

Saturday 22 August

Personal Record

It's only about three days, but the thing that I came for has begun to happen. The three days seemed to be needed for me to come out of the depths of despair and worry and physical discomfort. It had been decided on Thursday that I wasn't making enough progress and I was to be left alone more or less for a few days to concentrate on union with the Atman and put aside everything else. During Thursday night I would sleep for two-hour stretches and meditate for a few minutes with a straight back each time I woke up. At the Friday morning meditation with H.H., it seemed to me that I must no longer sit in a chair like a V.I.P. but sit on the floor with the others in the position I'd found during the night to be best—legs crossed, hands dropping over knees. This half-hour was a particularly happy one, and after it His Holiness said something like this:

“To get Self-Realization is not really difficult for individuals, but when a man has to instruct others something more is necessary.”

After some questions it became apparent that the meditation had to be taken further during half-hours, further than just a personal bliss, but up to the highest possible. He was not referring to what one did between meditations, but to the meditation itself. All he would say was that a straight back was necessary, but it was the approach to the Atman mainly. That afternoon after another good meditation with H.H., a question arose spontaneously and quite unpremeditated.

It was this: “Is it safe to say that that which is conscious of repeating the Mantra is ‘I’ and all the rest is ‘not I’?”

The conversation that followed has been fully recorded, and it was this that set things off. Alone that night, in spite of the fitful sleep one was able to keep in the “still place” all through and woke finally this morning still there to do a full half-hour and hold it till I set off at 3.30 to meet H.H. again. In the rickshaw I repeated the Lord's Prayer and remained detached from the impact of all the manifold impressions one meets on the way.

The session began with only two other people present besides H.H. and both of them had a strong emotional relation with one—one being a man I had admired at Rishikesh and again at Allahabad. His Holiness started to meditate, humming a scarcely audible little chant, as is his custom. I just keep a straight back and my mind wholly on the Mantra. Suddenly it began to accelerate and went faster and faster, and it was as if my consciousness was being carried up in a lift to some place at the top of the head. It seemed to want to go down again, and got slower and slower until it disappeared. This happened about five times and then there was a period of rather frustrated longing, but right at the end of the half-hour it came again, so that when His Holiness opened his eyes I was looking very happy.

It was our host's (Agrawal Senior—the older of two brothers) first attempt at translating, and I had been warned to ask only very short and simple questions. I'm afraid the recording was not a success, but what there is will corroborate what I can remember.

I asked: “What does it mean when the Mantra goes faster and faster lifting one's consciousness to the top of the head?” The gist of the answer was that this was the aim. One was usually centred at the navel (Solar plexus); as the Mantra went faster consciousness became centred in the heart; then in the throat, then behind the forehead and then at the top of the head (finger pointed to where Pineal is). If it reached there it would be eternal and very blissful and harmonious. The danger of descending again was only while one was on the way up; but once there, there was no danger of loss. On the way there one could be forced to descend by external interruptions or by the weight of one's own mind, particularly by any unhappiness. There was one panacea for ensuring ascent, and that was to keep happy under all circumstances. Since this highest place of consciousness is one's birthright, some circumstance would happen to spiritual aspirants at some time in the course of their lives, and

he told a story of Tulsi Das a famous Indian sage who composed the Ramayana: He had always been very worldly, never inclined to spiritual things.

One day his wife (to whom he was entirely devoted) went to stay at his father's house. By midnight he could bear the separation no longer and went and beat on her door. She came out and said to him; "If even a small part of the devotion you have for my body could be diverted to God, you would attain Spiritual Enlightenment."

This was the shock which put him on the Spiritual path.

"It is the same with you," he went on, "a certain circumstance had to happen before you could attain Realization—now just keep happy."

