

26 March 1979

LARGE MONDAY MEETING

Lord Allan. This is the last Monday Meeting of this term. On Thursday the 29th, the Annual General Meeting of the Society will be held, the first part of which starting at 8.15 is for Members only. This is followed by a talk by Alan Caiger-Smith entitled 'Pottery, People and the Wheel of Time' and this is open to Associates, that is all those people who come to our group meetings. People who come to this later part are asked to wait downstairs until it begins at about 8.30 p.m.

There will *not* be a Meditation Meeting in April so the next Meditation Meeting will be on Tuesday, 8th May. There will be a Work-In on Sunday, 22nd April. There are lists for names on the landing table and we'd like as many people as possible to come as there is quite a lot to be done to keep the house in order and of course it also provides an opportunity of good company during the holidays and working together. These groups who have been in the Working Party have found that physical work together is a very valuable experience.

Next term starts with a large Meeting on Monday, April 30th and Movements will also begin that evening. Group meetings will also start that same week. The first Mukabeleh will be Friday 4th May. Turning practices will start on Tuesday 1st May, but there will not be a Mukabeleh for Visitors until the 11th May.

Dr. R. May the 1st! So when other people are dancing round a Maypole, the faithful will be starting the turning practices! (laughter)

A. Because there are two Bank Holidays in May, there are very few Mondays available for meetings so there will not be another Large Meeting until June 4th.

Dr. R. It would be nice to make this meeting today, a summary in a simple way of what we set out to do. As we have only an hour, I would like to clear up certain points arising from discussions I have heard about Reading 5 and the two points of view illustrated in it about ways of looking at the world.

One way was the way our Western system used to look at it and the way, I think, that most people look at the physical world today is to look from *below*. Man, one of the species of organic life, lives on this earth a very tiny thing. In the planetary world our solar system which is just one of a myriad number of stars in the Milky Way which is just one of uncountable galaxies that at present seem to be moving rapidly away over the celestial horizon. That's one way of looking at it. And we certainly should have that picture and know about it. But I don't now find it of the slightest use in Self-realization! That has been a tremendous surprise to me. I thought, for years, that it was the key to so many different things.

We have, I think, a much quicker, more direct way to look at it from above. Going from below one can turn off into side alleys at so many points that require such a long and patient determination and constant help to keep on the right road. Now we have the opportunity of learning how to look at it from above. And it's that second illustration in the story told recently by the Shankaracharya which I want to concentrate on at the moment. I don't know whether you would like to hear any of it again or whether you've heard it so much that you know what I mean when I refer to it.

The point was, that being shown by a rich man his achievements, this Realized man, we might call him a wise man and not a holy man, was taken room by room through this fourteen-storeyed building and at a certain point there was a map of the world on the wall. When he asked what it was, he was told that this was a map of the whole world. So then he asked where India was located on this map and he was shown the area. He went on asking – where is Bombay? – and like any other big city in the world, it can only be shown on a map of the world as a dot. So he went on and asked where is your building? To which the host replied that since the whole of Bombay was represented by a dot, how could he indicate his building? And the wise man said, ‘Have I not really seen all I need to be shown?’ The point as regards ourselves is that in relation to Consciousness, we need to keep a broad picture and not go into detail too much.

The first way of looking at things is an intellectual way – a way of cognition, of thought, of thinking; the second way is a way of looking at things in moments of Consciousness and it is shown in the group discussions that I’ve seen in that directly people began to get very intellectual and tried to get down to detail, the whole thing got lost. Has anybody anything to say about this? Just the main step that on the map of the world you can only see cities as dots. Be brave! I’m sure you haven’t swallowed the fish absolutely whole! Bones, tail and all!

Mrs. Brunston. (repeat) The difficulty is that in moments of consciousness you may see a little more of the whole, but except in those moments you forget it and you may invent your own.

Dr. R. Yes granted; but what we want is to develop something we can do in moments when we aren’t conscious to get that. Because it’s so nice! Why go on living in the dark in the cellar all the time? One won’t do that, I think, by means of an Einstein conception of the world. Yet we could do it if we did what we were shown. Any other questions?

Miss Cullinan. (repeat) As the map was contained in the room so the whole was contained in a part – is that one way of seeing the whole?

Dr. R. Maybe yes; if you see it that way, that’s fine. I think that the main way to realise it is to realise that all the details come on an ever-repeating circle, changing all the time. Whereas come away from the circle towards the centre and everything *is*, always. You see then the map of the world and you see two steps from that to the big city in relation to any problem or any question and the whole art is to withdraw from the perpetual revolution of turning thoughts and habitual behaviour.

