

has even stranger implications. A three-and-a-half-year-old Indian boy, Jasbir Lal Jat, apparently died of smallpox, but revived a few hours later with a totally new personality. The 'stranger' identified himself as a man from another village who had died after eating poisoned sweets, and his detailed knowledge of the man's life convinced his parents—and later Stevenson—that he was telling the truth. The strangest feature of the case was that the man had died at about the same time the child went into his 'death trance', suggesting the complete transfer of the personality from one body to another.<sup>2</sup>

I was struck by the parallels between cases of multiple personality and those involving poltergeist activity. Another of the television programmes dealt with one of the best authenticated poltergeist cases on record, the 'Rosenheim spook'. The poltergeist played havoc with the electronic equipment in a lawyer's office; the culprit turned out to be a young clerk named Annemarie Schaberl. Yet Annemarie was clearly ignorant that she was the cause of the trouble. And this is so in the majority of poltergeist cases. (Professor Hans Bender, who investigated the Rosenheim poltergeist, emphasises the importance of 'breaking it gently' to the children who are the unconscious cause of the disturbances, to avoid frightening them.) 'Miss Beauchamp's' alter-ego, Sally, was mischievous and given to practical jokes; it is easy to imagine a disembodied Sally behaving exactly like the Rosenheim poltergeist.

I was intrigued when the producer of the programmes, Anne Owen, told me that she had been through a period when she could predict the future. Before a concert with a celebrated cellist, she had a premonition that he would break a string and asked the producer what they should do if this happened; he dismissed it as unlikely. But the string broke eight minutes before the end of the concert. (The cellist, hearing about her prediction, jumped to the conclusion that she had somehow made it happen, and refused to speak to her.) At a race meeting with her husband and some friends, she suddenly knew with certainty which horse would win the next race. Everyone rushed off and backed the horse, which won. But her husband had somehow mis-heard her and put the money on the wrong horse. Her conclusion was that such powers cannot be used for one's own profit. The number of famous psychics and 'occultists' who have died in poverty seems to bear out that judgment.

I found myself looking around for evidence that might link powers

of prediction with my 'ladder of selves' theory. Dowzers have told me that the pendulum can answer questions about the future, and I have seen convincing evidence that this is true; but dowzers rely on the divining rod or pendulum, not upon some mystical illumination. Then I came across Alan Vaughan's book, *Patterns of Prophecy*, and found the example I was looking for. Vaughan describes how, in 1965, he bought an ouija board to amuse a friend who was convalescing. When the radio announced the death of newspaper columnist Dorothy Kilgallen from a heart attack, they asked the board if this was correct; the board replied that she had died of poison. Ten days later, an inquest revealed this to be true.

One of the 'spirits' who made contact through the board identified herself as the wife of a Nantucket sea captain; she was called 'Nada'. Then, both to my fascination and fear, "Nada" got inside of my head. I could hear her voice repeating the same phrases over and over again.' Asked about this, the board replied: 'Awful consequences—possession.'

In the presence of a friend who understood such matters, another spirit called 'Z' made Vaughan write out the message: 'Each of us has a spirit while living. Do not meddle with the spirits of the dead.'

As I wrote out this message [writes Vaughan] I began to feel an energy rising up in my body and entering my brain. It pushed out both 'Nada' and 'Z'. My friends noted that my face, which had been white and pinched, suddenly flooded with colour. I felt a tremendous sense of elation and physical wellbeing. The energy grew stronger and seemed to extend beyond my body. My mind seemed to race in some extended dimension that knew no confines of time or space. For the first time, I began to sense what was going on in other people's minds, and, to my astonishment, I began to sense the future through some kind of extended awareness . . .

Vaughan's brief glimpse of 'extended powers' led him to embark on a programme of research into powers of 'prevision', whose results are described later in the book.

The phrase 'a tremendous sense of elation and wellbeing' brings to mind Nietzsche's 'indescribable sense of wellbeing and zest' and Bennett's 'influx of an immense power'. Here, then, we have a case in which the orgasmic upsurge of energy not only brings the typical