On the way home it poured with rain and I was soaked through, but I was as happy as one of the poor old buffaloes who was finding the rain so refreshing. After a bath and tea, I tried it again and it worked quite spontaneously—the quickening of the Mantra and the rise of consciousness to the top of the head. It seemed to me like the Food Diagram—two stages in the meditation, two shocks. First down to the quiet place, the 'nothingness', the silence. Many of us don't seem to get beyond that for moments and years. But the 2nd Shock would cause this lightening of the spirit with rise from Mi 12 in the lower storey up through Fa 6, Si 3 and even Do 1.

Saturday 22 August—Evening

During Jaiswal's absence, 22–28 morning, the translator did not understand questions or remember answers. But mostly recordings were made and later translated by J.

R. During the meditation just now, I quickly reached to the silence. Then suddenly the Mantra began to go quicker and quicker and my "centre of Consciousness" seemed to move up through the solar plexus to heart and centre of head and then to the top of the head. Then Mantra slowed again and I reached the silence again. This happened 5 or 6 times in the half-hour and I feel happy and full of energy. Will you explain please?

H.H. In happiness the Prana (Life Force) rises upwards and in pain and strain it is pressed down. At its lowest level it is activated in pelvis below the navel and at its highest it moves up from navel, to solar plexus, to larynx, to forehead, and the top of the head, which is called Sahasrar. Here at the top it swings on the waves of bliss. The pains and strain are heavier substances and they press it down to the bottom where it feels weak, limited, powerless and sick and becomes very coarse and heavy. Due to meditation this prana is stilled, and in stillness and happiness it becomes lighter and rises high according to stillness and bliss.

R. If it happened to come down, will coming back to Mantra push it up?

H.H. If it can't rise, then strains are pulling it down. It is one of the laws of Nature that when any substance rises upward, then the nature will start pulling it down, just as one is pulled by leg while stepping up the ladder. If one gives importance to the material substances, then the attachment drags one down. If one is not attached to anything, then the nature can't hinder the progress and once you reach the top then the forces of Nature have no hold at all and the fall is out of question. The way up is against nature and the danger of all is only on the way. Once you reach the top then Nature gives up.

R. Even at our stage will it stay up? (Mr. Agrawal asked it without understanding the question so no answer received).

R. Any other instruction which H.H. would like to give?

H.H. The discipline is a part of Divine activity. This is more like a medicine which gives happiness. In every-day life and under all pressing moments it acts as a tonic to strengthen one with happiness and peace (contentment).

R. One of the things which keeps me very happy is the story which H.H. told to us yesterday.

H.H. When one gets bliss as a sample and gets it again and again then one becomes sure that there must be a Source or oceans of bliss from which one has been deriving the moments of bliss. With that little discipline when you get moments of real bliss and peace you will come nearer to the Source by the discipline and one may also merge in that bliss, then no profit or loss of the material world make any mark. The stories are told to encourage and highlight the way to the Source of Bliss.

Tulsi Das (the author of Hindi Ramayana) was very much in love with his wife. He was so much attached to her that he could not live a day without her. Once she went to her mother's home when Tulsi Das was out. When Tulsi Das didn't see her home he went to find her in her parent's house. He reached it by midnight and knocked on the door. His wife came out and said to him that if he loved the God who is all bliss consciousness and Truth as much as he loved her, he would certainly have complete liberation. This hard word went deep into his heart and the shock was so profound that he immediately turned back. His love of the God made him a saint from being an ordinary lowly man.

Sunday 23 August

Personal Record

At 12.15 I took a rickshaw to the house of Mr. Agrawal. It was a special day. I was to meet his family—two sisters, wife, daughter and her three children, wife and younger son, and especially his brother who had been with Guru Deva from 1951-1953 when he died. We sat down to a sumptuous meal—that is the men sat down while the women did the work. General social conversation was very gay and I was made to taste everything and the nature of the different things was explained—four different kinds of chapatti or of poppadoms for instance. After lunch I was given a bowl of water to wash in and herbs to cleanse the mouth.

