

30 April 1979

LARGE MONDAY MEETING

On the platform: Lady Allan, Professor Guyatt, Dr. Roles.

Prof. Guyatt. There are some announcements: Movements classes start again this evening, but there will be nothing next Monday because of Bank holiday. Turning practices start tomorrow and the first Mukabeleh is this Friday and the Visitors' Mukabeleh next week on the 11th May. Help is always needed before a Visitors' Mukabeleh on the door, checking lists and showing guests to their seats etc; anyone whether a turner or not may help with this – there is a list in the Green Room for volunteers. Group meetings will begin this Thursday. There will be a large Meditation meeting next Tuesday, 8th May.

Dr. Roles. That's the day after Bank holiday so we won't expect a crowd!

R.G. The next large Monday meeting will be on June 4th because there is another Bank holiday on the last Monday in May and this House will be closed for the two Bank holiday weekends.

The P. D. Ouspensky brochures from Yale have arrived and those that have been ordered are on sale today. Anyone who has not ordered one but would like a copy, please put your name on the list provided.

There is a reminder to the House Committee that there is a meeting this evening at 7.30 in the Blue Room.

Dr. R. Any questions about those things? (none)

This is the first Monday meeting when we haven't had Lord Allan but I want it understood that this is a moment of triumph and not of sorrow. It used to be said by Gurdjieff and his successors that a successful career in public life was incompatible with Self-realization. Lord Allan proved that to be completely false.

I'll just read from Lord Gibson's account of him; born in 1914, educated at Harrow and Clare College, Cambridge, where he ran for the University; and then three years at Yale. He had a wonderful career during World War II, serving in the Navy, mainly in Coastal Command in the Mediterranean, before finishing as Deputy Chief of Naval Intelligence Information in Washington where Lady Allan met him. During his war service, he was awarded the Distinguished Service Order and the Order of the British Empire; he received a number of foreign honours – the French Croix de Guerre and Legion d'Honneur; and the U.S. Legion of Merit. He was Mentioned in Despatches five times. Then you probably know that later, after contesting three elections, he was MP for South Paddington from 1951 to 1966 and he held several junior posts – Assistant Whip and Parliamentary Private Secretary to two successive Prime Ministers; became Parliamentary Financial Secretary to the Admiralty; and was Parliamentary under-Secretary at the Foreign Office when he retired. Director of the BBC, director of Pearson Longman, director of the Bank of Scotland and chairman of their London board, Chairman of Governors of Harrow School – a marvellous career which could have gone much further if he hadn't pulled out of politics at the last election.

As to this being compatible with Self-realization, there is absolutely no doubt about that. He achieved liberation before he died. Anybody who has seen him or spoken with him during the last two or three years can bear testimony to that; and a letter which he wrote only days before his death to our friend Howitt in New Zealand has been sent to us – it speaks plainly and we have sent that on to the Shankaracharya and hope to have word before long from him since the Shankaracharya knows him probably a good deal better than any of us do.

So it is a marvellous thing that we have helped. I have been afraid from time to time that our inhibitions from the past had curbed him too much. But on the other hand, let's go back in history because at a time when Mr. Ouspensky was looking desperately for someone like that – like the Allans – all through World War II (when of course they were serving) and then when he came back here in 1947 and spent those last ten months at Lyne Place in Surrey, when he got us to collect 300 people in this room and he held his four last meetings, all that time he would have given a great deal to have known about the existence of the Allans. And what were they doing? They were getting married! And planning to move to a farm in Kenya! By merciful Providence, they were prevented from doing that and joined us in 1948 just after Mr. Ouspensky's death.

Mr. Ouspensky's view is that in the usual way when a man's body dies, his clock is put back. But he doesn't die – his clock is put back to the same place and time of his former birth and he is given a new body. And it's my hope and ambition that this next time, he and Lady Allan will meet Mr. Ouspensky just when they are needed.

