

SOME DOWSING METHODS

By H. O. BUSBY

A short description of the methods adopted by certain dowsers in this country, Australia, may be of interest to the readers of the "Journal" who may wish to try them.

One dowser, a Mr. Murphy, of Koorawatha, N.S.W., who died some years ago, was quite an advanced worker and had thought out matters which are now receiving attention in Europe, *e.g.*, he claimed to be able to diagnose certain ailments and to analyse minerals with the aid of his rod.

The rod he used was a piece of copper tubing shaped thus:—



the upward end being flared out into a small cup, in which was placed his "sample." He used the sample method generally. The other end was held in his right hand, which was kept close into the centre of his body, the cup end being forward. The presence of water, or whatever the sought-for substance might be, was indicated by the forward end swinging to, and following, the edge of the stream, &c., and when directly over the object the rod swung from side to side.

I was not acquainted with Mr. Murphy, but a friend who knew him well and worked with him gave me this information relating to him. On one occasion Mr. Murphy was in South Australia, dowsing for water, when a stud-sheep farmer was faced with a problem which he could not solve and decided to enlist the assistance of Mr. Murphy. A buyer for flock rams had come, and after inspecting certain sires, said that he would purchase the progeny of a certain one of them. Now it is practically impossible to keep track of the bulk flock rams which may number hundreds, or even thousands, on a large property. Special studs are in quite a different category. These young flock rams are usually kept in quite a large flock and are sold for general flock purposes, so general records are kept but not individual ones.

The owner could not say which was the progeny of the sire in question as they were mixed with many others so Mr. Murphy was asked if he could do anything. He expressed his willingness to try, although he did not know anything about sheep. He secured a lock of wool from the required sire, placed it in the cup of his rod, and stationed himself at the side of the "race" through which the young rams passed one by one. When his

rod indicated any ram by swinging with it as it passed, he signalled to the man in charge of the drafting gate to send it to one side.

When the work was finished the buyer examined the drafted-out rams and bought them, as they exhibited the characteristics which he had noted in this particular sire.

The single-handed wire rod is used by quite a number of people. One method is to have the short end of the rod placed in a short piece of piping so that the long forward end swings freely, the piping being held in the hand. If a sample is used, it is held in a small receptacle hung on the forward end of the rod, held in the hand with the rod, or in the free hand; it does not seem to matter much what method is adopted, and each person uses what appeals to him. I have seen one dowser who used a forked rod place his sample in his mouth. I did not envy him when he emptied a small phial of crude petroleum into the same receptacle when looking for petroleum.

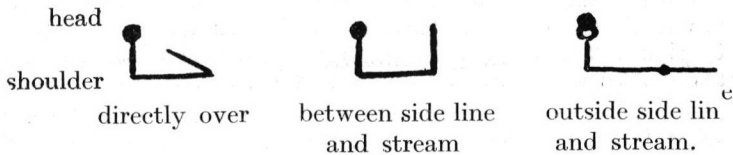
For my own purposes I prefer the plain wire rod of a fairly light gauge, 12 to 16, held directly in the hand without a holder. I bend the wire at right angles, the short end being about six inches and the long about nineteen inches. These lengths may be shorter or longer as the individual may desire.

The indications in my own case, and in others with whom I have worked, are usually of two types, and either may be used at will by a practised dowser. In one the free end appears to be attracted to the outer edges of a stream, &c., to "lines of force" in other words, given off by the object. There are other lines of force which the rod picks up, related to the object but not directly over it: *e.g.*, there is that which is sometimes referred to as the 45 degree line or side line sometimes used as an indication of depth. Mons. L'Abbé Mermet shows several of these lines relating to a stream in his book, *Comment J'Opère*, this main line being called by him "the seventh line of force, or the great parallel line."

