

4 December 1978

LARGE MONDAY MEETING

Dr. Roles. You will say if you stop being able to hear. It's our last big Meeting before Christmas except for the Meditation Meeting tomorrow week, and we usually give some sort of Christmas message, and hope we'll see what to say as we go along. Meanwhile, there are just a few announcements.

Lord Allan. The Mevlana Festival takes place on Friday the 15th December, when the Mukabeleh will begin at 7.30 p.m. Anyone who comes to these meetings in this room or group meetings will be welcome to watch the Mukabeleh and to stay on to the festivities, afterwards. Would you please note that the party is meant only for those who have been at the Mukabeleh, either turning or watching.

Dr. R. You can't just 'come for the beer' (laughter).

A. Please look at the lists on the hall table if you are coming, and would the ladies please say what they will bring in the way of food, and the men please put £1 in the box for expenses. There is also a list for anyone able to help, in which case would they put down the time when they could come. Is that fairly clear?

Now we want to remind people that the House does close at 10.30 p.m., except on very special occasions like the Mevlana Festival when it can be held open later but we want to adhere pretty strictly to the rule of 10.30 p.m. closing down.

Dr. R. We've got to preserve our precious housekeepers!

A. The first large Monday Meeting of next term will be 29th January and group meetings will start on the same week. The first Mukabeleh after Christmas will be on 26th January with turning practices starting on the 23rd.

We had hoped to have the third issue of *The Bridge* available for this meeting, but unfortunately it won't be out until about the 20th December. If anyone wishes to have a copy before Christmas, it would mean calling here for a copy which will cost £1.50. It might be worth ringing up first to know if they are here so that you don't have a wasted journey! A specimen of the 'Contents' page can be seen in the hall downstairs.

Dr. R. You will see that we make a special mention of our first teacher, Mr. Ouspensky, because it was to have synchronised with the Centenary Exhibition at Yale which is still going on. It has been such a success that they are keeping it available – so many people have come from all around the States. So it's really going on.

So much then for the announcements. I don't know if there is anything you want to ask about on the administrative side?

We thought it would be a good thing if we took the main questions which those who have been taking groups have been asking as a result of your questions to them at weekly meetings. I've got the verbatim report of which those group takers also have copies and I'll get Lord Allen to take the questions they ask in turn and see if there is something new to say about them.

A. (reading) There were several people who wanted to know earlier on if Sattva could be equated with love and then last week we were beginning to come to the feeling that love is above the three Gunas.

Dr. R. Yes, quite definitely. According to the Shankaracharya and our own experience, love is a divine attribute which we only know through contact with that Divinity itself. The three Gunas are in everything in Nature. They are the cause of all the happenings in the big world and in the world within each of us. The interplay – the dance of the Gunas accounts for all the things which suddenly happen surprisingly. It's a marvellous thing to try and realise this because instead of getting fussed about one's surprising psychology which keeps doing extraordinary things and also the enormous surprises there are in the drama of the world, one simply sees them as the play of the three forces and detaches oneself from them, accepts whatever Guna is prepondering at any particular moment and it gives one a lovely feeling of freedom, if one can cultivate it

(to Lord Allen) Would you add anything to that? The three Gunas – action – Rajas Guna is present whenever any activity is going on within us or around us, it must be due to a high percentage of Rajas Guna – the force of action in the universe. The opposite of that – 'to every action there is an equal and opposite reaction' – is called Tamas Guna and leads to fatigue and inertia and very often to negative instead of positive ideas, and attitudes. And then, unsuspected by anybody unless they are shown and told about it, there is a third force which is always present which resolves that conflict and which unites those two – action and reaction. This third Sattva Guna shows itself not in action or in inertia or reaction, but in sudden *clarity* like light which suddenly brings together conflicts which have been raging. Any views or questions?

Miss Newington. There does seem to be this difference between Sattva and love. Could you tell us what it is?

Dr. R. Well, what is the difference between plum pudding and rice pudding? (laughter) We can't say *what* the difference is, we can just say that there is no similarity whatever! (laughter) They cannot be compared. Sattva Guna prepares the way so that if there is a spark of love in you, you know it – you recognise it. It comes into the open; it's clear. You're conscious of it. The two things are incomparable. The Divine Love which is omnipresent and one's momentary awareness of that love.

We speak very lightly about Love; it is considered to be the possession of everybody at will. But it is a rare thing and the way to it is Self-realization through the gradual accumulation and valuation of this third element which emerges between steps 4 and 5 of the Ladder of Self-realization. Right – well that's the first question.

