

24 September 1979

### SMALL MONDAY MEETING

On the Platform. Dr. Roles, Prof. Guyatt and Lady Allan

(the dates for this term were put on the screen)

Dr. Roles. Would you like to give the announcements?

Professor Guyatt. Yes. The groups this term will remain as before; but which group is to be the Working Party? (M.W.F's group will start off) The Tuesday Working Party will change to Wednesday for this term. So should the turning practices also be on Wednesday? With an extra one on the Tuesday when there is a Meditation Meeting? How do the practice takers react?

Dr. R. Speak up now. We've got to decide this *now for this week*. (Discussion) Bill Wilks doesn't often take practices; Kaffe Fassett would find it difficult; but it would suit Pam Varley and Ron Miles as they come to the Working Party. It was decided to let the practice for Tuesday, 25th September, go forward.

Dr. R. So that's settled for this week, anyway.

Prof. G. Would group takers and secretaries please check their groups on the magnetic board and let the office know about any change. There's a reminder that there is an organisers' meeting in the Blue Room immediately after this Meeting.

There is one correction to Reading 1; it should be 'verbatim' not 'verbatum'. (laughter)

Dr. R. Considering the stress of getting a first paper out, before we'd even met all the party back from India, I think we did rather well to have only one misprint!

Well, the central theme of interest is the return of the warriors from India. Maurice Pickering also is here and he had six audiences on his own with the Shankaracharya. I hope to see something of them but you're short of typing help, I expect. But you felt that you got a load for future reference and quite a lot to develop, didn't you?

M.E.P. About two or three years' work!

Dr. R. And the last meeting, you say, was very hilarious. Much laughter all round – perhaps we could see just that one?

We chose originally the six people whom we thought would help Colet and the Society all round. We were limited by expense; we couldn't send the whole lot of you! This was a very harmonious party and they got on very well together and with H.H. too. At the last minute I realised that the existing translator out there, Shri Narayan, wouldn't be able to cope so I rang our other translator, Jaiswal, and he told me that H.H. had already applied to him to go and help translate, but he had been too diffident to mention it; and that was about three days before the party were leaving! However, he and his wife went, so there were eight people. The Ashram rallied round most lavishly – they produced chairs and cushions and changed from a very hot room to the verandah, so our party was treated in a very red carpet sort of way.

They crammed so much into the eight audiences they had, that even the people who were there haven't yet had time to read them through. So we'll have to come at it quite gradually, don't you think? Are the Fenwicks here? (Lady A: Yes, Dr. Fenwick is.) I wondered if we could read a bit of Mrs. Fenwick's letter – I asked her to give me a pen picture of her first impressions as they hadn't been to India before.

(Lady A reading)

Dear Dr. Roles

Peter tells me you would like to know my impressions of our trip. It was wonderful. You don't need me to tell you of the initial impact of India – that drive from the airport in Allahabad.

Dr. R. (to Lady Allan) How would you describe that?

Lady A. Professor Guyatt will tell you.

Dr. R. (to G) It's a sort of cross-section of an amazing country?

Prof. G. Yes, it's extraordinary. It's a sort of more Indian than you can imagine! (laughter)

Dr. R. Elephants, cows, bicycles...

Prof. G. Camels...

Dr. R. Everybody driving straight up to each other and then deciding at the last minute not to hit each other! (laughter) And driving on the horn the whole time!

Lady A continues reading:

...a few days later driving in a rickshaw to the market, Peter and I were saying what a shame it was that one can never really retain or recapture that sort of first impression. After a day or two, it seemed quite normal and one felt a part of it all.

The first visit to H.H. was an enormous relief. A relief, because although I had half expected to feel strange or out of place, I didn't at all. It was all extraordinarily easy to accept and feel a part of. Maureen had told us of how, when you first saw him, you were struck by his qualities of Self-remembering, and seeing him, I felt for the first time that I was beginning to understand what this meant. That it is a wide quality and not a narrow one because his awareness was obviously such an all-embracing thing and included all of us within it. He had an enormously human appeal too – a presence. I think we all loved just the sight of him, sitting there on the wide couch in those marvellous coloured robes with his spectacles laid out beside him. If you look at someone for an hour a day or more for eight days on end, I suppose you are bound to carry away a pretty vivid image of them, though it doesn't always happen. But H.H. definitely makes that memorable kind of impact. His accessibility and the whole air of simplicity surrounding him and the Ashram appealed to me enormously.

Lady A. And then later, she goes on to mention the Keertan music

...which when a recording was heard here had not meant a great deal and yet when one was actually there, the whole thing was delightful. It was all so direct and straightforward and carried out with such an air of enthusiasm and even jubilation. There was absolutely nothing heavy about it at all and I found it quite marvellous.

Dr. R. Was this the chanting when he came into the room?

Lady A. No, this was one evening at the Ashram when they had Keertan.

