

BY WAY OF THE MEDIUM

The question of individual survival after death was probably never more poignant in human minds than in these terrible times. It is not Sir Oliver Lodge alone who pathetically turns to a medium or to any means that promises to reveal to him whether his gallant son be still alive, tho dead upon the battlefield. But he is a man so distinguished as a scientist, and so noted for his sincerity and good faith, that the publication of his *Raymond* has opened flood-gates of discussion on the question which is uppermost in the hearts of the bereaved.

In the published reports of his attempts to communicate with his son, Sir Oliver reaffirms his earlier conclusion that those who have died continue to exist as individuals; that they continue to be interested in the persons and fortunes of their surviving friends; and that they are able and willing, under proper conditions, to communicate with the living.

Perhaps the resultant discussion will add something to the philosophy of hope, which is desperately enough needed in these days. Belief in individual survival after death is at least traditionally an item of faith in the lives of most men. But our generation has been bred in a matter-of-fact atmosphere and will not be easily convinced by anything short of clinching evidence when a man claims to be able to communicate with the dead. The medium

constitutes the worst difficulty. The whole realm of clairvoyants, telepathists and mediums is one in which scientific evidence seems to fade away in a mist of conjecture. This doubtless is the reason why the forty odd volumes of proceedings of the Psychical Research Society have made no deep impression upon men in whom is no want of eagerness to be convinced. Nor do the doubters, as a rule, disbelieve the survival of the soul after death. What they disbelieve are the alleged communications from the unseen.

The points on which Sir Oliver rests his case will appear to many as simply trivial and commonplace, such as one would wish to ignore in the interest even of a dignified remembrance of the dead. But to others they will appeal as broken messages such as those must be that reach the listener over an imperfect connection. Their value will seem to lie not in any intrinsic importance, but in the likelihood from their reference to matters familiar to both parties, that they are actually from the unseen friend trying, in however feeble words, to make his presence known.

Raymond, by Sir Oliver Lodge. G. H. Doran Company. \$2.