Let’s see other sides of the question. You’ve discussed it, I’m sure at most of the meetings. What came up?

Mr. Bullough. On the Ray of Creation... (repeat) and lateral octave there is a point which is marked ‘the Spiritual Sun’ and this seems to give an entirely different way of looking at it.

Dr. R. How long did we take before we understood that, Clifford? Quite a long time, and the question is: Have we not got something quicker now? That Spiritual Sun corresponds to the Atman, as we’re told about it today. And that brings me to a question asked last week by Dr. Dale Beckett: ‘Is Spiritual the same as Causal?’ No, it isn’t. In this sense the use of the term Causal is a factual term involving a logical approach in the time-honoured discussion of what

is cause and what is effect. The word 'spiritual' is a word extremely difficult to define which is used in a thousand different senses and you can't get hold of it. A man once submitted to Mr. Ouspensky a paper which he thought related to Mr. Ouspensky's way of teaching. All Mr. Ouspensky did was to hand it back having underlined every time the word Spiritual was used in the course of this short article, about, I recall, 10 or 12 times on each page, all different. Every time he mentioned 'spiritual' it meant something different. So 'spiritual' is a word difficult to get hold of and it's only used loosely by us when we want to say in a word – we're speaking not from the point of view of flesh and bones, the physical body, but from the point of view of the more lasting side of man. So the language must be appropriate to the subject, to the theme, to the people, to the conversation. As we said, you can't talk about the emotional life of man or woman in scientific language – it just doesn't work!

Joe Skeaping. (repeat) Does the study of the six (processes) activities help in one's personal work?

Dr. R. There is need for much coming towards the centre – being conscious in emotional centre – before one sees the six combinations in any practical form, Skeaping. That's why I haven't dared broach it yet. But we may try next term, once more. So keep on asking.

(to A.) Will you read please – what I'm getting at is expressed very clearly by the Shankaracharya in a conversation where he was speaking to a big crowd on the question of birth and death, and he began this way:

S. In this ageless continuum of time what is the good of going deeply into temporary things? A little while ago we started preparing for this Festival and now we're packing it up. [In our case a little while ago we started planning this term's meetings and now we're finishing them off.] Everything that begins has to end.

Every person that is born has to die. [Life is a circle and that is the meaning of the symbol of the circle.] As regards life and death, each birth writes down the destiny of death and each death writes down the destiny of birth. But all you have to understand at first is this: that the Atman himself is birthless and deathless and it's only the physical body with its short span of life that is born and dies. Understand that much and it will be better than trying to understand the whole thing, because in trying to understand the whole thing, you may end by understanding nothing at all.

(Record, 23 January 1972)

Dr. R. And that is the association I have with that story of the fourteen-storeyed house in Bombay – about big things like life and death, try to understand just the fundamentals, like the circle of time, because if you go into detail too much, as in Dr. Connell's group for instance, you end by understanding nothing. Are you happy about that?

Dr. Cox. (repeat) I'm reminded of a book by Joshua Slocombe of a man who sailed round the world who said that in his mind's eye he could see the course of his voyage. In the stillness of consciousness, the movements of a man's life or his day could be seen. Is this right?

Dr. R. I absolutely agree, yes. You need to get that sort of a moment much more often, don't you? You need to come to the stillness where you see those things at will, when you need to.

Dr. Cox. He didn't see his misery or troubles; he just saw his course.

Dr. R. It's that you need to see, isn't it? You don't dwell on any failings or inadequacies. You want to see the course you're keeping to. It's impossible to live this complicated life and be right all through without having guidance of that sort. Wouldn't you agree? (Totally) So one doesn't regard oneself as superior to all the people who come to us rather lost. One feels that they haven't had a break, they haven't had the chance that we've had and one tries to help them in every possible way.

Now any other line of questions? Or any more of that?

Mr. Buscombe. (repeat) At the Frensham group we linked the story of the 14 storey house to the idea 'I have nothing of my own' and the last sentence of the paper about the 'light within'. Is this also a useful way of looking at it?

Dr. R. Very useful! That's really what the wise man wanted to point out to this businessman – precisely that. If that businessman realised how tiny, how minute anything of his own would be on a map of the world, he would be in a fair way to Self-realization and would at once link himself with cosmic forces. So one tries to find the light within one and that comes through this sort of realization you mention.

