the brains of maniacs and those of people of sound mind'. This led him on to broader reflections on the narrow boundary between 'even the most sublime geniuses and those who have entirely lost their wits' and on the difficulties of treatment because of the frequent protectiveness of their families. The latter may have owed something to the embarrassment caused by the extreme laxative effects of the therapy that he recommended.

The background to this is provided by the prevailing trend in attitudes to the mind in Sloane's period, developing from the physiological theories of Thomas Willis and others in the seventeenth century, which interpreted abnormalities of thought and mood as physiological defects, often to the nervous system.²³ A comparable attitude to Sloane's in a slightly different connection is to be found in George Cheyne's *The English Malady* of 1733, in which defects of the nerves were similarly seen as the result of physical malfunction which were susceptible to therapeutic treatment. Cheyne there implied that certain ailments that he saw as purely natural had previously been attributed to the effects of magic, but as explicit an account as Sloane's of magical practices as the effects of delusion is hard to find.²⁴ Perhaps the most telling parallel is to be found in the characterisation of religious enthusiasm as a form of mental illness, which became increasingly common in the early eighteenth century and which bears a strong resemblance to the characterisation of supposed contact with spirits as the result of mental disfunction to be found in Sloane's text.²⁵ This was again an attitude which went back to the seventeenth century and not least to Meric Casaubon, author of *A Treatise Concerning Enthusiasme* (1655), to whose hostile publication of Dee's spiritual diaries Sloane refers in the text below.²⁶

More broadly, Sloane illustrates the background to his outlook in his comments on the geological theories of Beaumont and his *bête noir*, Thomas Burnet, where, echoing the commonplace Newtonian rejection of 'hypotheses' in favour of 'facts, experiments and observations, which cannot deceive', he invoked the concept of 'attraction' which had come to the fore as an explanatory principle under Newton's influence and which he clearly saw as purely natural in contrast to the old 'occult qualities' to which he derisively compared it (even if admitting that attraction was itself not as clear as it might be).

Equally interesting is the abbé Bignon's response to Sloane's memoir in a letter dated 5 November 1740, in which, acknowledging the receipt of 'something so extraordinary as that which you tell me concerning Mr John Beaumont', he commented on it at length. Indeed, the passage in question is so interesting that

²³ See Roy Porter, *Mind-Forg'd Manacles* (London, 1987), esp. ch. 2; id. (ed.), George Cheyne, *The English Malady* (London, 1991).

²⁴ Cheyne, *English Malady*, pp. xxxiv and 284-5.

²⁵ Porter, *Mind-Forg'd Manacles*, pp. 62ff. See also Michael MacDonald, 'Religion, Social Change and Psychological Healing in England 1600-1800', *Studies in Church History*, 19 (1982), 101-25.

²⁶ See below, p. 14. For background see Michael Heyd, *'Be Sober and Reasonable': The Critique of Enthusiasm in the 17th and Early 18th Centuries* (Leiden, 1995).

it is quoted in full in Appendix 2. As will be seen, Bignon was fully in agreement with Sloane's overall diagnosis of Beaumont, expressing amazement that Beaumont actually believed that he had intercourse with spirits, which Bignon saw as an outmoded belief 'which hardly any but the common people recognise'. Beaumont's commitment to such ideas, in his words, 'astonishes me to the point of having difficulty in believing that he was speaking seriously', though he combined scepticism about the reality of such phenomena with a nescient caveat about God's power in the world.

In commenting on Sloane's idea that those who experienced such sensations were sleeping when awake, he saw as 'a difficulty' the experience of sleepwalking, as of other cases where people were able to perform actions when asleep which they could not afterwards remember – though one would have thought that such phenomena could easily be explained in terms of Sloane's theory. However, on the whole Bignon expressed himself satisfied, and he was particularly taken by Sloane's conviction that he could cure 'so dangerous an infirmity' by 'a specific remedy'. Indeed, in view of Bignon's commitment to a mechanistic view of nature – Sloane was clearly right to think that the piece would appeal to him not least for that reason – it is interesting how explicit he was in endorsing Sloane's advocacy of the use of traditional medical practices such as purging in terms of a conception of the human body as being filled with 'different fluids' which were susceptible to being acted upon in this way.²⁷ On the other hand, Bignon showed no interest in Sloane's broader extrapolation from Beaumont to other cases of magical practice: in view of the attitude he expressed towards Beaumont himself, this may be because he saw such beliefs as beneath contempt.

In Sloane's case, on the other hand, not only did he seek to tar Forman, Ashmole and others with the same brush as Beaumont. More striking still is the way in which, in his memoir of Beaumont, he extrapolated from his physiological explanation of supposed intercourse with spirits to magical beliefs and practices more generally, including witchcraft. Noting how certain drugs could be used 'to put people into a certain kind of sleep known as ecstacies', Sloane explained how they could thus come to believe that they had attended the witches' sabbat and to confess accordingly, 'often to their own destruction'.²⁸ Indeed, in his initial draft he went even further, adding how 'in several of the regions of the north, where much ignorance reigns, not only the anointing of their bodies, if I am not mistaken, but also a runic almanac carved onto a piece of wood, can have the same effect'. Though he suppressed this passage from the final version, it is again revealing, not least in relation to Sloane's collections and their rationale, since among the objects from his collection still to be found in the British Museum is indeed a runic almanac which he no doubt valued precisely because of the evidence it supplied of such 'ignorance'.²⁹

Once again, therefore, we return to the significance of this text for understanding the rationale of Sloane's collections. For included among these

²⁷ For Bignon's view of nature see Clarke, 'Abbé Jean-Paul Bignon', p. 219.

²⁸ For an overlapping passage also surviving in Sloane MS 4069, see Appendix 3.

²⁹ British Museum SLAntiq.90. For Beaumont's comments on the runic almanac in a similar context see *Treatise*, pp. 277-8.

were not only objects like the runic almanac and various magical rings and the like (even John Dee's 'shew stone' probably reached the British Museum through Sloane³⁰), but also Sloane's huge collection of astrological, alchemical and magical manuscripts: indeed, the Sloane Collection has long been renowned among historians of the occult sciences as a treasure trove of material of this kind. It can, of course, be charitably suggested that Sloane saw alchemy and astrology as the 'forerunners' of the studies that concerned him, the implication being that he believed that nuggets of truth could be winnowed from the dross that such texts otherwise contained, and this may certainly have been the case to some extent.³¹ On the other hand, the evidence of the memoir of Beaumont suggests that a much stronger motive for Sloane in collecting these items was as monuments of human error, indicative of the false beliefs to which people were prone if they were allowed to suffer from the delusions that doctors like him could help them to overcome.

Here an interesting analogy is provided by the almost unique assemblage of quacks' bills which Sloane preserved, which has been used to throw an extraordinary light on popular medical practice in eighteenth-century England.³² Again, it is conceivable that Sloane believed that some of the remedies promoted in these crude and self-promotional documents might have therapeutic value. But it is much more plausible that his primary motivation in collecting them was to illustrate the forces of ignorance which progressive physicians like him might be able to overcome. As with the disdainful attitude to the whole apparatus of the occult that is revealed by the various anecdotes retailed in the Beaumont memoir, Sloane comes across more strongly than ever as a true Enlightenment figure, preserving the relics of ignorance only as markers of the progress that men like him were bringing about.

³⁰ See John Cherry, 'Medieval and Later Antiquities', in MacGregor, *Sir Hans Sloane*, pp. 198-221, on p. 213.

³¹ See, for instance, M.A.E. Nickson, 'Books and Manuscripts' in MacGregor, *Sir Hans Sloane*, pp. 263-77, on p. 271-2, and Arnold Hunt, 'Sloane as a Collector of Manuscripts', in *From Books to Bezoars*.

³² Giles Mandelbrote, 'Sloane and the Preservation of Printed Ephemera', in Giles Mandelbrote and Barry Taylor (eds), *Libraries within the Library: The Origins of the British Library's Printed Collections* (London, 2009), pp. 146-68, esp. pp. 156ff. See also Roy Porter, *Health for Sale: Quackery in England 1660-1850* (Manchester, 1989), reprinted as *Quacks* (Stroud, 2000).

APPENDIX 1

Sloane's covering letter to the abbé Bignon,
16 October 1740

Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Fonds Français 22,229, fol. 254 (with cover sheet as fol. 255). The MS is in the hand of Thomas Stack, signed by Sloane. This has been collated with the draft version in British Library MS Sloane 4069, fol. 60, which is in the same hand as the text of the Memoir.¹

Monsieur

Il ya long temps que je me suis proposé d'avoir l'honneur de vous donner un echantillon² de la vie de Monsieur Beaumont, la quelle etoit tres singuliere, comme vous le verrès par le petit Memoire ci-joint.³ Mais j'en ai ete empeché jusqu'ici par l'attention que etois obligé de⁴ donner a ceux qui me demandoient les secours de ma Profession de Medecine; que j'ai toujours regardé comme un si grand depôt, que je m'estimerois⁵ coupable d'homicide, si je faisois la moindre chose, tant par omission que par commission, qui fut contraire à ce

Translation

Sir,

It is some time since I offered to have the honour of providing you with an overview of Mr Beaumont's life, which was very curious, as you will see from the short report I have enclosed. However, until now I was prevented from doing so because I was obliged to give my attention to those who requested my help in my capacity as a medical professional, which I have always regarded as such a great duty that I would consider myself guilty of homicide if I did the least thing, whether by omission or by commission,

¹ The first paragraph of the letter is printed in Jacquot, 'Sir Hans Sloane', p. 96. On Stack and other amanuenses employed by Sloane see Amy Blakeway, 'The Library Catalogues of Sir Hans Sloane; their Authors, Organisation and Functions', *Electronic British Library Journal* (forthcoming).

² Altered from 'une idee' (an idea) in Sloane 4069. After 'singulière' (curious) 11 words later, 'par plus d'une raison' (for more than one reason) is there deleted.

³ 'par le petit Memoire ci-joint' (from the short report I have enclosed) is inserted in Sloane 4069; before that, 'cy après' (hereafter) is deleted, and 'comme.... apres' ('as you... hereafter') is there in brackets

⁴ In Sloane 4069, 'etois' appears as 'j'etois' and 'j'etois obligé' ('I was obliged') replaces 'je devois' (I had to) deleted; 'de' (to) is there lacking.

⁵ 'regarderois' (would regard) in Sloane 4069.

que je jugeois raisonnable, apres avoir meurement pesé toutes les circonstances des maladies que je traitois.⁶ Or comme il a plû au Toutpuissant, que je fusse saisi il y a quelques mois d'une complication tres dangereuse de Crachement de Sang et d'Hemiplegie, et que j'en sois revenu en quelque sorte aujourd'hui (quoique pas au point de poursuivre mes occupations ordinaires); la premiere chose que j'ai entreprise, c'est de vous faire ce detail que je vous avois promis:⁷ et j'espere qu'il ne sera pas desagréable a un scavant doué de⁸ connoissances universelles en tout genre de Literature.

Mais avant que d'entrer en matiere, souffrés, Monsieur, que /fol. 254v/ je vous dise, que depuis la mort de Mr Hearne, /Sloane fol. 60v/ que j'avois encouragé a faire imprimer quelques Manuscrits et autres traités curieux, qui ne se trouvois pas facilement,⁹ je n'ai rien pû vous envoyer de rare (ce que je n'aurois pas manqué le faire, si j'en eus l'occasion) excepté les Trans^{ns} philos que j'ai envoyées ordinairement avant que d'être publiées: a fin que vous pussiés voir, Monsieur, et communiquer à vos amis quelques unes des pieces qui avoient été presentées à la Societé Roiale. Je me flatte¹⁰ que vous les avés recues:

Translation

that went against what I consider to be reasonable, after having carefully considered all the circumstances surrounding the illnesses that I was treating. And yet, it was the Almighty's will that, several months ago, I be seized by a very dangerous complication of spitting blood and hemiplegia, from which I have now recovered to some degree (although not to the point where I am able to continue with my usual activities). The first thing that I have undertaken is to do you this favour I had had promised you, and I hope that it will not be displeasing to a learned man endowed with universal knowledge in all genres of literature.

