

APPENDIX II. TO MRS. SIDGWICK'S PAPER ON  
PROFESSOR MURRAY'S EXPERIMENTS IN  
THOUGHT-TRANSFERENCE.

THE experiments made on December 6 and 7, 1924, of which the record is given below, are of interest for three reasons. In the first place, only two (Mr. G. W. Balfour and Mr. Basil Murray) of the company had been present at any of the previous experiments; in the second place, these are two of the very rare occasions on which experiments have been attempted elsewhere than in Professor Murray's own home or home-circle; and in the third place, three out of the five successes or partial successes on December 6, 1924, were obtained when the subject had been chosen by some one who had never been present before at experiments of Professor Murray's.

Mr. Basil Murray was asked to choose the subject of the first three experiments on December 6, because, the surroundings being strange, it was thought that there would be a better chance of success if a beginning were made with an agent to whom Professor Murray was accustomed.

The experiments on December 7, 1924, failed,—probably because the conditions were unfavourable. It should be noted that in one instance Professor Murray's impressions seem to have been influenced by things that had happened earlier in the day.

*December 6, 1924.*

FISHERS HILL, WOKING

*Present*—LADY BETTY BALFOUR, MRS. HENRY SIDGWICK,  
MISS LEONORA PIDDINGTON, MESSRS. G. W. BALFOUR,  
BASIL MURRAY, J. G. PIDDINGTON, LORD BALFOUR,  
AND PROFESSOR G. MURRAY.

While the subject of each experiment was being chosen and recorded Professor Murray waited in the dining-room.

the rest of the company being in the drawing-room. During his absence the drawing-room door was shut on every occasion, and on the first occasion the dining-room door was also shut. On subsequent occasions the dining-room door was left open. When the subject of the experiment had been chosen and recorded, Mrs. Sidgwick on each occasion but one left the drawing-room in order to summon Professor Murray. The drawing-room is separated from the dining-room by another room about thirty-six feet in length. While the subject was being chosen and recorded Professor Murray was separated by at least forty-six feet from the person nearest to the drawing-room door. The account of the subject chosen was dictated to the recorder in a quiet tone of voice: in fact in so quiet a tone that more than once the recorder had to ask for words to be repeated. On each occasion Professor Murray held the hand of the person who had chosen the subject. J. G. Piddington acted as recorder of all the experiments except the 9th, which was recorded by Basil Murray.

During two, if not three, of the first three experiments—all of which failed—there was talking among the experimenters after the subject had been written down, it not having been sufficiently realised at first that talking or other kind of noise or disturbance is thought to diminish the chances of success.

*First Experiment, 9.51 p.m.*

*Subject (chosen by Basil Murray).* "I'm thinking of Mussolini interviewing a number of Press correspondents at Rome. They were waiting in a large room, and he was three-quarters of an hour late, and eventually arrived with eight Fascisti walking backwards bowing to him as he came in."

PROFESSOR MURRAY. "I don't think I shall get anything.

I've a faint impression of Sir Basil Zaharoff."

*Second Experiment, 10.1 p.m.*

*Subject (chosen by Basil Murray).* "I'm thinking of David Copperfield and Peggotty driving in the 'bus."

PROFESSOR MURRAY. "No."

*Third Experiment, 10.4 p.m.*

*Subject (chosen by Basil Murray).* "I'm thinking of Lord Cecil reading the Covenant at the Council at the last Assembly, on the occasion of the Corfu incident, to the Italians and Greeks."

PROFESSOR MURRAY. "No."

At this point Professor Murray said he thought he would not be successful and had better stop. Piddington asked him to have one more try.

*Fourth Experiment, 10.5 p.m.*

*Subject (chosen by J. G. Piddington, who, as he records it, reads it out).* "I'm thinking of Queen Victoria when she learnt that she was next in succession to the throne saying 'I will be good'."

PROFESSOR MURRAY. "It's something in a book. No. it's a picture. It's the news coming to Queen Victoria that she is Queen."

*Fifth Experiment, 10.10 p.m.*

*Subject (chosen by J. G. Piddington, who, as he records it, reads it out).* "I'm thinking of Napoleon on the retreat from Moscow with Murat riding by his side."

PROFESSOR MURRAY. "No impression."

*Sixth Experiment, 10.12 p.m.*

*Subject (chosen by Basil Murray).*

"He stood and heard the steeple  
Sprinkle the quarters on the morning town:  
'One, two, three, four,  
On market place and people  
It tossed them down.'"

PROFESSOR MURRAY. "This is poetry" (said as he entered the room). (Pause). "De dum de dum de steeple de dum de dum the town, one two three four. Yes, I don't know the thing, but I rather think it's something like 'He stood and heard the steeple something and something on the dreaming town something down.'"

*Note.*—These same lines had been chosen several years before for an experiment, and the experiment had partially succeeded. See page 233 above.

