

January 1966

NEW YEAR PLANS

INTRODUCTION

At the start of a New Year it is useful to remind ourselves of what we originally set out to do, and set up a fresh enquiry as to whether each of us is going about it in the best and quickest way.

First collectively. We were given the job of building a School on the foundation prepared for it over the years before Mr. Ouspensky's death in 1947; a School capable of survival after the builders themselves should have died. What was meant by a 'School'? Our System defined it as an 'organisation for transmission to prepared people of Knowledge emanating from Higher Mind'.

But it was already clear to us that 'transmission of Knowledge' could only be done from 'Understanding', which depends on Being as well as Knowledge gained from experience, and that before people could transmit True Knowledge they must be 'born again'.

Shortly before the end of the second visit to India in 1962, we quoted to the Shankaracharya part of a sentence from the 'Rules for a Householder' laid down in ancient times by the Law-Giver Manu:

A kingdom... deprived of twice-born inhabitants will soon wholly perish, stricken by hunger and disease.

This sentence was important to Mr. Ouspensky over a period of at least twenty years, for he quoted it in *A New Model* and again in his Fourth Psychological Lecture here in London.

In his reply the Shankaracharya noted that:

Unfortunately the present trend in India has been breaking up the 'System of the twice-born': if that process were to continue, then nothing would follow except what Manu said.

'And the expression "twice-born"', I asked, 'Does that refer only to a man's social situation – his caste, for instance – or could it refer to a new birth inside a man?'

He answered:

The meaning of twice-born has always been related in the world at large to three hereditary castes... But there is, as you say, another meaning. The expression also refers to a different category of people from the common people, those who are devoted to learning some System of True Knowledge and spend their energies taking it further.

And so we come from our collective aim to the individual aim, and the words of Christ to Nicodemus who came to him by night for fear of his fellow Pharisees:

Except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God... Marvel not that I said unto thee, ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth: so is everyone that is born of the Spirit... Verily, verily I say unto thee, we speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness. If I have told you earthly things and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you heavenly things?

(St. John 3: 3)

Evidently 'to be born again' implies *mental liberation* from the gravitational forces which bind down all physical bodies to a state of maximum mechanicalness or 'entropy'.

About the transmission of 'Knowledge to prepared people', we have learnt much that is new to us. First, True Knowledge is limitless, has always existed and will always exist. No one man could ever possess and express the whole of it. It is like a great river, we can just take dips in it and give out something useful for the given day and age.

Secondly, even that limited System of Knowledge must be given gradually step by step according to the degree of preparation of the hearer as revealed by his questions. Any fragment of True Knowledge given to someone unprepared for it, is at once distorted. Let me remind you of one of the first stories I heard from the Shankaracharya which illustrated this subject:

A man went to a well-known Teacher to enquire about Spiritual Knowledge. He said: 'I will give you it in the simplest possible form – just three words: "God is everywhere" – but you won't understand it.' Well satisfied the man went off thinking he now knew it all. On the road he saw coming towards him an elephant ridden by its mahout. He said to himself: 'God is everywhere – God is in me, God is in the elephant. I will walk straight on.' When he came into the direct path of the elephant, the mahout shouted to him to get out of the way; but he thought, 'Can God hurt God, I'll walk on.' The elephant picked him up in his trunk and flung him across the road on to a pile of stones. When he'd recovered enough, he hobbled back to the Teacher and said, 'I carried out your Teaching and look what's happened to me.' The Teacher told him to recount exactly what occurred and then reminded him of his very limited understanding. 'It is quite true', he said, 'that God is everywhere; God was in you, God was in the elephant, but God was also in the mahout who told you to get out of the way; so you disobeyed God and got what was coming to you.' (Record 1.6.1961)

That is one good reason why a School is necessary.

PART 1

Changes in Organisation

At first when we made a fresh start in London in 1948 we were very much in the dark and we had to feel our way; we depended largely on a bygone past with its traditional rigidities, proceeded by trial and error, made mistakes. But momentous things have happened to us in the present decade – the 1960's. We received the full impact of the Meditation in 1960; came under the direct influence of the Fully Realized Man in 1961 and 1962; were visited by Mr. Resuhi in 1963, thereby establishing contact with the seven-century-old Inner Tradition of the Mevlevi; began actually to experience what before had been largely hearsay.

