

Je suis moi-même la matière de mon Essai.

I owe my title to long dead French philosopher Michel de Montaigne: I owe my own *matière* - the substance of my career and much of the course of my adult life - to World War Two and the Royal Navy. Enlistment and service in the latter led me into the exciting world of Radar, which further led, after demob., to an Electrical Engineering degree, and to a professional life as an Instrumentation Engineer in the embryonic nuclear industry. But now, in my late seventies, I look back at a career that was halted in mid-flight, destroyed in fact, by modern medicine. Cryptosporidia were not isolated as parasitic protozoa for a number of years after I succumbed to a devastating episode of uncontrollable diarrhoea, but are now most certainly believed to have been its cause. At the time, with no identifiable bug in my 'samples', it was judged that I had an 'anxiety neurosis', 'chronic' no less, and Librium was deemed to be the panacea for my ills. I have written of this and all that followed in complete and distressing detail in my book*. Sufficient now to relate that after a most severe depression, which modern psychiatry assures me resulted from the prolonged drug regime and other 'therapies' to which I was subjected, I retired very prematurely. But life has many surprises, for I recovered to start an entirely new life whose devious path has led me to write to you now.

I live in a very tranquil and pollution-free environment and that, coupled with the intelligent, sustained support of my local G.P., ensured that my emergence from a continuous and assorted drug intake that had spanned seventeen years, was comparatively painless. So, at fifty-one, free and financially independent, I had a new life before me. Much that I did involved new people, learning new crafts, developing the potential of my smallholding. But my mind is forever inquisitive, questing, and an earlier brief interest in dowsing was rekindled by books by Dr Bruce Copen - *The Practical Pendulum* and *Dowsing From Maps*.

Everything that the books described worked for me, except the explanations of how dowsing works. The fact that I could dowse over a piece of paper and get verifiable results made me look for alternative explanations to those given. My parents and grandparents had been actively involved in spiritualism, though I had fought shy of the family activity. However, I was aware of the existence of independently acting spirits, and I was convinced that the control of the pendulum was spiritual. Yes, raise your hands in horror, I did what I now knew was stupid, nay *dangerous*, I made an alphabet diagram, and I was away. Space does not allow for detail, and you can read of all that happened in my book. But eventually one day, doing what I had been asked to do through communication via the pendulum, namely sit and quietly meditate, a 'presence' moved from the space in front of me, *into* me. From that day, in 1979, I have never been free from mental intrusion - voices and other subliminal processes - nor from *physical* intrusion, which I can now recognise in all its subtlety.

As 1979 changed to 1980 I went through a very disturbed and traumatic time, lasting no more than three weeks, but in those three weeks I experienced the full gamut of spiritual interactivity from the most demanding, commanding, dominating, terrorising, malevolence to the ultimate manifestation of spiritual inspiration, warmth, encouragement and benevolence. Returning to

comparative stability, I moved forward in increasing composure and control, and with a mind constantly fuelled and refuelled by a desire to *know*, which, I believe, is part of my innate make-up, and is also partly the result of my technical life from the age of eighteen. For my own benefit, and to be able to make a coherent story to tell to others, I have recorded much that has happened over the last twenty years. I have identified over thirty 'ploys' that intruding spirits use, which, if analysed, would yield a number of 'sub-ploys'. It is only recently that I have seen written the definitions of what are called in psychiatry the 'first-rank' symptoms of schizophrenia, and I can say without equivocation that I have experienced all of them (and possibly more) without being *ill* from these causes. And yet, read any book on schizophrenia which a layman is capable of understanding and you will see that in reality the condition defies definition; indeed, much will depend, for instance, on which side of the Atlantic you should find yourself.

And of course, I read knowing what I know, and experiencing what I have experienced, and my heart cries out at the anguish of all the people being treated for a condition whose cause and cure defy research; treated, if that is the word, with substances that are mind-altering, addictive, emotion suppressing; substances that succeed in creating zombies out of intelligent, sensitive individuals. Writing in 1990 in his book *Schizophrenia Genesis* Irving J. Gottesman expresses the belief that a cure would be found 'before the end of the decade'. Well, the decade has passed and ended. Cure? When my feet were on the first rung of the ladder of my career as a Professional Engineer in Government Service, my then boss, a recently retired war-time Lieutenant Colonel and Scottish baronet, laid it on the line for me - "Vincent," he said, and I can still see the famous chin jutting and ginger moustache bristling, "Vincent; always remember the tortoise; it never gets anywhere without sticking its neck out!"

I have never forgotten J-F; not his vigorous character, nor his words. Thus, sticking my neck out, I say this: if Dr. Gottesman had written 'before the end of the next *millennium*' he would still have been wrong. Unless and until psychiatrists have experienced what I and others like me have experienced, *knowing as it happened*, as I had know, what (who) was the cause; unless and until they truly *listen* to the content of what the individuals in front of them are actually *saying*, listening to its content and not treating it as the outpouring of a diseased mind - until this happens not much progress will be achieved in the *real* care and rehabilitation of individuals dubbed schizophrenic through the conventional medical route.

As I read books such as the one that I have quoted, one fact never fails to stand out - essentially the world of psychiatric research seems to be an incestuous Caucus Race "...just keep running in a circle; there's no start, no finish - and everyone is a winner". Author 'A' quotes 'B' and 'C', with whom he partially agrees, 'D', who is totally wrong, 'E,F,G et al' whose work he applauds and which he cites to complement what appears to be his one original contribution, and on and on.... Yes, I know; I am probably maligning many sincere workers in the field, but I have suffered gravely at the hands of psychiatry and psychiatrists and my losses have been considerable and I plead special cause. For my title, I quoted Michel de Montaigne; he has also something appropriate to say on this score - "There is more ado to interpret interpretations than to interpret things, and more books upon books than upon all other subjects. We do nothing but comment upon one another." That was in the sixteenth century; how much more appropriate are his words now!

With the knowledge that the intrusions derive from a spiritual domain must likewise come the acceptance that they are also the product of an intelligence of considerable magnitude. But, in spite of my experiences at the interface with this domain, I feel as I do when I stand knee deep in the sea on my nearby shore. I know that there are myriads of fish and a whole host of other creatures below the surging surface of the water, but I haven't, never will have, the remotest conception of what it is like to have my existence in that element, let alone look through its eye with the mind of a fish. Since time immemorial, many have stood at the edge of this allegorical interface between visible humanity and invisible spirit, and many and varied are the religions and philosophies that have emerged. For myself, and from my experience, I acknowledge the existence and presence of a huge spiritual resource, the intelligence that resides within it and the intellectual and physical powers that are applied for good and evil, then, having stood knee deep in this veritable ocean, I dry my feet and continue living on dry land.

But like all good explorers, I observe and record, and this I began to do with a new insight, for in 1982, and under the tutelage of renowned healer Bruce Macmanaway, I found that I had the talent to heal, and this, the healing route, is the one that I have followed ever since, but, withal, with the mind and perception of an engineer. Much insight has arrived through that combination as I have observed how we react with our natural and man-made environment, but more than that I have been able to observe through experience just how the depleting and undermining influences of our environment are exploited by spiritual malevolence. This is a topic that, as with all of the others upon which I touch, I describe and explore fully within my book, which I strongly urge you to read.