

20 June 1966

READING 6

I had a letter to-day (about one of your small, informal meetings) in which the writer said: 'Perhaps the most important question last night was Mrs. Wood's: "I wish I could see what to do about the Law of Inertia rather than just battle with it".'

That, of course, is the big idea; but in order to 'see', we have to know more about it, and that chiefly means getting rid of old points of view and seeing it differently. It isn't the 'Law of Inertia', by the way; it's the *Law of Three Forces*, of which Inertia is an aspect of only one. The two Universal Laws (Law of Octaves and Law of Three Forces) are the rules of the game of Living; in a game like chess, you first learn the rules and then acquire more and more skill in playing the game. You don't waste time swearing at the rules; and there's nothing wrong with the Three Forces either! It's a question of the relative amounts of each that are needed for particular purposes.

For instance, Active Force brings about change, gets things done; and the Force of Inertia makes things *last* – it's the durability of things. A soap bubble has very little inertia, a bar of iron much more. Hit someone on the head with a soap bubble and the bubble bursts; hit someone over the head with a bar of iron, and the head bursts. It depends what you want!

Max Planck's famous equation (which can be written $ET=h$) means that, in a vacuum, Energy multiplied by Duration is constant – here Energy is Active Force, Duration an expression of Inertia, and the *constant* (h) an expression of the Third Force. For electrical current flowing along a wire, Ohm's Law is a clear expression of the Three Forces, and so on. But we've a lot to learn and must go slowly; though when you begin to get hints of Three Forces all around, it becomes rather exciting! To see the Third Force you often need to look for what is *constant* amid conflicting forces.

But to return to Julie Wood's remark, can we find examples (in work connected with Self-realization) where the Force of Inertia is turned to profit? This is very important as the *Dhammapada* says:

As a stormy blast cannot prevail against a rocky mountain, so Mara[†] cannot prevail against the man... who is possessed of unflinching faith and who conserves his energy.

Our first big step towards that happy situation is to become 'Man No.4'. Our System says that 'Man No.4 has a permanent Centre of Gravity' – this means that for such a man the Aim to be conscious of himSelf has become more important than his other interests. What can bring about this permanent change in our Being? It means the daily repetition of little efforts; to learn a language in, say, three years, you have to learn a certain number of words every day. 'To possess unflinching faith' you have to withdraw from doubting thoughts about the Atman and from conflicting desires, whenever you notice them; and 'to conserve one's energy' you have to save a drop of energy whenever you notice it draining away. The first steps are the most difficult; at first inertia is against us, but soon momentum turns in our favour. But all the time there must be present a constant and usually invisible Third Force or progress will cease. Can we find ways of reminding and encouraging each other to keep going, and to turn inertia into momentum?

[†]In Buddhism, Mara (not Maya) is a tempter, distracting humans from practicing the spiritual life by making the mundane alluring or the negative seem positive.

Would it help to find examples where the Force of Inertia is turned to profit, if we look on a bigger scale? To start with something we know: A remarkable feature of the Mevlevi is the permanence of their method of ‘Turning’ distilled by Jalalu’d-Din-Rumi (born 1207) more than seven centuries ago. Think of all the wars and political and ‘religious’ disruptions that have convulsed the Middle East since the 13th century, ending in the banning of ‘astrologers, fortune-tellers and dervishes’ by Kemal Ataturk after 1923. Then ask what is the secret of that permanence and of its promising resurgence just now?

These questions are very relevant to us. From 1922 when Mr. Ouspensky came to live in London, his chief aim was to create a School; namely a permanent body of people who would go on developing after this death. We have now a certain cohesion which looks like lasting – but *will* it last? Taking the active forces of the changing environment on the one hand and the durability of our organisation on the other, what would be the Third Force that would keep it alive? For there is a certain permanence also in the trunk of an old dead tree.

Or again, take that wonderful experiment of giving the Meditation to the world, described in His Holiness’s words like this: (4th October 1962)

Q. Beginners often say, ‘Is it only this simple thing to do? Are there not other disciplines big and important that must later lead us to Heaven?’

S. The rigorous disciplines of the Past which people often expect have been done away with. This Meditation system has now been created to relieve people of hard labour. This is made simple because ordinary men in this age cannot undergo strict discipline by their very nature...[†] As far as the simplicity of the method is concerned, that is the result of a Conscious experiment which has been brought to this stage. For example, when someone invented the printing process, it was very cumbersome at the beginning; but now it has developed to such a state that we take it for granted, we just never question it. Perhaps this simple Meditation system will be taken for granted at a later stage.

Its simplicity is, of course, the result of previous hard work. Just as when a photograph having been taken and processed and made into a block, it can be printed in thousands without any difficulty. The difficulty experienced in the first stage – that of making the block – is not again met with in the reproductive process. Just so a few Realized Men who penetrated the subject with their foresight encompassing ‘three times together’ (past, present and future) observed and experimented on this method, and when it was found useful to suit this generation, they passed the method on. A few people took it to the stage where it could be given to the multitude.

There are plenty of questions we can ask ourselves on how we can help to bring this ‘Conscious experiment’ step by step towards a successful conclusion, since we are privileged to play a significant role. It might need a whole generation and more before ‘this simple Meditation system will be taken for granted at a later stage’.

We have already learnt that too much Active Force in propagating the Meditation without taking into account the Force of Inertia in creating unnecessary resistance against it, often spoils

[†]NOTE: From other things he has said, one gathers that the emphasis here is not on the inferiority of modern man, but on the difficulties of the present age, in which there is so much Active Force that everything goes faster and faster externally, so it is more difficult for the individual to achieve a Permanent Centre of Gravity.

the ground in a particular community where you want to sow the seeds. Nevertheless, we must scatter these seeds as widely as we can; time can go by and the impetus die down. The meeting next Thursday is something but not much; more could be done if someone could think of a new way to go about it.

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