

Conversations with Dandi Swami

R.A. Among His Holiness's disciples in the Ashram was Dandi Swami Bhagawatananda Saraswati who, we understand, had been a Judge before becoming a Sanyasin seven or eight years ago. He is a very learned man and has written an eighteen volume commentary on the Bhagavad Gita. He speaks perfect English. Perhaps because of this, perhaps for other reasons as well, His Holiness decided that we should put questions direct to this Swami who would reply in English. It was at first indicated that when this method was adopted His Holiness would leave us alone with the Swami. In the event, however, he remained with us throughout the whole of every session. The Swami is an intellectual man wholly devoted to His Holiness but with a somewhat rigid approach as can be judged from some of the quotations which follow. His Holiness is, of course, aware of this and has subsequently written softening the line taken by the Swami in certain respects. For example, where the Swami insists that there is an absolute pre-destined quality about every action, His Holiness subsequently made certain amendments (see letter dated 12th November). It will also be seen that the Swami himself later modifies his first unequivocal statements on this subject.

The Swami was exceptionally verbose and repeated himself a great deal so this record, though it contains much direct quotation, in many places paraphrases long and academic discourses.

M.A. Before going through the actual account, it came to me that the most important thing was what His Holiness said to Dr. Roles at the very beginning of the visit—"practically everything has been discussed before—but it is nice to come together again to refresh the memory"—so all the Swami's answers could be a test for one to remember how His Holiness had previously answered, and what one had understood. I feel His Holiness's subsequent corrections show that one cannot accept the Swami's answers without very careful verification of His Holiness's way of answering similar questions. I do not feel, therefore, that the Swami's answers can form part of the main record of the wisdom from His Holiness.

The Swami's answers about pre-destination, re-incarnation, yoga, posture, bramacharya all conflict with previous answers of His Holiness's. For instance, His Holiness gave a very simple and direct instruction *re* posture which was quite specific—that only the straight back was necessary and that it did not matter what we did with our legs, etc.

Mr. Lucas. What is needed to ensure that we take right actions in our lives, and come to the right decisions? Some people maintain that the Meditation alone can guide them. Do you feel it can do so on its own or, if not, what else is needed? In our Western teaching we were told that 'man cannot do anything'; what is needed for people to do something?

D.S. The first thing is to consider why you do actions—why are actions necessary at all? Why are we prone to bad actions, not *right actions*? If God is immanent everywhere in every part of our body, how are we, as individuals, capable of bad actions?

He went on to give the example of the cinema and the white screen which is there both before, during and after the show, You can take Param-Atman, or the all-pervading Consciousness, just like that.

The first thing you do is to put out the light and shut the doors. Then the reel is focused on the screen. First, by the shutting of the door and putting out the light, you are prevented from seeing the white screen; then the reel is focused on it which has no reality of its own, but if the door was open and the light on, you would not enjoy the cinema.

He spoke of the all-pervasive influence of God, or Param-Atman, or any of the names given in the different religions—Allah, Krishna, and so on; whatever name is given the personality is the same. Like a man who can

be called the son of his father, or the son of his father's father, or his mother's son—he is the same person. The all-pervading Consciousness is the substratum of all our individual souls. Although there are different names in different religions, there is no difference as far as the spirituality is concerned in the different religions.

R. By mind, do you mean Buddhi?

D.S. Mind, by its imagination, takes a reel and focuses it on the substratum. Supposing you wish to go to India, but have not yet planned how you will be going—you think of all the different courses — by ship, train, air, etc. That is the function of mind (Manas?).

Buddhi determines and eliminates, and chooses one thing.

And then Ahankar, ego, says this is my action, and then all this is recorded just like the tape-recorder or gramophone. This whole thing comprises the act of the individual.

Antahkaran is the inner instrument.

We have external instruments—the ear, eyes, tongue, skin, and nose—five external organs to take the experience of the outer world. We have four internal instruments which comprise the soul. But the internal things must attach themselves to the external as well to manifest. Your eye may see something, but unless your mind also takes it, it will not be experienced by you.

