

5 October 1974

EXTRACT FROM LETTERS FROM MR. HOWITT FROM ALLAHABAD**Friday, 20 September, 1974**

We arrived this morning at Allahabad and it was wonderful to be met by the Hotel official and guided to Barnett's. A message said that Mr. Dixit would be calling to meet us at 11 a.m. What a delightful man he is! ... He said at the moment he had not yet been able to tell His Holiness that we had arrived, but that he would with pleasure give us an audience.

Then he told us that as H.H.'s commitments are very full, he would not be able to give us question and answer sessions. He would, however, he felt sure be able to put a few questions to H.H. So at the moment it would seem that we would meet H.H. tomorrow and any further meetings would depend on that meeting.

In talking to us, Mr. Dixit said that H.H. did not wish to take on any more separate organisations as his life is already so full. I told him I was more than happy to have my connection with him through you. I said that my sole purpose in coming to India to visit H.H. was certainly not to establish a separate connection through H.H. just for a separate group of us in New Zealand, but that a personal contact should be made with the Realized Man.

I intend to formulate what I would like to say to H.H. after this letter. I feel it would be valuable to understand how the different relationships work and our relationship to them.

He assured me that my visit produced absolutely no friction in relations to Mr. MacLaren; he said there was no problem there at all.

I will write and let you know exactly what happens after I visit His Holiness.

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23 September, 1974

On the first morning the audience was at 10 a.m. About twenty to ten Mr. Dixit called for us. We went by taxi to the markets, seeing sights that would now be most familiar to yourself and Mrs. Roles. We bought a basket into which we put apples and a fruit that looks like a cross between an orange and a lemon; finally we obtained a garland of flowers.

We did not reach the Ashram until ten past ten and were ushered straight into the presence of the Shankaracharya. What an immediate impact the first glimpse of him had on me. Here was strength, gentleness and wisdom all in one.

He signalled for us to stand aside and wait for a moment. It took only a second to understand what the delay was, for from the right-hand window one of his disciples was producing two chairs – how thoughtful.

His Holiness spoke for a short time, then started chanting, after which we meditated. The following, according to Dixit, is what H.H. said before we meditated:

S. I know about your background, that you belonged to the group of Mr. MacLaren and then came over to the group of Dr. Roles. I think that both Mr. MacLaren and Dr. Roles are receiving equal guidance from me, so I am equally pleased to see both of them. They are both equally competent to guide the people of their group. Once you start a change, then the seed of change is sown into the mind. This may begin a habit of making and breaking connections, and this could stand in the way of your real progress.

Whatever group you join, you must stick to it. As far as I am concerned I am giving equal guidance to Dr. Roles and Mr. MacLaren. About Dr. Roles, I have been in contact with him for many years – during which period I have given him enough material which can benefit anyone who wants to take to Meditation or answers to all questions are available in the material given him. He has already more than enough.

I had given Mr. Dixit a specific question relating to your work, and the work of H.H. and how we, in NZ, might fit into the whole scheme of work. However, Dixit asked just about broad general guidance of the group in NZ. H.H. said:

S. I have already given some guidance on this point, probably when the question was raised as to how to deal with persons who joined your group for some general guidance. But if there is any particular point on which you wish further guidance I will try to help your difficulties.

I then made it clear through Dixit that I now regarded yourself as my guide. It said it was not strict discipline that made me change. I said I didn't feel I was wandering around going from Guru to Guru. (Obviously I could not, nor did I wish to say anything critical about the SES etc.) He answered:

S. What I wanted to impress on you is this; once you give up one thing and adopt another the mind has a tendency to give up the other thing also. For example, you have given up a group of Mr. MacLaren and you have come to the group of Dr. Roles. What happened in the case of the group of Mr. MacLaren? Because it has happened once, it can happen again with Dr. Roles because the tendency of the mind to do such a thing is open. That kind of thing can happen and, if such a thing happens again and again, in that case you lose the way.

As far as I know about both groups is this: Mr. MacLaren is very strict on procedures and rules, while Dr. Roles is not so strict on procedures and rules. He simplifies things, his method is mainly based on Love. I have been clarifying things to both of them, that love and a strict following of the rules, both are equally good, equally essential. If procedure is followed without love, then the whole thing becomes dry; if it is followed with love, in that case it acquires sweetness. I have been emphasising to both groups that there should be strong strictness about rules, but there should also be love.

