

27 June 1977

LARGE MONDAY MEETING

The meeting began with the announcements:

Lord Allan. In the immediate future there is a Mukabeleh for visitors on Friday, 1st July; and the Mukabelehs will go on until the 15th July. That will be the end of the Mukabelehs. Practices also will end that week.

This is the last big Monday meeting of the term, and the next large Monday meeting will be on 3rd October.

The first Mukabeleh will be on the preceding Friday, 30th September; so practices will begin that week, on the 27th. The first Mukabeleh of next term will be on the 30th September.

The first large meeting is on 3rd October.

Then many of you will already know that we are going to continue with the Meditation meetings on the second Tuesday of the month this summer; and it is proposed that there should be Turning practices before each of those meetings at the usual time of 6.30 p.m. These practices may also be used to practise certain parts of the Mukabeleh – other parts which have not been kept to strictly enough.

A. I think that is all the dates; is everybody happy about the dates?

Then the question of the Movements classes was raised.

The last Movements class this term is on next Monday; and the first one next term will be on October 3rd.

While on the subject of Movements, there is also the opportunity of starting a new class of Movements next Autumn, so if you know of anybody who wishes to start to learn would they let the office know. Would meeting takers particularly make a point of getting that across?

A. then gave the actual Meditation meeting dates. 12th July, 9th August and the 13th September.

Q. When will be the first Thursday meeting of next term?

A. Probably on the 6th October.

Then as regards the final meetings of this term, there will be meetings next Thursday, but there will not be an additional paper for Thursday week; but it is entirely up to meeting takers how long they go on.

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A. continued:

Then there are one or two requests. We hope to redecorate Dr. Roles's room this summer.

Dr. R. It has been pink for too long!

A. So we hope that there will be many volunteers for that, and there are two sheets on the far landing table giving dates and the times; so would you put your names down with the dates and times you can come?

There is also a list for the names of those who would occasionally help by coming to

answer the doorbell on Wednesday evenings and at weekends. As we said before, this is a fairly light task and there is time to study in the Library if you want to do that. That is Wednesday evenings when Roy Tomlinson is off and at weekends.

Then we had a good response to the appeal for caretakers to help when Roy Tomlinson is on holiday, but there are still a number of vacancies to fill in, so would you have a look at the list outside? Miss Wright is reminding you that this is for regular caretakers who come on Saturday nights and know the business.

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Then two small requests. Would you remember that the house is supposed to close at ten o'clock in the evening. People have been staying a little later than that and it is causing some inconvenience. So ten is closing time.

Finally, when people put the chairs away after this meeting, it is a great help if you would do that; but please, if you can, *carry* them rather than drag them.

I think that is the lot; sorry, it has been rather long!

Dr. R. All these things can be regarded as part of the practice of 'External Considering'.

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He then began as follows:

I would rather like to begin at this meeting by answering some of the marvellous questions which the two New Groups have been asking. There isn't time for much and the rest will I hope be given later to Dr. Connell, Mr. Sampson and the Guyatts. Here are one or two important points raised:

A. reads:

Paul Ignotus. If you see one thing which instils a feeling of wonder it leads on, and you then see everything differently.

Dr. R. Yes, this feeling of wonder arouses the emotional parts of centres. Many people live all their lives without the arousal of those; and when one centre is aroused in its emotional part, it is very much connected with all the centres. So, if you have some intellectual emotion, which used to be described as 'Columbus discovering America' – it will arouse your heart and will arouse the emotional part of instinctive centre and the moving centre. And vice versa; if the emotional part of the moving centre is aroused in the Turning or the Movements, that will arouse the emotional parts of the other centres. They are much more closely connected together than the mechanical parts and tend to work in harmony.

Robin Stuart. So, some truths could be called esoteric truths, and these, presumably, would last for ever?

Dr. R. This is a very important question, Stuart. We heard a lot about it in the old days. Knowledge is of very different kinds – different kinds of truth.

There are some which can be given to everybody in a crowd. There is no danger of its being misunderstood and doing any damage; and the Shankaracharya describes those as Truths which the Inner Circle keep in a *leaden casket*.

Then there are Truths which have to be kept in a *silver casket*, which are Truths which can only be preserved as true if they are being practised all the time. It is no good just giving

those out to people who are very unlikely to try and put them into practice; just as it is no good talking to non-meditators about meditation. I refer to such Truths as the Law of Three and the Law of Seven; the Ray of Creation and the Table of Hydrogens – all those things which require regular study and regular attendance.