For us this is bound to make a big change – man makes plans and God disposes. But I think the main thing is that we, in common with everybody in this country, shouldn't make any long-term plans at the moment. Live from day to day and from week to week. No one knows what is going to happen on Election Day this Thursday or what will follow it. So it would be very wise if we, as a Society, don't think ahead too far. And that gives us time to do something which is badly needed to consolidate ourselves, to make sure that we are meditating properly, that we are doing enough from day to day to keep something going to become a unified body of people and maintain that. There is very much still to be achieved by us in that way from week to week; so that I want you to be very careful before you introduce new people at the present time.

There have never been so many teachers of one sort or another, either imports or natives in this country and all round the world, than there are today. I suppose you saw the *Observer* supplement yesterday where there is as good a crowd of brigands as you could possibly find anywhere! (laughter) It would repay looking into this carefully because it is very, very hard for people of little experience to know where they stand today with all these different things going on, all of which are pretending to be something other than they are. So make inquiry before you introduce a friend of yours to anybody else in this Society, let alone to groups or any of this Society's activities.

Our job is not to feel ourselves superior in any way, but to learn what was intended for us and has always been intended for us. Noticeable things to avoid are *making claims* – people claim the earth and they claim miraculous powers; they demand money accordingly. We are told that we should make no claims whatsoever; that we are not people who know the answers; we are students; we are people who are studying – the Study Society – studying, trying to find the Truth, trying to sift it. So it is very important that we should, all of us, get right out of the habit

of making any claims for oneself or the Society. Then again we should be very, very careful about making any alteration in the externals of our own lives or of other people's. We are assured by the fully Realized man, the Shankaracharya, that we need to make only a slight change in attitude and change nothing else. Whereas many of these cults demand full-time service, special clothes, special behaviour, special location. We must 'try to walk through snow leaving no footprint'; and not be noticeably off some production line as regards our behaviour in public. There are some societies where you know at once that so-and-so belongs to it. Well, it's very difficult to avoid and I daresay that there is probably already a 'Study Society image', but let's try and vary it a bit!

Are there any questions about these matters because we have a very bright future if we profit by all the past experience? (pause) Do you think, Dickie, that there is anything we ought to say that we haven't said?

R.G. I don't know, but I feel strongly in myself that this is a moment when we really all ought to stand together. It's a new chance to do so. It's a new chance to try to fill the gap that Bobby has left by each of us doing a small part of it in some way.

Dr. R. Absolutely. To hold together and be one. Now there is an extra reason for this. I remember asking Mr. Ouspensky quite early on if he had thought who would be his successor. As usual when asked a difficult question like that, he retired for about half an hour to collect himself, and then he came back and he said, 'You ask if I had thought of a successor. When I want the man, he will come.' This is what you have all got at your feet now. Those who take over will have picked themselves; the new leader may or may not be somebody we envisage at this moment. It's a chance for everybody. If we keep together and remember ourselves with as much understanding and persistence as possible, then whoever takes over will declare themselves in due course. So that's one reason for going hard at it from now. Anybody feel like saying anything? I'm sure you could!

Mr. Kindersley. It's very comforting to know that it's only a change of attitude that is needed.

Dr. R. I don't think that most of us realise that, because when we originally started with Mr. Ouspensky, much more than that was necessary. Gradually, as we have been trained and as we have understood a little more, so we found some labour-saving devices which will shorten the time that people need to take nowadays; and the social conditions in the country have changed and the knowledge has moved on. And now they reckon that three years' good work will open the world for us. So don't let's feel that we have to make great alterations in our lives and do something stunning and dramatic. We have Lord Allan's example – he didn't go into a monastery or into a Himalayan cave; he carried right on.

Any other questions?

Mrs. Cardew. Could you speak about the connection between Self-remembering and Meditation?

Dr. R. This brings us to the point of what we shall study this term... What we need to know desperately and as soon as possible. I've thought a lot about this. I've felt that it was the relation between *Consciousness* and *Memory* where everything comes together. It was the

