PERPLEXITIES

At the Russell Project the job of writing commentaries and annotations is undertaken with tireless zeal. But occasionally there are references that—at least temporarily—defeat even the most assiduous efforts. It is therefore proposed that in this column I set before you some of these problems in order to ask your aid in unriddling the mysteries. Will you help? Unfortunately, no pecuniary rewards can be promised. But we do promise to print in subsequent issues the name of the person who provides the answer that the editors judge the most plausible, as well as the answer itself. It is a chance to participate in the excitement and the frustration of the scholarly detective work that is performed here on a daily basis. In the most difficult cases I am sure that the editors would be grateful for even a clue, however tenuous, of places they might look themselves for the answers. Here then are some of the more vexing problems.

I. "A Locked Diary" (1890–94)

Of all the material that will form Volume 1, the greatest single editorial challenge has been the journal Russell kept between 1890–94. Because this is a private document, the references are often exceedingly cryptic. People are sometimes noted only by initials and often there is little help from the context to provide clues. Many names, both of the enduringly famous and the ephemeral, are crowded into the pages. Of course, this is the very reason that the journal is such a valuable source of information about the milieu in which Russell grew up.

Among those who have eluded identification are people who are known only as tennis partners. Russell played the game with "Fred" on 24 May 1890. In a later entry, he says that he played with F. G. H. Is this Fred too? There is also a reference to having played with Dickens, a person who is introduced as a friend of Fred!

Another tennis partner is Miss Fane. One might expect that she would turn out to be one of the five daughters of Russell's Aunt Louisa Ponsonby-Fane. But all of these cousins were either married or dead by this time. Who then can she be?

Russell also plays tennis with Miss Fraser. She was probably one of the two daughters of Alexander Campbell Fraser, the Scottish philosopher.

A few more people who have hitherto proven unidentifiable are:

1. Irish people called Dennehy. These are friends of a friend, too, but this time there is *no* connection with Fred.
2. The Moretons at Petersham. Is this a reference to people or to a place?

Once again, the context does not seem very helpful. There was a Punch-and-Judy show which Russell's younger cousin attended.

3. It has been impossible thus far to determine who Miss Stephens was. She figures in a dream described in the entry for 25 August 1893. In the dream, she flirted "furiously" with Russell until he was driven to embrace her.
4. At a dinner on 10 June 1890 a person known only as "Clarke" makes an appearance. He is accompanied by Swift MacNeill, a leading Irish M.P. This dinner occurs the week of William O'Brien's wedding. For these reasons, Clarke may have had some connection with the Irish Nationalist Party.

There are some people who have been easily identified, but not all the desired information has been found. Lady Scott is known, of course, to be Frank Russell's first mother-in-law. But what are the dates of her birth and death? Alice Augusta Lane-Fox-Pitt-Rivers is Russell's cousin. For her we need a birth date.

In the same journal, there are some puzzling allusions. The first is difficult because it is intensely personal. Russell writes on his birthday about having received a letter from his brother (written at Granny's prompting). Russell expresses regret over "the old affair of the breakfast letter". Why? The second looks like a quotation from some well-known source: "Et depuis je ne sens plus de joie". But what is the source? To date it has also been impossible to trace "a very funny piece about a bishop and a caterpillar". (I have, however, found a poem about a cardinal and a crow.) The story was told by an elocutionist named Samuel Brandram. It may or may not be helpful to know that in the same performance he gave recitals from *Henry V*, Macaulay's "Horatius", and Benjamin Franklin's *Poor Richard's Almanack*.

II. Who compared metaphysics to Ali Baba's brother?

The following query comes from Nicholas Griffin.

The essay, "On the Distinction between the Psychological and Metaphysical Points of View", was written while Russell was an undergraduate student, probably in 1894 for his tutor, James Ward. In it Russell argues that experience as given does not distinguish between the internal image (or "subjective idea") and its external correlate (or "objective reference"). Thus in seeing a coin at an angle, for example, in the experience as given we don't distinguish between the actual roundness of the coin itself and the apparent oval shape which the subjective visual image has as a result of perspective. However, so Russell argues, in developing individual sci-

ences it becomes necessary to separate these two aspects of experience, so that the objective reference becomes the subject-matter of Physics and the subjective idea the subject-matter of Psychology. Finally, in good Idealist manner, Russell argues that it is the task of Metaphysics to correct the imperfections and partialities of particular sciences and thus, in this case, to reunite the objective with the subjective aspect of experience.

Russell puts the point this way: "Metaphysics endeavour, somewhat lamely, it is feared, to undo the work of thought and restore the original concrete unity: or, as has been said, to stitch Cassim together again after the robbers have hewn him asunder." This last reference has defied our best efforts. Cassim is easy, he was Ali Baba's brother in the *Arabian Nights* whom the forty thieves chopped in pieces. But who compared metaphysics to Ali Baba's brother? Russell's "as has been said" clearly suggests someone else did—and, in any case, we would hope that no philosophy undergraduate would make such a comparison on his own responsibility.

III. Looking ahead to Volume 12

1. In a journal entry for 13 November 1902, Russell records a conversation with an acquaintance: "She began talking of a Frenchman who has written on 'les femmes Célibataires en Angleterre'—a title which she described in a crescendo of horror." Who is this "Frenchman" and what is known about this book?

2. In "International Competition" (1904), a letter to the *Spectator*, Russell says that Richard Seddon had described "Protectionist countries as heaven and England as hell for workmen." We have been unable to find this quotation from a speech by Seddon, the Prime Minister of New Zealand—a speech most likely made in 1903, or possibly 1902.

3. In "Literature of the Fiscal Controversy" (1904) he speaks of Krupp having "succeeded in destroying unions". What had he destroyed by then? Is this allegation accurate?—M. M.