Then I had a most interesting talk with the younger Agrawal age 55 (our host being 67). Allan may have heard it all: His father was religious and had many Swamis to the house, but A. didn't see any necessity to go out of his way to meet Guru Deva when he came to Lucknow. However one day a mutual friend arranged a meeting and he went to please him. Nothing much happened, but at a second meeting Guru Deva suggested he became his pupil and he began to be trained by way of Bhakti like H.H. In his new enthusiasm he asked if he might live at one of G.D.'s Ashrams, but the latter said, "No, your way lies in the active life". He was told to carry the picture of G.D. in his mind, especially his eyes which he would feel looking at him at every difficulty, every situation. He had a little photograph of him on his desk in the office so he was never separate from him; last thing at night first thing in the morning he brought the image of G.D. before his eyes for a minute or to. Thus armed, immediately any difficulty arose the solution presented itself spontaneously to his mind. Moreover he was to take every person he met as sent to him by God, every situation provided for him by God (Atman), so that in everything he was to help to manifest the Unmanifested. He met the Maharishi too, but thought his teaching too complicated—too many words—so kept close to H.H., whose extreme simplicity of expression seemed to him the hall-mark of greatness and whose teaching about the meditation was so close to G.D.'s. He, himself, had been told by the latter to avoid all set hours and disciplines, to meditate spontaneously and for as long as he felt like it. G.D. has been very kind to him, had moved him to the room next his, and told him to make the Ashram his own. He seemed to me a very open, honest and intelligent person, but acknowledged that he was nowhere near the heights of H.H. and was not trained as a teacher.

While we were talking, H.H. came in unexpectedly and we hastily sat on the floor and meditated with him. Gradually more and more people came in. After, with the younger Agrawal translating, I said to H.H. that this time the Mantra wouldn't move at all and was very heavy. H.H. said it was always so after a meal; that is why the afternoon time had been fixed for 4.30 to give fully four hours after the noonday meal, but (he added with a chuckle) you are so keen that the interval kept getting shortened, so he had been heavy too and probably affected me. Then he began his talk to the assembled people:

“Man has got more and more separated from the Source of Creation and has to find his way back. That is what all these techniques are designed for, the corner-stone being that he has to become the observer. The eyes, for instance, could not observe by themselves, they needed the sensory organization; the sensory organization observed the eyes and was in turn observed by the intellect that told it what it saw—the meaning. But the intellect in turn was observed by the ego, and the ego in turn observed by the Atman. It is only the Atman which is not observed by anything else. So when a man reaches the Ultimate Observer, he reaches the Atman who just watches what goes on without becoming involved.”

I said my own Teacher kept saying, “Observe, observe”, without a method I did not seem to be able to do it. He replied that, nevertheless, our Teacher was absolutely right, that was the true direction. But the house we live in is a big one with seven rooms: First a living-room (the body), then the dining-room given over to eating, then a withdrawing room, then a social room for entertainment, then a study, then a bedroom, but in all those rooms a man can be interrupted and his peace disturbed. So he begins to look, and the eyes explain to him the existence of a seventh room where his peace cannot be disturbed. Meditation is the best way to get to that Seventh Room and become detached from everything and just observe.

I said “But even after a good meditation, in quiet surroundings and with nothing particular to do, I find it difficult to remain a detached onlooker for more than about two hours. But when in action in a busy life interrupted by people and telephones I don't see how you do it!”

He replied, “But you don't have to be saying all the time, ‘I am observing I am observing.’ Suppose you can swim, you don't go about on the dry land saying all the time, ‘I can swim, I can swim.’ You just remember it enough so that if there is a flood you swim automatically. Even so, whenever there is a free moment you remember the Atman with the help of the Mantra; so you turn to the Spiritual life at any moment when possible or necessary.

The quickness with which you can do this comes with experience and practice in the meditation so you gradually get its full value. The beginner learning to drive a car takes a long time and much noise to change gear—the expert does it instantaneously.”