The internal instruments are mind, intelligence, ego and Chitta. Chitta sings the old songs—all our experiences of the past are recorded there—things of direct experience, and things from eternity which have not been fulfilled—although they have not been turned into practical experience, they are also recorded in Chitta.

... ego—mind—ego until it is your work—until it is you who is involved, ego is not in play.

R. In the West there is only one word for mind—whereas there is a difference between comparing, contrasting and the recording mechanism.

D.S. Mind is only to imagine—it cannot decide anything. It is intelligence which decides, and that is called Buddhi. You may think of many things, but you will take no action until the decision is made; and until you think it is your duty you won't do it, and in the light of past experience, which is where Chitta comes in. All this is necessary for action to take place.

Actually these are the reflections of consciousness itself. When consciousness is steady, there is no imagination; but when consciousness begins to imagine, it is the nature of consciousness. If you ask why consciousness imagines, it is like asking why ice gives coldness—no scientist can answer that—so there is a nature of consciousness itself which is called Maya. No-one can explain why it is there to you—it is the nature.

When you go to sleep, you never imagine you will be dreaming but automatically the dream comes, and that is through the imagination of the mind. He does not want dreams, but they come in spite of this.

So also in regard to consciousness there is nothing to be achieved, but in spite of that it is the nature to reflect the glories outside. So the purpose of actions is just to glorify. In the same way as no-one can say why fire burns, no-one can say why the world is being reflected on the substratum. When it is static it is pure Consciousness.

Ego and consciousness are two different things. Ego in Sanskrit is called Ahankar.

Goldsmith who makes many ornaments out of one piece of gold—the gold is in each part of the ornaments. Ahankar is that which makes so many 'I's out of one.

Mind reflects the phenomenal world. Maya means the reflection or projection of names and actions of the substratum.

R. Is this illusion?

D.S. You can say that infinity can't be divided by infinity so it must be illusion, there is no place for the created world so it must be illusion; but supposing you mistake a rope for a serpent in the dark—the serpent is an illu-

sion, but without the rope there could be no illusion. Mind is the reflector.

We can reverse the process and see reality only by right knowledge. Indeed, no action is possible until we go towards the substratum itself.

You can say when you see the Thames on the screen, “I am seeing my own Thames,” but if you try to touch it, you will find it is nothing—just the white screen.

Illusion is there because we are not taking the right things in the proper perspective.*

When I talk of knowledge, we mean wisdom, the wisdom of Consciousness which always exists because it is Consciousness itself. Knowledge is like the water you get through the pipes, wisdom is the reservoir. Out of Consciousness we get Knowledge through the mind. Ananda is also its nature.

*If you say the world is an illusion, there must be a real thing behind it to give the illusion!

R. The most difficult thing is to differentiate between the pure Consciousness and our little reflections of consciousness.

D.S. If you have come from the city you will have to proceed along the roads you know to find your way back—to go in reverse. You may make all sorts of attempts to do the right thing, but right action is not possible if the base is ignorance. However hard you try to correct, you will need right knowledge. You will not be expected to do the right actions unless you have the right knowledge.

Now, is there any way to do right actions while working in the phenomenal world as it is? If your aim is to do the right thing, in spite of ignorance you will do the right thing. For instance, you would say truth is right action; so if you speak the truth that is right action. If you do not commit adultery, that is the right action. Right things do not have imagination; if you tell the truth, you do not imagine.

Truth, non-violence, abstinence—we have regard for these because they are going on the right way. If a man is going on the bad way, we have no regard for him. You have regard for the man who only keeps for himself what is necessary. For doing wrong actions you have to think of so many things and make so many plans—like the thief—so if your mind is involved in so many thoughts and plans, that will be wrong action. Everyone wants peace and happiness—both man and beast. If by doing anything you lose the peace of your mind, it will lead you away from happiness. Anything which does not mar the peace is therefore right action.