I'm glad your group did that. Can we decorate them in some way! (laughter)

Mr. Richardson. Is it correct to say it's a question of octaves in the example of sailing the world. The end objective was all in mind – is that an octave in itself? Whereas another octave was the training to do just that and also the building of a seaworthy craft when these problems would have been foreseen and dealt with at that stage. (Repeat) Mr. Richardson is asking about this topic in relation to octaves and he is relating it to the example of the man sailing the world where one octave is the object he has in mind and another octave is the training necessary to undertake the trip.

Dr. R. Not several octaves – that's all part of *one* octave on this scale, Richardson. There is the training period, there is an executive period and there is a period of perfection and perhaps retirement – it's all part of a single octave. There would be subdivisions and all the rest of it but it's all part of one process.

(to Mark Tyou) Now what about you? I'm sure you and Martin Redfern and others feel that it's all been rather unfair to Einstein (Reading 5 chiefly).

Mr. T. I've been trying not to think too much during this past week. (laughter)

Dr. R. Oh very good – yes! (laughter) If we can only store up these questions that we would like to have solved for us – not do without them – but store them up and work hard towards getting to the stillness where you're free of habitual thoughts and have the light. You'll find that these questions which we have often asked ourselves will be answered step by step in the most marvellous way – just being told each time what you could understand and then later you'll be told a little more. This is the method to try to adopt here, you see.

In the end of that quotation there is something about that...

S. The Meditation takes one to the realm of the point of unity in which this most significant universe with all its forms, knowledge and bliss is brought into one single experience.

It actually was brought into this last talk of Attenborough's where he speaks about all the amazingly different forms of mammals as variations on a theme. He calls it 'Variations on a Theme' and he tries to find the theme of which all these variations are forms. How can one describe this? 'All one can do is to indicate in a symbolic way and give a rough sketch which is all we have been able to do ourselves. The real thing lies in the experience alone. We have got to get more experience.' (H.H.)

Now that brings us to the fact that seeing things in terms of a Symbol belongs to the fifth step of Yoga. It's a very important stage which we haven't made use of. I'd just like to have Lord Allan read a bit quoted by Mr. Ouspensky in *A New Model* (p.217) about the use of a Symbol.

A. It's p.217 in which Mr. Ouspensky reminds us of certain essentials we often forget when we try to use our Symbol.

A Symbol can always be studied from an infinite number of points of view; and each thinker has the right to discover in the Symbol a new meaning corresponding to the logic of his own conceptions. Symbols are intended to awaken ideas sleeping in our Consciousness. They arouse a thought by means of suggestion and thus cause the truth which lies hidden in the depths of our psyche to reveal itself.

Dr. R. Did you get that? We don't use that enough, do we, sculptor Crampton? It's what an artist in the visual arts anyway is supposed to be doing.

Mr. C. That's how it works.

Dr. R. And when a sculptor or a painter sees something himself, it sometimes has to stay in his mind a long time before he can do anything about it. He has to hold it, doesn't he? If he sees the image of the complete work that he wants to produce, he has somehow to maintain that for a sufficiently long time to consider all the ways of working it out.

S.C. Until it's finished.

Dr. R. Anybody got any views on this kind of topic? What about actor Tony Anholt? (no reply) Well, we'll go on with this quote.

In order that Symbols can speak, it is essential that we should have in ourselves the germs of those ideas, the revelation of which is the mission of the Symbol. No revelation is possible if the mind is empty, sterile and inert.

Dr. R. How often do I myself find that! (laughter) So we have tried to introduce that aspect of our universal Symbol which is dealing with the house of 3 storeys in which every man lives, and we have found that it arouses the germs of related ideas. For instance, it shows one lots of new attitudes: for example about Eightfold Path of Yoga and its relation to our Meditation – our simplified meditation. A lot of other things, too, which you'll find it will awaken. But only if one has the germs of these ideas available. At other times when one is as flat as a pancake, nothing happens! (laughter) Any questions about that?

According to Yoga, symbols are used on the 5th Step in one way and on the 6th Step in another way. On the 5th Step it's used to withdraw the sensory part of the mind away from all objects of *sensation* – just as a tortoise withdraws its head and limbs into its shell – which is essential to a half-hour's meditation. That is Pratyahara, the 5th Step, withdrawing from

all objects of sensation temporarily. The 6th Step which is Dharana refers to the ideational or abstract part of the mind – withdraw from all *ideas* except one, keep one idea and get the power of withdrawing from all other trains of thought and associations and everything else apart from this one idea. So you can use the symbol we've given you or any other symbol – the symbol of the Cross – for one or other of these objectives. In one case you have no words or thought whatsoever; you are dealing with the sensory mind. In the other case you have one thought and one thought only. Is that clear?

