

MASTERPIECES OF MYSTERY

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Masterpieces of mystery by Joseph Lewis French

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JOSEPH LEWIS FRENCH

**MASTERPIECES
OF MYSTERY**

Masterpieces of Mystery

In Four Volumes

MYSTIC-HUMOROUS STORIES

Edited by
Joseph Lewis French



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NOTE

THE Editor desires especially to acknowledge assistance in granting the use of original material, and for helpful advice and suggestion, to Professor Brander Matthews of Columbia University, to Mrs. Anna Katherine Green Rohlf, to Cleveland Moffett, to Arthur Reeve, creator of "Craig Kennedy," to Wilbur Daniel Steele, to Ralph Adams Cram, to Chester Bailey Fernald, to Brian Brown, to Mrs. Lillian M. Robins of the publisher's office, and to Charles E. Farrington of the Brooklyn Public Library.



FOREWORD

THERE is an intermediate ground between our knowledge of life and the unknown which is readily conceived as covered by the term *mysticism*. Mystery stories of high rank often fall under this general classification. They are neither of earth, heaven nor Hades, but may partake of either. In the hands of a master they present at times a rare, if even upon occasion, unduly thrilling—æsthetic charm. The examples which it has been possible to gather within the space of this volume are offered as the best of their type.

The humourist, thank heaven, we have always with us. Spectres cannot fright him, nor mundane terrors deflect him from his path. He takes nothing either in earth or heaven seriously, as is his God-given right. Some of the best examples of what he has done in the general field of mystery are presented here for the first time in any collection.

JOSEPH LEWIS FRENCH.

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