But before moving on to the topic, allow me, Sir, to tell you /fol. 254v/ that since the death of Mr Hearne, whom I had encouraged to have printed several manuscripts and other curious treatises that could not easily be found, I have no longer been able to send you anything unusual (which I would not have failed to do if I had had the opportunity) except for the *Philosophical Transactions* which I have usually sent before their publication so that you could see, Sir, and share with your friends some of the pieces that had been presented to the Royal Society. I trust that you have received them.

⁶ The last 3 words are inserted in Sloane 4069; before 'maladies' (illnesses), 'leur' (their) is there inserted.

⁷ Followed in Sloane 4069 by 'et qui est fort remarquable, comme vous le verrés par la suite' (and which is most remarkable, as you will see from what follows) deleted. 2 words later 'j'espere' (I hope) is there followed by 'meme' (even).

⁸ Followed in Sloane 4069 by 'tant de' (so much) deleted; the next word, 'universelle' (universal) is there inserted.

⁹ The antiquary, Thomas Hearne (1678-1735), on whose publishing activity and links with Sloane see Theodor Harmsen, *Antiquarianism in the Augustan Age: Thomas Hearne 1678-1735* (Oxford and Bern, 2000), esp. ch. 5. See also Clarke, 'Sir Hans Sloane', p. 480 and, e.g., Sloane MS 4068, fols. 189v-90, 197 (Sloane to Bignon, 15 April 1731, 29 March 1733). In this sentence, 'trouvois' (could... be found) is altered from 'trouvent' (to be found), 'rare' (rare) is followed by 'ou difficile a trouver' (or difficult to find) deleted, and 'ce' (that) is lacking.

¹⁰ 'Je me flatte' (I trust) inserted in Sloane 4069, replacing 'lesquelles j'espere' (which I hope) deleted. 3 words later 'les' (these) is there inserted, as is 'au' (at) 3 words after that, replacing 'sur le' (on the) deleted.

INTRODUCTION

autrement au moindre mot de notice de ce qui pourra vous en manquer j'aurai soin de les suppléer.

Je ne scaurois mettre fin a cette lettre sans vous reiterer mes tres humbles actions de graces toutes les grandes bontés et civilités, dont vous m'avés comblé de tems à autre:¹¹ lesquelles m'étant accordées par une personne qui a toujours merité l'estime et la veneration de tout le monde scavant, m'en deviennent plus precieuses, et m'exigent les retours les plus zelés de reconnoissance. C'est avec un desir ardent d'entrouver les occasions, que j'ai l'honneur d'etre avec tout les respêt possibles

Monsieur, Votre tres humble et tres obeissant Serviteur, Hans Sloane

A Londres: Ce 16 Oct^{re} 1740.

Translation

Otherwise, at the least word of what you might be lacking, I will take care to supply it.

I could not bring this letter to a close without reiterating to you my very humble gratitude for all of the great kindness and courtesy which you have shown me from time to time, and, these having been granted to me by a person who has always deserved respect and veneration from all scholars, it is all the more precious to me and demands of me the most fervent appreciation in return. It is with an ardent desire to find the opportunity for this that I have the honour to be, with all possible respect,

Sir, your very humble and very obedient servant, Hans Sloane

London, 16th October 1740

¹¹ In Sloane 4069, in the phrase 'de tems à autre' ('from time to time'), 'à autre' is inserted, replacing 'en tems' deleted; earlier in the sentence, 'les' (the) is also inserted, replacing an illegible deleted word. In the following phrase, Sloane 4069 has 'comme elles m'ont été accordées' (since these have been granted to me) instead of 'm'étant accordées' (these having been granted me). 6 words after that, Sloane 4069 lacks 'toujours' (always), instead having 'depuis plusieurs années' (for many years) 2 words later.

APPENDIX 2

Bignon's commentary on Sloane's Memoir of Beaumont

The text reproduced and translated here comprises just over half of the letter from Bignon to Sloane of 5 November 1740 to be found in Sloane MS 4056, fols. 331–2. The opening two paragraphs and the two paragraphs and postscript that follow this passage deal with completely different subjects, and it did not seem appropriate to include them here. The letter is written in one of the standard hands used in letters from Bignon to Sloane, with what is evidently a holograph signature.

Vous m'endedommagés merveilleusement aujourdhuy par le memoire que vous avés la bonté de me communiquer sur quelque chose d'aussi extraordinaire que l'est ce que vous m'apprenés par M. Jean Beaumont. J'admire qu'un homme d'un aussi bon esprit, et aussi distingué par son Erudition, ait eü tant de fatuite a se persuader qu'il estoit en commerce avec les Etres don't il a y'a gueres que le peuple qui reconnoisse l'existence et les operations. Ce n'est pas qu'en mon particulier je voulusse les revoquer si facilement en doute, loin de donner des bornes à la toute puissance du Créateur, et loin donc de penser qu'il n'y ai dans ses ouvrages que cequi nous en est /fol. 331v/ connu. J'ay toujours été frappé du concours unanime de tous les pais et de tous les tems ou l'on n'a cessé de raconter des faits qui semblent supposer qu'il y a des creatures qui se foue connoitre par differents effets; mais que se soit un genie aussi ferme que vous connoissiés celui de M de Beaumont et en meme tems un observateur si capable d'Examiner tout avec la plus severe Exactitude, qui se soit persuadé d'avoir connu ces Substances de quatre de ses sens, c'est ceque j'admire au point

Translation

You have marvellously indebted me to you today by the memoir that you have been kind enough to communicate to me containing something so extraordinary as that which you tell me concerning Mr John Beaumont. I marvel that a man of such great wit, and so distinguished for his erudition, was fatuous enough as to persuade himself that he was in communication with beings the existence and workings of which hardly any but the common people recognise. It is not that I myself would wish so lightly to throw doubt on them, nor would I assign boundaries to the allpowerfulness of the Creator, nor think therefore that there is only in his works that which we know of. I have always been struck by the unanimous agreement of all countries and all ages, in which there is no end to accounts of facts seeming to show that there are beings which make themselves known in different ways; but that a intellect as strong as you know M de Beaumont's to be, which is also capable of examining everything with the utmost rigour, should have persuaded himself that he had known these substances by four of his senses; this is

d'avoir peine a penser qu'il ait parlé serieusement. Ce qui m'en etonne encore plus, c'est qu'il ait refusé de s'en expliquer avec Le Duc de Montmouth [sic],¹² et même avec vous, Monsieur, malgré toutes les instances qu'on aie pû lui en faire.

Ainsi je reviens bien plutot a votre idée, qu'il lui seroit arrivé en veillant quelque chose de semblable à cequi arrivé au commun des hommes pendant le sommeil. Je ne laisserois pourtant pas d'y trouver une difficulté, c'est l'Exemple des noctambules ou somnambules donc j'ay connû quelques uns, et meme de nos proches parens lesquels pendent ce sommeil faisoient une infinité de choses qu'ils n'auroient pas miueux fait étant parfaitement Eveillées, mais lesquels aussi en se reveillant ne s'en souvenoient presque point. Cette difficulté ne m'embarrasse peutetre que par mon peu d'experience en fait de maladies, et ceque vous me faites l'honneur de m'en dire suffiroit pour me faire adopter vôtre sentiment.

Au reste je suis charmé d'apprendre que vous ayés trouvé le remede specifique pour une infirmité si redoubtable, et /fol. 332/ en reflechissant sur la constution de toutes les parties de notre corps, et sur le cours des differents liquides dont il est rempli, je crois sentir la raison qui produit la grande Vertu des forts vomitifs en pareil cas.

Pardonnez moy ces reflexions sur le curieux memoire donc vous daignés me faire part; vous y trouverez du moins et la preuve du cas que je fais de tout cequi vieu de vous, Monsieur, et de l'envie que j'aurois d'en proffiter.

Translation

what astonishes me to the point of having difficulty in believing that he was speaking seriously. What astonishes me still more is that he refused to explain himself to the Duke of Montmouth [sic], and even to you, Sir, in spite of all the entreaties one could make of him.

So I come back rather to your idea, that while he was awake something happened to him which is similar to what happens to most people during sleep. Nevertheless I still find a difficulty, in the case of sleep-walkers, some of whom I have known, and even among our close relatives, who during sleep did an infinity of things which they would not have done better if they had been completely awake, but which when they awoke they could hardly remember at all. This difficulty perhaps only troubles me due to my lack of experience in illnesses, and that which you have done me the honour to tell me is sufficient to make me agree with your view.

For the rest I am fascinated to learn that you have found a specific remedy for so dangerous an infirmity and, reflecting on the construction of all the parts of our body, and on the course of the different fluids of which it is filled, I believe I am conscious of the reason that produces the great virtue of strong emetics in such cases.

Pardon me these reflections on the curious memoir which you have deigned to share with me; at least you will find in them the proof of how much I value everything which comes from you, Sir, and the desire that I have to benefit from it.

¹² This appears to represent a rather careless confusion on Bignon's part as to the identity of the aristocrat involved. See above for the fact that it was John Sheffield, Earl of Mulgrave and Duke of Buckingham.

APPENDIX 3

Passage overlapping with Sloane's account of the witches' sabbat
in his Memoir of Beaumont

This self-contained text from Sloane MS 4069, fol. 129, has been included here because of its overlap with the passage dealing with the extasies of witches in the text below. It will be noted that it gives the exact page reference to the passage from Laguna's edition of Dioscorides that Sloane cites. At the bottom, the text is embellished with an elaborate pen flourish. In red crayon at the top are the words, 'Abbé Bignon hereafter', and at bottom 'Effect of Herban food'.

Le Delire causé par cette Semance differe de delire ordinaire, et s'accorde en quelques facon avec celui qui est produit par l'espece de Stramonium nommé Dutroa, et de Chanvre appellée Banque dans les Indes Orientales. Et ils diffèrent tous de cette sorter de <sommeil &> reverie¹³ produit par la friction avec un certain Onguent secret, dont se servent les Sorcieres (au Rapport de Lacuna dans sa Version et Commentaire sur Dioscoride <p. 421>¹⁴) L'effet de quelle est de les jeter dans un profond Sommeil, et de les faire songer si fortement de voyager dans d'être charroyez <(ou de voler)> dans l'air des lieux fort eloignez et de recontre d'autres de la meme Confrerie diabolique¹⁵ que quand illes s'evillent, illes croient avoir effectivement¹⁶ fait de telles actions extravagantes.¹⁷

Translation

The delirium caused by this seed differs from the ordinary delirium and agrees in certain respects with that produced by the kind of stramonium called Dutroa, and cannabis, called Banque in the East Indies. And they are wholly different from the sort of sleep and reverie produced by rubbing with a certain secret unguent, as used by sorcerers (according to the report of Lacuna in his version and commentary on Dioscorides, p. 421). The effect of which is to throw them into a profound sleep, and to make them dream so strongly of voyaging in a form of transport (or flying) in the air to very distant places where they meet others of the same diabolical fraternity that when they awake they believe they have effectively done these extravagant things.

¹³ Followed by '& sommeil' (and sleep) deleted.

¹⁴ The reference is to Andreas Laguna (ed.), *Pedacio Dioscorides Acerca de la Materia Medicinal, y de la Veneros Mortiferos, Traduzido de langue Griega, en la vulgar Castellana, & ilustrado con clares y substantiales Annotaciones* (Salamanca, 1566), which does indeed deal with stramonium and its effects on p. 421.

¹⁵ The entire passage from 'de voyager' to 'diabolique' (that they voyage... diabolical fraternity) is struck through.

¹⁶ Replaced above line by 'reallement' (really), but this was then deleted.

¹⁷ At this point '(extraordinaires)' (extraordinary) is inserted above the line but deleted.

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TEXTUAL NOTE

The text printed here is taken from Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Fonds Français 22,229, fols. 258–65. This has been collated with Sloane's retained version in British Library Sloane MS 4069, fols. 94–103. Both copies are in the hand of an unidentified amanuensis, the latter with emendations in the hand of Thomas Stack. The final leaf of this version, fol. 103, is blank except for a note on the verso in Stack's hand: 'The fair Copy has several very considerable Corrections throughout the whole, which I had not time to insert in this Rough Draught'. Both versions are written on both rectos and versos, and the original foliation has been indicated by the insertion in the text of 'fol. 258' or 'fol. 258v' within soliduses where each recto or verso of the manuscript text begins (the version in Sloane MS 4069 has for this purpose been denoted 'Sloane'). In the version in Fonds Français 22,229, each bifoliate has an original numeration from (1) to (4), whereas the Sloane version lacks any original foliation. In the Sloane version, fol. 96 is a part sheet with text on the recto only.

