

29 January 1973

READING 2

The story of farmer Riley is all about certain moments of ‘ineffable happiness’ which the recipient recognises as different from everything else that people call happiness. The OED tells me that ‘ineffable’ merely means ‘can’t be said’ – ‘indescribable’ (in words). There is a law of human and animal nature that any impulse which is not frequently renewed, tends to die away and be forgotten. You could suppose that one object of our meetings now is to renew these impulses so they increase instead of diminishing.

Our guide, the Shankaracharya, said:

Every human being drives towards what he feels as happiness; it is natural for him to do so. If he gets a little taste of true happiness, he wants more – again natural. Anyone who has made even a little progress on the Way, and who has taken to Meditation, must have had at least some taste.

(Record, 21 October 1965)

Farmer Riley describes certain characteristics, a certain ‘taste’ which he is constantly trying to cultivate.

‘CULTIVATING THE TASTE’

The Shankaracharya continued his talk in these words:

Once people have been induced to get a glimpse, they will not forget and will want more...

The Two Ants

There were two mountains and there were ants living on each; one, a mountain of sugar and the other of salt. One day an ant from the sugar mountain went to visit an ant on the mountain of salt. After trying the salt which was not to her taste, she said to the other ant, ‘Why don’t you come up to my place? Then you’ll see what delicious food is available there?’ So the salt-fed ant went to the other mountain, but, not being sure of getting enough good food, she took along some in reserve and held a particle of salt in her mouth. So when she ate the sugar, because she had salt in her mouth, she said, ‘I don’t find much difference, sister, between your stuff and mine.’ Then the other ant said, ‘Perhaps you are holding something of your own within. Get rid of that, and I’m sure you’ll see for yourself that the taste of my food is good.’ When she did this, the salt-fed ant never went back to her mountain of salt again.

He concluded:

It is the same with human beings. Even if we are offered the sugar of True Knowledge (which is also True Happiness), we will not taste its true flavour if we retain the salt of our ordinary attitude with its craving for temporary pleasures and desires. Remove the ‘salt’ and enjoy the pure sweetness of ‘sugar’ then you will want nothing else.’

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In answer to one of D.B.C.’s questions about the need for guidance, as in children’s game of hunt-the-treasure, H.H. had replied: ‘In the soul of each person there lives the Universal along with the individual Self (Atman) for purposes of guidance.’

On meeting him shortly afterwards I asked if he could say more:

S. Before answering, let us get the question right. The *eyes* are present and moreover they are performing their proper function of seeing all the time. The reason why the child does not find the thing he is looking for is that he is searching for it in a place other than where it actually is. For example, suppose we have lost a certain thing in our house, and that in searching for it we labour under the false impression that we have lost it somewhere outside the house. Similarly there is this false impression in this case of the Self, individual and Universal. In order to correct this we must get directions from someone higher.

So at these meetings we are learning to look in the right place for the source of Happiness. We try this, try that, and then by chance one fine morning we find the place, and Oh, how everything changes!

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