

SMALL AUDIENCE FOR GHOSTS

AND A SMALLER MARKET FOR MAUD LORD DRAKE'S BOOK.

Said It Was a Great Chance for Dr. Cook to Explain Why Is a Hypothesis—Medium Drake Discusses Mme. Blavatsky and Cigarettes and Calls a Few Spirits.

Not counting ghosts, there were thirty-two persons who braved the storm last night to assemble in a little hall at 69 West 125th street to drink in a programme consisting of Maud Lord Drake, in Manifestations of Psychic Phenomena; George W. Lewis, A. M., Reincarnation, and Dr. Cook, Psychic Dynamics. There were positively hosts of spooks, but at no time did the haunts seem to be crowded for room because every one of them would fall down on his foolish face with some statement or other shortly and would have to move on.

The way the ghosts would try to conceal their identity from the Harlem audience by giving a name that was to the bad would put a crimp in any scientific investigator who wasn't long on faith.

"Ah, I hear the word—ah I hear the word—the word grandma," the gifted medium would say with the suppressed emotion of a pillow covered alarm clock.

"Yes, young man, this is your grandmother here and she says that all will be well. Ah, she is so happy. 'Be of good cheer, my darling,' she is saying, 'and all will turn out—'

"But my grandmother is living," interrupted the young man with a reluctance that showed that although far be it from him to contradict a voice from the other world, nevertheless truth crushed to earth will rise again.

"But this is your other grandmother, young man," said the medium sweetly.

"Of course, one is living, but the one in the spirit is here and tells you that the work you are engaged in now will turn out all—"

"Ye—ye—ye," insisted the truth seeker again, "but both my grandmothers are living."

There was only one explanation of this phenomenon, looking at the manifestation in the cold light of science—the haunts was a liar.

There were many interesting things on the bill, however, before Mrs. Drake's troop of performing spooks walked out on the platform and began to act right out of her hand. Dr. Cook, for instance (every he medium has a certain amount of stage later), was down on the programme labelled merely "Psychic Dynamics." The doctor wore what appeared to be a Grand Army button, and the scientific audience gave him to do largely with the way the civil war fights was fit. His peroration was in verse and told how

The soldier dead came through the ground Without their shoes and dressed in blue, And walked around and then around, And around and around and around.

After the applause had died away with a final breathing of the words, "Be-autiful, Dr. Cook, be-autiful" from Medium Maud, George W. Lewis, A. M., a clerical looking person, took a catch as catch can, hold of "Reincarnation." He said in part, as near as can be remembered:

The ego is all. That which is, is more an atomic, molecular motion than otherwise, as you will readily see. But, "Ah!" you say, "Ah! We have you there, for is not this a going back upon the original hypothesis?" My friends, looking upon the subject in whatever light you choose, all hypotheses are but separate hypotheses gathered together. The Darwinian theory, was, nay, is, but a hypothesis. Ah, I see by your faces, my friends, that I have you there! And what is the nebular hypothesis? Merely a hypothesis, friends, merely a hypothesis—a theory as it were, to account for the molecular and atomic attraction.

I could go on indefinitely with this argument, dear friends, but I shan't take up too much time by—

There were cries of, "Do, do go on, Dr. Cook, I beg of you," from Medium Maud. The doctor realized, however, that he had proved his point and let well enough alone.

Mr. Drake, the husband of the medium, then took the platform to remark casually that there were several copies of his wife's latest book on spiritualistic phenomena, price one-fifty, right in the very room, and that if he were approached in the right way he could doubtless be induced to sell out.

"And I say right here," concluded the medium's husband earnestly, "that I'll give anybody in this room \$1,000 who can prove that any fact it contains isn't true. For fourteen years I've written the proofs of the book before I would let it be printed till I had verified every true fact in it. Perhaps you will doubt a conclusion here and there, but looking into the matter as man to man, assuming that the premises are true, and the true facts true, then I ask you, must not the conclusions be true?"

There was no getting away from it, but nobody bought. During a little lull to permit possible customers to advance to the book counter without being crushed to death Dr. Cook got up and pleaded that he might be permitted to say a word in favor of the book. Mr. Drake hesitated for a time, but finally consented upon condition that the doctor wouldn't talk too long. Dr. Cook therefore merely reviewed the many true facts in the book and dwelt at some length upon a fact that he had just discovered on page 132 that was particularly tremendous.