R. How could I give the answer to Mr. Lucas in two words?

D.S. Non-thought and peacefulness.

Now to turn to the question about meditation. Whatever one is doing, either directly or indirectly, the aim is peace. You may labour hard and suffer many hardships, but you will be happy if you find peace at the end. Working for many years in an office—it is the pension at the end which gives peace without doing anything, which is the aim. Even the thief is looking for happiness, but through ignorance he does not know the object of happiness.

Meditation is necessary for this, and there are two sorts. In the West many people are interested in meditation for the powers and miracles it may produce, but that is not the real meditation. Meditation can also be a wrong action if it is not directed towards peace.

Meditation is the roof of the house, but unless you learn to climb the ladders, you won't reach it. If you try without, you will fall and break your leg and go to hospital.

In one type of meditation the imagination remains—such as meditating on the Cross. In the other meditation, the mind does not remain. There are seven stages: (The Sanyasin went on to describe in detail the seven stages, of which the following is a brief resume)

1. The cleaning of the mind. If linen is soiled, however many times you dip it in dye, it won't take the colour; so before meditation can reflect the Truth, the mind must be cleaned and turned in the right direction. You cannot proceed East and West simultaneously. So it is necessary to cleanse the mind, particularly because it is the first manifestation of real Consciousness, and so is very close to real Consciousness. Until it is clean it won't reflect the pure Consciousness, like a mirror which is dusty or painted over. The mirror is still there, but it cannot reflect.

2. Control. Here he talked about Truth, non-violence, continence, abstinence, non-greed and the non-accumulating of things. Keep the pitcher empty so that it may receive from above.

3. Rule of life. Time and posture. Time should be fixed so that you don't have to think about it. If you have to think when you will do it, your mind will become active; whereas if it is regular you will just begin like drinking your early morning tea regularly at 8 a.m.

There followed some complicated instructions about the special posture — sitting on the ground to meditate, and locking the charge in the body to prevent it being conducted through you into the earth. If it is locked, it will reach the bottom and rise up.

He spoke of the aura which some of the elderly saints have—although they may be 90 or 100, they glow from the aura they have collected in this way.

4. Breathing. A description of the fire from breathing through the right nostril, and the moon from the left, and the equilibrium in the middle, and if you make this connection it gives light.

Like the body, it does not feel pain itself—it is the mind which feels pain; the mind and the breath are brothers and affect each other. When the mind is disturbed, the breath is disturbed—when you are angry, you breathe heavily; you have to learn to control the breath.

Who is controlling the breath? Is it the intellect?

It is not the electricity which will give you light; electricity alone cannot give you light. You can have many bulbs in the house, but they will not give light unless the switch is put on. It is the connection made by the switch which gives the light.

The ego makes the connection, so the ego must be persuaded to go to the 'Real I'. The connection between the consciousness and the body is the ego.

5. Make your mind turn from outside towards inward things. Leave the external world by constantly reminding yourself of the illusory nature of the external world.

If you really know about mirages, even in a desert when you are dying of thirst you won't expect to get water from a mirage.

6. Retention—continuous memory of the real thing like oil pouring in a continuous stream from a bottle. Your mind concentrated on a particular object through going inward, and inward on Step 5. Continuous memory of the Reality.

7. What happens next? Through continuous memory of the Reality you forget yourself, and then you will have no thought; and even the object of your meditation and continuous memory will go away—that is the realization of your own Self.

Friday 6 October

There was meditation with His Holiness, and then the Sanyasin came in to continue answering Mr. Lucas's question. Dr. Roles said he had many questions from people all over the world, which needed answers translated into several languages, and therefore we would very much appreciate short answers as we had so little time. Also he had been coming to see His Holiness for twelve years, and had heard many of the ideas before, and it was clarification on points rather than the full system of Knowledge about which the questions were being asked. The Sanyasin pointed out that unless you got to the root of the matter it was not satisfactory. Again, the following is a brief resume, on 'can men do'.