I use the rod in this way when locating a stream, pool, or whatever I may be seeking, and then hold it upside down: *i.e.*, with the longer and horizontal part downwards. This is just a personal method. The rod will give an indication of direction even though I may be a very considerable distance away from the object: thus much walking about is eliminated as one goes directly to the spot. The free end of the rod turns in a certain direction and one follows it as though it were a compass needle. On arriving at the spot the rod appears to pick up a line of force, so that if one walks over this the rod will swing back towards it; its actions are usually very marked. If the dowser using this method is directly over the object the rod swings from side to side as though it is attracted to the lines of force at the edges alternately.

In the other method there appears to be some sort of induced attraction set up in the body when the dowser is directly over the object, or on one of the side lines, so that the free end of the rod is drawn in towards the body. I use this method when examining a stream, &c., in detail, and then hold the rod with the longer and horizontal part upwards.

The presence of these outside lines of force occasionally brings about mistakes on the part of dowzers who have taken them for actual streams. I have seen sites for wells marked on these lines, whereas the actual stream lay several yards away. I have, at times, used this second method to determine on which side of a line of force an actual stream lay; on one side the attraction will cease, while on the other—the stream side—the attraction will partly remain, *i.e.*, the rod continues to be drawn partly towards the body.



Another point which I have noted in connection with the location of sites for wells or bores is that the edges of a stream bed, *i.e.*, an old watercourse which has been buried—and many of our so-called underground streams in this country are of that type—give off quite a strong line of force although there may be no water at the edge at all, the actual water occupying quite a small portion of the defined bed. I follow a stream until it appears to open out into a pool, and mark that. I have seen bores put down in the centre of a stream as defined by a dowser and fail to get a good supply (though they sometimes improve it with pumping after a period), because the bed was rather impervious and the actual stream followed the line of least resistance, which happened to be to one side. The usual bore has a diameter of only about six inches, so it has to be accurately placed. If a pool is located it is obvious that the chances of missing the spot are lessened; one also has the advantage of drawing on an accumulation of water.

One can use what may be termed the “direct question method” in determining the position of the actual water in the stream bed. I incline towards Sir William Barrett’s definition of dowsing, “a supernormal cognitive faculty”; that it is a function of the subconscious made manifest through the movement of the rod as medium, and think that this faculty may be made to function

by direction. That there is also strong evidence for a more physical basis in some cases is undeniable, and there are probably many who prefer to regard it as a physical faculty.

Actual samples, colour samples, and what may be termed mental samples or adjustments, appear to be equally efficacious, and I have used them all. I suggest that it will be an interesting experiment for readers to try the "direct question method." Write your question: "Is there actual running water?" and hold that paper, or if you are a forked-rod worker attach the paper to the apex of your rod, and see the result. Use any question which may apply to the matter in hand. When doing this be very careful to avoid auto-suggestion. To make a success of the mental adjustment method is largely a question of personal training in mental discipline.

As a practice in the sample method take a leaf from a tree and it will be found that by using this leaf as a sample it is possible to pick out an individual tree from a number of the same kind, also that the rod will be found to work strongly while standing directly under the leaves and branches of the tree: then walk away from the tree and a strong line of force will be found at a distance from the tree which bears a relation to the height of the tree.

My own experience in dowsing leads me to think that this faculty exists in most people, but is latent in the majority, and that it is possible to cultivate it by practice. My first contact with actual practical dowsing was in South Africa about thirty years ago. A forked twig was used but I could not get the slightest result from it myself. After returning to Australia I often tried the forked rod without getting any result, and I have never yet succeeded in getting the slightest indication with this type of rod.

About fifteen years ago a man located a well site for me, using the single-handed wire. Naturally, I tried that method, also without result. I frequently tried this method over the known site and one day noticed that the rod had a slight movement. So I kept on practising, usually at night—being somewhat sensitive to possible ridicule—and in time became more adapted to the reaction, so that it was definite and clearly marked. This experience makes me think that almost anyone can become a dowser, as I was not especially gifted; in fact, quite the reverse; the faculty was decidedly latent and only aroused with difficulty.