Nothing doing. Medium Maud Lord Drake advanced to the platform at last. She is a woman who is so out of the ordinary in appearance that at first glance one would know that she is something. She wears literary glasses with a silk ribbon and her back hair is undecided. Mrs. Drake asked first, that a hymn be sung before the ghosts were made to walk. She thought there was nothing so beautiful and elevating as a good hymn. So the audience turned to number 12.

Before the manifestations began Mrs. Drake said:

Isn't music beautiful? Ah, when I was a little child I would lay on my back on the hills and listen to the music of the flowers and the trees. I would sit and listen to the music of the wind playing grand harmonies and tell me things my mother would say, "Oh, go on, you're crazy." And, ah, then she would say when I told her how the flowers danced and walked along the forest, "That was Mrs. Maud, in which she lives." Then she passed her hands over her eyes—first removing the glasses—and asked various parts of the audience to call out their birth months to give the spirits a something to work on. After several had called out the months in which they had been born the medium discoursed briefly, before starting the sidewalk conversation with the haunts, upon the great sin of race suicide.

VERIFICATION WITH SOMEBODY BY FIRST BUTT-HOLDING AN INSTRUMENTAL HOUSE ORGAN. THEN SHE TURNED TOWARD THE FOOTLIGHTS AND TOLD ALL WITHOUT RESERVE. DID THE YOUNG MAN RECOGNIZE THE NAME JOHN IN THE SPIRIT WORLD? ANY SPIRIT NAMED JOHN WOULD DO. IT WAS A CINCIP. AND, AH, THERE IS JAMES, AND HE IS SO HAPPY. AFTER SOME THOUGHT, THE APRIL YOUTH REMEMBERED A JAMES WHO HAD CRASHED IN.

Also he dropped a remark that he had been born in England, and this immediately suggested to the spirits that some of his dead relations had been buried across a great body of water. With a gasp of amazement the young man allowed that this was true. The inquirer then volunteered the information that for eight years he had experienced spiritualistic stirrings around his bed after he gets home nights and that he can hardly move when the control has him going. Mrs. Drake told him immediately that the spirit that was pestering him was his uncle.

"And you see great lights at these times?" said the medium.

"No, everything is absolutely black," declared the youth.

"But you will see the lights later," the medium assured him. "When you have progressed a little more they will show you the lights. But you must work to attain this state. You must keep your face and hands as clean as your heart. And, you must stop smoking."

"I did stop two years ago, ma'am."

"Ah, that is right—I knew it."

"Two boys about sixteen years old got messages from some spirits whose first names were familiar to them and from a lot of ghosts that had to be introduced. Then for a while things went along fairly well until one woman about fifty years old dressed partly in black, was told not to grieve too much for her little boy—child—as it was happy."

"You must be for some one else," ventured the woman. "I—I am unmarried, ma'am."

The messages petered out slowly from this on. The ghosts gradually strolled away one by one, many doubtless glad of a chance to take a good roll in the snow before beating it back to their long home.

LIVE TOPICS ABOUT TOWN.

The well dressed woman slipped two opera tickets into an envelope, which she proceeded to address to a girl employed by a fashionable dressmaker.

"That," she explained, "is a favor that many women with good clothes confer upon the girls who are responsible for their fine feathers. In bestowing it we are not actuated by vanity but by a desire to give pleasure. After a woman has been in the millinery or dressmaking business for several years she ceases to take much interest in the public appearance of the women who wear her creations, but the younger girls have a great desire to see a customer fully dressed for some occasion for which they have hurried to finish her clothes. From long experience I can pick out these curious, clever little artists and whenever I wear an especially nice dress to a place open to the public I send tickets of admission to the girls who have worked hardest to make my costume a success."

A woman who had just moved into an apartment in the neighborhood of a West Side church was awakened about 7 o'clock by a violent ringing of her doorbell.

"What on earth is the matter?" she asked of the young man standing in the hall.

"Time to get ready for church," he said, and started upstairs.

But the woman called him back and demanded an explanation.

"I'm hired by the curate to wake folks of mornings," he said. "Almost everybody in these buildings around here goes to that church on the corner, but they get out of going to early service by saying that they can't wake up in time. The curate thought if that was all that kept them away the difficulty could be overcome, so he hired me to get them up early every morning till after Easter. Maybe you don't belong to that church, but I thought I'd call you anyway."