All this time Agrawal was being helped with the translation by all and sundry from the floor, and though at times things began to be chaotic it was interesting to see how quickly H.H. restored order each time without raising his voice or even moving. At this point I excused myself.

Sunday 23 & Tuesday 25 August

A Private Conversation

The younger Agrawal was telling me on Sunday afternoon of the special method he himself was trained in by Guru Deva during the two years he was with him before he died in 1953. He explained that this was the way of Bhakti or devotion; other people were trained differently; he was merely reciting his experience, not advising me to imitate it. From the beginning he was discouraged from leading a special life, adopting special disciplines, even fixed hours of meditation. He was to meditate when and for as long as he felt impelled to. I asked him how

he managed to do enough when he was a busy man working in an office and having a home life as well? He said he was encouraged to form in his mind a vivid image of his Guru, the expression of his face and particularly of his eyes. So after the two years he only had to close his eyes for a second or two and his Guru's physical presence would be there with him. Ever since then, he has practised this whenever the thought occurred to him; before coming to any decision; in any difficult situation. It had the effect of bringing him to the Atman and his fullest powers. For instance, if he had a problem and he did this, the answer to the problem would be immediately forth-coming. Also it regulated his behaviour, so that he would never do anything which he would not have done in his Guru's presence. Guru Deva had always treated him very kindly. Once when he was going to stay for his holiday at his Ashram he was given a room in the basement; Guru Deva enquired where he was and had him moved to the room next him. He always had access to him, was told to use the Ashram as his own, and came a long distance to Benares for the ceremony of immersing his body after death.

Since I liked this man very much—lively, unpretentious, man of the world, always very positive and zestful—and since I'd been told that H.H. had been trained by the 'Way of Bhakti' also, I sent a written question to H.H. which was answered this afternoon before the other people came. I had asked:

"How much should one dwell on the physical presence, the expression and the eyes of the Fully Realized Man and so establish an image of him in the mind as a means of Self-Realization?"

The older Agrawal translated the answer:

"He says a pupil should look at the physical form and the eyes of the Master as much as he can and every second of that will be good for him."

R. said it had often come to his rescue at dangerous moments or moments of depression, so he wondered whether to encourage it?

He said: "You must practise at every moment you can, as long as your eyes can stand the sight and you'll get great benefit from it."

Also, by the way, to hear the voice and the laugh.

Monday 24 August—Evening

R. People are happy and unhappy during the day according to the circumstances. When H.H. speaks of being happy, does he mean to make an effort to come out of unhappiness, or be happy in spite of circumstances?

H.H. This creation is a movement. In this movement whatever is favourable to mind is pleasant and unfavourable is pain. The creation of pleasure and pain is of the mind. The Atman feels and feeds on bliss, and is not at all moved by or desirous of pleasure or pain.

R. wanted to ask about 'attention', whereas the translator asked about stillness.

H.H. One has to start with body. When body is still and firm, the prana becomes balanced, the control over Manas is easier. Mind is mobile, but one should just ignore its movements. It will come back if left unattended. Thus Manas and Buddhi could become still. Lessening desires will still the Chitta (Consciousness) and make way for deeper stillness. In deep stillness meditation works.

R. Sometimes body is full of energy and is in Rajas and at others heavy and in Tamas. Are there different remedies to different situations? (Question completely missed) H.H. speaks again:

H.H. It is natural for Manas to become one with the object of senses. If you hear music you become one with it, and if you look at the musician you feel all his bodily movements in your own body. Now if you look away

from the musician, you will—although hearing the music—not be moved by the bodily movements of the musician. So the key is the attention to movements of mind. Stop attending to the moving mind and you will be attentive. The moment you see that you are not attentive is precisely the moment you have the opportunity to get out of it.