D.S. Drew a diagram showing how the dreamer creates many different people and creatures who appear to move independently, but they are dependent on the mind of the dreamer. In talking of mind he drew first the Cosmic Mind with the creation as the cosmic, and then the mind of man with his dreams. Out of the cosmic or collective mind of Maya all of us are controlled by the cosmic dreamer, and so we have no independent action. In deep sleep the subtle mind retains its identity, but does not set up actions. In your dreams if a man sees a tiger he is afraid and runs away from the tiger, but as both are not real he need not run, because they are all created out of the same thing. Therefore, so long as you are in the individual state—thinking "I am an individual, and I am separate," this is ego and ignorance and you cannot act. But if you go to the Cosmic plane by such practices as meditation, etc., when you lift yourself from the individual to the Cosmic plane, then action is possible. On the individual plane you suffer, but on the Cosmic plane independent of body and senses, you enjoy the glory of the creation. In a drama whether you are playing the part of the hero or the brute you feel pleasure after the performance, because it is all one play, the prompter is the same for all the parts. If you simply witness the drama you enjoy it.

R.A. Who is "You" in this conversation?

D.S. If you go to the cosmic level from the level of pure Consciousness "I-ness" begins. As you come to the individual level it is more limited.

Question from Mexico. Can one be told more about the place within the Antahkaran from which life can be regulated?

D.S. It is connected with the breath, but mind and breath are like Siamese twins. Life is breath. When there is no breath there is death. By control of breath, or by control of mind because both are co-related. You control your mind by means of devotion to God, and breath by the way of Yoga—the 8-fold way. But by simple control of the mind you do not need all these processes. If the mind is fully controlled, the breath is also controlled. By devotion, surrender to God, there is no ego and neither mind nor breath can move. Surrender to God is devotion. The word is de—vorere (from the Latin), which means 'away' and 'vow'—to take a vow—determination. You make a vow to give all to God. This is possible while you are working, or whatever you are doing. If you really recognize that God is omnipresent and in everything, you will not need the Eightfold path, the mind will be concentrated and you will see God in front of the mind everywhere. That is called waking meditation.

The habit of the mind is restlessness. If you bind a restless boy—after a while he will go to sleep. So also if you always keep God in front of the mind, then after a time mind will become quiet like the sleeping boy.

Devotion requires belief or faith. Faith is the support of mind, effort the support of yoga, and discrimination the support of knowledge—discrimination between Self and non-self. You keep discriminating—"I am not this hand of mine which I see, I am not this mind, etc." You remain the subject and you see all these parts as objects,

and the whole subtle body and linga sharira becomes object and you remain the subject—"I am the witness of the eternal dream".

R. Question from New Zealand about meditation—Dharana.

D.S. Mind goes through three transformations in Meditation—concentration, Samadhi and total annihilation of mind. At first you are trying to direct everything towards God—I and God. Then in Samadhi only God remains, and you forget yourself. In both these stages some ego may remain, but in the third stage there is nothing—no ego. It is the pure Consciousness which has been there all the time like the sun. You have just removed the clouds. It is not the void—void and pure Consciousness are different—void is nihilism.

R. Suggests we might do just that now—D.S. indicated we could not. He seemed to misunderstand what was meant, but went on —

D.S. One cannot do this just like that—meditation is the rehearsal. The real act is whether you can be like this in the active world, be in the active world and not lose this. It is not just in the one or two hours meditation, but in the remaining 24 hours that is the real test of whether you have achieved this.

R.A. Asks about the word 'void.'

D.S. If you make the mind void you are experiencing void, and so there is still a knower present. You cannot make a void of the knower! When you get beyond the void to the next stage then that is Self-realization, and it is not difficult because the Self is always there — it is like going for a bath with the towel round one's neck and then looking everywhere for it. When it is pointed out to you that it is round your neck, you have not found it—it wasn't lost—you just forgot it. It is the same with the Real Self—it is self-evident.