A. (reading) We were asked in terms of the simplified diagram where to put the ego. There seemed to be quite a lot of difference of opinion as to what the ego actually is.

Dr. R. The ego is everything that we call I at any time; so in the symbol there are I's belonging to the moving apparatus, the sensory-motor apparatus; there are I's belonging to the intellectual side, knowing, not knowing and so on; and there I's (which often conflict very strongly) in the emotional centres governed by the autonomic nervous system. So there are

many different I's and we learn to recognise where they belong; and recognise above all that they must not be thought to represent the whole of one. They are just like servants – some good, some bad. Every habit speaks as if it were the whole of you and we have to get rid of this idea that Real I – the Atman – is just handy and anybody can find it and get it when they want.

Many of the Shankaracharya's stories illustrate this.

For instance, the King who wanted to find a successor before retiring arranged at the seven gates from the outskirts of his capital city to the palace, a whole series of different temptations; wonderful clothes, food, swimming baths; and announced that anybody who got through these seven gates could come to his palace in a week's time at a certain time of day – say 7 p.m. next Tuesday – and be given the keys of the kingdom. All the people – all the different I's thought it a very good thing to start. They all liked the idea and they all set out but they stopped off at all these different temptations in the world; and only *one man* went through and claimed the keys of the kingdom at the appointed time. That one man is the Atman; and the only way you can tell 'Real I' from all these fictitious I's is by results.

(adapted from the Record, 29 November 1963)

So it's a very precious idea – the idea that there is an 'I' in each of us which has the keys of the kingdom of Heaven. Let's hesitate very much before we use the word 'I'. In the *Mathnawi* Mevlana makes Iblis (the Sufi devil) say, 'Never say I or you will become what I am.'

Any questions about that? It is quite well recognised by some people in ordinary life. For instance long ago there was a poem in *Punch* from which we quoted in 1952, an anonymous poem, we don't know who wrote it. Part of it is this:

For I have seven different selves
That I can clearly recognise
And many, many ill-defined
And intermittent 'I's'.

Some selves can be assumed at will,
And some precariously held,
And others are like bailiff's men
To be paid off but not expelled;

Some of the lot are decent types,
And some unquestionably queer;
*But each insists on being me
As long as he is here.*

Where *I* come in, I cannot tell
Nor whether I include the whole,
Or am an image in the mind
Of each successive separate soul.

I much suspect that I, who claim
 To stand outside and watch the fun,
 Am little better than the bunch
 Of whom I am but one.

That's one of the things we get to know from working together in a group as at Colet, or in smaller groups, about ourselves and other people. Any questions about that?

The Shankaracharya doesn't use the terminology of many I's which belongs to our Western system taught us by Mr. Ouspensky, but he does say that one's feeling of 'I' is changing every moment and is not to be relied on and is different from what he describes as the Atman. There is no difference really between the two systems.

A. (reading) Someone said that although they could recall the symbol and this brought a feeling of Sattva, there still seemed a gap separating one from deeper understanding. Perhaps this is because we haven't found a way of observing it properly?

Dr. R. And it's going to take a long time and it may even be that this gap is only filled as we pass out of life at the death of the body. We may have to await that moment before we see the whole thing. In the meantime, it's very encouraging the way one is getting letters during this term, the last few weeks especially, describing how this symbol of the Enneagram (the universal symbol in the way we are now presenting it) keeps floating into the minds of some people strengthening their resolve to be quiet, to get to the peace whether in meditation or even at other times. Very interesting letters – one of which – from Gerald Beckwith – can be taken as representative:

A. (reading)

The diagram we have had this term I have found to be the most effective way of getting some stillness and memory of the Centre regularly every day (apart from the Meditation) that I have experienced. Very often diagrams seem to over-stimulate the mechanical intellectual part and result only in words, but I find that I am able to understand it more and more without words.

Dr. R. It's meant to do away with words altogether. A symbol contains many many things which can't be put into words.

A. (reading) The letter continues:

Very often over the last few weeks when negative emotion begins to bite, or when I'm about to commit myself to some stupid course of action, the diagram comes floating up bringing all the turmoil momentarily to a halt.

Dr. R. Yes – that expresses what one hadn't dared to hope would be happening to a number of people. It is important to realise that the circle of 9 points is a universal symbol for the Shankaracharya, for us, for any valid teacher. It can answer all questions. It has an enormous number of different variations which you haven't seen yet, and it's used in our 'Movements to Music', it *has to been seen in movement*. We must resist the temptation to say: 'My view of the Enneagram is such and such. It must be like this.' It floats into the mind in a new form every time when one has a valid question. We have merely found that this particular form

you have been having is the most general form which people seem to be able to take today if they don't label it too closely. Any questions about that?