It's most important now to free ourselves even more from the pre-1960 Dark Age, so that we can really achieve the Reconstruction of the System which was the chief task assigned to us in the week before Mr. Ouspensky died.

In order that True Knowledge should lead to rebirth for the individual and retain its power after transmission, we have to take it step by step. At first people joining us have to become familiar with certain timeless and basic ideas, see this System 'in the round' to some extent, distinguish the flavour of Truth from all the kinds of half-truth which turn into lies. This is best done in groups of from 12 to 20 people, and at the moment we need 4 such groups. While they are learning some of the Knowledge they are encouraged to practise some direct method, usually

the meditation. All this prepares them for the next step, and it also gives time for people to take a look and leave if they find they've come to the wrong shop; time also for us to see if they have a Magnetic Centre that corresponds to this particular Way.

But they mustn't continue too long being spoon-fed in this way; they must be given a chance to develop their own thought, their own initiative and particularly a will of their own. Now there are among you quite a large number of people who have reached this point. It is to them that special attention must now be given. We want to get to know them better, find out how they are progressing, what they chiefly need *now*. Some of them have already started doing things together in groups like Work Parties, where they can continue to hear such materials as they want. Others we should like to meet on Thursday evenings for a week or two. There's nothing rigid about this group; as soon as people find what they want to do and who they want to work with they can begin; always remembering that what they choose must be in the line of their Self-knowledge, rebirth and preparation to transmit the Truth.

Lastly, there are the people who have come through all this and are able to work on their own. They have become connected with their own inner Source of Knowledge and it is their help we need; so we will continue to see them here at these Monday meetings. The following conversation will interest them:

Mr. Allan asked:

Does a School of the Fourth Way have a purpose of its own other than that of helping its members towards Self-realization?

S. Yes, two purposes. Self-realization for the members and also other activities in the outside world.

A. Will the School only be used by the man who created it...?

S. School can be used only by man who has command of it. Other Realized persons may not need the School, they may have means of their own...

A. Does the Shankaracharya mean by 'man who commands it' a man who might be dead?

S. Death is not important. Organisation will be taken up by those who inherit his desires. School does not stop because someone dies.

A. Is the work of the School in the world always obvious, or sometimes hidden?

S. There are different levels. Most obvious is for the masses. Above that for selected groups, and above that again a very rare group for rare and special people.

Perhaps the highest that we can visualise is expressed in verse 11 of the *Gospel According to St. Thomas*:

Jesus said to His disciples, Make a confession to Me and tell Me what I am like. Simon Peter said to Him: Thou art like a righteous angel. Matthew said to Him: Thou art like a wise man of understanding. Thomas said to Him: Master, my mouth will not at all be capable of saying whom Thou art like. Jesus said: I am no more thy Master, because thou hast drunk from the bubbling spring which I have measured out. And He took him, He withdrew, He spoke three words to him...

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The Knowledge required for these three categories of people was described in a simile:

True Knowledge has to be preserved in three caskets. An ordinary wooden casket is for that simple part of knowledge which can be given to anyone who is searching; it can be spoken of at any open meeting to which everyone can come without fear of its being misunderstood or misused. A silver casket is kept for Knowledge which can be given to prepared people, people who are on the Way. And then there is a very special Knowledge of Mysteries which the Realized Men keep in a casket of gold – very precious and never to be given away free because it would be bound to be spoilt or distorted.

PART 2

You will see from the preceding that there is quite a gap between what we want and how things are, so there is plenty to be done.

For those who would like a small test to prove that they have advanced, it is suggested that you take one of the formulations in the System, e.g. that about 'Influences A, B, and C,' and see if you now understand it more 'in depth'.

Influences A, you remember, are those arising in and for the ordinary life of the outer circle; Influences B, those originally put out by the Inner Circle but subject to the accidental distortions of the outer circle; and Influences C, those reaching the individual direct from the Inner Circle.

How do you take this now? And how now do you regard 'Magnetic Centre' in terms of the ladder of Self-realization?

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