R. People all over the world who practise the meditation are asking how they can come in closer contact with the fully Realized man and his whole Tradition? Can they come in contact with his mind on the subtle level, and how can they come in contact with the Being of the fully Realized man?

D.S. Certainly it is possible both in a physical and a subtle way. For this, regard and prayer are necessary. He gave the example of the low-caste man who went to Dronacharya who was the great teacher of the bow and arrow, and longed to learn his art from him, but was refused because of his low caste. But out of his regard for this teacher he made a clay figure of the teacher, and continually looked towards him and prayed to him. He did this in the forest, and then practised himself the art of the bow and arrow. Later he became a greater warrior than the teacher.

Now you may ask—who is the guru—the guru was himself. If you go before a selection board choosing, say, officers, you will suppose that the selectors are superior in knowledge and experience to yourself? Now—did you select the Shankaracharya to be your teacher? So, who is the selector, and who is the selected? Who is the superior—the "selector" will create guru out of you. Geography does not matter. It is intensity of desire for the guru which is necessary. Gave example from Ramakrishna to show the need for intense desire. With this intense desire for a teacher, if it is necessary, this will bring a physical body to you; if it is not necessary, it will bring the real Knowledge to you.

R. Said you needed to practise this.

D.S. said, Yes, it was like milk—you could see or smell milk and you would not be nourished by it—even if you drank it, you would not be nourished unless you could digest it.

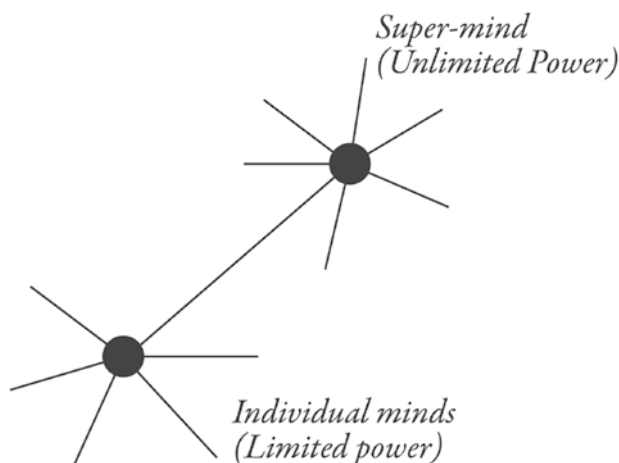
Saturday 7 October

After meditation with His Holiness, and in his presence, we continued to put questions to Dandi Swami:

D.S. You were asking yesterday morning about the transmission from the guru to the disciple. I am just giving myself as an example of that. Ordinarily I am not giving advice, even if asked for, until I am sure that the man asking has got the greatest regard for me, and that he will root out his doubts and accept what I say. That is our way—that until the man has an unflinching regard for you do not speak out, so personally I usually keep my rooms always closed. Now His Holiness ordered me to try and solve the questions which you will ask. You may have noticed that, whenever you ask a question, I do not stop to think about it—do not pause for the answer, but at once give you the answer. How does this happen? Realized souls are generally always established in the Cosmic Mind, or what is called super-mind or super-consciousness. There are four* states of consciousness:

- 1) Unconscious state of deep sleep.
- 2) Dreaming state or sub-consciousness, where we are dreaming but do not know we are dreaming.
- 3) The state where we are conscious of our dreams.

*[*He changed it to 4, but only described 3.]*



It is the same process, but for the individual it has limited power—for the super-mind it is unlimited. For the individual the power is limited to the experiences in the conscious medium. When the man has only individual mind he cannot catch the transmission of the guru because he is separated.

