

last, has now made public the fact that while at the British College her husband, Mr Hewat McKenzie, made a secret examination of Hope's bag and found in it a flash lamp with bulb attachment, some cut out photographic heads and some hair. In a discussion after the discovery, Mr McKenzie and myself were in no doubt whatever that Hope had been using similar apparatus for the production of his results, although Mr McKenzie was still definitely of the opinion that Hope *had* at times produced genuine psychic effects.

Mr McKenzie's suspicions were aroused by the fact that after the Price-Hope case of 1922, all the extras secured by Hope at the British College, on their specially marked plates, were of the "switch" or flash-light type. The use of a flash lamp had been discussed on many occasions and it was to settle his doubts that Mr McKenzie made an examination of Hope's bag. Certain other events had tended to increase Mr McKenzie's suspicions, such as the fact that Hope's bag was always locked and specially placed. My view is that it was only right for this examination to have been made and for the facts to be placed before the public.

It would appear from my discussion with some of Hope's most strenuous supporters that even *they* believe he deceived. My own considered opinion is that in no single instance did I obtain with Hope a genuine psychic effect.

Yours, etc.,

FRED BARLOW.

REVIEWS

T. BRAILSFORD ROBERTSON, PH.D., D.SC., *A Note Book*. 8vo, pp. viii. 39, 2 ill. Adelaide: The Hassell Press, 1932.

This little book consists of notes made by the late Prof. T. B. Robertson, in which he recorded for his own use certain experiences and certain speculations to which they had given rise in his mind. Prof. Robertson, who was a bio-chemist of distinction and the author of *The Physial Chemistry of the Proteins* (1912), *The Principles of Bio-Chemistry* (1918), and *The Chemical Basis of Growth and Senescence* (1923), died in January 1930 at the age of forty-five. This note-book is now published by his wife, Mrs Jane W. Robertson.

The book is divided into three parts. The second, which deals with a visit to Pavlov's laboratory in St Petersburg in 1914, is of no special interest from the point of view of psychical research. The first records eight cases of apparent telepathy, mostly between Prof. Robertson and his wife, which took place in the latter part of 1913 and the earlier part of 1914. None of them separately is particularly striking, but Prof. Robertson says in Part III that the continual accumulation of such experiences persuaded him that

telepathy is a fact. Sometimes these coincidences would occur almost hourly for days at a time, and then weeks would elapse without an instance being noticed.

In connection with these apparently telepathic phenomena, Prof. Robertson generally recorded the train of thought in his own mind which had led up to his share in the coincidence. Unfortunately in most cases he did not investigate, or at any rate did not record, the train of thought in Mrs Robertson's mind which had led up to her share in the coincidence.

In Part III Prof. Robertson states that repeated personal experience has convinced him that premonition, as well as telepathy, is a fact. His account of his own premonitory experiences is extremely interesting. They always took place during sleep, and they were nearly always forewarnings of *disagreeable* events. The few exceptions to the latter rule were, he says, "of an indescribably different character." The events foreseen were of three kinds, viz. (a) trivial personal misfortunes, (b) serious personal dangers, and (c) public disasters. The provisions of serious events, both private and public, were a combination of two radically different kinds of experience. One of these was a vague foreboding of danger or disaster; the other was an extremely vivid visual image of certain details in the future situation. Prof. Robertson's statements are not absolutely unambiguous, but I understand him to say that the vague foreboding and the definite visual image would both recur many times and would not necessarily be connected by him. But finally a situation would arise which was dangerous or disastrous, and in which there was some outstanding detail of a quite characteristic kind corresponding to the visual image. Afterwards this visual image would not recur. He makes the important remark that the emotional tone (apprehension, anger, etc.) of his premonitions was proportional, not to the objective danger or inconvenience of the foreseen event, but to the degree of emotion which the latter aroused in him when it actually took place. Thus the provision of an event which was not really dangerous, but which aroused great fear when it happened, would be an experience of strong apprehension. And the provision of an event which was really dangerous, but which aroused no great fear when it happened, would be an emotionally unimpressive experience. The vividness of visual factor was, however, quite independent of these conditions.

Two interesting examples are given. One was an apprehension of grave personal danger associated with a vivid visual image of a long strip of sand and a struggle to escape from something. In September 1915 he nearly lost his life while bathing at Bolinas, California; and he identified the visual image with the sand-pit at Bolinas. Just before starting for Bolinas he had handed a folded

paper to Mrs Robertson, asking her not to read it till they had returned. She put it into a sealed envelope. After the adventure she read it, and found that he had written that they would both be in great danger at Bolinas, and would nearly lose their lives. Mrs Robertson was swimming with him when he was nearly drowned by a strong current, though it is not quite clear from her statement that they were *both* in danger.

The other example refers to the war of 1914 to 1918. He had had an intense and prolonged but vague premonition of impending public disaster, accompanied by a vivid visual image of the arrival of an army at a certain village. And, in connection with this visual image, he had a terrifying impression of "absolutely ruthless and brutal assertion of power". He claims that he afterwards identified his visual image with photographs of Dinant. He admits that he had not beforehand connected the vague presentiment of public disaster with the vivid visual image. This being so, it would seem that the only part of the story which is of much importance as evidence for prevision is the identification of the vivid visual image of a town being entered by a hostile army with the photographs of Dinant. The vague expectation of a great public disaster may well have been quite irrelevant. For Prof. Robertson was constantly having vague apprehensions of unpleasant events, and the contemporary political situation in 1914 was (and has been ever since) such as to provide ample cause for apprehending grave public disaster in the near future.

Accepting telepathy and prevision as facts, Prof. Robertson made and recorded certain speculations to account for them. These are too briefly stated to be easily grasped or profitably discussed in detail. He appears to have held that the physiological basis of telepathic experiences is oxidation-processes in the brain; that such a process in one brain can set up a corresponding process in another brain by some kind of disturbance which travels through an intervening medium; that we might discover the nature of these chemical processes, and make artificial chemical systems in which they could be induced; and that such artificial systems could then be used to record and to experiment with the telepathic influence. He had proposed to carry out experiments on these lines, but he would appear not to have done so. It is difficult to see that this suggestion, even if it were found to be useful as a hypothesis for guiding investigations on telepathy, could throw any light on prevision.

C. D. BROAD.