R. (*Question omitted*)

H.H. One should feel the self being the Universal Self. The Universe can be represented on a piece of paper indicating all boundaries of lands and mountains, oceans, nations, rivers, population and so on. This small piece of paper becomes a microform of the Universe though that is so very extensive. This body is also a replica of the macrocosm. One who knows how to follow and understand the map can understand the Universe. One who knows the Self knows the Absolute. The Self is the Absolute in microcosm. (*R. asks for more to illustrate*).

The macrocosm is that biggest form of Universe, composed of five elements [H1536–H96], mind [H48], intelligence [H24], consciousness [H12] and Atman [H6] [*What words?*] Senses are Indra, mind is Moon, Buddhi is Brahman, Atman is the Absolute. The microcosm is made of the same elements. The clay employed to make a big house or a small cup is the same in both the forms. The water of river Ganges in full glory is the same as in a small pot, though they differ in weight and volume. The difference in macrocosm and microcosm is in weight, size and form but not in consciousness. In consciousness they are one and the same. The separateness is the result of ignorance.

R. *There seems a lot of difference in effect between a small quantity of fire and a large quantity. The nature may be the same but effect is different?*

H.H. Every matter has two types of properties, general and special. The general property of both fires are the heat and they both burn whatever is put into them. The special property is subject to their shape, size, weight and so on. Once the small fire merges in the big fire it assumes all the special properties of the large fire. It virtually becomes the large fire. So does Atman when relieved of its bondage become one with the Absolute.

R. (*S. of M.*) *What is the purest form of the Mantra during meditation?*

H.H. Mantra is to help one's consciousness to be united with the Self. Once you have done so the Mantra disappears. Unity with the Atman is the aim, and in its purest form the meditator, Mantra and meditation become one.

When you start the Mantra and let it repeat itself, it will go slower and longer until a stage comes when you experience no rhythm at all. Everything just merges into one Consciousness.

R. (*S. of M.*) *Has H. H. some stories or analogies which illustrate that although man is searching for fulfilment outside himself, the true direction lies within?*

H.H. Within and without is the same. The Absolute is in all. All beings are a part of the same. Everything exists in Atman and it is also reflected in the human form. Wherever you look, you will look at the Atman. It is not so much a question of looking within or without, but a question of looking right or wrong.

Tuesday 25 August

R. *Please thank His Holiness for his words yesterday, "the body must first be made attentive". This helped greatly all evening and meditation at 9 o'clock brought the Consciousness to the top of the head with very happy feeling. Whenever I woke up in the night it was still there and again this morning with strong memory of His Holiness. At last I begin to see what effort to make.*

Further questions: Arising from some of the remarks made to Mr. Allan:

1. August 8: “Mind is the most mobile of all; when the relaxed body removes its support it rushes round all over the place picking up toys to play with. It rushes to any minute source of sound and engages in unnecessary interpretations. It provokes unnecessary duets between thoughts. At this stage there has to be a feeling of expansion of the body so that it covers the whole Universe”;

How to get this? Is it being aware of body as a whole in its surroundings? Is this felt during meditation or at other times?

2. August 9: “During meditation distracting noises seem very loud. But if one expands oneself so as to cover everything, these distractions disappear for they become part of oneself.”

Here is the same idea of expansion. Do the two need a similar kind of effort? We have sometimes tried this in our group alone or together and recognise its value but haven’t got very far with it.

3. August 9: “Everything is vibration; in vibration live all words and knowledge. One can hear the words of the past also. The true Knowledge is sometimes passed on to the aspirant without word of mouth. This ensures continuity of true Knowledge. Time and space are no barrier in imparting Knowledge.”

This kind of ‘Inspiration’ is what we want most of all in the West and in our Group. Obviously the meditation greatly helps this, but we would like to know more.