All substantive differences between the two texts have been noted in the apparatus, as have insertions and deletions in both texts, though minor differences of spelling, capitalisation and punctuation have been ignored, as have the most trivial deletions in Sloane 4069. Insertions are denoted by the use of <arrowheads>. It is perhaps worth commenting here on the differences between the two versions. One paragraph is moved to a completely different place in the revised version, as noted on p. 11, n. 67, below. In addition, as noted above in the Introduction and below on p. 15, n. 87, a significant section of text concerning popular beliefs was omitted from the final version. Otherwise, the differences are often stylistic, clarifying the sense and making it more idiomatic. Others make it more accurate (as with the correction to the details of the work translated by Robert St Clair cited in the second paragraph), while changes are occasionally made to render the text slightly more formal in tone, as where 'fait ses addresses' (made his addresses) replaces 'fait d'amour' (made love) on p. 6, n. 30 or where 'les commodités ordinaires' (the usual facilities) replaces 'le Pot de Chambre' (a chamber pot) on p. 18, n. 103.

ABBREVIATIONS

BL	British Library
BM	British Museum
BNF	Bibliothèque Nationale de France
Fonds Fr.	Fonds Français
ODNB	<i>Oxford Dictionary of National Biography</i> , eds H.C.G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (61 vols., Oxford, 2004), http://www.oxforddnb.com .

SLOANE'S MEMOIR OF BEAUMONT

Monsieur Jean Beaumont, sorti d'une bonne famille de Somersetshire, avoit resolu d'écrire l'histoire naturelle de ce Comté, à l'exemple de Mons^r Plot pour les Comtés d'Oxford et de Stafford;¹ et apres la publication de ces deux Livres il fit imprimer le Projet de son Ouvrage, et se donna beaucoup de fatigue en cherchant avec soin les Mineraux et autres Fossiles des montagnes de Mendip: dont il envoya quelques Memoires à la Societé Royale.²

Sa connoissance de l'état des differentes couches qui se trouvent dans ces montagnes, le rendit plus capable que la plus part des hommes d'en tirer des raisonnemens contre l'opinion de M^r Burnet dans sa Theorie de la Terre.³ Or cet auteur avoit amplifié, et essaié de rendre probables, les opinions qui avoient été premierement proposées par un Ethiopien dans un Livre intitulé: *Della Rhetorica degli Antichi*, publié a Venise l'an 1562. 4^o par un grand homme de son tems nommé Francesco Patritio:⁴ et cependant Mons^r Burnet desavoue en

Translation

Mr John Beaumont, who came from a good family from Somersetshire, had resolved to write the natural history of this county, following Mr Plot's example for the counties of Oxford and Stafford. After these two books [by Plot] had been published, he [Mr Beaumont] had the prospectus of his work printed, and put great effort into carefully searching for minerals and other fossils from the Mendip hills, on which he sent several reports to the Royal Society.

His knowledge about the state of the different strata found in these hills made him more capable than most of coming up with arguments that contradicted the opinion of Mr Burnet in his *Theory of the Earth*. Now this author [Burnet] had developed and tried to lend weight to arguments that had first been put forward by an Ethiopian, in a book entitled *Of the Rhetoric of the Ancients*, published in Venice in the year 1562, 4^o, by a great man of the era named Francesco Patritio, and nevertheless Mr Burnet denies

¹ A reference to the influential *Natural History of Oxfordshire* (1677) and *Natural History of Staffordshire* (1686) by Robert Plot (1640-96), first curator of the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford. At the start of this phrase, Sloane 4069 denotes 'following' by 'suivant' instead of 'à'.

² For the prospectus, see Introduction. For a recent account of Beaumont's geological work see Barry, 'John Beaumont'.

³ The first part of *The Sacred Theory of the Earth* by Thomas Burnet (c. 1635-1715) was published in Latin in 1681 and translated into English in 1684; the second part followed in 1689. At the start of the next sentence Sloane 4069 has 'Car' (For) instead of 'Or' (Now).

⁴ For a translation of the relevant passage from *Della retorica. Dieci dialoghi* (1562) by the Renaissance savant, Francisco Patrizi (1529-97), see Robert St Clair, *The Abyssinian Philosophy Confuted, or Telluris Theoria Neither Sacred Nor agreeable to Reason* (London, 1697), pp. 88ff., where a cosmogonical theory comparable to Burnet's said to derive from 'the most ancient Annals of *Æthiopia*' is recounted. The words 'a Venise 1562. 4^o' (in Venice 1562. 4^o) are inserted in Sloane 4069.

quelque endroit, si je ne me trompe fort, avoir jamais vû ce Livre.⁵ Mais le Dr. St. Clare en fait mention dans sa traduction angloise du Traité de Rammazini : De Fontium Mutinensium admiranda scaturigine.⁶ /fol. 258v; Sloane fol. 94v/

Le dit Docteur Burnet aiant ensuite⁷ irrité notre Clergé par son *Archaeologia &c.*, on m'a assuré que quelques uns de ces Ecclesiastiques inviterent Mr Beaumont à Londres, a fin de publier un Livre qu'il avoit composé contre la Theorie de Burnet, et que les Libraires avoient refusé d'imprimer auparavant.⁸ Cette meme connoissance qu'il avoit acquise le mit en etat aussi de refuter le Livre de Mons^r Woodward sur cette matiere. A ce propos je me rapelle une expression assez plaisante de Mons^r Flamsteed, qui etant hors d'humour avec ces Theoristes, me dit un jour à l'occasion du Livre de Burnet,⁹ qu'il lui feroit scavoir, qu'il y avoit plus de Sagesse et de Science requise dans la fabrique de l'Univers, qu'a faire

Translation

somewhere, if I am not greatly mistaken, ever having seen this book. But Dr St Clare mentions it in his English translation of the treatise of Rammazini, *Of the Wonderful Springs of the Fountains of Modena.* /fol. 258v/

The aforementioned Dr Burnet having then irritated our clergy with his *Archaeologia &c.*, I was told that some of these ecclesiastics had invited Mr Beaumont to London, in order to publish a book that he had written against Burnet's theory, and which the booksellers had so far refused to publish. This same knowledge that he had acquired also put him in a position to disprove Mr Woodward's book on the same subject. Incidentally, I recall that Mr Flamsteed made a rather amusing remark one day: exasperated by these theorists, he said to me about Burnet's book that he would let him know that much more wisdom and knowledge was required to explain the universe than

⁵ The place where Burnet denied having read Patrizi's work is in a sentence added to chapter 9 of book 2 of the *Sacred Theory* in the 3rd English edition (London, 1697), p. 189 (this reappears in subsequent English, though not Latin, editions). I am grateful to Scott Mandelbrote for his help in this connection. For the next word, 'et' (and), Sloane 4069 has 'le quel livre' (a book which); 2 words later it has 'Le Dr' (Dr) for 'Mons^r' (Mr), and 2 words after that it has 'à ce je croi, nie avoir jamais vû' (as far as I believe, denies ever having seen) instead of 'desavoue en quelque endroit, si je ne me trompe fort avoir jamais vû ce Livre' (denies somewhere, if I am not greatly mistaken, ever having seen this book).

⁶ The title of the work that St Clair translated, and the name of its author, the Italian physician, Bernardino Ramazzini (1633-1714), are inserted in Sloane 4069, replacing 'Gulielmini des Eaux Minerales de Modene' (Gulielminus on the mineral waters of Modena) deleted: this evidently represents a confusion on Sloane's part with the Italian mathematician and hydrologist, Domenico Guglielmini (1655-1710), which he therefore corrected. Prior to this, Sloane 4069 has 'd'un' (of a) for 'du' (of the).

⁷ In Sloane 4069 'aiant ensuite' (having then) replaces 'avoit' (had) deleted. At the start of the sentence it has 'Lorsque' (When) deleted and lacks 'dit' (said) before 'Burnet'; '&c' (etc.) after 'Archaeologia' is there inserted.

⁸ Burnet's *Archaeologiae Philosophicae* was published in 1692. Beaumont's *Considerations on a Book, Entitled 'The Theory of the Earth'* appeared in 1693. His rebuttal of the *Essay toward a Natural History of the Earth* (1695) by John Woodward (1665-1728) appeared in his later work, *Gleanings of Antiquities*, pp. 17ff. In the next sentence, 'aussi' (also) is inserted in Sloane 4069.

⁹ Sloane 4069 here has 'en particulier' (in particular), and 6 words earlier it lacks 'un jour' (a day).

une Periode bien tournée.¹⁰ En effet, des Hypotheses ingenieusement inventées, et ecrites d'un Style elegant, ont été souvent bien recues et adoptées par des Scavans meme¹¹ avec applaudissement pendant quelque tems : mais ensuite après les avoir examinées à loisir par les faits, les experiences et les observations, qui ne peuvent pas tromper,¹² elles ont été rejetées. Je me souviens du tems quand quiconque auroit /Sloane fol. 95/ parlé de l'Attraction, comme on en parle aujourd'hui devant des Philosophes, auroit été aussi peu regardé /fol. 259/ que ceux qui voudroient resoudre toutes les difficultés par les qualités occultes: & cependant cette meme Attraction est encore un peu dans les tenebres.¹³

Mons^r Beaumont croyoit que quelques uns des corps figurés qu'il avoit trouvés, s'étoient crûs et formés¹⁴ dans leurs figures differentes, comme les Plantes croissent sur la surface de la terre. Et cette opinion étoit soutenue par plusieurs historiens naturels de ce tems là, scavoir que ces corps étoient ainsi formés par je ne scai quelle vertu plastique dans la terre: d'autant plus qu'ils ignoroient l'origine de plusieurs de ces corps, jusqu'à ce que¹⁵ de grands hommes, comme

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to create a well-turned period. Indeed, ingeniously conceived, elegantly written hypotheses have often been well received and adopted by the learned, even with acclaim, for a certain period of time. But then, after they have been examined at leisure, according to facts, experiments and observations, which cannot deceive, they have been rejected. I recall a time when anybody who had /Sloane fol. 95/ spoken of the concept of 'attraction' in the same way that one speaks of it before philosophers today would have been just as little regarded /fol. 259/ as those who would like to resolve all difficulties by means of occult qualities. And nevertheless, this same 'attraction' is still a little shadowy.

Mr Beaumont believed that some of the figured bodies that he had found, and which featured in his work, had grown and been formed into different figures in the same way that plants grow on the surface of the earth. And this theory was upheld by several natural historians of the time, that is to say, the theory that these bodies were thus formed by some kind of plastic virtue within the earth. All the more so, since they did

¹⁰ Sloane similarly quotes the Astronomer Royal, John Flamsteed (1644-1719) in the introduction to vol. 2 to his *Voyage to... Jamaica* (London, 1725), p. xiii, in a passage in which Burnet's supposed indebtedness to Patrizi is also mentioned. See further Introduction. In this sentence, Sloane 4069 lacks 'à faire'; in the next, 'ingenieusement' and 'inventées' are there reversed; it also has 'dans un' (in a) instead of 'd'un' and 'gens' (men) before 'Scavans' (learned).

¹¹ Lacking in Sloane 4069.

¹² Sloane 4069 has 'ne trompe point' (do not deceive) instead of 'ne peuvent pas tromper' (cannot deceive), and the next word, 'elles' (they), is there inserted. Later in the sentence it has 'voulent' (want) for 'voudroient' (would like to) and 'points difficiles' (difficult points) for 'difficultés' (difficulties), and 'all' is denoted by 'tous' instead of 'toutes'.

¹³ This passage evidently alludes to Newton: see Introduction.

¹⁴ Sloane 4069 here has 'avoient crûs et s'étoient formés' (had grown and were formed).

¹⁵ Sloane 4069 has 'qui a été decouverte par' (which were discovered by) instead of 'jusqu'à ce que' (until). 8 words later it has 'et qu'on a depuis trouvé avoir été formés dans' (and which were since found to have been formed in) instead of 'ont decouvert qu'ils tirent leur naissance de la' (discovered that they originated from the). After 'Mer' it has 'puisque par' (since by) instead of 'Car en faisant' (by [comparing]), and 7 words later it has 'de' (some) after 'avec' (with).

