

TITLE

Telepathic Hallucinations, The New View of Ghosts

AUTHOR

Frank Podmore ([5 February 1856](#) - [14 August 1910](#)) was an [English](#) author, founding member of the [Fabian Society](#), and writer on psychic matters. See [wikipedia](#) entry. Author of " Mesmerism and Christian Science" "The Naturalisation of the Supernatural" etc.

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DESCRIPTION

"Do YOU believe in Ghosts ? Most educated men nowadays, it may be anticipated, would answer, No.

A majority, or at lowest, a substantial minority of educated Europeans, at any date within the last two hundred years, would probably have given a similar answer had the question been put to them. But by the greater number of the human race at the present day, and by learned and unlearned, civilised and uncivilised alike, at any previous period in the world's history, an answer would unhesitatingly have been returned in the affirmative. In fact the belief in ghosts has been so widespread that it may almost be claimed as universal. The very conception of a future life is intimately bound up with the belief; it has left its traces on all the religions in the world. The elaborate arrangements for embalming the dead amongst the Egyptians, the offerings to the dead which formed part of the funeral ceremonies in early civilisations, and are still found throughout a great part of the world at the present day, are obviously associated with the belief or at least the hope of the survival of a quasi-material soul—a soul having form and substance, appetites and desires. Among the Egyptians the soul which was weighed in the balance and found wanting was doomed to be devoured by the Eater of the Dead....."

LANGUAGE: English

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TELEPATHIC HALLUCINATIONS :

The New View of Ghosts

BY

FRANK PODMORE,

*Author of "Mesmerism and Christian Science,"
"The Naturalisation of the Supernatural," etc.*

Illustrated



LONDON

MILNER & COMPANY LIMITED, PATERNOSTER ROW,
AND RAGLAN WORKS, HALIFAX.

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Telepathic Hallucinations :

THE NEW VIEW OF GHOSTS.



CHAPTER I

SOME RECENT GHOST STORIES.

Do you believe in Ghosts? Most educated men nowadays, it may be anticipated, would answer, No. A majority, or at lowest, a substantial minority of educated Europeans, at any date within the last two hundred years, would probably have given a similar answer had the question been put to them. But by the greater number of the human race at the present day, and by learned and unlearned, civilised and uncivilised alike, at any previous period in the world's history, an answer would unhesitatingly have been returned in the affirmative. In fact the belief in ghosts has been so widespread that it may almost be claimed as universal. The very conception of a future life is intimately bound up with the belief; it has left its traces on all the religions in the world. The elaborate arrangements for embalming the dead amongst the Egyptians, the offerings to the dead which formed part of the funeral ceremonies in early civilisations, and are still found throughout a great part of the world at the present day, are obviously associated with the belief or at least the hope of the survival of a quasi-material soul—a soul having form and substance, appetites and desires. Among the Egyptians the soul which was weighed in the balance and found wanting was doomed to be devoured by the Eater of the Dead. The Homeric ghosts were thin squeaking shadows, anæmic extracts of the heroes whose names they once bore, thronging to

CHAPTER II

GHOSTS AS HALLUCINATIONS

IN the preceding chapter we have given a few examples, selected from many hundreds of similar narratives communicated to the Society for Psychical Research within the last thirty years. From the mere quantity alone the case for the ghost would seem to be much better than the case for the sea serpent. But if we examine the quality of the evidence, we find its superiority still more marked. Here we have to do, not with credulous and irresponsible sailors, but with well-educated men and women; and men and women who feel their responsibility in the matter sufficiently to allow their names to appear in attestation of their reports. Their testimony is given soberly and deliberately; it is impossible to doubt at any rate the sincerity of the witnesses. They may have been mistaken; and in any particular case it is perhaps not difficult to suggest a plausible explanation, on normal lines, of the supposed apparition. Mr. Tandy may have mistaken some outside object—bird or tree branch—for the face of his friend looking in at the window; Mrs. McAlpine may have seen a fellow guest standing in the doorway of Mr. Bryce Douglas' sitting-room; Mr. Gore Booth may have caught a hasty glimpse of the new hallboy; Frau Rieken may simply have been dreaming, and so on. But when these or similar explanations have to be applied to hundreds of stories, they are seen to be a little thin. It becomes more reasonable to believe that something out of the way was really seen in many of these cases—a figure, but not a figure of flesh and blood.

been conveyed to the percipient by a hallucination, or what is for the present purpose the same thing, a dream, occurring many days after the event. Such is Case No. 5, quoted in the first chapter, where Mr. Tandy saw the apparition of Canon Robinson. A case similar in many respects to Mr. Tandy's may be quoted here. It has the advantage of being authenticated by contemporary entries in a diary which Mr. F. W. H. Myers was allowed to inspect.

No. 24. From Mr. Cameron Grant. Mr. Grant was at the time in the interior of Brazil. On the 25th December, 1885, his diary has the following entry:—

"There was something on my mind all day and yesterday—a sense of a death or loss of some one dear to me. I spoke to E.C. [Mr. Catlin, the Manager] about it: and I don't know how it is, but as I wrote the above, [a member of Lord Z.'s family] has been constantly in my thoughts."

The next writing in the diary relating to the subject occurs on the 26th January. 1886:—

"Impression about 1 o'clock, and dreaming and reasoning therefrom on death."

On the following day, the 27th of January, there is an entry as follows:—

"Very tired, but did not sleep a wink all night. I am sure that something has happened to [a member of Lord Z.'s family]. I heard every hour strike, and kept thinking of [all the members of the family] but *not* of the dear old gentleman [*i.e.*, imagining *them* in sorrow, but not Lord Z. himself]. I got up and wanted to draw him. His features seemed before me. I had before shown Mr. Catlin a face in the *Graphic* that was like him, also that of a dead man. I had the greatest difficulty not to draw his portrait with his head forward and sunk on his breast, as if he had been sitting in a room with a window on his right hand and an old man-servant;—and then his head just went forward, and he fell asleep. Weeks ago I thought of him—some time about Christmas; and ever since I have been feeling [pity, etc., for members of family]."

Now on the 24th December, 1885, as it afterwards appeared, Lord Z. died; and on the 28th January, the day following the last entry, Mr. Grant received a Scotch newspaper from which he learnt the fact