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26 September, 1974

Continuing on from the question I asked H.H. about the relationship between Teacher and devotee: the next question I asked was:

Your Holiness stated that Dr. Roles's is the Way of Love. What are the basic rules and regulations traditionally followed on the Way of Love by the householder?

S. Love (Prema) and Knowledge (Tattva Jnana) are the same thing, but function of Love is to join together and that of Knowledge is to tell. Love joins the two things. Love joins to the Param-Atman. Love of Guru joins to Guru.

Ordinary knowledge (Jnana) is all that is within our knowledge. The special knowledge is Tattva Jnana. Most teachers consider only Tattva Jnana to be the true, essential elemental knowledge.

In love, knowledge is helpful. For strengthening knowledge, love is essential. In the absence of love, knowledge would not be powerful enough to influence people. Knowledge only helps us to decide what is right and wrong, but it cannot alter things. Love

can alter things. If you know somebody to be good, then we develop a respect and regard for him. Then we approach each other very closely until the two Atmans become One.

Love and Knowledge, both are powers of Chitta (human reflected consciousness).

Without Love, Knowledge is incomplete; and without Knowledge, Love is incomplete, because, in the absence of Knowledge, Love would go away. If there is Knowledge, then Love would be maintained. As Love increases, Knowledge also goes on increasing.

Without Knowledge, Love is not expansive, and without Love the Knowledge is not allowed to play its full part. Both are essential. Knowledge creates Love and then Love has Knowledge to establish its roots.

I can vouch for the authenticity of this translation. I played back H.H.'s words to Mr. Dixit this morning and he translated it sentence by sentence. I also asked H.H.:

After initiation, what guidance do they require to gain the fullest benefit from Meditation?

He answered:

S. Just as a father has several sons and one of them is more intelligent, more capable than any other; but although the father is more pleased with that son, still in his heart of hearts he has the same regard for all his sons. The same should be your attitude among your followers.

You should be very careful in handling them. You will find some more intelligent, etc., yet for all of them you have the same feeling in the heart of not discriminating between them. Externally, your method of handling both kinds of people would differ according to the situation. Some are bound to be more sincere, grasp things more readily, others not. Although your behaviour to both kinds of followers would differ externally, internally you should have the same feelings for both.

This is most important, not treating them differently from the heart. Of course, externally you have to modify your behaviour towards each according to the individual requirements of both the sets of people, but your internal feelings should be such that you treat all of them alike. The more intelligent and capable should meet separately. For sake of progress, groups should be kept separate.

Mr. Dixit has been a wonderful help and seems to be enjoying it all completely..'

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Last Audience: Friday 27 September

During our 4th Audience with the Shankaracharya I thought it would be valuable to clarify our relationships. As I have written already, he said I was to consider yourself as my Guru. This of course I could accept, but I think the acceptance and confirmation comes from your side.

So, in my first question, wanting to clear the air and dispel any further confusions, I simply said:

Now that I understand Dr. Roles to be my Teacher or Guru, could H.H. explain the best and most valuable relationship between Dr. Roles and myself, that is, the role between a Teacher and follower and disciple?

S. Accepting Dr. Roles's word without argument. There should be no questioning in the heart about what he says. Whatever he says, you take as the Absolute Truth: this would be the feeling.

I am not the Guru of Dr. Roles, I am only a helper. Dr. Roles's Guru was a Russian called Ouspensky who, when he left the earthly body, told Dr. Roles he would eventually find an Indian Guru. He then made a search for such a person. Ultimately he came into contact with myself. He was given a lot of questions (with many others) to answer and as result of those questions and answers I failed him; I put him only in the third class as a safeguard against his becoming over-conscious of his own wisdom – he was developing a sort of pride for his own wisdom, and 'I know everything', and this is the way to forgetfulness. After his contact with me continued and strengthened, he was given a first class.

Here is an example (from *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*: 'Famous Debates in the Forest')

Yajnavalkya, and his wife, Gargi, were both very learned people. Gargi asked Yajnavalkya, 'Are you the most learned man in the world?' Yajnavalkya replied, 'No, but I bow to those people who are learned. But even so, if you should have any questions to ask, I will try to answer them and to satisfy you.'