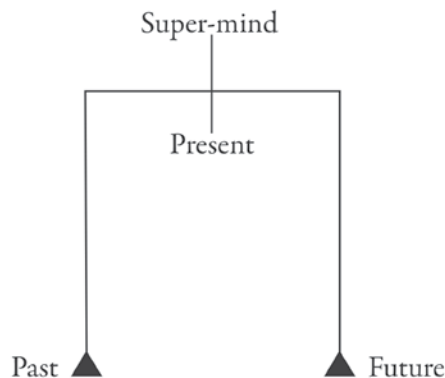
Now, when I am speaking, it is only what His Holiness intends me to say. His Holiness transmits—I speak. Yesterday you said I was speaking too fast, but the ideas which His Holiness was transmitting were so full that I was trying to transmit all of them to you.

I give the example of Vivekananda who went to New York and was told he would only have five minutes to address an audience. He stood up intending to speak himself, and found he was dumb—but he remembered his Guru, Ramakrishna, who was dead, and suddenly the words flowed in such a way that the audience was fascinated and he was allowed to go on much longer than five minutes. Although his Guru was dead, cosmic mind could make this connection. Distance and place are not a bar, nor time.

So, if you had put your questions direct to His Holiness, he might have used different words, and answered in a very short way, but the essence would be the same. So don't think "I have spent all this money, and come all this way to hear His Holiness, and this old fellow is doing the talking!"

R.A. In talking yesterday about the stilling of the restless mind, you said that we should seek to become the “witness of the eternal dream”. I find this is possible quite often when I am playing a passive rôle, for instance listening to a business discussion. The moment my rôle becomes active, however, I find it almost impossible to remain detached. Have you any advice?

D.S. On the spiritual level there are only two tenses—past and future—because the present is always here. What is it which is always present with us? —it is super-Consciousness—God—whatever word you give it. This super-mind is the fulcrum:



Whenever you are thinking of anything you are in the past or the future. We are never in the present. Why is it? Either one is thinking of the past where you might have done something different, or you are in the future where you are always hoping—“I shall do, I shall get.” So long as your mind is engaged with either, the present is out of the picture.

In reality, the reel has already been made, and one is simply the witness at the cinema. If we don’t like the reel we are always trying to change it, but if you went to the cinema and were sitting there and did not like what was being shown, you could not ask them to change the reel!

As soon as you realise it is just a reel which is already made, and which you cannot change, you will realise it is the will of God; then the mind will lie down and you will lie in Consciousness.

The technique is to find out how to make mind *not think* of the past and future. The present is not in our hands—as soon as you try to touch it, it has gone to the past. You either have to see the reel peacefully or leave the cinema!

If you regard both the past and the future as the will of God, you will not need to think about them and so you will be free of thoughts. So the technique is not to think of the past or the future, but in the way of devotion just believe in God and realise that the whole cinema is God’s will; so if you have done some bad things in the past, it was in God’s will—Thy will be done. Secondly in the way of Jnana—that means in the path of knowledge—once you have confidence that it is all God’s will—that even a leaf on a tree does not move except at God’s will, then you are free from the past and the future.

R. Whether he is active or passive?

D.S. It all depends on the person—what path he has taken to.

R.A. We are trying to go on the way of the householder.

D.S. You can be doing many things, but you can offer them to God. At the end of the action you say “Swaha”, that is, I surrender it to You. Like the sacrificial pyre which is burnt and offered to God—you offer each action

to God. Therefore the worship of God should not be in a closed room; it should be while you are acting, drinking, sleeping, walking. As soon as you have done it, you say: “It is not my acting, drinking, etc.” I am only the instrument, and you sacrifice it to God.

We are like puppets, we recognize that we have no freedom and are instruments—you recognize that you have to play a rôle. Think of the money which the audience pays. Does it go to the puppets; do they get pleasure from it? No—it goes to the one who controls them. So the results or fruits of our actions must be given to the one who operates us—they must be given to God. You can go on throughout the day like this. This is called the worship by work. You should not sit and be idle, but every work must be sacrificed to Him. Some puppets have to act saints and some ruffians, they each play a rôle. This should be our attitude. As soon as you are free from aspiration for the reward of the action, you sacrifice it to God; also you have to offer up your thought—your actions and your thoughts can be your worship—you need not only offer flowers; you can offer your actions and your thoughts, whether they are good, bad or indifferent. Belief is the main support. He is the fount of all actions, and every action must go to Him.