Stenon, Scylla &c, ont decouvert qu'ils tirent leur naissance de la Mer.¹⁶ Car en faisant une comparaison exacte de ces fossiles avec certains corps tirés de la Mer, on les a trouvés s'accorder jusques dans les plus menues¹⁷ circonstances: c'est pourquoi ils estoient d'avis que ces corps fossiles avoient été porté a terre, ou y avoient été déposés par la retraite de la Mer, ou bien qu'ils avoient été élevés de son fond par des tremblemens de terre ou autres pareilles causes.¹⁸ Ce Mons^r fit un recueil de ces Substances, dont plusieurs sont /Sloane fol. 95v/ tres singulieres: /fol. 259v/ et il m'a fait la grace de les placer dans mon Cabinet.

J'ignore les raisons qui l'ont porté a quitter l'exécution de son Projet¹⁹ (comme d'autres ont fait à l'égard d'autres Comtés, apres y avoir travaillé:) Mais dans le tems que les Secretaires de la Societé Royale avoient discontinué les Trans. Philos. il publia des Memoires hebdomadaux pour les Ingenieux, dans lesquels il rendit compte des Livres qui parurent alors: aussi bien qu'un autre ouvrage en anglois intitulé: L'Etat <present> de l'Univers.²⁰

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not know where many of these bodies came from, until great men such as Stenon, Scylla &c., discovered that they originated from the sea, for by comparing these fossils directly with certain bodies taken from the sea, it has been demonstrated that they are identical, right down to the smallest details. That is why they [the great men] were of the opinion that these fossilised bodies had been brought onto land, or had been deposited there by the ebbing of the sea, or even that they had been raised from its bed by earthquakes or other similar causes. This gentleman [Mr Beaumont] put together a collection of these substances, several of which are /Sloane fol. 95v/ very singular, /fol. 259v/ and he was kind enough to allow me to put them in my cabinet.

I do not know the reasons that drove him [Mr Beaumont] to abandon the execution of his project (just as others have done after having worked on other counties). But at the time when the secretaries of the Royal Society had discontinued the *Philosophical Transactions* he published *Weekly Memorials for the Ingenious*, in which he reviewed the books that were being released: as well publishing another work in English entitled *The Present State of the Universe*.

¹⁶ See the *Prodromus* (1669) by the Danish geologist, Nicolas Steno (1638-86), and *La Vana Speculazione Disingannata dal Senso* (1670) by the Italian artist, Agostino Scilla (1629-1700).

¹⁷ Sloane 4069 has 'dans les circonstances <meme> les plus menues' (even in the smallest details) instead of 'jusque dans les plus menus circonstances: c'est' (right down to the smallest details. That is). Later in the sentence it has 'corps furent' (bodies were) instead of 'corps fossiles avoient été' (fossilised bodies had been) and 'du fond de la mer' (from the bed of the sea) instead of 'de son fond' (from its bed).

¹⁸ Sloane 4069 starts a new paragraph at this point, and instead of 'Ce Mons^r fit un recueil de ces Substances, dont plusieurs' (This gentleman put together a collection of these substances, many of which), it has 'Il recueillit plusieurs de ces Substances, qui' (He collected many of these substances, which).

¹⁹ Sloane 4069 has 'dessein' (enterprise).

²⁰ On *Weekly Memorials for the Ingenious* (1682-3) and *The Present State of the Universe* (1694), see Introduction. In Fonds Fr. 22,229, 'present' (present) replaces 'politique' (political) deleted; it is 'politique' which appears in Sloane 4069. Sloane 4069 has 'que' ([as well] as) instead of 'qu'un autre ouvrage anglois intitulé' ([as well] as another work in English entitled), and has 'a l'égard des Rois, Republiques, &c.' (with regard to Kings, Republics, etc.) after 'l'Univers' (the Universe); within this, 'leurs' (their) is deleted before 'Rois'.

Il estoit, comme il dit lui meme, d'un Temperament sanguin plutot que melancholique, et il avoue en quelque endroit qu'il aimoit²¹ la bouteille; ce que je n'avois observé pendant prés de cinquante ans que j'avois connu, car il y a environ dix ans qu'il mourut agé de plus de nonante ans. Il avoit des Procés, qui lui donnerent beaucoup de peine. D'ailleurs c'estoit un honnête homme²² et tres sincere, de la Religion Catholique Romaine, à laquelle il convertit sa femme; et par là donna tant d'offence a son beau frere (dont son epouse etait veritable heritiere) que ce Monsieur ne legua a sa soeur, femme de M^r Beaumont, qu'une Pension /fol. 260/ annuelle²³ sa vie durant: et par son Testament il laissa le gros de²⁴ tout son bien à un jeune homme fils d'un de ces plus proches parens /Sloane fol. 96/ (par le nom ou titre de l'heritier de ce parent.) Or le Pere etant encore²⁵ en vie lors de la mort du Testateur, ce bien tomba partager à M^r Beaumont par notre *Droit commun*, (suivant la Maxime connue:²⁶ *Nemo est*

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He was, as he said himself, of a sanguine rather than melancholic temperament, and he confesses somewhere that he was fond of the bottle, which I had not observed during almost fifty years that I have known him, since it is about ten years since he died, aged over ninety. He was involved in some lawsuits, which caused him a lot of trouble. Otherwise, he was an honest man and very sincere, of the Roman Catholic religion, to which he converted his wife. This caused such offence to his brother-in-law (whose true heiress was his [Mr Beaumont's] wife) that this gentleman bequeathed his sister, Mr Beaumont's wife, nothing more than an annual pension /fol. 260/ during her lifetime, and in his will he left the bulk of all his fortune to a young man who was the son of a close relative /Sloane fol. 96/ (by the name or title of the heir of this relative). Since the [young man's] father was still alive when the testator died, this fortune went to Mr Beaumont under our common law (following the well-known maxim: *Nemo est hæres*

²¹ Sloane 4069 has 'etoit adonné a' (was dedicated to) instead of 'aimoit' (was fond of). Earlier in the sentence it has 'le' (it) before 'dit' (said), and 9 words after this it has 'plus' (more than) instead of 'prés' (almost). Later in the sentence it has 'je l'ai connu' (that I knew him) instead of 'j'avois connu' (that I have known); 'et' (and) instead of 'car' (since); and 'est mort' (is dead) instead of 'mourut' (died). The words 'et il... nonante ans' (and he... ninety) are there inserted. Sloane here cites Beaumont, *Treatise*, pp. 394, 396.

²² Though translated here simply as 'honest man', Sloane's usage of the concept 'honnête homme', made famous by Molière, implies that Beaumont was a sensible, unpretentious, generous-spirited person. At the start of the sentence 'D'ailleurs' (Otherwise) lacking in Sloane 4069, as is 'tant d'' (such) in the next line.

²³ Instead of the phrase 'que ce... annuelle' (that this... annual pension), Sloane 4069 has 'a tel point qu'il ne lui <legua> qu'une <Pension>' (to such an extent that he only bequeathed her a pension); within this, 'legua' (bequeathed) replaces 'laissa' (left) and 'Pension' (pension) replaces 'Annuité' (annuity) deleted.

²⁴ Sloane 4069 lacks 'il' (he), 'le gros de' (the bulk of) and 'homme' (man). Instead of the latter it has 'Cavalier (par la nom de son heritier)' (gentleman (by the name of his heir)); it then lacks the bracketed phrase that follows, and has 'dont' (of whom) for 'Or' (Since).

²⁵ Lacking in Sloane 4069. Later in the sentence, it has 'son' (his) instead of 'ce' (this) followed by 'le b' deleted, and it denotes 'went' by 'en partage' instead of 'partager'.

²⁶ Sloane 4069 has 'connu du Droit' (known to the law) instead of 'connue' (well-known); 8 words later it lacks 'ou arrêté' (or ruling).

hæres viventis;) mais le jugement ou arrêt donné en sa faveur fut ensuite reversé par la Chambre des Seigneurs,²⁷ qui est le dernier resort en pareils cas; et par là Mr Beaumont fut privé de ce Bien, dont it etoit deja en possession. /Sloane fol. 97; fol. 96v blank/

Voici la maniere dont, a ce²⁸ qu'il me raconte lui meme, il obtint son epouse. Il m'assura²⁹ qu'il etoit visité toutes les nuits par les Fées, avec lesquelles il conversoit; et qu'elles lui conseillerent de faire ses addresses à une Damoiselle soeur du Colonel Speccot, Membre de Parlement pour le Comté de Somerset:³⁰ ce qu'il fit, et l'epousa ensuite. Sur quoi lui ayant dit mon Sentiment, que ce qu'il croioit réel a l'egard des Fées, n'etoit qu'imaginaire, ou un forte impression de Songe: il me repondit qu'il en etoit certain par le temoignage de quatre de ses cinq Sens; et que ce quil avoit veu, oui,³¹ touché et flairé, devoit etre réel; quoiqu'a³² la verité il ne les eut jamais goutées. Il /fol. 260v/ m'assura aussi que cette Visitation (comme il l'appellait) cessa et retourna plusieurs fois; et se

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viventis, 'No-one is heir to a living person'). However, the judgement or ruling in his [Mr Beaumont's] favour was then reversed by the House of Lords, which is the court of last resort in such a case, and so Mr Beaumont was deprived of this fortune, of which he was already in possession. /Sloane fol. 97; fol. 96v blank/

This is the way in which, according to what he told me himself, he acquired his wife: he told me that he was visited every night by fairies, with whom he conversed, and that they advised him to make his addresses to the maiden sister of Colonel Speccot, Member of Parliament for the county of Somerset. He did so, and he then married her. Upon which I told him what I thought: that what he believed to be real with regard to the fairies was only imaginary, or a strong impression of a dream. He replied to me that he was certain of it [that he had conversations with fairies], thanks to the evidence provided by four of his five senses, and that what he had seen, heard, touched and smelt must be real, even though in truth he had never tasted them. He /fol. 260v/ also told me that this visitation (as he called it) came and went several times and it ended on the

²⁷ Inserted in Sloane 4069, replacing 'My Lords' deleted; 'qui est... pareils' (which is... such) is there in brackets and 'cas' (case) and 'pareils' (such a) are in reverse order. Later in the sentence it has 'perdit' (lost) instead of 'fut privé de' (was deprived of). For references concerning these legal disputes with the Long family and others, see Introduction.

²⁸ 'dont, a ce' (which, according to what) lacking in Sloane 4069; 3 words later 'raconte' (told) is there spelled 'racconta', and 6 words later it has 'qu'il (that he) for 'il' (he).

²⁹ Sloane 4069 has 'me dit' (told me). 9 words later 'Fées' (fairies) there follows an attempted version of the same word which deleted.

³⁰ John Speccot (1665-1705), father of Beaumont's wife, Dorothy, was in fact MP successively for Newport and Cornwall. See B.W. Henning, *The House of Commons 1660-90* (3 vols., London, 1983), vol. 3, p. 462, and Eveline Cruikshanks, Stuart Handley and D.W. Hayton, *The House of Commons 1690-1715* (5 vols., London, 2002), vol. 5, pp. 531-2. In Sloane 4069, 'ses addresses' (his addresses) is inserted, replacing 'd'amour' (love) deleted. At the start of the next sentence 'Sur quoi' (Upon which) is lacking in Sloane 4069, as is 'l'egard des Fées' (with regard to the fairies) a few words later.

³¹ Sloane 4069 has 'entendu' (heard), and 'senti' (felt) for 'flairé' (smelt).

³² Sloane 4069 has "qu'a' (that); 6 words later it has 'avoit pas' (had not) for 'eut jamais' (had never). At the end of the sentence 'goutées' (tasted) is there spelled 'gouté'.

termina à l'occasion d'un vomissement violent avec Diarrhée, don't il fut³³ saisi, et qui dura un tems considerable.