From a Letter—Tuesday 25 August

On Sunday H.H. spun a simile of the ‘House of Seven Rooms’...The point of his story is that one has to detach one’s attention from all the six rooms simultaneously by reaching the seventh. The talk started like this :

“Our eyes receive impressions, but they don’t see without the sensory part of the brain. So sensory mechanism observes eye, and is itself observed by Buddhi, soul. Soul observes intellect, but is itself observed by the changing ego. But the ego is being observed by Real ‘I’ (Atman), which alone is not observed by anything else but itself. So Atman alone is the True Observer, and the more you try to observe the nearer you get to ‘Real I’”.

I said, “Our first Teacher was always saying, ‘Observe, observe, observe’, but without special methods we never managed to get very far.”

He replied, “Nevertheless he was absolutely right, you had the right training”, and he told the story of the King and the Search for the Holy Man to illustrate the relation of the ordinary ‘Ego’ to the Atman.

Another simile which has helped me a lot is this:

“When a moving object passes a stationary one, both appear to be moving. If you are in a moving train you think the stationary train you are passing is moving too. Suppose you are in the stationary train, as long as you look at the moving train you have the illusion of movement. There is a part of the mind which is really and truly stationary, but when we look out from there at the part of the mind that is moving (turning thoughts, reverberating circuits, bodily cycles), then we appear to move with it. But this is illusion—don’t look at the movement and you will be still.”

This helps enormously. Another thing; we talked about attention. He said:

“... ‘state of attention’ can only be reached by detachment. *And you have to begin with body.* Make body attentive and then you will be able to make the mind attentive also.”

A Story to Illustrate the Relation of our Ordinary Ego to the Atman

Once there was a king who felt the need of a saint, but there wasn't one around, so he sent a minister and servants to search everywhere. They combed all the forests and found various hairy men, supposed to be holy, but they couldn't find a real saint. So, in desperation, after the first month of the three allotted to them, the minister said to one of the servants—"There's nothing for it, you'll have to do it. You'll have to sit meditating and perhaps in two months you'll look the part, and anyway some hair will grow on your head and chin!"

He duly did this and the king came and recognized him as holy and bowed down to him. The situation thus having been saved, the minister said to the servant—"all right, now have a haircut and get on with your job, serving me." But the servant said—"No, I don't serve you any more; for while I was meditating I discovered what I was really wanting, and now I'm going for that alone."

This story was told with great gusto and laughter.

F.C.R.

Tuesday 25 August—Afternoon

Introduction to Conversation about the Original Shankaracharya

It so happened that I had with me in India Aldous Huxley's book, *The Perennial Philosophy*, and used to dip into it now and then. I was not particularly interested in Huxley's opinions. I'd got to know him just before the Munich crisis and brought him and his group to Mr. Ouspensky; but he got into a panic at the prospect of war and fled to California, so there was no contact between then and his death. But his book is full of fine quotations—particularly from the writings of Shankara. On page 11 he says:

"The philosophy of the Upanishads reappears developed and enriched, in the Bhagavad Gita, and was finally systematized in the 9th century of our era by Shankara. Shankara's teaching ... is summarized in his versified treatise, *Viveka-Chudamani* (The Crest-Jewel of Wisdom)".

There follows a long and most impressive quotation containing passages identical with what the present Shankaracharya was saying.

I determined to ask him about it one afternoon; it was not so easy because interpreter Jaiswal was away and no one could understand my pronunciation of *Viveka-Chudamani*! However one man present managed to translate into Hindi certain key sentences I'd chosen from the book which were immediately recognized by His Holiness:

R. Please, your Holiness, I want to clear up some of my ignorance about your holy Tradition.

The original Shankaracharya, when did he live? We were told it was 500 years after Lord Buddha Gautama. Who then was "Shankara" (supposed to have lived in 9th century A.D.) who wrote the Viveka-Chudamani, which is much quoted in the West:

"The Atman is that by which the Universe is pervaded, but which nothing pervades; which causes all things to shine, but which all things cannot make to shine ..."