Then there are certain Truths which are kept in a *golden casket*; those Truths are never spoken on the physical level. They are conveyed between people on the Ladder of Self-realisation from Realised man to Realised man, and those last for ever – but only if they are not spoken.

I think Stuart that you are probably sympathetic to that idea, aren't you?

It is strange that Shakespeare's three caskets in the *Merchant of Venice* seems to have come from a very ancient source.

Now, we were set up here by Mr. Ouspensky to try and create a School which would last – last for a long time after the original generation of people have died, and new generations have come along. In this we were groomed very carefully by Mr. Ouspensky for a long time before his death – about how we could conduct this Work, regain the place in the Inner Circle which our Tradition had lost, and all this has come about in a rather wonderful way.

The two chief things which would prevent that are those obstacles you have been hearing about: the dispersion of the mind whereby the mind turns to any sort of other system and brings quotations from here, there and everywhere, so that the original Aim is dispersed. The second is identification. If the people in the School become identified with their superior position as members of a special school and unlike other men, this is the end quite quickly.

So the preservation of ideas and the continuing freshening of ideas which are true for ever, but get stale, depend on the members of the School individually and collectively struggling against those two obstacles.

I will tell you a story from the Shankaracharya:

There was a gardener who had by faithful service pleased a rich landowner, so the landowner handed over to him one of his many gardens. In this garden there were a number of sandalwood trees which, in India, is a very valuable wood bringing in a great deal of revenue.

The landowner went away, and after a few months he came back to see what the gardener was doing with this. He found, to his horror, that the gardener had been cutting down the sandalwood trees, burning them up for charcoal, and selling the charcoal in the market.

He said, 'You foolish man. One small piece of polished sandalwood would fetch far more than you get from your charcoal.' So, out you go, and I will give this garden to somebody else before you cut any more trees down!

(Record, 27 August 1964)

Dr. R. went on:

This is applicable to spoiling some very valuable and eternal idea by using it in the wrong way.

Any questions about that?

This Society is for the preservation of valuable ideas which can far outlast the physical lives of the members of the School.

Q. (a woman) Is it because identification crept in that it appeared that Mr. Ouspensky disbanded the school?

Dr. R. A lot goes to this; it is hard to put it in a word. Before 1947 Mr. Ouspensky realised that because there were not enough Enlightened people with him, the School had *already* broken up. So, having prepared a few people to carry on, he announced at the big meetings he held in this room before he died that: 'I have abandoned the System.'

Then, all the people who weren't doing what he intended went their ways, yet something has continued to grow from the dispositions he made.

Of course, identification of different people with different meanings of his Teaching, had been the cause of this disruption.

So, in a way your question is quite right; but it is not quite so simple.

Any other questions about the preservation of certain Truths – life-giving Truths?

It used to be said that we would get further more quickly if we took only one thing seriously instead of taking hundreds of different things equally seriously; and the one thing which is to be taken seriously is to remember oneSelf – the Eternal Self which is always present, and the Inner Circle of humanity which preserves and makes manifest the Will of this Self. So, it means Self-remembering, and membership of a Tradition which has lived for six thousand years and more, and which is there to keep it all alive (in future).

Mr. Anholt. One is often very tempted to share with others outside Colet the benefits one has received from Colet by bringing them along. How wary should one be in this approach?

Dr. R. Very wary indeed; one can't be wary enough! By the practice of certain of these ideas you cultivate the wariness, because you know that without practice it is meaningless.

There is a story about that and also referring to Stuart's question, which was told me – not from the Shankarcharya, but by somebody who objected to our setting up on our own at Colet – as a warning – and very valuable has it been.

The story is that there was once a great teacher – well known everywhere – to whom crowds of people used to come. But before he would speak to people, he would go into the forest, light a fire, and say a prayer. Then he would come back and speak.

He died in due course, and his successor remembered some of this. He went into the forest, lit a fire, but he forgot to say the prayer. And the teaching went a step down. He would speak to the people, but not from the high level of Being of his predecessor.

He died, in due course, and there had been a falling off of the followers, but there were still some left, and his successor went into the forest, but had lost the art of lighting a fire and didn't get as far as the prayer. So there was another step down in the teaching; and his successor didn't go into the forest at all. He just talked to people out of the kindness of his heart, and that was the end of the Tradition.

So it is up to all of us to know what this means – to go into the forest, to light a fire, and say a prayer. Going into the forest means solitude with a settled mind, as in Meditation. You will find out what the meaning of the fire and the prayer is if you carry on.

