

6 March 1966

## READING 6

Your questions and the answers which are being given at meetings, clearly show that progress is being made. For instance, last Thursday at Campden House Terrace:

Miss G. I still feel I need a re-explanation of Buddhi.

Mr. R. It is still an idea for me – is it the part of us which reflects something higher?

Mr. C Was it called Soul?

Mrs. S. Hypocrisy still seems to enter into so much of one's activity – I keep seeing this now – is this seen by Buddhi?

Miss G. Is Buddhi a definite thing, or a mental activity?

We learn about Buddhi, not from theories or definitions, but by learning to use it for its right purpose. It is man's means of seeing things with the 'eye of God' – an ancient, symbolic term for the Source of all Truth, Beauty, Happiness, Goodness, as much in oneSelf as in the bigger Creation of the Universe. So we observe what brings about these glimpses of Truth and Happiness in consciousness measured by frequency and duration. In the beginning it comes as momentary and fleeting flashes – the 'good impulse'; on the higher steps of the Ladder it naturally comes more often and stays longer until it becomes permanent. One mustn't be impatient; one must just be selective in one's observation. To observe is, as we said, to learn 'to see things with the eye of Atman'.

Perhaps we need reminding of a talk which began with a question from London that we put to the Shankaracharya on 26th October last:

Should one guard the eyes from wandering glances in order to maintain contact with the Self? I feel that they steal treasure from me.

S. These wandering glances do give away treasure, because with the glance goes the mind (Manas), which is followed by Buddhi. Thus everything is given up and one becomes destitute. To stop this there are two ways: *First* is to see everything without any identification; and the *Second* way is to look at things which are artistic and represent aspects of Divine Nature. By doing this one would learn to see the beauty of the Absolute in everything one perceives.

And he told the story of a Holy Man who was passing along a road when he saw a beautiful woman. Her beauty stopped him in his tracks, so that he stood gazing at her rooted to the spot. The bystanders asked him how it was that a Holy Man could indulge himself by staring at a woman? But he said, 'I am looking at that which is behind her face; for He takes entrancing shapes by which to show Himself; and beauty is of the Nature of God'.

Seen psychologically this story describes 'Buddhi seeing with the eye of Atman' as the Holy Man; and the 'I's' belonging to the different centres as 'bystanders', not understanding and each identified with his own point of view – desiring, wanting to possess, feeling frustrated, envious, disapproving, conflicting, etc. But none of these bystanders is capable of *observing* in our sense. Moreover, what one is observing may as well be within oneself (as, for instance, during a half-

hour) as outside during active life. In neither case do we waste any time stopping to comment on the view or feeling frustrated etc. Immediately that starts, it means we have stopped observing.

\*

Gradually as the mirror becomes clear and the cloud of ignorance around it is dissolved, so the Universality of the Atman becomes apparent and all separation or duality disappears. One sees, for instance, that all the experiments in the Great Laboratory of Nature were necessary – not only for preservation and improvement of species, but to produce this capacity of mirroring the Mind of the Creator, which reaches its culmination only in Man. We are going to try to illustrate something of this at the Society's Annual General Meeting on the 26th.

Of the many different observations and quotations sent me, I especially liked this one from Gerson (1362–1428):

Think of a ship in the open sea, well manned, and carefully provided with every necessity. At the masthead sits a watchman, so placed that he can look right and left, backwards and forwards; neither the raging billows, nor the changing course of the vessel, nor the noise and confusion of the crew, can prevent him from gazing unhindered in every direction. His eye roams over the restless deep unfettered in its range save by the boundary of the horizon. Behold, thus also should the Spirit act during its voyage in the body. It should ascend to the watchtower of the conscience, and contemplate the immutable Majesty of the Deity. Though all around the waves of this world rage and toss, it alone will remain calm and serene, and know well how best to steer its bark into the haven of rest.

\* \* \*