Miss Cassini. Does it have to be an accepted symbol? Something came to my mind from the last paper which I don't think is what you intended to be brought to mind. The first half seemed like circles going outwards and the second part going to a point.

Dr. R. Well, you see how difficult it is to express it but you're free... it came with some clarity or you wouldn't remember it... you're free to develop that approach to this Symbol and see if it won't turn over the pages of the book a bit more. There are thousands of approaches to it and each person has the right to his own. But to communicate, we have to agree to use a symbol in a particular way, and that's why our Universal Symbol transcends all others.

Somebody asked if a man had to realize consciousness by those three channels – through actions, through emotion, through knowledge – Karma Yoga, Bhakti Yoga and Jnana Yoga? It isn't a question of does he have to; but all those three are available to any normal, fairly balanced person. In the old days you had to be a specialist on one or the other. If you wanted devotion, you had to go that way – the monastic way with rituals and so on – and when you got into the Fourth Room, you would find it wasn't enough but you had to come out again and go in another way! But Raja Yoga, from which our Meditation system and the Mantra meditation itself was taken, goes *straight to the centre by all those three ways*; just as our system was supposed to do. It deals directly with Consciousness. It uses those three gates to go straight to the centre.

(Silence)

I seem to edge away from the point where people are interested and where they want to discover more. I'm always doing that. Mr. Ouspensky used to say, 'You go a step too far all the time.' I'm sorry.

Mrs. Cardew. (repeat) Sometimes things seem to happen of their own accord and we go along with it and things are fine. But it's how to cause it to happen that is the whole problem?

Dr. R. And that is a matter of not wasting energy on trivial things. If one can try and be still, particularly the thinking part of the mind which has all the strain, you will save energy. There is no moment when you can't save a drop of energy. In a lot of moments, you save a lot of drops and that is the way to create causes because as soon as the Sattva reaches a certain concentration, at once things begin to happen.

Mr. Sampson. Is the silence the means by which the Ahankar reaches the Atman?

Dr. R. The silence is necessary because the Atman is there telling you things, is always ready to help, is anxious to help, and is helping all the time but we never hear. There is so much hubbub going on. And so silence is necessary in order to hear.

Mr. S. When one does get a little insight, apart from the insight itself which is quite clear, there is a feeling of an old familiarity about the place from which it came.

Dr. R. Yes, this familiar place. We all of us in this room know 'coming back home' – we know it a little more vividly.

By the way, about Ahankar. I'd always got it wrong. I thought that the false I – the false Ahankar – was the thing that said how clever I am and I'm better than anybody else and I know all the answers. In one conversation not so long ago His Holiness took a quite different line. He said: The false Ahankar is the thing that tells you that you are something other than the Atman. Your true Ahankar is a servant who knows that you are the Atman.

So we who were brought up in the greatest humility in the old system and kicked around quite a bit should remember that false I can be that way too. I don't know if it ever does that to Mr. Sampson? I seem to remember it in the past. (He laughs)

Shall we do five minutes of Meditation, wish ourselves a happy Easter, and perhaps some last question may arise.

MEDITATION

Those of you who are having trouble because part of you wants to do one thing and another part wants to do the opposite probably rather enjoyed that story on one of the radio programmes last week. It also has to do, Mark, with your trying to stop one hemisphere working too much.

An old lady had a parrot and a benign clergyman came to call on her and was surprised to see that the parrot had a sash tied to each leg. The old lady explained that when she pulled the sash on one leg, the parrot had been trained to sing 'All Things Bright and Beautiful' and when she pulled the sash on the other leg, the parrot had been trained to sing 'Onward Christian Soldiers'. And the benign clergyman said, 'What happens if you pull both?' Here the parrot rudely broke in with: 'I fall off my perch, you fool!' So don't try to do both things at once!

[The story was new to quite a lot of people. For some reason the radio parrot spoke with a Scots accent!]

I hope you'll get some refreshment from your Easter holiday. Some will be travelling and some will be staying at home. I don't think anyone will be travelling quite as much as the Allans who are doing a world trip crammed with duties they have to perform. Not only business, but for us as well. For instance, they are initiating in Sydney and calling on our groups in Wellington, New York and Mexico 'on the way' to Brazil! The only one hope of a break for them is that going round the world that way they save a whole day (which is not on the calendar) and that non-existent day they are going to spend in Tahiti, I understand. And you Allan will have great difficulty, I'm sure, in getting Lady Allan to come back from the beaches of Tahiti where she will be basking with hibiscus flowers in her hair...

Lady Allan. We spend a non-existent Friday in Tahiti.

Dr. R. Well, do come back, we need you! Happy Easter then.

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