Now there are some more questions;

A. reads:

Bridget Hall. When you are in the sticky gum, it isn't always easy to see the way out.

Dr. R. No, that is why it is necessary to have a School where people meet each other because, as an individual, one keeps getting stuck in the gum and needs somebody to help one to get out. For unlike a fly caught on fly-paper, the human being doesn't know when his mind is caught in the sticky gum.

So, we are here with the special idea of *external considering* – considering the needs of the other people in this organisation – and the need for the organisation itself; for this would stop, at source, the inevitable process where each of us in turn gets identified with this or that. Any questions? Is Bridget Hall here (Yes). Does that answer it? It is impossible, isn't it, while you are stuck in the glue, you don't even know you are stuck, do you? When you come out of it and are in the clear, you realise that nasty feeling you've had; and that is how we get better and better and earlier and earlier wariness about being caught in this glue.

Any more from that group?

A. Well, there was another one from her:

Bridget Hall. Isn't external considering expertly expressed in the fifth chapter of St. Matthew about loving your enemies?

Dr. R. Very true; you put your finger, as usual, right on the spot.

These words which Christ used are at the heart – not only of the origins of Christianity, but of every true Religion or Fourth Way School, and used by the teachers for testing and bringing on the individual pupils.

The meaning of it in a School is that the Leader of the School tests you to see if he can make you negative – if he can make you feel towards him as if he were your enemy. There are many examples in other Traditions, for example Zen Buddhism. Have you read also about Milarepa of Tibet whose teacher – Marpa – made him build a house; and then, when he had built it, he told him to pull it down and build it again twenty yards away!

When I mentioned this to His Holiness, he said, 'Yes, Doctor, we tried it on you!' And he mentioned various instances – one has to be rather wary of him. (laughter)

But the very first experience that one had was with Mr. Ouspensky and it is a rather long account; but because you asked that question, I am asking Dr. Connell to give you the episode, which was my first acquaintance with such treatment!

This can't be done casually just to anyone; it has to be asked for and wanted very much, or you will only really make a lot of enemies and there'll be more hate and less love than ever! And you have to be caught a little bit unawares. It is no good my preparing myself for the next test by the Shankaracharya because it doesn't happen that way.

(To Mr. & Mrs. Reid). Don't look so sad. It's rather fun.

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Dr. R. went on:

We go on now to Professor and Mrs. Guyatt's meeting taken by Mrs. Guyatt and John Sampson last week.

A. There is a question from Mark Tyou.

Dr. R. Is he here? (Yes) You mentioned about identification with ego.

Mark Tyou. I have been trying to see what this could mean. I wondered if it could be like being the character in a novel and losing oneself in the thoughts and actions of character?

Dr. R. No, that is not what is meant; because that is what a novelist or an actor has to do. In fact, if he is portraying a character he has to be in the character; and the writer of a novel has to put himself in the shoes of the character he is creating.

This is a matter of attention to what you are doing.

There is a story of Mr. Ouspensky's – how when he was Editor of a newspaper in Moscow, an author came with hair dishevelled and in the last stages of despair, and said to him:

'Lend me a revolver. My two characters insist on getting married, and if I let them marry it ruins the story!'

'So,' said Mr. Ouspensky, 'I lent him two revolvers!'

After a couple of hours he came back more dishevelled than ever, and said. 'What can I do with *two* revolvers?' (laughter)

This is not what is meant. You can understand about identification with one's own ego most easily in relation to 'considering' other people. There is always a barrier between oneself and somebody else however near and dear they may be to you. And a barrier between you and strangers; and that barrier is always oneself. One is more interested in oneself than in the other person.

There are even times when one only considers one's wife because one wants a quiet life! This is very reprehensible; and I can assure you it doesn't work!

If you have been looking on television at this series of P. G. Wodehouse stories, the chief male character is always leading off if anybody is telling him something. He always says: 'That reminds me of the time twenty years ago when I was staying with the Aga Khan,' or something like that.

It is very upsetting to everybody when somebody won't listen to what they are saying and doing, but is reminiscing about himself.

It is a thing I am rather guilty of, and I would like to be reminded!

A. reading:

Sarah Stuart. Is it that one has no choice? It is no good saying: 'I shouldn't have' or 'I wish I had.'

Dr. R. One *has* choice – every moment one has choice about something – even if it just saving a drop of precious energy; even if it is just remembering that there is a very important person looking on within one. One always has choice.

What she is very right about is that it is no good saying afterwards. 'I shouldn't have...' or 'I wish I had...'