The man was right. The woman had never stepped foot inside a church of that denomination in her life, but she was so impressed with the enterprise of the curate that she routed her whole family out of bed and bundled them off to church before breakfast.

Art was undoubtedly the ruling passion of the woman who clung to a strap in a subway car yesterday when she might have sat down. She was dressed in a coral pink gown. There was a vacant place next a cross seat to which a man, who was also clinging to a strap, called her attention.

"Oh, no, thank you," she replied frantically. "I couldn't sit there. It would kill my gown."

PEDAGOGUE HALF A CENTURY.

PRINCIPAL ALMON G. MERWIN DECEDES IT'S TIME TO QUIT.

He's Come to Believe That Wallowing Public School Boys Isn't the Best Way—Segregation is Much Better—Justice Aspinall Nearly Got a Licking Once.

The oldest and most jovial pedagogue in active service in the city of New York, Almon G. Merwin, principal of Public School 74, in Kosciuszko street, near Broadway, Brooklyn, has put in application for retirement, which he was legally entitled to ten years ago. He has been asked by Supt. Maxwell to continue work until the end of the term in June, and he will do so for two reasons, one of which is to oblige Mr. Maxwell and the other to round out an uninterrupted course of forty years teaching in Brooklyn, which was an overgrown village when he arrived there in 1877, after twelve years teaching in Delaware county, his birthplace, and at Port Jefferson and Bellport, L. I.

Mr. Merwin is rugged, straight and quick witted. There is none of the old fogey in him. He has kept in touch with the times. He says frankly that he has learned much from his pupils, and that the old time methods are not the good merely because they are ancient. Age and tradition cannot sanctify without the help of merit.

When he was a young man—he began teaching at 16 in Delhi, Delaware county—he believed that the rattan was a good educational adjunct; in fact, he had about as much faith in it as most of the teachers of his early pedagogic days, but he found that it was not a good thing to apply generally. Perhaps there were special cases in which flogging might have been good, but he is now inclined to doubt if it ever was or is good.

Some mothers with the old fashioned ideas about discipline recently have come to Mr. Merwin and requested him to please give their boys a good licking. His opinion in the case of some of these boys he did not hesitate to express to the mothers. He said the boys really deserved the licking, but that the law would not permit a teacher to give it, and that the mothers had better take the bad boys home and let the fathers do the job. Mr. Merwin is of the opinion that the knowledge that a pupil has been whipped by a teacher is not good to have circulated around a modern school. The discipline is better than it was in the days of the rattan, and the boys are better drilled and calisthenics had helped a good deal to impart a soldierlike spirit to the boys. A certain refinement of character came after the abolition of corporal punishment. Boys put upon their honor were likely to be better than boys subjected to the rule of fear.

All small boys—or very nearly all—Mr. Merwin said, were little savages, or as primitive as the man of the stone age. They were merciless to animals until they were made to feel that the animals had feelings very much like the feelings of little boys. But the boys were not made to understand this by wallappings. There was no doubt about it, the boys that were licked almost had a more cruel disposition toward animals than the boys who got along without lickings.

When a boy is in the incorrigible class Mr. Merwin thinks the best way to educate him is to segregate him rather than to beat him, and by a rigid system of discipline to get him into the straight. Some apparently stupid are really merely dormant intellectually. When they wake up they become after pupils than those who were ahead of them in the early classes.

An army of boys has passed through the various schools of which Mr. Merwin has been principal. One of these boys is Justice Joseph Aspinall of the Supreme Court, who assisted last week in the presentation of a loving cup to Mr. Merwin. The Justice was not a bad boy, the principal said, but was very mischievous. I remember once that I decided to try the rattan on Joe," said Mr. Merwin. "He came up smiling, willing to take the punishment. I looked at him and decided that a rattan would not make a good impression on a boy like that and I just said, 'Joe, go to your seat.'"

Although he is going to get out of the business of teaching, Mr. Merwin will continue in his efforts to gather more knowledge for home consumption. He is not addicted to looking upon the old times of the microbe laden old oaken bucket as the very best ever. A visit to the scenes of his childhood has hardly a sentimental interest for him. He tried it last summer. Delhi was there, looking pretty much as it used to look, but a bit different somehow because of the contrast with a long life in the city. Everybody in the town, he said, was dead. He had died or gone away. He met one man only that he recognized, Thomas Steele, who is interested in mining out in California. Mr. Steele is a few years younger than Mr. Merwin and was his pupil at the district school. Mr. Steele also was on a visit to the old home. He did not like it so well that he felt inclined to move in with his family from the Western coast. Master and pupil had a talk over old times and agreed that the new ones were somewhat of an improvement.

