

4 June 1979

LARGE MONDAY MEETING

Professor Guyatt. The next large Monday meeting will be on 2nd July and this will be the last Monday of this term. There will be a Meditation meeting on Tuesday, 12th June. There will be an experiment here on the next two Thursday evenings after the meetings are over at 9.45. There will be repeat of some of the music given at the recent concert. This Thursday, 7th, Alison Gordon and Eva Schay will be giving the same pieces by Bloch and also some piano solos; and on the following Thursday the 14th, Sue Cassini will be singing the same Ravel Songs and Alison Gordon will be playing some more solos. Anyone who has been at the meetings will be welcome.

Dr. Roles. There has been a lot of demand for encores and repeats and it's rather difficult to get hold of artists at the right moment... when we want them.

Prof. G. There will be a Special Meeting of the Society tonight after this Meeting for full members only; so would the others please leave as quickly as possible so that the Meeting can start without too much delay.

Finally will those who have ordered copies of the Ouspensky Brochure from Yale, please collect them from the landing.

Dr. R. As we hoped, you have made it clear to us where the interest lies and what would be worth studying. Dr. Connell's group are really going splendidly and we want to follow their lead. They are leading us in the direction of developing a new look at a side of the System to which Mr. Ouspensky attached great importance, and himself developed; but none of us has taken it further.

It is one of the uses to which our Symbol can be put in that it relates Attention to different levels of efficiency and action. And a lot of the problems that you have been discussing can be explained and clarified beautifully if we once get hold of the way Mr. Ouspensky had of looking at it. It's in the paper for this week, Reading 4, but briefly it was led up to by your observation (Tony Anholt) of two weeks ago about 'if the actor doesn't pay attention, the performance will be only mechanical'. You remember? 'But if he is using his memory with the right awareness and knowing his aim, he is likely to give a good performance; and (you added) presumably this is so in life'. This fits beautifully with the formulation that Mr. Ouspensky gave for the division of any of our chief functions: feeling, thinking, moving – any function you like to name – which is not just looked after by a small bit of the brain, but which involves many levels of the nervous system, as modern neurology shows.

This, he said, is the chief criterion in studying any function. If we take any function from the point of view of Attention, we shall know at once which part is in use, at what level it's working. Without attention or with attention wandering, we are in the mechanical part [just as you said]. With the attention aroused and kept on the subject by interest or absorption, we are in the emotional part.

(adapted from *Psychological Lectures*, P.D.O.)

Much more becomes possible, but uncontrolled – we have no control over it. We get excited and our attention is all over the place and our efficiency reduced.

With the attention roused and controlled and held on the subject by purpose or will, we are in the voluntary part – the higher part of any centre or function.

And that always has a smack of genius to it. We recognise genius by the sudden appearance of the higher part of some centre.

It's a fascinating conception which explains a lot of things we see around without realising them. Let's go into that a bit. There is this Symbol of the triangle inscribed inside the circle; and we have said that on the right-hand side, there is the outward and visible part of the performance of the organism. What the actor is seen to do on stage for instance. On the other side, the left side of the triangle, what the actor is feeling, all his inner life which is not visible by anybody else, is different in each person, and is the 'great unknown' in life. At the base of the triangle is that part of which should be occupied by the silent, impartial observer who can bring those two different halves of one's nature together. This would be the secret of a successful and productive life, and it is done through the cultivation of attention.

Any comments? You'll have plenty of time; it's rather sprung on you just now, but if you have anything for or against, you'll be very welcome.

But, Anholt, you said something which I didn't agree with: you said, 'If the actor is using his memory, (because having rehearsed the whole play when he is playing a particular moment) he knows the future as well because he knows the play and presumably this is so in life.' But not only is it *not* so in life, not only do we *not* know the future, but the actor mustn't be seen to know the future. If he did, he could never express surprise. The whole play would be a dismal failure.

Mr. A. I think what I was trying to say was that the Atman knows the future.

Dr. R. Ah yes, now this is fine! In ordinary life, nobody knows the future. In fact there is no future; it's just a repetition of the past in a slightly different way. The future has not been made yet. But from the Atman, if you remember yourSelf, then there is a future. Immediately a future can start; a future which is different from all the dull stuff that we keep repeating.