*Seventh Experiment, 10.20 p.m.*

*Subject* (chosen by Basil Murray). "I'm thinking of a scene in Galsworthy's *The White Monkey*, where Soames Forsyte is defying a shareholders' meeting.

PROFESSOR MURRAY. "I don't think I shall get it. Faint impression of a line of Homer."

*Eighth Experiment, 10.24 p.m.*

*Subject* (chosen by Basil Murray). "I'm thinking of my sister Rosalind riding on a grey horse across Port Meadow with Rupert Brooke."

PROFESSOR MURRAY. "It's galloping—somebody galloping on grass over—I should say Port Meadow. It's (pause) I should think it was Rosalind."

BASIL MURRAY. "Yes, anyone with her?"

PROFESSOR MURRAY. "I should be guessing. Mr. Z. I should say it was a grey horse."

BASIL MURRAY. "That's odd, because I was thinking of Mr. Z. I very nearly said that she was riding a dead horse."

PROFESSOR MURRAY. "I very nearly said 'a dead horse.'"

*Note.*—Mr. Z. was a horse-dealer who sold a friend of the Murrays a dead horse.

*Ninth Experiment.*

*Subject* (chosen by J. G. Piddington). "I'm thinking of Thomas à Becket being murdered in Canterbury Cathedral."

PROFESSOR MURRAY. "This is something rather horrible" (spoken at once on entering the room). "Oh! (Pause). It's some one being murdered in a church or something like that. (Pause.) I first thought it was something in the Bolshevik revolution, but I'm sure it isn't Russian. Oh! I should think it was the murder of Thomas à Becket."

*Note.*—When the experiment was over, Piddington said that he had thought of including in the subject "and saying 'Into thy hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit'"; but not being sure whether à Becket had said these words, he did not include them; but nevertheless he had thought of the text during the experiment. Professor Murray said he had had no impression of the text.

When the ninth experiment was over Professor Murray suggested that Lord Balfour should choose the subject of the next experiment.

*Tenth Experiment, 10.37 p.m.*

*Subject (chosen by Lord Balfour).* "I'm thinking of Robert Walpole talking Latin to George I."

PROFESSOR MURRAY (speaking as he enters the room). "Something Eighteenth Century." (Here Lord Balfour nodded assent.) "I don't think I shall quite get it exactly. Doctor Johnson meeting George III. in the King's Library; but I'm sure he's talking Latin to him—which he didn't do. I don't think I shall get it right. Wait. I've nearly got it. Eighteenth Century. Somebody talking Latin to a king."

*December 7, 1924.*

#### FISHERS HILL, WOKING

*Present*—MRS. HENRY SIDGWICK, HON. MRS. G. COLE, MISS L. PIDDINGTON, MESSRS. G. W. BALFOUR, BASIL MURRAY, J. G. PIDDINGTON, LORD BALFOUR, AND PROFESSOR G. MURRAY.

Conditions the same as on December 6, 1924, except that on every occasion the dining-room door, as well as the drawing-room door, was shut, and that Professor Murray was summoned back to the drawing-room by Miss Piddington instead of by Mrs. Sidgwick.

When asked whether he would be willing to try further experiments Professor Murray had said he would be quite willing to do so, but that he anticipated failure, as he was not in the tranquil and serene mood favourable to success. The day had been a disturbing one for the whole party, as in the morning Lady Betty Balfour had broken her leg.

*First Experiment, 9.32 p.m.*

*Subject (chosen by Basil Murray).*

"I was the man the Duke spoke to;

I helped the Duchess to cast off his yoke, too."

[BROWNING, *The Flight of the Duchess.*]

PROFESSOR MURRAY. "Is it Basil? I don't expect this is right. The only thing I'm getting is enormous tropical forests."

BASIL MURRAY. "I was thinking of 'Ours is a great wild country.'" [i.e. the first line of the passage in the poem which describes the Duke's country:—which, however, is not a tropical one.]

PROFESSOR MURRAY. "I also had the feeling of a tree falling down."

*Note.*—Earlier in the day there had been conversation about tropical forests; and the accident to Lady Betty Balfour had been in part caused by the fall of the rotten branch of a tree.

*Second Experiment, 9.37 p.m.*

*Subject (chosen by Basil Murray).* "I'm thinking of my sister throwing a ball to Jack Medley at a terrace at Alassio, and of him falling over backwards in the attempt to catch it—over the edge of the terrace."

PROFESSOR MURRAY. "No. Nothing at all."

*Third Experiment.*

*Subject (chosen by J. G. Piddington).* "Sir Walter Raleigh in a bad temper refusing to spread his cloak before Queen Elizabeth."

PROFESSOR MURRAY. "I thought for a moment I should get that. No."

J. G. PIDDINGTON. "Did you get anything?"

PROFESSOR MURRAY. "I got a momentary impression of the Duke of Wellington."

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