

## PERPLEXITIES

Your assistance is sought by Nicholas Griffin with this new dilemma.

In an important, unpublished paper written in mid-1897, "Why do we Regard Time, but not Space, as Necessarily a Plenum?", Russell writes:

The important point seems to be, that, while I cannot be in two places at once, "like a bird", I can be in the same place at different times.

*The Oxford Dictionary of Quotations* (2nd edn.) attributes to Sir Boyle Roche (1743-1807), an Irish politician famous for his inept use of words, the following remark:

He regretted that he was not a bird, and could not be in two places at once.

We can be certain that this was the remark that Russell had in mind, but, alas, we cannot be certain under what circumstances it was made, for the *Oxford Dictionary of Quotations* gives no basis for its attribution. Extensive researches, including a letter to the Oxford University Press, have failed to reveal its source. It would be nice to know. While the matter is hardly crucial to understanding why we regard space, but not time, as necessarily a plenum, your editors would not like to deprive their readers of a possibly good story.

The following problems mentioned in previous issues have now been solved.

●In "Dramatic and Utilitarian Ethics" (c. 1911) Russell wrote

"Le sage qui passe interrompt mille drames", says Maeterlinck; this is one reason why the sage is hated.

This quotation was challenging to identify because Russell read almost everything this author wrote. When Lady Ottoline Morrell made specific reference to one of his books, Russell replied in late February 1912: "I don't especially remember 'Le tresors des humbles'; the different books are confused in my mind." This admission created the concern that the passage might have been misquoted from memory. Maria Forte was undaunted by these difficulties. She discovered the quotation in *La Sagesse et la destinée* (Paris: Bibliothèque-Charpentier), p. 40.

●Mrs. Napier's identity has been determined by Marilyn Mason to be Maud Denison Gooch Napier, wife of Major-General William John Napier (1863-1925).