Ayant excité la Curiosité de³⁴ quelques personnes distinguées tant par la naissance, que par l'esprit et le savoir en³⁵ tout genre d'erudition, par la mention de ce Cas extraordinaire; je conviai Mons^r Beaumont à diner avec ces Messieurs: où la³⁶ Conversation commença par des Remarques critiques sur les fameux Poetes tant anciens que /Sloane fol. 97v/ modernes de toutes les Nations; et³⁷ en cette matiere il etala tant d'erudition, qu'il donna beaucoup de plaisir a toute la Compagnie. Mais le Discours etant tourné sur les Actions avec les Esprits, il raconta beaucoup de ces Conversations avec eux sans reserve. Sur quoi un Cavalier de la Compagnie (le Duc de Buckingham, a ce que je croi³⁸) lui dit; Je vois bien, Monsieur, que vous etes une³⁹ personne de grande curiosité; et je ne doute pas qu'en recontrant⁴⁰ un voyageur venu d'un pais fort éloigné⁴¹ et

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occasion of a violent bout of vomiting, with diarrhoea, which he was seized with and which lasted a considerable time.

Having aroused the curiosity of several persons who were distinguished both by birth and by their liveliness of mind and knowledge in every genre of erudition, by mentioning this extraordinary case, I invited Mr Beaumont to dine with these gentlemen, where the conversation started with critical remarks about famous poets, both ancient and /Sloane fol. 97v/ modern, from all nations. And on this matter he displayed such erudition that he provided much enjoyment for all of the company. But when the conversation turned to actions with spirits, he related many of these conversations he had had with them without reserve. Whereupon a gentleman in the group (the Duke of Buckingham, I believe) said to him, 'I can well see, Sir, that you are a person of great curiosity, and I do not doubt that on meeting a traveller from a far

³³ Sloane 4069 has 'avoit été' (had been) instead of 'fut' (was).

³⁴ 'excité la Curiosité de' (aroused the curiosity of) inserted in Sloane 4069, replacing 'fait mention de ce cas extraordinaire à' (mentioned this extraordinary case to) deleted, as is 'la' (the) 6 words later, replacing 'leur' (their) deleted.

³⁵ Sloane 4069 has 'dans' (in); 3 words later it has 'de Literature' (of literature) instead of 'd'erudition' (of erudition).

³⁶ Followed by 'premier partie de la' (first part of the) deleted in Sloane 4069. Before 'fameux', (famous) 'P' is deleted.

³⁷ Followed by 'sur ce sujet' (on this subject) deleted in Sloane 4069.

³⁸ I.e. John Sheffield, 3rd Earl of Mulgrave and from 1703 1st Duke of Buckingham and Normanby (1647-1721). See Introduction. In Sloane 4069, 'le' (the) is preceded by 'je crois que c'etoit' (I believe it was), and it lacks 'a ce que je crois' (I believe) after the name. It also lacks 'Sur quoi' (Whereupon) at the start of the sentence.

³⁹ Sloane 4069 has 'etoit persuadé qu'il (Monsieur Beaumont)' (he was persuaded that he (Mr Beaumont)) instead of 'Je vois... une' (I can well see... a), and 'beaucoup de' (much) instead of 'grande' (great).

⁴⁰ Sloane 4069 has 'que s'il avoit rencontre' (that if he had met) instead of 'je ne doute pas qu'en recontrant' (I do not doubt that on meeting) and 'voyageur venu' (traveller from) is altered from 'voyage revenu' (returned from a journey).

⁴¹ Sloane 4069 lacks 'et inconnu' (and unknown) and continues 'il auroit souhaité d'etre informe' (he would have wished to be told) instead of 'souhaiteriez etre informe' (would wish to be told).

inconnu, vous souhaiteriez être informé des Mœurs des Habitans, de leurs Viandes, Boissons, Coutumes, manières de propagation &c: vous nous ferés donc grand plaisir de nous donner les reponses des Fées⁴² a ces particularités. Mons^r Beaumont tint silence pendant quelque tems, et repondit ensuite⁴³ qu'il ne s'étoit point /fol. 261/ informé de ces sortes de choses. A quoi le Duc repliqua, qu'il lui demandoit pardon, s'il étoit d'avis qu'il ne faisoit que rever ou songer de ces Conversations.⁴⁴

Pour moi j'ai traité plusieurs sortes de desordres de l'esprit ou du cerveau, et je croi que quelques uns en viennent de ce que ces gens songent (*somniant*)⁴⁵ lorsqu'ils sont éveillés: d'ou il devient necessaire de leur faire des Evacuations tres fortes, puissantes et penibles,⁴⁶ a fin de les faire revenir, lorsque les Secousses <ordinaire> ne le peuvent pas faire. /Sloane fol. 98/

M. Beaumont nous dit dans la relation de ses Actions avec les Esprits, qu'il ne s'est pas servi de Conjurations pour les faire paroître:⁴⁷ (et quand il s'en fut servi, je doute fort s'ils lui eussent obeis.) Car quoique le Docteur Dee, grand

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away and unknown country, you would wish to be told about the inhabitants' customs, about their food, drink, habits, methods of procreation and so on. You will thus do us a great service by giving us the fairies' replies to these questions'. Mr Beaumont remained silent for some time, and replied then that he was not /fol. 261/ at all informed about these kinds of things. To which the Duke replied that he begged his pardon if he was of the opinion that he [Mr Beaumont] was only dreaming up or dreaming of these conversations.

As for me, I have treated several kinds of disorders of the mind or the brain and I believe that some of them stemmed from the fact that these people dream (*somniant*) while awake: [a state] from which it becomes necessary to bring them back, by giving them very strong, powerful and harsh purges when ordinary shaking cannot do it. (Sloane fol. 98)

Mr Beaumont told us, in the account of his actions with spirits, that he did not use conjurations to make them appear (and if he had used them, I very much doubt that they [the spirits] would have obeyed him). For although Dr Dee – a great man,

⁴² Sloane 4069 has 'et qu'il serait fort aise d'apprendre leurs reponses' (and that he would be greatly pleased to learn of their replies) for 'vous nous ferés... des Fées' (You would thus do us... the fairies' replies).

⁴³ Sloane 4069 reverses the order of 'repondit' (replied) and 'ensuite' (then). At the start of the next sentence it has 'Sur' (Upon) instead of 'A' (To).

⁴⁴ In the translation we have tried to differentiate Sloane's usage of the words 'rever' and 'songer', but it is not entirely clear exactly what he intended to imply by it.

⁴⁵ In Sloane 4069, 'que ces gens' (that these people) is inserted, replacing 'qu'ils' (that they), and 'revent' (dream) appears instead of 'songent (*somniant*)' (dream (*somniant*)). 4 words later, 'ce qui' (which [it]) is deleted before 'd'ou' (from which).

⁴⁶ 'douleureuses' (painful) in Sloane 4069. 8 words later it has 'des' (which requires that the direct article 'the' be omitted in English) instead of 'les' (the), and later in the sentence it has 'les' (them) instead of 'le' (it) and 'eveiller' (wake) instead of 'faire' (do).

⁴⁷ See Beaumont, *Treatise*, p. 394. In this sentence, Sloane 4069 has 'Compellations' (compellations) for 'Conjurations' (conjurations) and 'venir' (come) for 'paroître' (appear).

homme d'ailleurs,⁴⁸ eut crû qu'il avoit des actions grandes et reelles avec les Esprits: cependant je ne me souviens pas d'avoir lû qu'il eut jamais oui, vû, flairé,⁴⁹ ou touché ces Esprits. Mais après les Invocations &c Kelly son Assistant⁵⁰ en recevoit des reponses douces (c'est à dire dans leur language, telles qu'elles ne s'entendoient que par Kelly) qu'il racontoit ensuite au Docteur Dee:⁵¹ dont les Manuscrits orginaux, a ce que je croix, ou du moins des copies autentiques, sont dans ma bibliotheque.⁵²

Souffrés, Monsieur, qu'a cette occasion je vous⁵³ raconte une chose un peu divertissante, qui arriva ici /fol. 261v/ il y a plusieurs années. Un⁵⁴ Pretre de l'Eglise de Rome, un Ministre Presbyterien et un Procureur Banqueroutier, qui avoient peu d'argent et beaucoup de Foi a ces sciences mystiques, s'associerent ensemble et louerent⁵⁵ une grande maison a Clerkenwell (un des fauxbourgs de Londres) a cent livres Sterling de rente; afin de decouvrir des tresors cachés par

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incidentally – believed that he had great and real actions with spirits, I do not recall having read that he had ever heard, seen, smelt or touched these spirits. But after the invocations &c., Kelly, his assistant, received soft replies (that is to say, in their language, which nobody but Kelly understood), which he recounted afterwards to Dr Dee. The original manuscripts relating to this, as far as I know, or authentic copies at least, are in my library.

Allow me Sir, at this point, to tell you about something rather entertaining that happened here /fol. 261v/ several years ago. A Catholic priest, a Presbyterian minister and a bankrupt prosecutor, who had little money and a lot of faith in these mystic sciences, joined forces and rented a large house in Clerkenwell (one of the suburbs of London) for one hundred pounds sterling, in order to discover hidden treasures using

⁴⁸ Sloane 4069 has 'qui etoit d'ailleurs grand homme' (who was, incidentally, a great man).

⁴⁹ Sloane 4069 has 'entendu' (heard) for 'jamais oui' (ever heard), and 'senti' (smelt) for 'flairé' (smelt). 5 words later 'Mais apres' (But after) there replaces 'qu'apres' (that after).

⁵⁰ Blank in Sloane 4069, which has 'avoit' (had) for 'recevoit' (received), replacing 'qua' (just) deleted.

⁵¹ On the celebrated séances carried out at the behest of the Elizabethan magus, John Dee (1527-1608), by his skryer, Edward Kelly (1555-95), see especially Deborah Harkness, *John Dee's Conversations with Angels* (Cambridge, 1999). See also above, p. xiii, n. 19. Sloane 4069 lacks 'ensuite' (afterwards), and at the end of the bracketed phrase 'Kelly' is there followed by 'lui meme' (himself).

⁵² I.e., Sloane MSS 3188, 3191. See Introduction. In this sentence, 'original' (original – singular) is altered to 'originaux' (original – plural) in Sloane 4069, and 'ou du moins des copies autentiques' (or authentic copies, at least) is there in brackets.

⁵³ In Sloane 4069 'Monsieur' (Sir) is inserted, 'qu'a' ('that at' – use of the French subjunctive not rendered in English translation) and 'vous' (you) are lacking and 'je' (I) is preceded by 'que' (again, a use of the French subjunctive not rendered in English translation).

⁵⁴ Preceded by 'C'est q'un' (It is that a) in Sloane 4069. Later in the sentence, 'Banqueroutier' (bankrupt) and 'avoient peu d'argent et' (had little money and) are there inserted; Sloane 4069 then has 'ajoutoient' (put) before 'beaucoup' (a lot).

⁵⁵ Sloane 4069 has 'avoient loué' (had rented) instead of 's'associerent ensemble et louerent' (joined forces and rented).

ces sortes de pratiques. Comme la rente n'étoit pas payé à terme, le Propriétaire voulant se saisir d'une partie⁵⁶ des Meubles pour se payer, n'y trouva pas son compte. Il trouva a la verité dans une Chambre /Sloane fol. 98v/ haute sur une Table, une copie anglois du Livre intitulé *Clavicula Salomonis* tres bien ecrite, qui contenoit des Prieres devotes à chaque Esprit des differens quartiers du Monde, les conjurant par leurs⁵⁷ noms de paroître et decouvrir les Tresors ou autres choses qu'ils demandoient à⁵⁸ scavoir. La Table etoit placée au milieu de la Chambre, dont le plancher⁵⁹ etoit couvert de Satin blanc, sur lesquels on avoit tracé plusiers Cercles concentriques: et entre ces Cercles etoient les Noms de Dieu en plusiers langues (orientales sur tout) pour empecher que les Esprits n'approchassent pas trop, et ne nuisissent pas au Magicien,⁶⁰ qui etoit assis au centre ou milieu, portant une paire de Pantoufles consacrés et armés de Croix.⁶¹ Mais enfin tous les meubles ne furent évalués qu'a sept Livres Sterling: don't j'ay payé une partie pour les Manuscrits &c⁶² Cette relation m'a été faite par celui qui acheta les meubles /fol. 262/

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these sorts of practices. As the rent was not paid on time, the owner wanted to take part of the furniture to pay himself, but did not find enough there to cover his account. In fact, he found in an upper room, /Sloane fol. 98v/ on a table, a very well-written English copy of a book entitled *Clavicula Salomonis*, which contained prayers dedicated to each spirit from the different parts of the world, conjuring them by their names to appear and reveal the treasures or other things that they [the people saying the prayers] wished to know. The table was positioned at the centre of the room, the floor of which was covered in white satin, on which someone had traced several concentric circles, and between these circles the names of God were written in several languages (mainly oriental ones) to prevent the spirits coming too close and harming the magician, who was sat at the centre or in the middle, wearing a pair of slippers that were blessed and bore a cross. But in the end, all of the furniture was only valued at seven pounds sterling, part of which I paid for the manuscripts &c. I was told this story by the person who bought the furniture. /fol. 262/

⁵⁶ Sloane 4069 has 'quantite suffisante' (sufficient quantity). In the next sentence 'a la verité' (in fact) is there inserted.

