

THE HUMAN CHORD. By ALGERNON BLACKWOOD.

If we were right in suggestion as we did in September, that Mr Edgar Jepson had stolen fire from Mr Blackwood, we must now admit that Mr Blackwood has got more than even. For the "Human Chord" has a plot so like that of No. 19 that we can hardly help thinking that Mr Blackwood must have been studying the methods of William Somerset Maugham, Esq., M.D. In both books we have a lonely place, and a strong man of the magician type, and the beautiful young lady, and the nice young gentleman, who agree after a little experience that it is much better to give up any aspiration higher than that of checking race suicide. Even the incidents in the "Human Chord" suggest "No. 19." The horrible creature coming out of the dark is very like Mr Blackwood's personified sounds, and the final smash-up is of very much the same type. Mr Blackwood's other sources are the Qabalah, which he appears to have taken from the preface to Mathers, and if he had only added to his library a shilling handbook on sound, he would have avoided some of the more absurd blunders. The distinguishing difference between "No. 19" and the "Human Chord," is that Edgar Jepson is a first-rate story-teller, while Algernon Blackwood is suffering from indigestion brought on by a surfeit of ill-cooked Theosophy. The theories spring up and choke the narrative, and it becometh unfruitful.

GEORGOS.