Again:

There was the story of the devotee who each day would bring a poem to his Master. Each day after reading it, his Master would say it was terrible, no good at all. So, one day, the devotee came to him and said. 'Here, for a change, is a poem by another poet – a well-known one.'

After reading this one, his Master said, 'This poem is beautiful, most wondrous.'

Then the devotee said, 'It is my own poem; I only said another had written it. Why did you say today it was beautiful when I said it was another's, while every other day you found my poems so bad?'

His master said, 'Now you have done this thing I cannot help you any longer; there is nothing I can teach you now; please leave the Ashram.'

S. contd.

He who says that he knows, does not really know anything, and he who says that he knows nothing is equally ignorant. The criterion of knowing is twofold:

1. One should not be proud of one's knowledge.
2. One should not have any doubt in one's mind.

Ultimately, when contact between Dr. Roles and myself developed, I played this part only – I helped him by giving answers – not in the capacity of Guru – otherwise there is no difference between Dr. Roles and myself.

From the point of view of body, I and Dr. Roles are separate, and yet from the subtle point of view, we are not so.

Mr. Howitt concluded:

This was his answer. There is so much in it. I would be most pleased to hear your comments on it all.

We go to the Ashram tonight, Friday, 27th September, at 8 p.m. to hear a talk by the Shankaracharya in Hindi. Due to pressure of work before he leaves in two days, he cannot see us again, but we have already received much more than we ever hoped for.

Love,
Nolan.

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F.C.R.'S REPLY TO MR. HOWITT

5th October 1974

Dear Nolan and Brigit,

Here, for your convenience, is a consecutive copy of your letters describing your audiences. Joan and I have read them all and considered them deeply. We are letting very few people (like the Allans, and Rabeneck etc.) read the lot as a guide to our future; and of course you will be doing the same – what is on page 2 could be used here for those senior SES people who have been contemplating leaving the SES to join the Study Society: for a long time now I have been telling them they owe a debt to Mr. MacLaren and his School which they now have a chance to repay – not leaving it like rats who think the ship is sinking! Only from within the School can 'love' begin to operate in relieving the harshness that still prevails – don't you agree?

It would seem useless at this stage to try to give H.H. the true facts about the beginnings of the rift between MacLaren and myself. It was way back in 1914 that there was a rift between Gurdjieff and his School and the Inner Circle; then there was a rift between Ouspensky and Gurdjieff. After MacLaren had been in my group only two terms he left and began to use the teachings of Gurdjieff which he found in books without knowing that a trail of disaster, mental breakdown and suicide always accompanied Gurdjieff's violent methods. When I warned MacLaren, he ceased to communicate with me – we haven't exchanged a single word for some ten years now! You and I don't personally dislike him, we only feel sorry for the people who suffer through ignorance. The only thing that could get things right was to encourage MacLaren to go out to H.H. and come under his influence – which will work in time, but slowly!

So leaving the 'burden of the past', what do H.H. and the Tradition require of us *now*? Surely he wants us to unite and be grown-up enough to relieve him of some of the burden of lining up all the English speaking groups as far as lies in our power.

What does H.H. mean by saying 'there is no difference between himself and me'? Anyone can see that there is the hell of a big difference. I regard him and the great men of his Tradition as, almost, divine incarnations, and see no difference between him and Param-Atman. What we have in common is only that my knowledge is just the knowledge he has given me and the lovely spirit he emanates. So when he speaks to you like that, I take it that he means us to try to fulfil this ideal in thought, word and deed. He tells us what he expects of us now; we must not let him down!

What do we do in the face of all the appeals for help that come week by week from members of the School? We must stop giving them and MacLaren the impression that we are out to disrupt his School. *The School must be a success*, and what H.H. says about 'discipline' and love both being needed is clearly the way to bring it about. So you are to go ahead in Wellington with great confidence and his authority, united with us in London and Rabeneck in New York and Whiting in the School of Meditation.

It was a fine deed that you and Brigit have done in undertaking that immense journey and it will surely give great help to the Shankaracharya's work. I look forward to your comments on this, and to your helpful advice in dealing with disgruntled members of the SES like Pickering and Cox and the rest – you know them so much better than I do!

Meanwhile you and I can practise substituting H.H. and Param-Atman for thoughts of 'I' – it's a life saver!

Affectionately yours,

F.C.R.

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