⁵⁷ Sloane 4069 lacks 'leurs' (their) and instead has 'chacun par son nom' (each of them by their name). Earlier in the sentence 'differens' is there spelled 'different'.

⁵⁸ Sloane 4069 instead has 'souhaittoient de' (wished to).

⁵⁹ Sloane 4069 has 'qui' (which) instead of 'dont le plancher' (the floor of which), which replaces 'et' (and) deleted. 7 words later it has 'lequel etoient' (on which were) instead of 'lequels on avoit' (on which someone had).

⁶⁰ Sloane 4069 has 'Sorcier' (sorcerer).

⁶¹ Sloane 4069 lacks 'armés' (bore) and 'et' (and) is deleted; instead it has 'avec' (with) before 'de Croix' (a cross) and 'travaillés dessus' (worked onto them) after it. It also lacks 'enfin' (in the end) in the next sentence and has 'livres' (books) for 'Manuscrits &c' (manuscripts etc.).

⁶² For what may be the copy of the *Clavicula Salomonis* involved, see Introduction. Both in format and presentation, MS Sloane 2731 would match the description given here. Otherwise, nothing is know of this episode or the one that follows.

Ce n'est pas la seule fois qu'on a été trompé à l'égard des trésors cachés.⁶³ Il y a du tems que quelques personnes de consideration, ayant eu information d'un trésor enseveli sous⁶⁴ des vieux batimens dans le bourg de Southwark, firent contract avec les Commissaires des finances, peur en avoir une certaine partie. Mais s'y etant rendus,⁶⁵ pour /Sloane fol. 99/ le deterrer, ils furent attaqué et presque dechirés par un gros Chien qu'on y avoit placé pour garder quelques Marchandises⁶⁶ sur la surface et non pas dans les entrailles de la terre.

⁶⁷Dans la vie de l'Astrologue Guillaume Lilly, ecrite par lui meme, il raconte que lui et quelques associés ayant eu notice d'un trésor enterré dans les Cloîtres de l'Abbaie de Westminster, obtinrent la permission du Doyen et Chapitre de le deterrer, a condition de le partager dans une certaine proportion. Ils le cherchant cependant en vain, n'y trouvant⁶⁸ que des Cercueils contenant des

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This is not the only time that people have been deceived regarding hidden treasure. Some time ago, several persons of high standing, having received information about treasure buried below old buildings in the borough of Southwark, made a contract with the Commissioners of the Treasury to have a certain proportion of it. But having arrived there to /Sloane fol. 99/ dig it up, they were attacked and almost ripped to shreds by a large dog that had been stationed there to guard some goods at the surface and not in the bowels of the earth.

In the astrologer William Lilly's account of his life, which he wrote himself, he relates that he and several acquaintances, having received information about treasure buried in the cloisters of Westminster Abbey, obtained permission from the Dean and Chapter to dig it up, on condition that they share a certain proportion of it. They searched for it,

⁶³ Followed in Sloane 4069 by: ', en voici une autre preuve' (and here is further evidence). A mark in Sloane 4069, matching a deleted one on fol. 99, may imply that the story about Lilly was originally going to be placed here.

⁶⁴ Sloane 4069 has 'caché dans' (hidden in) instead of 'enseveli sous' (buried below).

⁶⁵ Sloane 4069 has 'allés' (gone). 7 words later, 'et presque dechirés' (and almost ripped to shreds) is there inserted, and 5 words after that 'qu'on' (which [had been]) appears as 'qui' (which), with 'été' (been) after 'avoit' (had).

⁶⁶ Sloane 4069 has 'Meubles' (furniture/property).

⁶⁷ In Sloane 4069, this entire passage appears later, on fols. 99v-100. See below. In this sentence, Sloane 4069 has 'fait mention de la notice qu'il eut avec quelques uns de ses confreres' (mentions the information that he and some of his colleagues had) instead of 'raconte que lui et quelques associés ayant eu notice d'un trésor' (relates that he and several acquaintances, having received information about treasure); 2 words later it has 'caché' (hidden) for 'enterré' (buried).

⁶⁸ Sloane 4069 has 'et de l'accommodement, <qu'ils firent> [replacing 'fait' (made) deleted] avec le Doyen & Chapitre pour /Sloane fol. 100/ une partie de ce Trésor. Apres d'avoir checher ils ne trouverent' (and the agreement that they made with the Dean and Chapter for a proportion of this treasure. After having searched they only found) instead of 'obtinrent la permission du Doyen et Chapitre de le deterrer, a condition de le partager dans une certaine proportion. Ils se cherchant cependant en vain, n'y trouvant' (obtained permission from the Dean and Chapter to dig it up, on condition that they share a certain proportion of it. They searched, however, in vain, only finding).

Cadavres; mais sur le point de s'en retourner,⁶⁹ il s'éleva une tempête si furieuse, qu'ils craignoient d'être ensevelis sous les ruines de l'Abbaie: ce qu'ils s'imaginèrent être arrivé, pour n'avoir pas fait leurs Fumigations de la bonne manière.⁷⁰

Peut-être ne sera-t-il pas hors de propos de conter ici une histoire, que j'ai eue du Capt^{ne} Charles Hatton /fol. 262v/ témoin oculaire du fait.⁷¹ L'Empereur de Maroc ayant envoyé un Ambassadeur à Londres du temps de Charles second,⁷² il fut entretenu par plusieurs gens de considération, sur tout ceux de la Cour, et entre autres par Mons^r Elie Ashmole, qui demouroit alors dans une mansion qu'il avoit achetée à South-Lambeth (village auprès de Londres) la quelle appartenoit autrefois au Docteur Forman, grand Proficient dans les⁷³ sciences

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however, in vain, only finding coffins containing corpses; but when they were about to turn back, a storm blew up, so ferocious they feared they would be buried under the ruins of the Abbey. They imagined that this had happened because they had not carried out their fumigations in the proper manner.

Perhaps it would not be out of place to recount a story here that I heard from Captain Charles Hatton, /fol. 262v/ who was an eyewitness to what happened. The Emperor of Morocco having sent an ambassador to London at the time of Charles II, he [the ambassador] was entertained by several persons of high regard, above all those from the court, including Mr Elias Ashmole, who at the time lived in a house that he had bought in South Lambeth (a village close to London) which previously belonged to Dr Forman, a great expert in the occult sciences who had acquired such a reputation for his

⁶⁹ Sloane 4069 has 'en s'en allant' (when they were leaving) instead of 'sur le point de s'en retourner' (when they were about to turn back).

⁷⁰ An account of this episode, which took place in 1634, does indeed appear in the autobiography of the astrologer, William Lilly (1602-81), *Mr William Lilly's History of his Life and Times* (London, 1715), pp. 32-3, though the details differ slightly, not least in that Lilly attributed the failure to the size of the party and the fact that some of those present were sceptical. In this sentence, Sloane 4069 has 'lui et ses confreres crurent' (he and his colleagues believed) instead of 'ils s'imaginèrent' (they imagined), and 'comme il les falloit faire' (as they should have) instead of 'de la bonne manière' (in the proper manner).

⁷¹ Charles Hatton, brother of Christopher Hatton, Viscount Hatton (1632-1706), was sometime Governor of Guernsey and later a captain in Lord Huntingdon's regiment. He wrote many of the letters in E.M. Thompson (ed.), *Correspondence of the Family of Hatton* (2 vols., Camden Society, 1878), including those referring to the antiquary and occultist, Elias Ashmole (1617-92). In this sentence, Sloane 4069 has 'le' (the) instead of 'j'ai eue du' (I heard from) and has after 'Hatton': '(une de la compagnie susdite [deleted], a ce que je crois <me reconta>. Lorsque du temps de Charles II [deleted]' (one of the company mentioned above, I believe) told me. During the time of Charles II), instead of 'témoin oculaire du fait' (who was an eyewitness to what happened). It is unfortunately unclear which of the episodes described above is here referred to.

⁷² For the visit of the Moroccan ambassador, Muhammad ibn Haddu, in 1682, see Introduction. In this sentence, 'ayant' (having) is inserted in Sloane 4069; 'Charles second' is there followed by 'plusieurs' (many) deleted, and 'de considération' (of high regard) is lacking 7 words later.

⁷³ Sloane 4069 has 'Amateur des' (amateur of the) instead of 'Proficient dans les' (a great expert in the), and it has the whole phrase, 'grand... occultes' (great... occult sciences) in brackets. 3 words later it lacks 'acquis' (acquired), and 5 words after that it has 'profondes' (deep) for 'hautes' (vast).

occultes, qui avoit acquis tant de reputation pour ses hautes connoissances, qu'il fut consulté comme un Oracle <meme> par plusieurs Ministres d'Etat de la Reine Elizabeth.⁷⁴ J'ai acheté plusieurs de ses Livres, mais j'en ai manqué un, qui me parut traiter de la⁷⁵ Necromancie, & qui meritoit d'être procuré, pour en voir la folie. Car les questions y estoient resolves à la maniere du Juge Brideye de Rabelais, par le sort des Dez.⁷⁶ Cette maison appartient ensuite à Jean Tradescant /Sloane fol. 99v/ fameux Jardiniere:⁷⁷ et Mr Ashmole y mena l'Ambassadeur susdit pour lui montrer quelques Arbres des Indes Occidentales et d'autres pais: qui estoient fort rares par tout ailleurs, et que Mons^r Tradescant y avoit plantés. L'Ambassadeur remarqua notre Laiteron (Sonchus)⁷⁸ ordinaire, dont il se fit faire une Salade, comme il avoit accoutumé de faire dans son pais. Mr Ashmole lui montra dans une petite Tour les Instrumens et les Livres dont se servoient le Docteur Dee et le Chevalier Edouard Kelly dans leurs /fol. 263/

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vast knowledge that he was consulted as an oracle, even by several of Queen Elizabeth's ministers of state. I have bought several of his books, but there is one I have not managed to obtain, which seemed to me to deal with necromancy, and which would be worth procuring to see the madness contained within it. For the questions therein were resolved in the manner of Rabelais' Judge Brideye: by a throw of the dice. This house later belonged to John Tradescant, /Sloane fol. 99v/ a famous gardener, and Mr Ashmole took the aforementioned ambassador there to show him some trees from the West Indies and other countries, which happened to be extremely rare, and which Mr Tradescant had planted there. The ambassador noticed our common milkweed (*sonchus*), from which he had a salad made, as he had become accustomed to doing in his country. Mr Ashmole showed him, in a small turret, the instruments and the books used by Dr Dee and the gentleman Edward Kelly in their /fol. 263/ actions with spirits

⁷⁴ On the Elizabethan astrological physician, Simon Forman (1552-1611), see especially Lauren Kassell, *Medicine and Magic in Elizabethan London* (Oxford, 2005). However, although both Forman and Ashmole lived in Lambeth, the idea that Ashmole lived in what had formerly been Forman's house seems to be a misunderstanding on Sloane's part. In this sentence, Sloane 4069 lacks 'comme un Oracle <meme>' (as an oracle, even), and adjacent to 'Ministres d'Etat' (ministers of state) 'politiciens' (politicians) is added above the line.

⁷⁵ Sloane 4069 has 'etre de' (to be about) instead of 'traiter de la' (to deal with), and 'Necromantie' is spelled thus.