"Pure, absolute and Eternal Reality—such is Brahma, and 'thou art That' (Tat tvam asi). Meditate upon this truth within your consciousness..."

These were, he said, indeed from the original Shankaracharya but the date was wrong. He lived not in the 9th century of our era but 25 centuries ago! Moreover this book, *The Crest-Jewel of Wisdom* was so encrusted with additions

and commentary by subsequent Shankaracharyas, that only a few sentences of the original could be found, but these could be easily recognized by taste. A rather interesting talk followed in which nearly everyone present joined:

H.H. No writing, nothing of the sort; they used to understand it and then practise it. Then later on when there were more recipients the .(?). increased. Then they started on pattras (?) and other things—they used to write, then the people who read it they practised it. And then ...

Then again, when understanding is still diminished and there was need for more explanations, then there were books written; and then not only the original but there were, say, commentaries, and books increased in volume. But the substance remains the same.

R. This was why I mentioned it, because it seems to me miraculous that what the original Shankaracharya said twenty-five centuries ago is being said exactly by Shankaracharya to-day.

H.H. How our Teaching has constantly remained from tradition, he has given a story in support of it; how the memory has played a part in this. He said that once one of the four disciples of Shankaracharya was given a treatise by earlier Shankaracharya—he taught them some lessons and then set them to write commentary on it.

One of them, his name was Padmapada, he wrote a very good commentary on the treatise allotted to him, and he came and narrated it to the group. The group heard it and commended. Then he went on pilgrimage and took a copy of that book with him. He came to his uncle's place, his mother's brother, and there also he narrated it—he was happy because his Guru had commended his book, and he had written it; so when he got there, he naturally narrated the whole book to him. His uncle, who didn't follow the same Vedanta sect, didn't like it, and he felt so jealous and vexed that he wanted to destroy that book. This Padmapada—he left that book with his uncle and said, 'I am going far South, so this book I will leave with you.' Now this uncle got his opportunity, and the jealousy was so high in his heart—to destroy that book which was against what he himself had written. He could not destroy that book alone, but so that nobody may find fault with him he just set fire to his house, the entire house, and since the book was there—the book was also burnt with the rest.

Now after some time, when his pilgrimage was over, Padmapada came back and then his uncle told him with pretence of a heavy heart that, 'I am really very sorry, the house caught fire all of a sudden and your book has also been burnt along with it.' This told heavily on Padmapada and he felt very much grieved; and he said, 'It doesn't matter. You have only burnt the book—my memory is still there. I will write it again because I remember it.' Now the uncle felt rather worried and said (to himself), 'Look here, I have set fire to my own house, in order to burn the book, and my brother (nephew) says that he will write it again.' He thought of a plan so that his memory should also fail, his intellect should also fail. So next day he managed to give him poison. The effect of poison was very quick and this man suffered from mental derangement, he lost his memory. At length he came back to his Guru in great sorrow. He told the Guru, 'Sir, I have lost the book which was burnt, then I have become mad. I don't know how that book will see the light again.' The Guru said, 'Don't worry. When you had completed that book you narrated the whole thing to me. I remember it so I will ask somebody—I will narrate it, and get them to write it again.' And the book was again written.

So this way memory has played a part in getting our cultural traditions right from times immemorial to this day. Even to-day the Geeta contains seven hundred shlokas (verses), and even if you burnt all the copies of the Geeta in the world, in India, there are still thousands of persons who remember the Geeta, all the shlokas by heart. It is ingrained in their heart, so this way it will go on.

R. Quite true what His Holiness was saying this morning, that when the intellect gets mixed up with the sensation this is where the damage starts; the moving train goes and goes and goes. Now there are many mistakes made still about what one has to do about this. If I understand His Holiness rightly, he says, 'Withdraw from the moving train.' Some people stamp on it, push it down, the intellect; some people try to rise above it, but what His Holiness is saying, 'Withdraw from it to the stillness,' is that it?