People don't *have* to use it, that's the point. Some people like symbols. Some find a way to read them, others don't. It doesn't matter. People who like symbols don't go to heaven any more than the people who don't like symbols go to Hell! (laughter) Just have patience and you will find that if you get quiet and know the symbol, very often the answer will come if you've got the question. (Pause and Silence) I'm sorry, I've been talking a lot and nearly stopped all your speech mechanisms! (laughter)

Q. (repeated) I'd like to ask about the connection between Sattva and inspiration: the moments when inspiration comes usually seem to follow when Sattva has been saved or collected. Is this so?

Dr. R. Yes, I think so. It does not mean that you *cannot* get inspiration at other times, but certainly when Sattva increases (above say 30 to 40%) you find that inspiration comes. But it very quickly burns itself out – the Sattva. Don't expect, don't say: 'I've got it now' – or it will vanish. Any others?

Mr. Harbord. You said that all questions could be answered by the symbol. It seemed at our group that we wanted to know how to put a question to the Enneagram and indeed, what question to put.

Dr. R. Of course, yes, that's the central question. But I'm afraid that we were never taught that and never will be *taught* it! It's for the individual to find out. The whole essence lies in the discoveries that the individual makes in this field. One never got told by Mr. Ouspensky. One had to take something to him and try it out. And he'd say: 'No good,' or he'd say 'Go on.' And the same with the Shankaracharya. One has to draw out the particular form of the symbol, get it translated into Hindi – the labels – and then he'll answer and he usually says 'This is one way – yes – but only *one* way of seeing it.' So it's for the individual. And it really helps the individual to decide (among all the conflicting and warring points of view and teachings and schisms in the world) what *for him at this moment* is valid – will answer his question.

I don't, Lucas, want it to be laid down, as you've laid it down in your last letter to me. You see, each person's *own answer* must come to the individual, floating into his mind, in reply to a specific question or bunch of questions. Because what you have written down for me doesn't apply to me at all! I don't work in that way; that's why I can't be in full support of your Wednesday group, though I want you to go on exploring.

Miss Cassini. I want to ask something about Karma: Does the Shankaracharya talk about it and is it to do with the Gunas?

Dr. R. Yes, both; both of those are right. Without going into the many varieties of the doctrine of Karma in India – very complicated, volumes – one can just say that it is the Law of Cause and Effect as applied to the individual. The individual has created certain causes and he has to have the effects. And if you want different effects, you have to have different causes!

S.C. I suppose I was thinking in terms of life after life.

Dr. R. Yes, very important if you feel there is validity in that idea – that we don't just come from nothing and go into nothing. It's the most important part – cause and effect. This life, the Shankaracharya says, writes down the destiny of next life. Yesterday writes down the destiny of tomorrow. So be careful! (laughter)

Mrs. Simpson. But we can redeem the time?

Dr. R. Yes, And it's said that by the fifth step of the Ladder you have cancelled out all the liabilities of the past. So that's the point of the Ladder of Self-realisation being a matter of giving up. You give up all the movement round this circle of life after life and you can come straight from wherever you are towards the centre. In the centre there is no movement and no repetition. It's not in time. And that's the way to get out of the wheel of recurrence, if you want to.

Mr. Geoffroy. Is the centre the place where all possibilities are realized?

Dr. R. I should have said that in what we are calling the Antahkarana – the inner organ or soul – the Causal level here – there is no time. Everything exists in potential. There are not separate I's; there is only the seedbed of all the different I's which emerge as one goes round the circle. So on the Causal level there is only potential – the potential of the whole human race in each individual. Only a very small amount of that is actualised and seen in one's life and produces Karma. Does that answer your question? Theoretical, of course! Well, that's enough about 'I's' for now.

A. (reading) We were very interested in the new way of looking at Manas and Buddhi which was so clear and we wondered if, in fact, the Shankaracharya's system doesn't include an equivalent to Emotional Centre?

Dr. R. Oh yes, that's our famous Mrs. Crampton, isn't it? Have you confirmed what I tried to say on Monday? Not yet...

Mrs. C. I needed the help of the group but it was cancelled by fog last week.