Here again, I was impressed with the quality of the people around H.H. Shri Narayan of course is delightful, but there is the same aura around everyone there. One didn't feel it possible that for any of them the search for spiritual advancement had become an 'ego trip' in the way it does for some people here. Perhaps this was because I wasn't seeing enough, but I don't think so or not entirely.

And she also mentions the wonderful way H.H. answers questions and he always knew exactly when to stop. She says:

...it was a very positive experience on all levels and as a group experience it was enormously rewarding because I think we all liked each other and got on well together and this made it emotionally very satisfying too. We seemed to have the same aims and attitudes and approached it all in the same way so that nothing jarred. I hope the others felt like that too.

Dr. R. Peter, please thank your wife for this vivid description. You had all the possibilities because the Allan's fascinating daughter Jane was a complete triumph. She was found playing table tennis with the family of the people they were asked to lunch with, and Indian boys kept calling at the hotel! (laughter) So she had to defend herself! But that added a new note to what had gone before! She also helped with a lot of typing and shopping and asked a very good question of her own. She is still in India for another week before going on by herself to Australia.

Lady A. Perhaps we ought to mention that it was 104° a good deal of the time.

Prof. G. (in sepulchral tones) In the shade! (laughter)

Dr. R. But the one advantage you had over us was that the swimming bath at the hotel was working and actually full of water! So they bathed, but they couldn't bathe after half past five; for they had evidently heard that Professor Guyatt of the Royal College of Art was coming so there was a loudspeaker relaying pop music just outside his window.

Lady A. We perhaps ought to take Mr. Pickering to task for not leaving us a message warning us about the loudspeaker attached to Room No. 4. (laughter)

Dr. R. And so they couldn't sit in the back garden at all.

M.E.P. I was unaware – I was in Room 1!

Dr. R. Anything you'd like to say, Maurice?

M.E.P. If I start, it will be hard to stop me! (laughter)

Dr. R. Anybody want to ask them anything? (pause)

I asked them when they went, to put their own questions and didn't give them any prompting. So from their different angles many very interesting new aspects of the True Knowledge came. At the very first audience, a question of Peter Fenwick's was turned by His Holiness in a way that would make it of general interest, and not just of importance to him as a doctor in relation to his mentally ill patients.

It concerned an important clue to a method which we've neglected very much. We've had several half-hearted shots at it for it is absolutely fundamental, so we must understand it. There's a lot of new light been thrown on it in these audiences: it enables busy people to remember at intervals during the day. This we were trained in by Mr. Ouspensky. He said 'Whenever there is a change of consciousness, there is a chance to remember yourSelf. If you can make that moment into two minutes, it will change your life.' And the Shankaracharya has been describing this for two or three years now although, at the beginning, he wouldn't be drawn on the subject, saying it was too advanced.

So this first paper is a lead-up to that question and the answer you will be getting in the papers. It's difficult to understand the new answer straightway so we've collected together what he has previously said in a simpler way. It all started with the time I went with the Maharishi to stay at his Ashram close to his Meditation centre (which we had helped to pay for) when I met H.H. for the first time. The Maharishi then said that there were many small changes of consciousness during the day as well as the big ones during every twenty-four hours from deep sleep to dream-state to daytime state and back. At any moment of change of consciousness there was a natural moment where the curtain – the curtain of mechanicalness, sleep – was drawn aside and you could get a glimpse of enlightenment, if you knew how. When I mentioned that to the Shankaracharya at one of our first private meetings the following year, he said that 'what the Maharishi Mahesh said is correct, but it doesn't come at the beginning'; and he refused to be drawn for many years. But this time and at previous visits he has been advising this as a method for us all to try to do.

Now I wonder if any of you have made attempts at that as recommended more than once lately. Have you had any luck? Very difficult, isn't it? Terribly difficult to remember at all.

Miss Burdett. Is it because one places such reliance on desires which put us to sleep?

Dr. R. It all lies in what we each call 'desires'. It is difficult to understand because the Indian word is not the exact equivalent of how we use the word ordinarily. It's much more to do with the kind of *obsessions* which go on – identifications – and the change from one identification to another. And those identifications are so typical of each of us and this background noise going on in the mind is so typical for each of us that it's what goes on after the death of the body according to the testimony of all these people who have been resuscitated. So it's very much a part of our innate character, and you're striking at the very foundation of our mechanicalness when you find a way to remember yourSelves several times during the day – very important! You first of all have to empty your mind and remember yourSelf instantaneously and then allow it to fill with a big idea like Param-Atman which does away with all ego feeling.

Mrs. Buscombe. Dr. Roles, it's this second stage I find difficult. I can occasionally stop all these thoughts but then the depth doesn't come – it just stays on the surface.

Dr. R. (to Lady A) What would you say about that?