The Shankaracharya often says we must unburden ourselves of all that load of: 'If only I had done or not done something in the past things would be different.'

Shut it all out.

(to A.) That was in answer to your wife's question, wasn't it? (Yes)

When she asked a question which showed some tinge of regret at not having come up to her own standard, he said: 'If there is *any* regret there it only hinders you.'

So the voice of Conscience or a reminder from other people in this, are meant to be taken absolutely positively: 'All right; I made a mistake. Finished!' Forget it.

Otherwise one gets right down into the sticky gum of identification.

Any questions about that?

Lady Allan. Dr. Roles was very helpful in this respect to me a little while ago when I must have been indulging in this particular habit which we have been talking about, and you stopped her and said. 'Hello; how is the miserable sinner today?'

Dr. R. Yes, one must never allow one's mind to forget the greatness which is inherent in one. It is only some function of the machine that has made this mistake – not Me. 'Real I' is the thing one has to take seriously.

Any question about that?

Mademoiselle. How can one suddenly dismiss in one person who is always doing wrong?

Dr. R. Well, you have had – what is it? – thirty years, Mademoiselle? I didn't suggest you should do it in one; you should have been doing it for thirty years!

But we had a difficult upbringing, because the idea of identification was not understood by the people who were associated with Mr. Ouspensky and who shaped our early years. It takes a lot of living down, doesn't it? But we now know better, and we must do it every minute. It is a matter of cultivating the habit and dropping the past, which is over and done with, and can't be altered. And stop worrying about the future which will never happen the way you think. Drop all that burden; and it takes three weeks to form a new habit – three weeks, Yes!

(As Mademoiselle wasn't convinced, Dr. R. added): All right; I'll book the date! (and laughs)

A. then said:

There is one from Anthony Anholt, but you may have answered it?

A. Anholt. It seems as if, ideally, you should eliminate every single desire except the One?

Dr. R. Well, that is an impossibility, Anholt. We are full of desires all the time. There is a desiring part of our nature which has to go on desiring. So we can't eliminate every desire; and if we did, we would be as flat as a pancake!

Really, it is a question of discriminating and dropping off the obviously useless ones; then the less obviously useless. Then specifically in relation to your job as an actor, or to your relations with people – dropping Anholt's perpetual interest in himself from intruding.

Your examples of acting are very good in that way. Both the two things that you have practised are not identification – being wholly engaged in the part you are playing so that you don't notice anything else or, at certain times, when you are aware both of yourself and of the audience. Both those are quite legitimate, and it depends on what part you happen to be playing.

What is right about them is that you were not troubled about Anthony Anholt; you

were not considering in either of those situations. But in one you had more control – the one where you see yourself and the audience.

In the other, where you are lost in the part, you don't have any control and anything might happen. But, inherently, there is nothing wrong with either, and some actors use one chiefly and some another.

Dr. Roles then said:

We will have to leave the rest of those questions, but they have been an exceedingly good response from the people in the new Group, and I have been very grateful to them for clearing up certain ideas. We will try and answer some of the other ones for Thursday.

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Next, Dr. R. asked:

Any fresh questions today?

Mr. Geoffroy. Could you say something about the loss of energy through unnecessary talk?

Dr. R. Unnecessary talk is the outward and visible manifestation of a dispersed mind. If your mind is dispersed, then you will be talking unnecessarily; moving unnecessarily, and everything will follow; the machine will be free to act as a machine because the watchful Mind is no longer there to keep guard.

But we waste an enormous amount of energy – more today perhaps than twenty years ago on unnecessary talk.

But there is something extremely important hidden in this idea of unnecessary talk which Mr. Ouspensky laid great stress on: What is dangerous is the form of identification where you talk about things you don't know as if you knew them. There is nothing that people won't talk about as if they know; and all the public announcements really are a larger mixture of people talking about what they don't know! Politicians? (A. Yes) And trades unions, all on the shop floor, but it is pretty common. (A. agreed)

(Continuing to A.) Do you think that committees ever really solve things? I mean, setting up Royal Commissions and committees, and things? What goes to delay the violence?

A. Stop the wrong things.

Dr. R. But it is all talk, isn't it? (Yes)

Miss Scrutton. About external considering: Putting yourself in other people's shoes can be extremely painful and is, in fact, another form of identification. Can you say something about that?

Dr. R. Can you give any specific instance of pain caused by that?

Miss Scrutton. A friend of mine was recently rushed into hospital suffering very badly from shingles, which was very painful to her indeed. I, myself, saw this distress and I felt how awful it was for her and I myself became really distressed on her account.