Mr. Ouspensky says something very illuminating about that in *Tertium Organum*. He mentions, if you remember, that we are like foolish travellers who neither see the past nor the future; who think that the town they have just left has been demolished and no longer exists and that the city they are going to is hastily being built for their arrival. They don't realise that *everything is* – past, present and future. For instance, in playing a concerto, if the pianist or violinist has not got the whole picture of the entire concerto already there in the centre of his brain, or even if a singer hasn't got an auditory image of the note he wishes to strike or sing already there, he'll never be able to do it. This is the thing that the ordinary person will never be able to apprehend. That's the point of consciousness. Mr. Ouspensky says:

The consciousness which is not bound by the conditions of sensuous receptivity can outrun the foolish traveller, ascend the mountain to see in the distance the town to which he is going and be convinced that this town already exists. It can rise above the plain of time and see the spring behind and the autumn ahead; see simultaneously the budding flowers and the ripening fruits. And that is what Self-remembering means.

(*Tertium Organum*)

You look sceptical, Mrs. Gil. (No) Surely you must be! (No, not really)

So as long as you are on this circle of movement, the circle of eternal recurrence, this improbable thing seems to be happening, that at every moment the future is becoming the past. Where does it come from? Where does it go? Every moment NOW, the future has become the past. It can't be like that really; it must be a hoax! And it *is* a hoax and that hoax is called Maya. And it is dependent on the senses. The escape from this illusion makes life much more exciting.

Now let's hear all the sceptics and the 'yes' men and the 'no' men.

P. Kindersley. What Mr. Ouspensky said earlier on about attention and emotion and control, how does that relate to what H.H. teaches?

Dr. R. It relates exactly but in totally different language – this is the trouble. The end point of the two is exactly similar! If you talk in terms of the three Gunas and different concentrations of the three Gunas in relation to attention, as we did in India, you arrive at exactly the same point as Mr. Ouspensky's description of the various levels of a given function. Only you get into an awful muddle if you try to talk Indian and English at the same time!

About attention now, he encouraged us to try to study anything that one does really well because that is the place to begin; or shall we say, anything that one really enjoys doing. One may think that one doesn't do it very well, but if you enjoy doing it, it is probably something for which you have an aptitude. And we want as many people as possible to bring 'real life' observations from something they are good at, which they enjoy doing, to see whether his theory about levels of action, levels of efficiency, is still true.

Do you think it is possible, Fleming, that we could contribute at this stage, thirty years later?

Mr. F. In relation, say, to music, if you are roused by it, you then begin to understand better what the composer was after – is this the sort of thing?

Dr. R. Yes, for someone who can listen to music intelligently – which I can't! I would like to learn from you how this applies either to hearing music, to playing, performing, or even composing. As we said last week, no two people have the same combination of memory and aptitude.

Lady Allan. Dr. Roles, you gave the example of using the Symbol in relation to attention and you gave the experience of the ordinary function and when you are aroused and keeping the balance, but I would like you to say something of the other situation when you have got the impartial observer and you've got the function, but you haven't got the emotion properly.

Dr. Roles. Oh yes, this is much more common. To have the attention really roused by emotion, by excitement and interest, is uncommon in our drab lives. It is much more common (as when we learn at school) to have to make oneself attend. (Yes) Any schoolboy knows that unless he attends, he doesn't remember anything and he fails his exams.

Lady A. It struck me that this is what happens so often in Meditation – having the right type of arousal as well as the observer – and it seems to me that we are too often just two-sided.

Dr. R. Well, leaving Meditation out of it for the moment (because in Meditation we do absolutely nothing, that's what we've got to realise) and the mind is simply functionless

during Meditation. Leaving Meditation out of it until next Tuesday week; just as in ordinary life we observe that to learn anything, you have to use this voluntary part and attend either to movement or to what you've got to say, or to what you've got to write, or to what you've got to paint.

(to Sue Cassini) Now you want to speak about singing, do you?

Miss C. Yes. Before the concert I was meditating and the Symbol came in and it just seemed to me if we could allow the moving centre to get on by itself and the emotion to come in by itself and just have the observer there coming in when it's necessary.

Dr. R. You are absolutely right; but we can't bring in the Symbol today; we have to show it on the screen.

Lady A. What Miss Cassini said (which we can talk about without the Symbol) was that she felt that while she was meditating before the concert it suddenly came to her that if we could let the moving part get on with it and let the emotion come as it would and just be ready to have the attention when it was necessary.