main theme of Mr. Ouspensky's Psychological Lectures in the 1930's. It's the main issue; though in different language, with the Shankaracharya. Memory is much more easily experienced and described and defined than is Consciousness. It doesn't need special language. But both Memory and Consciousness are extremely unknown in ordinary life – there are many wrong things about them, wrong ideas. The general outlook has not improved at all since Mr. Ouspensky delivered this message in 1935. In fact, people have got further away from the possibility of Consciousness and of Memory because of mistakes which keep being made which he pointed out then. I think our job as a Society of practical people is to understand fully what we mean when we talk about *observing ourselves*; when we talk about observing our *memory*. There are as many different kinds of memory as there are people. No two people have the same kind of memory. It will be very clear when we know how much we have to forget – miscellaneous information with which we burden our minds in order to remember those most important things we have to learn to carry with us always. Memory of the Param-Atman, memory of the Self that lives in the hearts of all – this is the change of attitude, Kindersley; one is not the doer. It isn't *my* life, it isn't *my* family, it isn't *my* anything. It's part of a drama which is composed and played by a universal Consciousness and we have to learn to play our particular role better and better each time. And at one stroke, this does away with a lot of impediments and traps that people who attempt to Realize themselves fall into. Any questions about this?

Mr. Hodge. Can this new attitude be seen by guidance from Param-Atman?

Dr. R. It needs both, Hodge, it means making what efforts you can for yourself and hoping that those will bring guidance because guidance and effort, as H.H. said to Lord Allan (didn't he) have to go hand in hand. If we do what we can, we will get guidance, but not otherwise.

Peter Fenwick, now, this question of memory. I do think, don't you, that it would be a thing that trained observers of themselves could study with good effect. For instance, although a lot is known about the memory of the dominant hemisphere – different forms of short-term memory – very little is known yet about the potential memory of the inner, silent hemisphere which can't say anything about it, there is no language. Even less is known about the memory of both together when working in consciousness and harmony. So I think it's a very worthy object to study, wouldn't you say?

P.F. Of the synthesis of the memory of the two hemispheres, nothing is known nor is it studied; but the fractionation of the two is being studied.

Dr. R. I would like first to have some more data on what has been proved about some of the capacity for memory of the silent hemisphere. And then the integration of the two together must be actually studied by putting something into practice – Meditation and so on.

Lady Allan. And, Dr. Roles, it does come when you need it!

R.G. Dr. Roles, would you describe a talent as a form of memory?

Dr. R. If used, yes. People have talents like a musical ear which they don't remember because they are not used – they don't even know they have them. What we would hope to do in a Society like this is to dig out unsuspected talents in different people and that's why we have

a fairly varied programme – Movements, Turning – in the hope of discovering latent talents in any individual person.

But now, about *Memory and Consciousness*. It was the main theme of Mr. Ouspensky's teaching that a moment of consciousness brings a very vivid memory which connects all other moments of a similar sort. There are many wrong ideas about consciousness, namely that it is something to do with mental activity or intelligence; whereas it is just the opposite. It's a stillness which, with the appropriate energy, will bring this very vivid memory described by Mr. Ouspensky as 'memory of what you promised yourSelf'. So there is very little known about this in the ordinary way. And the chief question is, as I've put in this paper out of his lecture:

The question arises, is it possible to acquire command over these fleeting moments of consciousness to evoke them more often, to keep them longer, or even make them permanent?

And I suggest that this should be our chief question this term.

Mrs. Guyatt. Dr. Roles, if one has a memory that also draws other memories to it and one begins to feel a great source of delight, one can really eventually want them actually more than anything else. One can work like that.

Dr. R. Yes, very much so; it's something one can build on. And if you come back and back to it, it will enlarge and enlarge. It never runs dry. It will need freshening up, changes, everything gets stale quite quickly; but if you discover your own private bank account of memory, this is a great asset.

Mrs. G. One can learn to add to it.

Dr. R. Yes. But now, what is this adding you want to do? Adding what?

Mrs. G. Adding more moments.

Dr. R. Ah yes, increase the frequency of them, increase the breadth of view, and increase the intensity. But one will do this chiefly, the Shankaracharya said, by *getting rid of the obstacles*. His obstacles are very much the same as Mr. Ouspensky's – dispersion of thoughts, identification, waste of energy generally, involuntary actions.