When linen is put in the fire, every bit is burnt whether it is soiled or clean, whether it was a King’s or Queen’s robe or a sweeper’s. You just have to have aim and attention on a particular goal. The difficulty comes from lack of determination. Just have faith that, according to His Will, everything is being done. The fire does not refuse to burn the dirty linen—it burns all—so you just have to offer up all your actions whether they have been good or bad. You have to sacrifice all the limited consciousness. Having fixed the aim, fix your attention on the aim with determination.

R.A. Would you say, then, that we can only get Self-realization through renunciation?

D.S. You have to sacrifice the past to the present and the future to the present—the Omnipresent. Renunciation and sacrifice are two different things—renunciation means giving up, but sacrifice is a worship. Renunciation can contain an element of ego.

R. Do you mean at some point you have to cease to be a householder—a doctor or a judge?

D.S. Ego should be limited—that is all. The perfection of life will be obtained when you empty yourself and let the Infinite fill you. You eliminate your ego, and go from the finite to the infinite, from the limited to the unlimited, from limited knowledge to unlimited Knowledge, from limited happiness to unlimited happiness.

M.A. Do you mean that the sacrifice is not a literal one, but within you? Renunciation is within you—not necessarily physical renunciation?

D.S. Whether outside or inside, the same thing is there. Take a gold ornament: the gold is inside and outside; if He is Omnipresent, He is not only inside but outside, so whatever you see you should mentally bow down. If it is a good part, you will say: “What a marvellous part You are playing”; if it is a bad part, you will say: “What a devil’s part You are playing”, but you should bow down just the same and sacrifice.

M.A. What I meant was—did you mean my husband need not necessarily stop being a business man, but he should do God’s business?

D.S. No—that is what I was saying about renunciation. Renunciation contains some element of ego. Now if I try to give up work, that means I am being egoistic, as if I can do it. I am the doer of the renunciation. The thing is this: by the constant sacrifice, when you will become constant in this, then the work will automatically leave you. You should wait until that time; you should not give up work which has been given you. The work will eventually leave you. Until that time you must act. For instance, after four days when you have gone, this work

will automatically leave me—I am just waiting for that! (Laughter) Therefore a successful life does not contain renunciation—this has been the cause of all India's troubles. For so many centuries we have been imbued with the idea that renunciation is the best course for Self-realization, but this has just led to inertia. This has just increased Tamas. We should be free from Tamas.

He then gave a description of the Three Gunas. Sattva has the function to manifest and lead to real happiness. Tamas has three functions—ignorance, attachment and negligence. One who renounces the world is only too ready to sit and accept gifts, but he has ceased earning so he can give no gifts himself. This is the state of inertia—you have your destiny but you are not acting to fulfil it. Because of this he will not progress, because ignorance will become deeper, negligence of duty is apparent, and his attachment to trifling things becomes deeper.

Rajas—I must work—be active.

Sattva ←————— *Rajas* —————→ *Tamas*

Rajas can go both ways—if you do good actions it will lead you to Sattva; if you do bad actions it will lead to Tamas. So it is better to have Rajas, but you will have to be careful that it does not lead you to Tamas because that is the greatest enemy in life. In Tamas you can just sit and say all this world is unreal so I don't have to do anything, but as soon as 10 o'clock comes and you are hungry then you expect some food. That is why India is so poor. Man must work. The other manifestations of Tamas are when you put off things till to-morrow, or have such a fixed idea that you cannot hear any other arguments.

Rajas—I must do, I must achieve my goal. If it is a bad goal, as soon as it is achieved he will lie down—that is Tamas. If it is good, he will never rest and goes towards Sattva, and when he is still bliss follows.