Lady A. I would rather agree. I think that it's only after the Shankaracharya has shown the tremendous riches that are available if one pursues what he is giving us in these answers that you realise that we haven't even started!

Dr. R. Richard, I think in our talks you and I touched on this aspect. If you've got some big test just ahead of you that you're rather dreading, then this changes it from the nothingness to the inspiration, isn't that so? If you've got nothing just ahead of you, then nothing happens. (Yes, yes) Does that answer your question? (To Mrs. B) Your daughter in Poland could find many occasions when she would have to do that so you can talk it over with her!

Prof. G. The other thing that impressed me very much in the Shankaracharya's answers was that in these moments between desires – if one could increase these moments (that's what he was telling us, wasn't it?) as much as we could – he talked of the higher influences one could find were available, were *there*. He spoke of them rather marvellously as if they were a sort of nectar that one could feed on. He made it all seem very possible and just there, if only one knew how to acquire it.

Dr. R. And it was provided naturally for human nature.

Prof. G. He said it was there and used by ordinary people who didn't know they were using it. This was what gave ordinary mankind a stability and a happiness. But they were unaware that they were using this.

Dr. R. And what about this in relation to the painter, John (Hersey)? Doesn't that idea come during a moment of stillness, if it's a good one?

J.H. Isn't that what painting surely is all about? Trying to find the link between physical rejoicing and that nectar which Professor Guyatt spoke of?

Dr. R. How would you say, Peter (Stebbing)? The two artists one behind the other – you and Sean. What do you say about that now?

S.C. It's always centred in the silence and all we have to do is go there.

Lady A. But he spoke too more in terms of the *energy* available – that we need eight hours' sleep but if we knew how to use these moments and could expand them, we would get the same energy as eight hours' sleep gave us. Did Dr. Fenwick understand it in that way?

Dr. R. Fenwick, can you say anything to that? It was your question.

Dr. F. Yes, that was how I understood it. That these moments were there and if one could take the opportunity of tuning into them, then they provided enough energy for us to go on and on again; and that really what we had to do was to develop the technique. And as Professor Guyatt was saying, it's all quite natural – it's all there anyway.

Dr. R. And also that any fresh energy or ability to act starts at a point of rest and that this is the thing which your patients never get. It's much harder with them than it is with their doctors!

Prof. G. I may be way off-beam but I was reminded of Mr. Ouspensky talking of the 'sly man's pill' in the way that H.H. spoke about this. One really had to learn how to do it.

Dr. R. I went and read that immediately and I don't know if you recall what G said when he was teaching Mr. Ouspensky? He talked about the three traditional Ways – the fakir takes a month of physical torture to achieve; the monk takes a week of intensive and continuous prayer; the yogi takes a day of strenuous exercises. But on the Fourth Way the sly man



concocts a pill, knows exactly what the organism needs and he makes for himself a pill, and when he wants the energy he swallows it.

Lady A. This is what I missed out from what Dr. Fenwick said which was that what we had to do was learn the technique of how to make use of these moments.

Dr. R. Yes, and it's different for everybody. One person's pill won't work for another person.

M.E.P. With some relevance to this, he also said that one needn't be despairing about the gaps between these moments and he used the example which he had given before about the light from a lamp lighting half-way towards the next lamp.

Dr. R. Two street lamps surrounded by darkness giving light just around themselves with a stretch of darkness in between. This is part of the scheme, the human experience has to be like that. Two moments of awakening will look after the period of sleep between. That was it, wasn't it? One rather fascinating thing strikes me. Only three people have read through the entire eight audiences – one very interesting thing is where how he described how he answers questions. I think that's rather relevant to this meeting of senior pundits and group takers! (laughter)

We've noticed before that he never thinks out what he is going to say beforehand. He walks up to his seat on the throne with a completely blank expression and you have to tell by his expression how things are going – and in this description which you must hear at first hand, he points out that all the knowledge he has ever had is available, touched off by what he is asked and what he knows about the hearer. And then it's finished. He has answered the question and if he were to stop and wonder whether he had answered rightly or not, he wouldn't be hearing the next question. I believe that most of us, taking meetings or at other times, *never listen*. He always seems to hear more of the question than one does oneself and that's another thing we could all practise. It depends on the stillness and that can be helped greatly by this exercise of 'stopping' between jobs or between desires and between changes of consciousness.

Prof. G. His description of answering questions was a terribly good description of paying attention. It was marvellous wasn't it? He described how he paid attention to the person who was speaking and what that brought up in his memory was available to the questioner. Then he gave it and cut off and paid attention to the next question. It was beautifully formulated.

Dr. R. So if you asked him what he said in 1964 about the three caskets he couldn't be expected to answer that! But he has the most acute memory of the answers in a particular sequence of audiences he is giving at the time.

So let's all be fully Realized men and women too. (laughter) I think it would be good now just to meditate for five minutes.

#### MEDITATION

Well, now there is another (Committee) meeting.

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