H.H. The reply is very easy. It is that intellect—what we call in the vernacular Buddhi—that is an effect of Atman so that Atman is the Source. The intellect (Buddhi) is not the enemy, so the question of stamping it down does not arise. Atman has got no enemies, it has got no colleagues. It is supreme; it is the Absolute. And (Buddhi) intellect belongs to him, so the question of his stamping it down does not arise.

Intellect is subordinate to Atman, and whatever it does, it does at the bidding of Atman. When it is turned towards this world then it gets lost and it forgets. Intellect forgets that the Source is the Atman. And that is why it gets disturbed—perturbed—and loses the tranquillity. But when it is turned towards God Almighty, towards Atman, then it remembers back its Source, and then it becomes steady and attains liberation.

Wednesday 26 August—Evening

R. H.H. has said that distraction during meditation can be avoided by the feeling of expansion. How does this work when body is still and eyes closed?

H.H. Body and eyes are the two main sources to attract the Manas (mind). Once the body is still and the eyes closed most of the distractions are avoided. When one starts meditation the mind is turned to attention and at that time even a small sound feels like a loud one. The mind immediately runs to the spot and nobody can stop this because mind is tremendously fast. So one should let it go. What one really needs to do at that moment is not be bothered about the mind. Mind is a servant, and if you didn't care as to where he is going or gone he will soon come back to the Master knowing his disapproval. Master must not run with the mind (servant). By doing this one will be really still. This does not mean that all the distractions will vanish. No! they will always be there. Many things are happening in the body simultaneously and we never get angry or disturbed for we know that it is happening in me. When you expand your self and embrace everything around you, these distractions become just a part of you and their harshness disappears. Having one's body still, eyes closed, mind unattended and with the feeling of expansion, the meditation becomes easy and fruitful. [see revised account].

R. I feel that the world being vibrations and the vibrations passing through me are blocked by my thoughts.

H.H. The vibrations first reach the senses, then mind and later on Buddhi. Buddhi is the inner gate where all this stops and doesn't reach up to Atman which is in fact apart from that and holds us apart. One should watch this Buddhi. It can be a barrier. Once this barrier is removed the passage is clear.

R. H.H. spoke about seven rooms, and on reaching the seventh one has to be detached from six rooms and not get mixed up with them?

H.H. Unless you reach seventh room you wouldn't know you had six rooms. The mere fact of reaching the seventh is enough for one to realize that one doesn't really need all those six rooms for living in that moment. (Further on H.H. speaks):

R. What word for 'Spirit', 'Intelligence', 'Guard'?

H.H. Everyone knows that the body is a machine and there must be some conscious force to make it move. There are two substances in each of us. One is the Atman (spirit) and the other is the matter which makes up our body—Manas (mind), Buddhi (intelligence) and so on. When the Atman (Spirit) wants any work it switches on, and when it doesn't want to do anything then it switches off all the points one by one and goes to His quiet room. Only the 'goal-keeper' (guard-Prana is left working, but the rooms of senses and mind, etc, are shut one by one. This is what should be done before meditation

R. There is no equal word in English for Buddhi (another—Dr. Bajpai—suggested 'conscience').

H.H. Knowledge of equivalent words makes no difference. Once you work on yourself you know perfectly what is meant. If one goes to a new place, then one has to watch everything and keep careful, but continuous coming and going makes it easy and one does it without much trouble. The meditation is also a new way for people and one meets all hazards of senses, Manas (mind) and Buddhi. By persistent effort one will get over them and be used to them and ignore them while making our passage from body to Atman. Beyond Buddhi and in Atman all these experiences of pleasure, pain, striving of the material world don't exist. Atman knows only Bliss and Consciousness. When one gets true Knowledge then Buddhi becomes clear and takes commands from Atman and gets them carried out by Manas (mind) and senses. Only then does it know what is real pleasure (Bliss) and what is not.

Meditation is to cleanse Buddhi and still it.