Sattva is peaceful and blissful. Happiness depends on happenings, which means you have to depend on something else. Bliss is self-evident and depends only on blessings. When your mind is full of Sattva, it can reflect the present. That is real happiness. As regards renunciation which Mrs. Allan was mentioning, it is not a question of quitting anything, when you will come to the state where your mind is absolutely peaceful and serene then automatically the work will leave you. The work will leave you, you are not to leave the work. By constant sacrifice of your work you will come to this state. Worship Him with your work. If greed comes—if you say, “I am greedy”, you will be caught by your greed; but if you say, “God is present in the form of greediness”, it will leave you.

God created East and West, but if He had combined the two—the passiveness of the East and the action of the West, then everybody would have experienced the super-consciousness! But it is in the Drama—He has made us inactive and made you very active!

R.A. Of course, a lot of people work not for fame etc., but simply to keep alive.

D.S. There are good, bad and indifferent ways of life. Some people do not aspire, but that is indifferent way of life. You should always work for perfection. It is not just passing the time by good actions. Good actions must be done to make life perfect, so that we will not have any further care. As long as desire is there we will not be free, and just an inch below perfection leaves some desires. We should strive to make perfect each action which we do—go from the limited to the unlimited, from death to immortality.

M.A. Do you mean that whatever you are given to do you should do to the best of your ability—for the sake of God?

D.S. Yes, thinking that God has given me this rôle to play.

J.R. And this is our life—the life we are given is our field of work?

D.S. We should try to play our rôle very nicely, and with the greatest regard to God. People say that in India, in spite of this spiritual tradition the Rishis and leaders have suppressed the depressed classes, and have allotted certain work to the sweepers and they are untouchable. But this is not so—whatever rôle you have you can work for perfection. The sweeper can fill his basket, put it on his head and offer it to God just as well as a basket of flowers. God has given me this rôle, I must play it nicely—so he does his best and offers his basket to God.

In the drama there are many rôles—good, bad and others. Each rôle is prompted from the same book and by the same man—no work is bad and no work is good so long as the prompter is the same. If you play your rôle well the scenes won't touch you. Scenes and virtues are a mental reflection—it is ignorance—what is a scene to you, may not be a scene to me.

The soldier's rôle is to kill. If he says, 'I will not kill because non-violence is the greatest virtue,' then he will not be able to play his rôle properly. In the Gita Arjuna said to Krishna that he could not kill his preceptor, his teacher—although he is on the opposite side—it is better to beg than to kill my Guru. Then Krishna reminded him that it was his duty to fight, and as he had not chosen his rôle—it had been given to him—he must do his duty whoever was on the opposite side. If we leave anything of our own accord that leads us to Tamas.

R.A. *Are all three Gunas necessary?*

D.S. Not necessary—they are part of life. *Guna in Sanskrit means rope*; there are these three ropes attached to the puppet making him dance. These are revolving always; sometimes you will feel Sattvic Guna—peaceful; sometimes you will feel I must do some action; sometimes you feel I must lie down; therefore the three Gunas are always revolving. The Creator of the show is making us dance.

R.A. *But we have no choice?*

D.S. As I told you yesterday, when you are in the individual mind you have no choice.

R.A. *So we cannot eliminate Tamas Guna?*

D.S. Yes, you can eliminate, because if you sacrifice each thing, then it is not Tamas. But if you say, 'Oh this work is too heavy, I won't do it,' then you are working against His order and that leads to Tamas.

Supposing you walk about 30 miles and say, "Oh, I cannot go a step further", and actually feel that you cannot move another step; then a tiger or a serpent appears, are you unable to move? No, you have strength for another 3 miles at great speed! Therefore the "I cannot do this thing" is a mental thing—Tamas. In fact, you are always connected to the mains power. After a deep sleep you wake up and say, "Oh I slept very nicely"—now as soon as the mind is still we go to the super-consciousness. After this deep and dreamless sleep we feel restored, and if disturbed say, "Oh I was sleeping so happily, why did you disturb me?" This happiness did not come from objects because no objects were there. In the same way if you go to the present—to the Omnipresent—you are restored.