

**Date:** 1/29/08

**Conservator:** Sonya Issaeva

**Instructor:** Chela Metzger

**Call Number/Collection:** 2118716957, Collections Deposit Library

**Author:** The Religious Tract Society

**Title:** *Pretended Miracles and Remarkable Natural Phenomena*  
*Remarkable Delusions. Illustrations of Popular Errors*

**Collation/foliation:** 2 booklets bound together, 192 numbered pages each.

**Imprint:** 1848, London

**Format:** 8 folios, octavo

**Dimensions** (binding): H 14.8x W 9.6 x T 2.6 (cm)

**Dimensions** (text block): H 14.1 x W 9.2 x T 2.3 (cm)

**Treatment Objective:**

To reattach the front and back boards, as well as attach a toned cloth spine, while exploring an alternative method of spine attachment.

**Condition:**

**Binding:** This is a tight joint laced on boards binding. The boards were laced on with 2 hemp sewing supports, which are now broken. The boards are made from binders board that is about 1-1.5 mm thick. The front and back boards are detached from the text block and are tied to it with cotton twill tape. This publisher's binding seems to represent the transitional period between the decline of laced on boards bindings and the predominance of case bindings.

**Covering:** Covering material on the spine is missing. A pressure sensitive bar code sticker is attached to the front board. There are two paper remnants on the front board as well. The boards are covered in brown cloth with no embossing. The book cloth is abraded and stained with ink splatters. There is no decorative finish on the front or the back boards. This book has possibly been rebound because the boards are covered in poor quality cloth, while other editions of this volume are described on OCLC to have decorative elements such as embossing and gilt text block edges. It is possible that this particular book was purchased in a less expensive edition. According to OCLC the two religious pamphlets *Pretended Miracles and Remarkable Natural Phenomena* and *Remarkable Delusions* were frequently, although not always, bound together into one volume.

**Spine:** The spine of the text has been lined with several layers of printed pages featuring Christian book advertisements. The adhesive appears to be animal glue. It is applied sparingly yet the spine consolidation is intact. The spine is heavily rounded with very shallow shoulders. It appears to be hammer backed. It is possible the spine lining was originally one side of a hollow tube.

**Text Block:** The volume is comprised of two religious booklets bound together. The text block opens easily in most sections but the opening is about 165-170°. The edges of the text block are plowed and sprinkled red. They are soiled and discolored. The text block is sewn all along, on three sawn-in cords. The sewing is stable but leaf attachment is fragile because the paper is worn and brittle in the areas next to the sewing holes. The thread is S-twist.

The end sheets are single leaf and are tipped on. The end sheets appear to be made from a different paper than the text block. There is an ink line and erased notations in graphite on the

back fly leaf. There is brownish foxing on both end sheets. The title page from the first booklet, "*Pretend Miracles and Remarkable Natural Phenomena*", is missing.

There is a library check out slip attached to the front end sheet. There are notations in graphite on the end sheet underneath the check out slip. There is a UT Library ink stamp located near the center of the front paste down. A pressure sensitive library ID label is attached the paste down above the ink stamp. There are pencil markings on the front and back paste downs. The back pastedown has glue stains in the shape of brush strokes.

### **Proposed Treatment**

- Detach library check-out slip from front endsheet using local humidification and application of methyl cellulose, as necessary.
- Mend tears in text using toned Japanese style tissue and wheat starch paste
- Remove paper lining and adhesive residue from sections of the spine
- Re-line sections of the spine
- Re-case volume by a modified Bradel method using toned Japanese tissue and toned cotton textile.

### **Treatment Discussion**

The cloth on this publisher's binding volume is worn and fragile. The boards are very thin, 40 pt at the most. The board material is brittle and hardened. As suggested by Bill Minter in his article on the modified Bradel binding technique (1), it seems that it would be easier to hide the repair if, instead of lifting the book cloth on the outside of the boards, one was to lift the pastedowns instead.

This technique is very helpful in solving the problem of the bulge that is visible beneath the book cloth when additional material is inserted underneath it. However, one drawback, which I experienced firsthand, is that some pastedowns are extremely brittle and fragile, while some boards are also brittle, compact and hardened. The board material crumbles and breaks easily and does not lend itself to being delaminated easily. Since it took a certain amount of force to delaminate the board material in order to lift the pastedowns, the pastedowns suffered several tears. These tears were repaired in one of the final stages of the treatment by adhering strips of toned tissue to both front and back inner hinges. The repair dramatically improved the aesthetic appearance of the damaged end sheets, however, the resulting tears from lifting of the end sheets could not by any means be considered an invisible repair.

### **Treatment**

- Locally humidified front end sheet and attached library check-out slip using Gore-Tex strips, Mylar strips, moist blotter and glass weights.
- Detached library slip mechanically with the aid of methyl cellulose poultice. Mended losses from the reverse of the end sheet with toned Japanese tissue.
- Cleaned two sections of the spine with the aid of methyl cellulose (~3 cm down from the head and ~3 cm up from the tail), removing original paper lining and residual

adhesive, as possible. Much of the original paper lining was left intact because it contained textual information, speaking to historical context.

- Lined the above mentioned sections of the spine with two layers of machine-made lightweight Kozo and wheat starch paste.
- Lined the same sections of the spine with airplane cotton textile and PVA mixed with methyl cellulose (80% and 20%).
- Lifted pastedowns on the front and back boards up to 1.5 cm from the spine edge, using Teflon spatula and a Caselli micro-spatula.
- Made a cloth spine replacement with toned cotton textile lined with lens tissue and a spine strip made of 80# text weight Mohawk paper.
- Used strips of Usi-usimino tissue, toned with acrylic paints, to line the spine edges of the original boards. Inserted the strips of toned tissue between and pastedowns and the boards, letting the toned tissue extend ~1-2 mm onto the cloth-covered side of the board.

### **Materials**

- Methyl cellulose (MC) 2.5% dispersed in hot then cold distilled water
- Precipitated wheat starch paste mixed 1:4 with distilled water, cooked 20 minutes
- Elvace PVAc 45675 (Poly vinyl acetate adhesive)
- Airplane Cotton textile
- Mohawk 80# text weight paper
- Mylar
- Gore-Tex
- Machine-made lightweight Kozo
- Lens tissue
- Usi-usimino tissue
- Acrylic paints

### **References**

1. Bill Minter, *Cloth Rebacking: Using a Modified Bradel Binding Technique*, The Book and Paper Group Annual, The American Institute for Conservation, Vol. 18, 1999.