Dr. R. That's very good. But we are finding it easier to observe attention nowadays if we start with what Mr. Ouspensky called the 'Moving centre' – all our required movements. Acting is one of the higher features or capacities of this moving centre. He described it this way:

In the moving centre the mechanical part is automatic. All skills that have been learned belong to it as well as the capacity for imitation which plays such a big part in life.

(Psychological Lectures, P.D.O.)

So any skill that you have learnt to practise belongs to what he called moving centre. It applies also to acquired habits of thinking, turning of thoughts that go without attention; feelings which keep changing; anything which goes by itself is part of this automaton – human nature without attention or with attention wandering is an automaton, a puppet pulled by strings, imagining that he is doing things; whereas somebody else is pulling the strings! He continues:

The emotional part of moving centre is connected chiefly with pleasure in movement.

(ibid)

All of us have some particular kinds of movement which give us pleasure – love of sport and of games should normally belong to this part; should normally belong to that part but what about these spectator sports? It spills over into other centres with disastrous consequences very often. Let us try and bring observations of the pleasure one gets in the course of some movement that one is fond of doing. In my case, I think skiing was a good example, skiing or sometimes climbing, rock climbing, used to be. Everybody has things which they greatly enjoy doing and it's from those that you see some of the capabilities of the moving centre. Mr. O. continues:

The higher part – the voluntary part – is a very important and a very interesting instrument. Everyone who has ever done well any physical work, whatever it may have been, knows that every skill needs many inventions. One has to invent one's own small

methods for any but the simplest things one does. These inventions are the work of the higher part of the moving centre. Many other inventions (such as technology) also belong to this part and also artistic skills – just the skills of the trained artist. Otherwise if an artist has not got the skill, it just evaporates in dreams.

(to Prof. G) Doesn't it? (Yes) And he goes on to say, Anholt, that:

...The power of imitating at will, the voice, intonation and gestures of other people, such as actors possess, also belongs to the higher part of the moving centre. When this part is highly developed, it works along with the higher part of the emotional centre.

(*ibid*)

Then it gives an outstanding performance. I think you could find examples of that.

Mr. Wood. This is an example of doing craft work where you start with the physical skill doing it and then you have the attention directed to the work and if you can hold that, you begin to enjoy doing it. If you go on enjoying it without being drawn too deeply into it, then you seem to get a wider feeling and lifted into a different state of consciousness.

Dr. R. And a different level of performance, doesn't one? New things begin to happen.

Mr. W. Yes. It came up at our meeting that using attention in this way might be a key to open up this waking state.

Dr. R. Yes I think very much so. I think that many people would find the way of Self-realization open up much more quickly and profitably than they do at present, by learning how to use attention in moving centre in some particular direction .

Prof. G. At our meeting Mrs. Haisman raised the question about what happens (I forget the phrase she used – it was rather good) what happens if you are doing something which can be done by the automatic pilot and there is lots of attention to spare? What do you do then?

Dr. R. Yes, what *do* you do then? People are finding that they may have a lot of attention to spare now that automation of some sort is doing most of the job, but what do they do with all this attention that is to spare? Get into hot water!

Mrs. H. At the moment I just try to watch what's happening.

Dr. R. Yes, right, do. The religious man would say that you gave the attention to God – any attention that is not being used for what you are doing. If you were a dedicated priest or the Pope, you would dedicate your action and any attention over to God. In our case, any attention over, we use for Self-remembering. For remembering that it's not for ourselves that we do this, but for the Divine spark which is present in each of us.

Let's start with where we are. The idea is to give just that amount of attention to whatever we have to do as is suitable and necessary. You don't put the whole of yourself into sharpening a pencil! But attention is really the means by which human beings have risen to full Realization. It's our chief weapon.

Dr. Fenwick, have I outraged the current views too much in describing these different levels of action and relating them to attention?

Dr. F. No, I don't think so at all because one of the findings about attention is that it refines the senses.

Dr. R. Yes, there is a lot of research work going on about attention, isn't there?

Dr. F. Yes indeed. You become much more accurate and you can see much finer detail with attention than without it.