Dr. R. (laughing) Bad luck! Maybe this Thursday; if not you'll have to do it yourself! But a way to think of Buddhi is that the base of this triangle in which everything is reflected, is the part of our minds in which we *can be conscious* – the part here behind the forehead which we feel as our mind or brain. This part, when working at its full and purest measure, is the Buddhi which is, as it were, our chauffeur, our charioteer, that takes us day after day through our lives. But it's only a servant, it's not the master.

Buddhi, when it is working as it should, recognises the Atman, the Self, as Master. And that's the impression you get at Delphi in the Museum where this marvellous figure of the Charioteer, (everything else of the original Quadriga has been destroyed), never fails to impart a sort of mysterious feeling to anyone who sees it. It's the figure of '*attention* to the present moment' even in the middle of a tremendous race because this was the character who won the chariot race at Delphi that year. The Manas is all the movement produced by the physical senses from the outside world – (right side A of symbol) – which is assailing this observer at C2 who should be still; just as all the inner feelings from the emotional centre are assailing this observer from the other direction from inside – (left arm B of triangle). Our task is to *be still* whenever we remember it, and it's within our power to do that.

A. (reading) This was a question about Buddhi. It was said that in meditation Buddhi can take you to the door but it can't take you through.

Dr. R. Buddhi has no function in meditation at all. The Buddhi is meant to have a complete rest during genuine meditation. When you sit to meditate the Buddhi merely makes the initial decision 'now it's meditation, nothing else' and then it has to keep quiet. After you've come out of meditation it will draw certain conclusions and it's those conclusions that you have to actualise if you want to get into the centre. Buddhi is weak in itself; it has no power; it just sees clearly what's right and what's wrong when it's working well. The power has to come from the unity of all sides of our nature.

Mr. Hodge. When we become very quiet, is that unity?

Dr. R. You have to know by experience, Hodge, probably because Buddhi is only quieter than usual, shall we say? As for instance when turning in the Mukabeleh, the Buddhi again has *no thought function* at all. It knows from time to time, but it can't do anything. In the turning Buddhi should only keep awake. The other works of the body have to do the turning, make the effort, and the heart has to enter; and those supply the power.

Mr. H. That means that at certain points of the turning we could have that unity.

Dr. R. I'm sure you've often had it! I've seen people from the skin, coming in and out of it. You can see them have this unity, which is very volatile and disappears, and then their arms go down and their steps become weaker. Then as they amass more energy, suddenly they appear again. The Buddhi is quiet, still. Would you agree with that Vilhelm?

Mr. Koren. Yes very much.

Dr. R. But I'm sure you would agree that all the turners who are with us have had that frequently and this makes them keep on.

Mr. K. I think so.

Dr. R. Almost every Mukabeleh everybody gets it for a time, and we even felt it watching the film of the *Konya* turners last night on the BBC. Although there was a lot of funny business, we did feel impressed by the expression on the faces of the individual turners, and by the Sheikh and the Samazen Bashi who both looked to be genuinely enlightened when playing their appointed role.

Well, quarter past seven. Shall we just see for two or three minutes whether our Buddhi will be quiet in this atmosphere here – this Sattvic atmosphere with all our friends around us.

MEDITATION

Yes. It certainly seems easier for the Buddhi to be still in this company and in these surroundings. But don't forget that this company is *always* around us. Whenever we sit for meditation, we are connected with each other on the subtle level and we can have all the reinforcement that you are getting now.

Well, it's not so easy over Christmas! Christmas is coming along shortly – children's parties, Nativity plays, all kinds of celebrations – and it's quite right, it's splendid that we have that tradition. It gives everybody a lift and for once we tend to be kind to other people

and to children and it has a very beneficent effect – ‘Peace on Earth and Goodwill towards Men’. Yet we could have just occasional moments of stillness when we realise *what Christmas is all about*. The extraordinary realisation that this young girl experienced when the Angel Gabriel came and said that the Son of God will be born to her, completely changed the whole of her attitude to life. And yet she was obviously the perfect woman who could say nothing more than, ‘Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it unto me according to Thy Will.’ That complete self-abnegation and acceptance never fails to bring tears to my eyes, and that acceptance changed the whole face of civilisation; and keeps on changing it. And that is a symbol of the acceptance that could happen to any of us if we become still and reach the centre. The *stillness of acceptance*, instead of all the time putting one’s own wishes and views and comments, thereby blocking the source of Truth which is free and available to us all.

Well, I hope that you have a very happy Christmas, though some of us will be meeting tomorrow week at the Meditation Meeting and at the Mevlana Festival on the following Friday.

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