

OUR PRIZE COMPETITION.

HAVE YOU EVER SEEN A GHOST? IF SO, GIVE YOUR EXPERIENCE ACCURATELY, OR REPEAT THE EXPERIENCE OF OTHERS UPON WHOSE ACCURACY YOU CAN RELY?

We have pleasure in awarding the prize this week to Miss Theresa McGrath, Lloyd Street South, Moss Side, Manchester.

PRIZE PAPER.

I believe I can claim to have seen a ghost in the full acceptance of the term. And yet there is nothing in my story to feed any morbid desire for creepy sensations. There were no jangling chains nor swishing draperies to make my hair stand on end; no mysterious knocks to quicken the beating of my heart; no pattering footsteps approaching from incalculable distance to fill me with apprehension. No, indeed, because to me a ghost is not really a fearsome thing to be dreaded, but the phenomenon which results from the relation of magnetic influences to the sub-conscious mind. And the ghost I saw was the apparition of my dearest friend, from whom I was parted by the depths of a mighty ocean and the breadth of half a continent. Since I cannot enlarge on the actual vision which came to me, I will give an account of the details which seem to be connected with it.

At the time it occurred I was a probationer nurse, and on duty in the wards at night. During the day I slept in a room that was divided from another by means of a low partition which did not prevent conversation between the occupants, although otherwise there was privacy. One day my colleague said she was going out, and that she would post a letter I had been writing if it was ready. My letter was finished, but curiously enough I felt a reluctance to part with it. I explained to Nurse that, having written a very mopey letter to my friend because of an overpowering feeling that something was wrong, I hesitated to send it on such a long journey (United States), and would wait to see if I could write something in a more cheerful mood.

The next day I went to bed with my letter still unposted, as I had been unable to shake off the spirit of depression which had taken possession of me. Whilst the daylight was still streaming into my room, I was suddenly awakened, and sat up in bed to see my friend looking at me from the foot of my bedstead. There she was, as clear as ever I saw her in this world, and that was my last glimpse of her, living or dead. She was wearing a night-dress, and the impression was so great, that I

addressed her and asked why she was standing there. My voice must have roused the nurse in the next room, because she called out, "Who are you talking to, Nurse? Have you seen a ghost?" Immediately my friend disappeared, and I answered, "Yes, I have seen the ghost of A—, and I know now that something must be wrong. She wants me." "You're a queer girl," said my colleague. "I'm too sleepy to doubt you. Tell me all about it to-morrow."

Two days afterwards news came by cable from America that my friend had succumbed under anæsthetic, whilst undergoing an operation for appendicitis.

I do not touch upon my grief at that period, the object now being to prove the authenticity of ghostly visitants.

I never discovered if my friend was living at the time she appeared to me, but my firm opinion is that she must have been; that the keen desire she felt for the presence of loving friends instead of strangers, mingled with the poignant despair upon hearing a further operation was necessary (it was the second in twenty-four hours), resulted in telepathic communication with a responsive mind, which culminated in the apparition.

The effect of unknown influences on the human mind is certainly a study for psychologists. What we call our "inclination" is but the conscious acknowledgment of this sub-conscious response to unknown attractions.

It seems clear to me that intuition is the sixth sense, and that it is the master sense. The five acknowledged senses are carnal and belong to our conscious mind, whilst the sixth sense is purely intellectual and integrally bound up with the spiritual or sub-conscious mind.

Its full development depends upon the subjugation of the five senses and the striving after magnetic influences through such forces as imagination, memory, and conscience or reasoning power.

Consequently, we find it highly developed in persons who have lived through harsh experiences, especially in those who have been forced in their youth to cultivate self-control. This in itself is sufficient to cause inward reflection, and improves the imagination, the memory, and the conscience.

All this may not seem to have much to do with a ghost story, but it is a brief explanation of my conception of the spiritual. The sub-conscious mind is the soul; and intuition, besides being the highest and most delightful sense, is the key to immortality.

All that has been done for progress in the

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