

9 November 1964

READING 5

PART 1

We have surely established by now that all the troubles we meet with on the way to Self-realization are due to ignorance of our own Divine Nature. Because of this ignorance we become identified with the body, and its chemical reactions, or with the restless and ungoverned mind (Manas). Let's leave it at that and press on to get more experience and enjoyment.

We know in theory that the things we want start coming when the natural relationship between Buddhi and Manas is restored. In Biblical terms, Dives the rich man has to be put in his place, and the beggar Lazarus be given at least equal opportunities of good food and attention!

That this can happen for moments by luck, even without special methods, is easily demonstrated by examples; we can use such examples to ask ourselves why we, with all our techniques and efforts, don't manage to get the same things whenever we want them. We have a lamp, like Aladdin, but we don't seem to rub it to summon the Genie!

Out of hundreds of examples available, these three are chosen to teach us certain essentials about this coming together of Buddhi and Manas in right relationship:

1. From *Heaven and Hell* by Aldous Huxley

I was sitting on the seashore, half listening to a friend arguing violently about something which merely bored me. Unconsciously to myself, I looked at a film of sand I had picked up on my hand, when I suddenly saw the exquisite beauty of every little grain of it... Then, suddenly, my consciousness was lighted up from within and I saw in a vivid way how the whole universe was made up of particles of material which, no matter how dull and lifeless they might seem, were nevertheless filled with this intense and vital beauty. For a second or two the whole world appeared as a blaze of glory. When it died down, it left me with something I have never forgotten and which constantly reminds me of the beauty locked up in every minute speck of material around us.

2. From *The Atom of Delight* by Neil Gunn

As I sat on that boulder staring down stream... the shallow river flowed around and past with its variety of lulling monotonous sounds... I was just there. Then the next thing happened... I have tried hard but can find no simpler way of expressing what happened than by saying: '*I came upon myself sitting there*'. Within the mood of content... was this self and the self was me. The state of content deepened wonderfully and everything around was embraced in it. There was no 'losing' of the self in the sense that there was a blank from which I awoke or came to. The self may have thinned away – it did – but so delightfully that it remained at the centre in a continuous and perfectly natural way. And then... it became aware of seeing itself, not as an 'I' or an 'ego' but rather as a stranger it had come upon and was even a little shy of. ...

3. From *A Summer Night* by Alan Moorehead

He could not sleep. He heard the clock strike two... He got up quietly in the darkness, dressed, and walked out into the streets again...

Nothing. No sound. 'I must go home,' he said aloud, and he turned slowly down the piazza again. When he got to the end he stopped in front of a fountain... and he reached

out his hand to touch the water as it fell. In after years Philip remembered this moment very well... for it was just at this instant that he was possessed by a feeling of inexpressible serenity and happiness. It was so compelling and so vivid that for a minute he stood quite still, holding his breath as though he were listening to some distant voice calling his name... Looking down the piazza he saw, with the unreal clarity of a dream, that it was transformed into something so moving and so beautiful that it amazed him that he had not noticed it before... Within himself the same harmony had taken charge. He realised that his mind had been struggling on two levels, the one vulgar and aimless, the other masterful and half mad. But now these two levels had merged together, exactly complementing one another, making a balance. And beyond this there was another feeling, and this was the overwhelming conviction that he was free. There was no longer any compulsion upon him to take decisions... All his doubts and anxieties had been based on an illusion. He had been imagining chains and difficulties where they did not exist. It was now clear that there were certain things that one was fated to suffer and to do, and it was useless to try and escape them. The real slavery lay in this attempt to try and get away... The art of living lay in acceptance, in doing what you were bound to do, nothing more and nothing less. One had only to listen to this clear inward voice as he was listening now and you would know at once who you were and what you had to do. ...