⁷⁶ Sloane refers to the method of deciding cases by Judge Bridoye, or Bridlegoose, in book 3, chs. 39-42, of *Gargantua and Pantagruel* (1532 et seq.) by the French writer François Rabelais (?1494-1553). For the manuscript by Forman to which Sloane refers, see Introduction. After 'Rabelais', Sloane 4069 has the following struck through passage: 'qui aiant d'abord brulé les Registres des procedés des cours inferieures de justice, et ayant ecouté les deux parties [altered in composition], sans etre capable de decider avec justice; se retira dans sa chambre, et determina le Procés' (who, having first of all burnt the records of procedure of the lower courts of justice, and having listened to the two parties, without being capable of deciding by just means, retired to his chamber and determined the outcome of the trial).

⁷⁷ On Ashmole's relations with John Tradescant (1608-62) and his family, and his inheritance of the Tradescants' collection and their house at Lambeth, see Josten, *Elias Ashmole*, passim. In the following line, 'Arbres' (trees) replaces 'Plantes rares' (rare plants) deleted in Sloane 4069.

⁷⁸ 'Laiteron' (milkweed) and 'Sonchus' (*sonchus*) are reversed in Sloane 4069.

actions avec l'Esprits (une partie desquelles a été publiée par Casaubon.)⁷⁹ Sur quoi l'Ambassadeur pria M^r Ashmole de lui faire voir et parler à quelques uns de ces Esprits, sur quelques affaires qui se passoient alors dans sons pais. M^r Ashmole s'en excusa, pour eviter, dit-il,⁸⁰ les desordres qu'ils pourroient causer. Alors l'Ambassadeur le pria de lui enseigner au moins⁸¹ la maniere de proceder pour les faire paroître, et qu'il hazarderoit de souffrir les maux qui en pourroient arriver: mais il n'a jamais pu le lui persuader; quoiqu'il offrit de se convertir lui meme et plusieurs de ses Compatriotes au Christianisme, et de renoncer à un etablissement considerable chez lui, si M^r Ashmole vouloit lui montre ces Esprits.⁸²

Il y a des moyens qu'on employe pour jeter les gens dans une certaine espece⁸³ de Sommeil qu'ils appellent Extases; dont Lacuna fait mention dans sa Traduction espagnole de Dioscoride, et qu'on croit entre par quelque espece de

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(some of which have been published by Casaubon). Upon which the ambassador asked Mr Ashmole to make some of these spirits appear so that he could speak to them about some events that were taking place in his country at the time. Mr Ashmole declined, in order to avoid, he said, the disturbances that they might cause. So the ambassador asked him at least to show him how to make them appear, saying that he would risk the trouble that it could cause, but he was never able to persuade him [Mr Ashmole], even though he offered to convert himself and several of his fellow countrymen to Christianity and relinquish substantial business interests in his home country, if Mr Ashmole would only show him these spirits.

There are methods that one can use to put people into a certain kind of sleep known as ecstasies, which Lacuna mentions in his Spanish translation of Dioscorides, and which

⁷⁹ For Dee and Kelly, see above. Many of the records of their séances had been published by the scholar and divine, Meric Casaubon (1599-1671), as *A True & Faithful Relation of what passed for many Yeers between Dr John Dee and Some Spirits* (London, 1659). His motives in doing so were complex, since he was committed to the reality of demonic intervention in the world as well as being aware of the power of delusion, but he undoubtedly hoped to discredit such beliefs. See Richard Serjeantson in ODNB.

⁸⁰ Inserted in Sloane 4069.

⁸¹ Sloane 4069 lacks 'au moins' (at least) and 'pour les faire paroître' (to make them appear); 4 words later it has 'd'encourir' (bear) instead of 'de souffrir' (risk).

⁸² Sloane 4069 lacks the entire passage, 'quoiqu'il offrit... ces Esprits' (even though he offered... these spirits) and instead has: 'quoique a condition de se faire Chretien & de renoncer a un etablissement considerable chez lui s'il le faisant' (not even if he were to become Christian and relinquish substantial business interests in his home country if he did so). This sentence is inserted after composition at the end of the paragraph. It is at this point that Sloane 4069 has the paragraph about Lilly that appears on fol. 262 in Fonds Fr. 22229.

⁸³ Sloane 4069 has 'le' (the) instead of 'une certaine espece de' (a certain kind of), and 'ou, commes ils l'appellent en' (or into ecstasies, as they are known) instead of 'qu'ils appellent' (known as). Later in the sentence 'quelque' (kind) is there in the plural.

Solanum, employé par les Sorcieres de Majorque et du voisinage de Barcelone.⁸⁴ Quoiqu'il en soit, on se sert de Tabac, Semences de Dutroa qui est une espece de Strammonium, et d'autres vegetaux semblables,⁸⁵ pour faire tomber les gens en Sommeil, durant lequel s'imaginans etre eveillés, ils ont de /fol. 263v/ fortes Impressions ou Songes qu'ils sont presens aux Assemblées Sabbatiques: ce qu'ensuite ils croient etre vrai,⁸⁶ et la racontent comme une realité, souvent à leur proper destruction;⁸⁷ car cette imagination derangée a été la cause de la condamnation d'un nombre de personnes dans differens pais, de l'Europe sur tout, jusques a quelques centaines par un seul Juge.

Monsieur le Docteur Tyson, qui etoit grand Anatomiste, et Medecin de notre Hopital de Bethleem (semblable aux petites maisons de Paris) pendant

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is believed to be brought about by some kind of solanum, which is employed by the sorcerers from Mallorca and the vicinity of Barcelona. Anyway, one uses tobacco, seeds of the datura plant, which is a kind of stramonium, and other similar plants to make people fall into a slumber, during which they imagine that they are awake. They have /fol. 263v/ a strong impression or dream of being present at witches' sabbats and they then believe this to be genuine, and they speak of it as a reality, often to their own destruction; since these deranged imaginings have caused a number of persons in different countries, above all from Europe, to be condemned – in some cases, as many as several hundred by a single judge.

Dr Tyson, who was a great anatomist, and for many years a doctor at our Bethlehem Hospital (similar to the madhouses in Paris), told me that dissections only showed a

⁸⁴ A reference to the edition of the ancient medical author, Dioscorides, by the Spanish medical humanist, Andreas Laguna (1499-1559): for an overlapping passage in which Sloane gives the exact page reference to Laguna's book, see above, Appendix 3. In this sentence, Sloane 4069 has 'mis en pratique' (practised) instead of 'employé' (employed). After 'Sorcieres' (sorcerers) it has 'dans le voisinage de Majorque <ou> de Barcelone' (in the vicinity of Mallorca or of Barcelona); in this sentence, the inserted 'ou' replaces 'et' (and) deleted.

⁸⁵ Sloane 4069 has 'pareils' (similar). 10 words later it has 's'imaginant' (imagine) for 's'imaginans' (imagine).

⁸⁶ Sloane 4069 has 'veritable' (real); 5 words later it has 'tel' (such) for 'une realité' (a reality).

⁸⁷ After 'destruction' (detriment), Sloane 4069 continues: 'lorsque ceux qui [followed by 'les' deleted] prennent ces effets de reverie pour les realités y ajoutent foi. Et dans plusieurs pais, sur tout de l'Europe, cette imagination derangée a été la cause de la condamnation de quelques centaine de persons, [followed by 'si ma memoire ne me trompe pas', deleted] par les memes Juges.' (when those who take [followed by 'from them', deleted] these effects of dreaming as reality put faith in them. And in many countries, especially in Europe these deranged imaginings have caused several hundred people [followed by 'if my memory does not deceive me', deleted] to be condemned by the same judges). On fol. 100v it then has the following: ['Si je ne me trompe pas', deleted] 'Dans quelques unes des Regions du Nord, ou l'ignorance regne beaucoup, non seulement l'onction de leurs corps, si je ne me trompe pas, mais encore un morceau de bois fabriqué en Almanac Runie, peut contribuer au meme effet' ([If I am not mistaken, deleted], in several of the regions of the north, where much ignorance reigns, not only the anointing of their bodies, if I am not mistaken, but also a runic almanac carved onto a piece of wood can contribute to the same effect). For commentary see Introduction.

plusieurs années, m'a dit que les Dissections ne lui ont donné que tres peu de difference entre les Cerveaux des Maniaques et ceux des gens de bon Sens:⁸⁸ et pour moi, je n'en ai jamais observé que dans une Dame, qui ayant ete attaquée dans son Carosse par les Voleurs, se blessa la tete par une chute, et en eut d'esprit derangé:⁸⁹ car il y avoit une Tumeur dans la partie posterieure & moyenne d'un des Hemispheres du Cerveau; qu'on n'avoit⁹⁰ pas pú dissiper ni par les Saignées, les Ventouses, les Epispastiques, les Emetiques, ni les Purgatifs, remedes qui reussissent ordinairement en pareil cas. Tant il est vrai, qu'il n'y a qu'une petite separation entre les Genies meme les plus sublimes⁹¹ et ceux qui ont entierelement perdu l'esprit: dont ceux qui sont versés dans l'histoire des Scavans doivent avoir rencontré⁹² des exemples remarquables; & j'en pourrois /fol. 264/ apporter plusieurs de ma proper connoissance, s'il etoit necessaire, de ceux qui n'ont pas joui du grand bonheur de *Mens sana in corpore sano*. /Sloane fol. 101/

L'experience m'a pleinement convaincu que ceux qui sont affligé de ce malheur, se peuvent guerir aussi bien que d'une Pleuresie, Colique ou autre maladie

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very slight difference between the brains of maniacs and those of people of sound mind. I personally have only ever observed it in one woman who, having been attacked in her carriage by thieves, fell and injured her head, and was left with a deranged mind, since there was a tumour in the rear and middle sections of one of the hemispheres of her brain, which it had not been possible to clear, even by bloodletting, cupping, epispastics, emetics and purgatives – remedies that are usually successful in similar cases. It is indeed true that there is only a very small divide between even the most sublime geniuses and those who have entirely lost their wits. Those who are versed in the history of the scholars must have come across remarkable examples of this, and I could /fol. 264/, if necessary, add several examples from my own experience of people who have not enjoyed the great happiness of *Mens sana in corpore sano* (a sound mind in a healthy body). /Sloane fol. 101/

Experience has absolutely convinced me that those who are afflicted by this misfortune can be cured just as well as those suffering from pleurisy, colic or other similar illness.

⁸⁸ Sloane refers to the well-known anatomist and physician, Edward Tyson (1650-1708), to Bethlem, the London hospital for the mentally ill, moved from Bishopsgate to Moorfields in 1675, and to the asylum for the insane in the 6th arrondissement at Paris, established in 1557.

⁸⁹ Here, and frequently in the latter part of his memoir, Sloane uses 'esprit' in a variety of ways that differ from the predominant usage to mean supposed supernatural beings earlier in the text: often he uses it to mean 'mind' or 'wits'. In each case, we have translated the word as seems appropriate to the context. In the part of this sentence that follows, Sloane 4069 lacks 'ayant ete attaqué... il y avoit' (having been attacked... there was) and instead has: 'avoit l'esprit derangé, par un Coup qu'un [altered from something else: 'qu'enem'?] voleur lui donna a tete; ce qui cause' (had a deranged mind, due to a blow to the head from a thief, which caused).

⁹⁰ Sloane 4069 has 'n'a' (has not). 12 words later, 'Emetiques' (emetics) is preceded by 'Vomis' (vomit) deleted, and 4 words after that the passage 'remedes... pareils cas' (remedies... similar cases) is inserted.

⁹¹ Duplicated by 'grands' (greatest) in Sloane 4069.

⁹² Sloane 4069 has 'ont trouvé' (have found) instead of 'doivent avoir rencontré' (must have come across).

pareille. Le Docteur Pierre Berwick vieux Medecin, et très versé dans cette Pratique, me communiqua les methodes dont il traitoit cette maladie, lesquelles manquoient rarement de Succés.⁹³ J'ai remarqué que cette maladie est souvent hereditaire, et que ceux qui y sont les plus sujets, sont souvent gens de talens extraordinaire, par lesquels ils ont gagné et laissé de grands biens a leur Posterité;⁹⁴ circonstance qui cause de frequentes interruptions à leur guerison. Car les parens ne s'accordant pas des moiens proposés, y mettent obstacle, en flattant les idées du Malade, sous pretexte d'amitié: et par là on est⁹⁵ souvent empeché de donner des medicamens forts ou rudes, qui estoient necessaires pour les eveiller de cette espece de Sommeil.