Dr. R. Yes, but mind you, it isn't quite like they saw it in Mexico. One of the meeting reports was sent them in which His Holiness was quoted as saying that 'a Realized man was one whose Buddhi sees very nearly with the eye of the Atman' and they thought it meant some sort of microscopic vision (laughter) and you explained (to Miss Wright) not in French as they wrote...

Miss W. I did! (laughter)

Dr. R. I think that's marvellous – it needed attention, I'm sure! (laughter)

Miss W. It's only possible to speak French with a non-French speaking person! (laughter) who speaks Spanish!

Dr. R. I'd like us to feel an interest in the possibilities of this subject. That we try and study attention by practice and not through theory and that we enjoy doing it! Bring observations to our meetings.

Do you think, Colin Lucas, now that I see you're back from holiday that I am only producing a travesty of Mr. Ouspensky's teaching that you remember, or do you think it's fairly close to the meaning? Whereas we have substituted certain words like 'voluntary' part of a centre instead of the 'intellectual... perhaps you need notice of that question!'

Mr. L. I don't want to get into trouble but I do honestly think that the effects of the Meditation play a very big part in relation to how much attention you have and I would very much like to know how it works.

Dr. R. Well I'm sure you won't get into trouble! But I would like the answer to come from you. I'd like it to be special study if it's a subject that interests you. In practice to see how much, in fact, the Meditation does make a difference. I have a feeling that it's one of the chief differences apart from all the discoveries that have been made since Mr. Ouspensky taught this more than thirty years ago – the advent of the Meditation.

Mr. L. I have found quite definite examples. For instance, playing the piano after Meditation is quite different from playing it before. Why, I don't know.

Mr. Anderson. It's the same with writing. If I've got a poem boiling up, I must wait until after meditating to know that I will be able to get everything together and get everything out of what has been boiling up.

Dr. R. You're very lucky if it comes back to you, if it stays there. With some people, Pushkin for instance, they had to write it all down at once. His manuscripts are simply corrected, corrected, corrected, otherwise it escaped him.

Mr. A. He was a Russian nobleman with a large income and didn't have a job to do! (roars of laughter) I've had to learn to store it up! (more laughter)

Dr. R. That's very good! We need to have a budding Pushkin who has to earn a living as well!

Prof. G. One can see all this in more humdrum actions, can't one? One doesn't have to write poems or paint pictures.

Dr. R. No, that only interests a few people.

Prof. G. I think more people are interested in other things perhaps.

Dr. R. Well, what?

Prof. G. Well, I'm absolutely marvellous at making a bed! (laughter) I'm frightfully good at it! (laughter) Things like that.

Dr. R. Getting it straight, tucking in both sides? (laughter)

Prof. G. I'm really meticulous! (laughter) Things like this one can do really freshly and well.

Dr. R. As long as it's passed by your wife afterwards! (laughter) I think I'm good at making a bed, but she comes around and it's not... very often. (laughter) Do you make the bed with the whole of your attention? (laughter) Everything you've got? (laughter) Do you dedicate any of it to God?

Prof. G. I try to!

Dr. R. Good, I'm very glad! (laughter)

Prof. G. I enjoy it, too!

Dr. R. I'd like to look in on this idyllic Guyatt ménage!

Prof. G. You must ask my wife! (laughter)

Dr. R. (to Mrs. G) Is that true, what he said?

Mrs. G. It's so true, you can't believe it! (laughter)

Dr. R. Well, it has been very entertaining to me, this meeting. What do you make the time? (quarter past...) Shall we now actually meditate? Without thinking; the mind has no function here.

MEDITATION

Dr. R. Just one last thing. To get back to your subject that one can get profit from routine or hard or otherwise dull jobs, I would like to ask if you can discover what the special efficacy is in doing a job for somebody else or for something bigger than yourself? The Shankaracharya often says that most people calculate before doing anything what is going to come into their own pocket as a result. But the Realized man does it because it *should be done*. It's his duty to do it without expecting any personal profit.

A lot of people exhibited this during this last week over the flood downstairs. Which evening did they come? (Wednesday) They turned out, worked terribly hard up till midnight or sometime and then even more came to clear up yesterday. We are very grateful to them and I hope they have found that there is a profit in doing something that doesn't necessarily put the 'bawbees' into your own pocket. Thank you very much.

Now there is a Meeting of Members. Would non-members then go quickly and leave the space free.

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