Dr. R. You are lucky you didn't get shingles yourself! It sometimes happens like that if you are too identified with a friend's suffering.

But *external considering means not to be identified*, but to be at hand to help. To do that one must be strong and in the clear – not identified oneself.

A. Miss Scrutton did say before her question, that her concern was for the other person – not for herself. Yet she did seem to be identified and the emotion seemed to sweep over her.

Dr. R. Now, we have only touched a corner of the different forms which identification may take. We have mentioned certain common forms but there are many more. *One is to feel that one is not considering a person enough* (I'm all the time feeling that about you, Mademoiselle, I am not considering her enough!) and so one becomes a slave. So you may be thinking of the other person, but if it is slavery then it is just a form of identification. One must not be a slave under any circumstances.

Miss Scrutton. I think you have put your finger on it.

Dr. R. I hope so. Well, you put your finger on me, too!

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In conclusion, Dr. Roles then said:

Well, you have done valiantly and asked lots of questions. Supposing we give over now and be quiet. Then there is something I want to read to you from the Shankaracharya after we have meditated.

MEDITATION

Afterwards:

Dr. R. I want to speak on a more universal note about identification and considering.

The whole object of life is to discover the Divine Self and His Will and His nature and carry out His Will in one's life.

The opposite of that is identification, which is forgetting anything but the false self, and ploughing one's own furrow.

At those talks which His Holiness gives to the vast multitudes through the loudspeakers at the annual Mela Festival, he uses there the contents of the bronze casket; he says there only those things that can be said to *anybody* without dangerous misunderstanding. This is just one that refers to what we have been talking about.

A. reads:

S. As the Jiva (the person – you and me) is part of the Brahman or Absolute, it is fundamentally Eternal; it is fundamentally all Knowledge; it is fundamentally all Joy. Yet look at Eternity fearing death; at Knowledge missing all Knowledge; at Joy missing all Joy.

It is the business of Maya to make things look just the opposite of what they are, and to deceive the Jiva so that it can be kept in bondage as long as possible.

But, surrendering oneself to God removes the delusion of Maya. Then there is a dawn of true Knowledge, and we realise that there is no death for us, that no Knowledge is hidden from us, and that the fullest Joy is always with us.

Someone asked me, 'What happens when true Knowledge dawns?' I replied, 'That *then* there would be nothing to happen. All the suffering happens before true Knowledge comes and none thereafter.'

A hunter plays a tune on his flute to which the animals in the jungle love to listen; therefore, they do not run away and are killed by the hunter.

An insect loves the scent and pattern of a flower, and it sits on its petals; the petals close up and the insect dies.

A moth likes the flame, so it rushes into it and dies.

This is how blind desires created by Maya ruin us, and we do not realise it until it is too late. We often do not realise the Powers which we can command or acquire through purity of purpose. (Dr. R. Taking only one thing as important – seriously.) For example:

Although the cutting of a human body is a serious crime ordinarily, yet surgeons do it daily in their hospitals because of the purity of their purpose. Similarly soldiers kill human beings on the battlefield without becoming guilty of murder.

Guru Ram Das once tested his disciplines in this respect. By pretending to be ill and telling them that the only medicine that would cure him was the milk of a lioness.

(Dr. R. Supposing I did that here, imagine – what would happen! You would set up a special committee or ask Roy to ring up the Milk Marketing Board and ask how to get the milk of a lioness?)

While others hesitated, Shiva-ji went forth to bring it. He went straight into a den where a lioness was feeding her cubs. She gave a loud roar and was about to pounce upon him, when he looked straight into her face and said resolutely. ‘I am no hunter and I mean no harm to you. I only want a little of your milk for my Guru who is ailing. It would cure him.’

The lioness was – so to say – hypnotised by the power radiating from Shiva-ji due to the purity of his purpose. She lay down, and he took her milk and came back with it alive. We may call this a miracle if we like, but it was purity of purpose.

A good deal of unhappiness is caused by aspiring beyond our capacity and trying to do the work of others instead of that assigned to us. Doing our own work and taking pleasure in it is much better from the point of view of permanent happiness than trying our hand at other people’s work for greed of money or for power.

(Record, 25 January `1970)

Dr. R. Well, you see how beautifully this would go with the crowds in India, and we have to try and find a way of speaking as beautifully and acceptably to the crowds in the Western world. (to A.) We haven’t found it yet.

Finally: Well, a very happy summer holiday until we meet again.

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