Je me souviens d'un de mes Malades, qui refusa le manger et le boire, ce⁹⁶ qui est un des plus facheux Symptomes, quoiqu'il soit assés frequent dans cette Maladie. Sur quoi un des Parens, pour se mettre /fol. 264v/ dans ses bonnes graces, prit la peine d'avoir des Temoins de ce qu'il fut contraint, par le moyen d'une⁹⁷ cuilliere convenable, d'avaler ce qu'il prit pour une Medecine, mais qui n'etoit que du bouillon et des oeufs pour le Soutien de la vie. /Sloane fol 101v/

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Dr Peter Berwick, an old doctor well versed in this practice, told me the methods he used to treat this illness, which were rarely unsuccessful. I have noticed that this illness is often hereditary and that those who are most affected by it are often people of extraordinary talent, which has allowed them to amass and leave to their descendants great fortunes, a circumstance which causes frequent interruptions to their recovery. This is because the relatives do not agree with the methods that are suggested, and so they obstruct them while also pandering to the patient under the pretext of kindness, and in this way one is often prevented from administering the strong or harsh medication that was necessary for waking them from this kind of slumber.

I remember one of my patients who refused food and drink, which is one of the most disagreeable symptoms, although it is quite frequent in this kind of illness. Upon which one of the relatives, in an attempt to find favour /fol. 264v/ with him, went to the trouble of having witnesses say that he was forced, by means of a dosing spoon, to swallow what he took to be medicine, but which was only broth and eggs for sustenance. /Sloane fol 101v/

⁹³ Evidently a reference to the eminent Restoration physician, Peter Barwick (1619-1705), though his practice in this respect is not otherwise known. See Peter Elmer in ODNB.

⁹⁴ Sloane 4069 has 'familles' (families). At the start of the next sentence it lacks 'Car' (because).

⁹⁵ Sloane 4069 has 'ce qui empeche' (which prevents) instead of 'et par là on est' (and in this way one is), and it lacks 'empeché' (prevented) after 'souvent' (often). 4 words after this 'medicaments' (medication) is spelled thus, and at the end of the sentence 'eveiller de cette espece de Sommeil' (waking from this kind of slumber) there appears as 'eveiller de leur Sommeil' (waking from their slumber).

⁹⁶ Lacking in Sloane 4069, which also lack 'assés' (quite) 10 words later and 'Sur quoi' (Upon which) 5 words after that, and has 'ses' (his/her) deleted before 'Parens' (relatives).

⁹⁷ Sloane 4069 has 'avec un' (with a) instead of 'par le moyen d'une' (by means of a). 16 words later, 'et' (and) is there duplicated above the line with 'avec' (with).

J'ai observé qu'après avoir mediocrement tiré du Sang,⁹⁸ les Emetiques forts, et qui agitent beaucoup, sont les remedes les plus efficaces: et qu'il faut qu'ils soient bien forts, sans quoi⁹⁹ ils n'operent pas pour la plus part; & qu'ils soient aussi reiterés souvent. Tels sont l'Infusion du Crocus Metallorum quelque fois epaisse ou trouble, le Suc de l'Asarum &c:¹⁰⁰ et pour les Remedes specifiques, le Suc exprimé de l'Hedera terrestris, avec Onguens & Cataplamas de la meme plante appliqués à la tete rasée. Ces choses, avec des cuillieres convenables pour les leurs faire avaler, et un Appareil propre à les empecher de se blesser, ont rarement manqué de les guerir dans un tems suffisant. J'ai eu occasion de recommander une maison, où on recoit et traite ces sortes de malades: et je ne me souviens que de deux d'entre ceux¹⁰¹ que j'y avois recommandés, qui eurent occasion d'y rester au dela de six ou sept mois.

Je ne scaurois omettre¹⁰² le Cas d'un jeune Gentilhomme tres riche, qui avoit été travaillé de cette maladie sept a huit mois, a tel point qu'il urinoit et lachoit le ventre /fol. 265/ sans en demander les commodités ordinaires.¹⁰³ Apres l'avoir

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I have observed that after having let a small amount of blood, strong emetics that cause a good deal of physical disturbance are the most efficient remedy. And they must be strong – without this they do not work for the most part – and they must also be repeated frequently. They include infusion of crocus of metals (sometimes thick or cloudy), juice of asarum &c. and for specific remedies, juice squeezed from the berries of ground ivy, with ointments and poultices from the same plant applied to a shaven head. These things, together with the right kind of spoons, so that they [the patients] can swallow them, and appropriate equipment to prevent them [the patients] from injuring themselves, have rarely been unsuccessful in curing them within a sufficient length of time. I have had the opportunity to recommend a home where these sorts of patients are admitted and treated and I only recall two among them whom I had recommended and who had occasion to stay there beyond six or seven months.

I could not neglect to mention the case of a young, very rich gentleman who had been tormented by this illness seven to eight months, to the point that he urinated and opened his bowels /fol. 265/ without asking for the usual facilities. After having cured

⁹⁸ Sloane 4069 has 'la saignée modique' (moderate bloodletting) instead of 'avoir mediocrement tiré du sang' (having let a small amount of blood).

⁹⁹ Sloane 4069 has 'autrement' (otherwise) instead of 'sans quoi' (without this) and 4 words later 'ordinairement' (usually) instead of 'pour la plus part' (for the most part).

¹⁰⁰ 'Crocus of metals' was an antimony sulphide, a yellow powder obtained by calcining antimony; 'asarum' is the asarabacca plant, the bitter leaves and roots of which were used as a purgative. In this sentence, 'epaisse ou' (thick or) is lacking in Sloane 4069.

¹⁰¹ Sloane 4069 has 'deux malades de ceux' (two of these patients) instead of 'deux d'entre ceux' (two among them). 6 words later, 'avoit' (had) is deleted after 'qui' and 5 words after that it has 'plus de' (more than) instead of 'au dela de' (beyond).

¹⁰² Sloane 4069 has 'me rapelle' (recall) instead of 'ne scaurois omettre' (could not neglect to mention). Later in the sentence, 'maladie' (illness) is there followed by 'environ' [?] (about) deleted, 'point' (point) is there followed by 'qu'il ne demandoit point' (that he did not ask for) deleted, and 'et' (and) is followed by 'alloit' (went) deleted.

¹⁰³ Sloane 4069 has 'le Pot de Chambre' (a chamber pot) instead of 'les commodités ordinaires' (the usual facilities); 2 words earlier it lacks the pronoun, 'en'.

parfaitement gueri, sans retour à ce que j'ai jamais pu apprehendre,¹⁰⁴ j'eus la curiosité de lui demander un jour, en presence /Sloane fol. 102/ de sa Soeur, s'il se ressouvenoit de ce qui s'étoit passé dans ce tems là: a¹⁰⁵ quoi il rougit de honte, et j'en fis autant à mon tour, pour lui avoir demandé une telle question. Et quoique je l'eus recontré ensuite plusieurs fois, tant en compagnie, que dans son Carosse; il ne m'a jamais depuis montré que les civilités ordinaires, sans temoigner la moindre¹⁰⁶ envie d'entrer en Conversation avec moi: par où je vis bien qu'il se ressouvenoit de la plus part des choses qui s'étoient passés¹⁰⁷ pendant ces Songes d'éveillé. Apres cette reponse muette, mais expressive, j'ai toujours evité de demander de ces sortes de questions à ceux qui avoient été en pareils cas, aussi bien qu'à ceux qui avoient rechappé des Convulsions, Apoplexies &c: d'autant plus que j'ai vu plusieurs retomber en Convulsions, pour avoir essayé de se rappeler¹⁰⁸ leur etat passé.

Le Cas cy dessus mentionné a fait que je n'ai que rarement desespéré¹⁰⁹ de guerir cette maladie, quoiqu'elle donne beaucoup d'embarras, à cause de la

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him completely, without a relapse, as far as I could ever learn, I had the curiosity to ask him one day, in the presence /Sloane fol. 102/ of his sister, if he remembered what had happened during that time, to which he blushed with shame, and I did so just as much myself for having asked him such a question. And from then on, although I met him again several times, both in company and in his carriage, he never showed me more than common courtesies, without expressing the least desire to enter into conversation with me, from which I can see clearly that he remembered the majority of the things that had happened during these waking dreams. Following this silent but meaningful response, I have always avoided asking this sort of question of those who have been in similar states, as well as those who have come through convulsions, apoplexies and so on, especially since I have seen many relapse into convulsions because they tried to recall their past state.

Thanks to the above-mentioned case I have only rarely given up hope of curing this illness, even though it causes a lot of embarrassment, due to the severe treatment that it

¹⁰⁴ Sloane 4069 lacks 'sans retour à ce que j'ai jamais pu apprehendre' (without a relapse, which I have never been able to comprehend), but a line is left blank at this point; it also lacks 'un jour' (one day) 7 words later.

¹⁰⁵ Sloane 4069 has 'sur' (on). 4 words later it has 'et parut < tout > honteux: je le fus aussi' (and seemed extremely ashamed: I was as well) instead of 'de honte, et j'en fis autant' (with shame, and I did so just as much myself).

¹⁰⁶ Sloane 4069 has 'et il parut n'avoir aucune' (and he seemed to have no) instead of 'sans temoigner la moindre' (without expressing the least). 7 words later, 'par où' (from which) is there inserted, replacing 'et' (and) deleted.

¹⁰⁷ Sloane 4069 has 'arrivés dans' (occurred in) instead of 'passés pendant' (happened during), and the previous word is 'etoient' (had) rather than 's'étoient' (had – the French reflexive is not reflected in the English translation). The unfortunate individual involved has not been identified.

¹⁰⁸ Sloane 4069 has 'resouvenir' (remember).

¹⁰⁹ In Sloane 4069 'que rarement' (only rarely) and 'desespéré' (given up hope) are in the reverse order.

maniere rude don't il faut la traiter. Ajoutès à cela, que les diverses opinions et les Interêts divers des plus /fol. 265v/ proches parens, font que ces Malades ne sont pas fort à souhaites, quoiqu'ils soient souvent¹¹⁰ fort lucratifs. /Sloane fol. 102v/

Les gens dans cet etat demandent des Emetiques deux or trios fois plus forts que dans l'autres cas: à cause de la force de cette espece de Sommeil d'evillé. Mais je n'ai jamais observé aucun mauvais effèt arriver des Superpurgations dans ces occasions. Les Anciens employoient des Emetiques plus forts que les Modernes: et la raison en etoit, que si la dose etoit grande, la plus part du remede etoit rejetté par la bouche, dans la premiere ou seconde operation. Pour moi, generalement parlant j'ai eu soin de passer des Emetiques plus doux¹¹¹ aux plus forts ou rudes, pour eviter les accidens.

Ces Observations et autres particularités de cette relation pourront, a ce que j'espere,¹¹² etre utiles à ceux qui veulent entendre les Maladies de la Tete et de l'Esprit.

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requires. In addition, the different opinions and the different interests of the /fol. 265v/ next of kin mean that these patients are not desirable, even though they are often very lucrative. /Sloane fol. 102v/

People in this state require emetics twice or three times as strong as in other cases, due to the strength of this kind of waking dream. But I have never witnessed any bad effects resulting from superpurgations on these occasions. The ancients used emetics that were stronger than modern ones and the reason for this was that, although the dose was high, the majority of the remedy was rejected by the mouth at the first or second attempt. I, generally speaking, have taken care to administer milder emetics rather than stronger or harsher ones, to avoid accidents.

These observations and other particularities of this story will, I hope, be useful to those want to understand illnesses of the head and of the mind.

¹¹⁰ Lacking in Sloane 4069, which 3 words earlier has 'souhaiter' (to be desired) for 'souhaites' (desirable).

¹¹¹ Sloane 4069 has 'foibles' (weak). 4 words later it has 'forts, a fin d'eviter' (stronger ones, in order to avoid) instead of 'forts ou rudes, pour eviter' (stronger or harsher ones, to avoid).

¹¹² Sloane 4069 lacks 'a ce que j'espere' (I hope).

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