THE METROPOLITAN CONCERT.

Burgstaller, Kirby-Lunn and Fleischer-Edel Among the Solists.

Last night's storm had an appreciable effect on the attendance at the thirteenth Sunday night concert at the Metropolitan Opera House. While the standees were out in large numbers many of the boxes were without occupants and there were empty seats in the orchestra.

The programme was one of the best offered this season. The regular orchestra was augmented to 106 musicians, and the solists included Mr. Anton Heeking, the Dutch tenor, who played an interesting and final by Lado. Owing to the sudden indisposition of Mr. Otto Goritz, who was to have sung a duet with Mme. Fleischer-lamm, "Der Fliegende Holländer" was omitted. Mr. Franz Stiner sang instead the prologue to Leon Cavallo's "Pagliacci."

Other solists were Mr. Alois Burgstaller, who sang a scene from Weber's "Der Freischütz," and Mme. Fleischer-Lunn, who sang two songs. Mme. Fleischer-Edel and Mr. Burgstaller also had numbers in the second part of the programme. The orchestra had several numbers, the "Dance of Salome" particularly pleasing the audience.

"I never saw a man whose old clothes fitted him when he got out of prison," said a jailer. "He may come into my custody wearing a suit that is a model of the tailor's art, but when he goes out those clothes hang all askew. Sometimes the prisoner grows fat, sometimes he grows lean, but if he neither takes on nor loses flesh, he seems to undergo so many physical changes during confinement that the clothes he wore are a decided misfit. It is the same way with hospital patients. Not all persons leave a hospital in a state of emaciation by any means, yet they and their clothes seem to sever friendship during illness and the old suit never fits again."

A Nassau street druggist has devised a plan for saving his customers and himself time and trouble. He has clamped a City Directory to a small stand; then on four days he clamps the stand to the sidewalk just outside his door so that persons who wish to consult that popular volume may do so without going indoors.

"Some men in my business," said the druggist, "depend upon a directory to help drum up trade. They reason that when people come into the store to look at that they may see something they want to buy before they get out. But I have never profited by that scheme. I waste more time in answering the questions of wandering students and closing the door after them than their possible purchases could pay for."

"What wouldn't I have given for a pencil like this when I was a boy!" sighed the grownup, as he picked up a favorite from an assortment of gay and suggestively colored pencils—red, finkie and blue. Colored pencils are varieties of delicate shades. I keep my children supplied with pencils with their own names printed on in gilt. I find that it is an economical plan, for they make them as long as they can, and then cutting away the names and it seems to take away half the terrors which long division and fractions used to have for me."

SUNDAY NIGHT ORATORIOS.

The People's Choral Union to Sing at the Manhattan Opera House.

Beginning next Sunday evening a series of oratorios will be given at the Manhattan Opera House by the People's Choral Union under the directorship of Mr. Frank Damrosch. It is Mr. Hammerstein's intention to alternate with these oratorios the regular Sunday evening concert. The first oratorio to be presented is Haydn's "Creation," which requires 800 chorus voices besides the principal singers. The solists on this occasion will be Mme. Corinne Rieder-Kelsey, soprano; David Beddoe, tenor; and Frank Croton, bass, and the New York Symphony Orchestra. The full strength of the People's Choral Union will be brought out and Frank Damrosch will conduct the orchestra and direct the production of the oratorios. The oratorios to succeed "Creation" will be announced later.

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The dinner will begin at 8:30 o'clock on Saturday evening at the Waldorf-Astoria and will have some spectacular features. Everybody that can do a stunt will be expected to contribute something for the general entertainment. The orators will be numerous. St. Clair McKelway, who is a pretty good hand at word painting, will, it is said, attempt to beat the T. Hamilton poster record.

All the press agents of all the shows within a radius of 3,000 miles will be on hand and most of the actors and managers from the Atlantic to the Pacific. On the dinner and executive committees are all the editors, writers, advertising managers, business managers and nearly all the reporters that ever have met or heard of Mr. Hamilton. They will come from Alaska, California, Florida, Maine and the States and Territories between, in all of which Mr. Hamilton has left the impression of his equipped and skillful.

There have been many false alarms

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