

WHAT
MAN
MIGHT
MAKE
OF
MAN

By

"The Crank"

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“THE CRANK.”

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Preface.

This little book is not intended as a complete "A.A." route to Heaven ; but only as a suggestion that to go from St. Paul's to Charing Cross, it is not necessary to go by way of the Maze at Hampton Court.

Foreword.

From a chapter on "Crank's" in "Press, Platform and Parliament," by the late Spencer Leigh Hughes, M.P., by permission of Messrs. Nisbet & Co. Ltd.

"Let no one suppose that I pretend to have been always right in my forecasts, and that I have never described as impossibilities proposals or suggestions which have since been universally accepted not only as practical, but useful. I can well remember a visit I received from a gentleman years ago in a newspaper office, when he assured me that flying machines heavier than air, that would travel long distances, not only could, but very soon would be made. I listened to him politely, but I thought he was mad—indeed I felt certain he was, so that I was relieved when he went away without any display of

violence. As soon as he had gone I wrote an article which gave great satisfaction to myself on cranks in general and on flying machine cranks in particular. And what is more, I 'proved' that what the gentleman had predicted as being close at hand could never take place. There were some impressive passages about the immutability of the law of gravitation, and passing allusions to the same quality that used to distinguish the laws of the Medes and Persians. It was really a strong article, for I firmly believed what I wrote, and what is more, I am certain that nine-tenths of those who read it agreed with me at the time. But the 'crank' was right and I was wrong; moreover, if he thought I was a fool, as I certainly thought he was, again he was right and I was wrong. It may be that the same could be said of some cranks and some critics to-day."