There is one interesting thing especially that I'd like you to go into. When we first learned this from Mr. Ouspensky we understood him to mean that Memory of the past was the all-important thing. We read his work on Eternal Recurrence and so the idea of Memory got very much tied up in our minds with memory of the past, recall of things past. He himself changed about this. He realised that it was something you had to remember at the present moment and were always forgetting. I mean when he advised us to remember ourselves at the Gard du Nord and we used to come to him, very worried, and say, 'Now what *was* it you asked me to remember; here are your passport, your keys, your ticket but there is something else.' We never remember ourselves and this is *remembering the present*. And this is what the Shankaracharya means by Remembering. He doesn't want us to remember the past. He thinks it's a burden. 'Forget the past,' says the *Gita*; 'do not fear the future either; but remember the present with love of Param-Atman.' Well, shall we just try and do that and

then there is something we'd like you to hear. In this case we can remember Bobby Allan and let everything temporary fall away.

MEDITATION

About the qualities we have to aim at, the qualities of someone who leads in this Work, this kind of School. I'm asking Lady Allan to read something the Shankaracharya said on this subject.

Lady Allan. It was you who suggested it to me and it has been such a help to me.

Dr. R. It's the chief thing I have been hanging on to.

M.A (reading):

There is stillness on the physical level, stillness at the Subtle, and stillness at the Causal level which cannot be described but can be seen from its effects in the activities and dispositions of those men who provide themselves with Spiritual rest. (which is the ultimate aim of meditation).

And on the next page.

During the *Mahabharata* battle Arjuna asked Shri Krishna about the man with such stillness. In the *Gita* such a man is called Sthitaprajna – 'one who is steady and still in both his Knowledge and his Being'. Krishna says that such a man would not be agitated in discomfort, pain or grief. He would not rise in revolt against such misfortunes. Even if a calamity befalls, he neither gives up nor feels sorry – he only attends to overcoming its effects with a smile. When honoured with success, pleasure or comforts, he never bursts into jubilation; he simply accepts with gratitude and then forgets. In short, one could say that a person with this profound stillness always remains the same, and expresses efficiency, wisdom, love and mercy.

While the commander-in-chief of the opposing army was on his way to the battlefield, his charioteer said to him: 'Although you are a great warrior and an efficient leader, it would not be possible for you to vanquish Arjuna because he is supported by Shri Krishna who has achieved profound stillness.' [And told the famous story of the swan and the crows.]

(Record, 9 November 1973)

Dr. R. Which you have often heard. Looking up the passage which the Shankaracharya paraphrases, these are the verses in the *Gita* chiefly concerned:

Lady A. The relevant verses of the *Gita*, Chapter 6, are:

19. The wise man who has conquered his mind and is absorbed in the Self, is like a lamp which does not flicker, since it stands sheltered from every wind.
20. There, where the whole of Nature is seen in the light of the Self, where the man abides within himself and is satisfied; there the mind finds rest, its functions restrained by union with the Divine.
21. When he enjoys the bliss which passes self and which only the pure Buddhi can grasp; when he comes to this place (in Consciousness) never again will he stray from reality.
22. Finding *That*, he will realize that there is no possession so precious; once established there, no calamity can disturb him.

Dr. R. I'd like you to put this in your memory. When I sent it to Lady Allan, I remarked that I had had a week with enough problems to sink a ship but that this had saved my life; and she said, 'Count me in as a member of the crew!'

Before we part I would just like to say once again that I am conscious of having learned far more from Allan than he learned from me. For one thing, I learnt what it is to be a man of action; he was naturally a man of action as his career in the Navy has shown.

And I keep recalling the story of Ramakrishna about three men who emerged into a clearing in the jungle and were confronted with a tiger. The first man wrung his hands and, wailing, 'We're lost, we're lost,' he started running. The second man sat down and said, 'Let us think carefully about what we've learned.' That's like me! (laughter) But the third man, as he climbed into the tree just above his head, said, 'I'm for this tree' and he was the only one that survived! That's Lord Allan.

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SEQUEL

1. Just after the meeting, A.H.B. came in to remind me of how nearly we had approached the final words of *Tertium Organum*: 'The meaning of life is in eternal search. And only in that search can we find something truly new.'
2. Lady Allan telephoned gratefully next morning to say that after doing duty on the platform among all her friends she'd had the first full night of peaceful sleep since her husband died.

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