These are examples from sensory experience without specialist knowledge and thought. We can't command the exciting cause, but we could prepare the ingredients. Can you mention what are the essential factors common to those three examples? After all, *we* are supposed to be getting things like this often now if the meditation is going well! But such things are just the first step – the 'Good Impulse' – and they have to be put to use.

PART 2

I am sure that such experiences are not at all rare now but the Work doesn't seem to profit enough from them. Maybe we are not yet skilled in observing exactly what happens, or have not acquired the power to express it vividly and simply, without embroidery. That is what meetings are for. And that makes us ask: Are we doing all we might in disciplining and training this remarkable instrument, the human mind, and making it perform useful work for us? This is a formulation just received from one of you:

Manas the Useful Servant

So often Manas is regarded as a culprit – a position it gets itself into through running wild and weaving illusions or deluding itself by limited logic – but in fact it is an immensely valuable ally when used properly and under the control of an enlightened Buddhi.

It is rather like a horse and rider. A horse is of no use to its rider until it is under control, and until then it is not only useless but potentially dangerous. But disciplined and in harmony with its rider, endless possibilities open up.

So with the relationship between Buddhi and Manas. Supposing, for example, someone who has steeped himself in some scientific problem suddenly in a flash of illumination sees the solution (there are many examples of this on record). He *knows* the answer for certain, although he knows not how he has arrived at it. But how is he going to convince anyone else? An entirely different process has to be used, one of reason and proof, resulting in a coherent and possibly lengthy description in words or figures. This is the domain of Manas, and it is Manas who is largely responsible for *communication* with other minds, on the ordinary level.

The same is true whether it is a poet or writer or composer or painter who wants to convey something to others. Inspiration comes at the level of *Buddhi*, but it can't be communicated without the co-operation of a trained executive, or craftsman, at the level of *Manas*.

Working in the other direction, it is *Manas* who is responsible for collecting facts and impressions for *Buddhi*, at which level they are sorted and distilled and stored, the raw material for fresh creation.

Surely if we take the trouble to train the *Manas* and make it work on some idea of the System or on some topic of the hour, some of us might (with all our advantages) emulate even the father of modern Astronomy as in the following short passage from *De Revolutionibus Orbium Celestium*, Copernicus (1473–1543):

First and above all lies the sphere of the fixed stars...

Though some men think it to move in some way, we assign another reason why it appears to do so, in our theory of the movement of the earth. Of the moving bodies first comes Saturn, who completes his circuit in 30 years. After him, Jupiter, moving in a twelve year revolution. Then Mars, who revolves biennially. Fourth in order an annual cycle takes place, in which we have said is contained the earth, with the lunar orbit as an epicycle. In the fifth place Venus is carried round in nine months. Then Mercury holds the sixth place, circulating in the space of eighty days. In the middle of all dwells the Sun. Who indeed in this most beautiful temple would place the torch in any other or better place than one whence it can illuminate the whole at the same time? ... Thus the Sun, sitting on a royal throne, governs the circumambient family of stars... We find, therefore, under this orderly arrangement, a wonderful symmetry in the universe, and a definite relation of harmony in the motion and magnitude of the orbs, of a kind it is not possible to obtain in any other way.

PART 3

The examples given should stimulate us to understand and pay attention to the guidance given by the Shankaracharya. When asked by Mr. Allan: 'How we are to create the feeling of expansion; by thought or other ways?' he said:

It is not only feeling or thought, it is fact. The Macrocosm and the microcosm are both created of the same elements; what is in the Universe is in us too. Let the mind (*Manas*) go. Release tension and try to *think within*. This is fundamental; unless you do expand you remain limited. One should remember that one is far bigger than one thinks. If one *does* remember that one embraces everything, one can draw strength and power from everything. To be influential, people must feel that they are big. If they feel small, then they have no influence. Fear nothing, for nothing is bigger than you. (18.8.64)

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(NOTE: It is recommended that you take Part 1 this week and Parts 2 and 3 the week after; otherwise there will be too much to digest all at once.)

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