



# On the Witness Stand: Essays on Psychology and Crime

*Hugo Munsterberg*

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## **On the Witness Stand: Essays on Psychology and Crime** Hugo Munsterberg

THERE are about fifty psychological laboratories in the United States alone. The average educated man has hitherto not noticed this. If he chances to hear of such places, he fancies that they serve for mental healing, or telepathic mysteries, or spiritistic performances. What else can a laboratory have to do with the mind? Has not the soul been for two thousand years the domain of the philosopher? What has psychology to do with electric batteries and intricate machines? Too often have I read such questions in the faces of visiting friends who came to the Harvard Psychological Laboratory in Emerson Hall and found, with surprise, twenty-seven rooms overspun with electric wires and filled with chronoscopes and kymographs and tachistoscopes and ergographs, and a mechanic busy at his work. The development of this new science could remain unnoticed because it was such a rapid one, surprising in its extent even to those who started it. When, as a young student, I went to the University of Leipzig in the eighties of the last century, the little psychological laboratory there, founded by Professor Wundt, was still the only one in the world. No Western country college would to-day be satisfied with those poor little rooms in which the master of the craft made his experiments with his few students. But since that time the Leipzig workshop has been steadily growing, and every year has seen the foundation of new institutes by the pupils of Wundt, and later by their pupils. The first German laboratory outside of Leipzig was the one which I founded in Freiburg just twenty years ago. At about the same time Stanley Hall and Cattell brought the work from Leipzig over the ocean. Today there exists hardly a university which has not opened a workshop for this youngest of the natural sciences.

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