

26 January 1981

LARGE MONDAY MEETING

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

Prof. G. Movements will start this evening and group meetings also begin this week.

There will be a meeting for anyone wanting to know more about the Meditation on Sunday, 1st February, at 6.30. For those who would like to start Meditation, there will be initiations on Sunday, 1st March, and Wednesday, 4th March. And would you give in names to the office of anyone wanting to come next Sunday.

Would group takers please note that there will be a meeting for them here next Monday, 2nd February, at 7.30 in the Blue Room. This is only for the group takers of meetings and work parties here at Colet, New Group excepted.

The next Mukabeleh for Visitors is on Friday, 6th February, at 8 p.m. The next Meditation Meeting will be on Tuesday, 10th February, at 7.15. The next large Monday meeting will be on 23rd February.

Dr. R. These will all be put up after the meeting on the screen.

Prof. G. The Annual General Meeting of the Society will be on Thursday, 26th March, followed by a lecture by Prof. G.W. Schaefer, an ecologist from the Cranfield Institute of Technology.

Dr. R. Bill Anderson here? (yes) That's all going ahead all right? You're meeting him tomorrow? (yes) And what you wrote to me of what he wanted to talk about, that's fine. Ecology is the line of biology dealing with habitat and relations of a given species to the world in which it lives – very much in line with Mr. Ouspensky's ideas about the Great Laboratory, and is one of the most promising branches of biology today from our point of view. He wants to give us a bigger picture of the worlds we live in. He is an entomologist – he deals with small bugs – but he wants to give people a bigger picture of the relations between biology and psychology. Is that fair?

W.A. I think that's a very good summing up. When I first heard him speak he gave me such a feeling of his sense of the biosphere, of the whole, and his attitude to the small bit of the biosphere in which he specialises.

Dr. R. That's fine, because at one time at Warwick Gardens before we got this house, a book by Vernadsky called *The Biosphere* was used by Mr. Ouspensky to read regularly at meetings – the first of its kind.

Prof. G. Just one more notice which is that the editors of *The Bridge* regret that, although they have managed to produce four issues so far, this year owing to lack of response they can't see their way to producing another number until possibly the summer; this, in spite of encouragement all round. So if anyone could help to fill the gap, please let us know.

Dr. R. We're unique I should think in people not wanting to write! (laughter) So if anybody has something to say, do write to the editors.

Well though we can't talk about personal things at a big meeting like this, you'll all want to know how my better half is. It was last Sunday and Monday that she began getting severe heart pain and we had to call a doctor on Monday morning. He did an electrocardiogram

and it turned out that she had a very narrow escape from a coronary, perhaps fatal. But an escape she has had! She has been in bed ever since of course, but she gets better and better every day; and we have a local firm of doctors practically on our doorstep and my son Nick and his wife are both doctors and have been over the last three days at intervals and encouraging her to sit up in a chair, which she is doing very happily. Claude Geoffroy came in and put the television, the beautiful self-governing television you gave us (remote control) in the bedroom where we can both lie on our beds and look at it! (laughter) We have a rota of people who can do special things that are needed so that the telephone, the front door with laundry – I'm getting awfully interested in housework! (laughter) Fascinating! I didn't know there was so much to it! (laughter) No more plants or bulbs or flowers, if you don't mind – they all have to be watered! (laughter) That's another thing I've discovered! Before Christmas we said we had two of everything; now we have four of everything! (laughter) We don't need anything except a few nice letters from people she knows.

What do we study now? We want people to voice their opinions and we want to hear more of what people are looking for today – a kind of psychological teaching along with the meditation that could be understood by everybody. Mr. Ouspensky, at his death, foresaw that after a generation perhaps there would be a need for some systematic psychology quite different from the psychology existing in his time. You've only got to read through the Psychological Lectures he gave in the 1930's, put together in the climate of what he was taught in revolutionary Russia – very pessimistic! – to realise that it wouldn't do today; and accompanying that is the difference that in those days his teacher denied the existence of the Self... that is, of the God within each person. Whereas the Shankaracharya affirms that everybody, good or bad, has within him a Divine Self. It's a question of ignorance in most cases – simply not *knowing* its existence and therefore not knowing what life is all about.

But we want to take some of the special Knowledge from the psychological system that Mr. Ouspensky taught in the 1930's because some ideas mustn't be lost – they're too valuable and too much needed today. So the question arises how shall we begin to form such a system – we never thought it would take thirty years – but it has. There are two things to be realised in trying to establish *what psychology is*. One is that psychology must be based on individual *conscious experience*. It is too often forgotten that in spite of all the instrumental technology, if a person has never seen the redness of a poppy or heard the sound of a tolling bell, there would be never any way by which it could be explained to them verbally that such extraordinary things exist in the universe. That was how the mathematician Dunn expressed it back in the 30's. So psychology *must* be based on the individual's conscious experience – otherwise it is an instrumental substitute and isn't psychology at all. That's one thing.

The other thing is that there are many, many new discoveries – very important ones – since Mr. Ouspensky's time which are simply not known about anywhere in education or anywhere. And this must be included – several fundamental things which science now knows and has established which weren't known at all in his time. For instance, the mirror image basis of our central nervous system and mind, the alerting system, and many other things, which he would have given a lot to have had then.

The third thing is that it's very difficult to make a wedding between East and West. Not

many people today accept, happily and with understanding, Indian teachings and Indian language. Wouldn't you say?

Prof. G. Yes, I would.

Dr. R. You wouldn't talk about Gunas to the Royal College? (No) On the other hand, the teaching of the Shankaracharya's Tradition (as he alone gives it) is the only thing that will enable us to escape from prison. Our Western system taught us a lot about the prison and all about the walls and the stones and so on but it never showed us how to escape. So to escape from prison we need the guidance of a great man, an already liberated man, and we have to understand the language he uses. But Mr. Ouspensky always felt that our work based on this house was Western, was European, dated from, if you like, the Greek philosophers – Plato, the neo-Platonists to whom *The Cloud of Unknowing*, for instance, belongs in the 14th century. That line he wanted developed. And that, we can see now how to do a bit. Would you say, Peter Stebbing, that this is in keeping with your beliefs, for instance?

P.S. Certainly, yes.

Dr. R. Now would people like to say anything, especially the newer ones. I know roughly how the older ones feel.

Q. I was just thinking of the importance of the spoken word, Dr. Roles, rather than something written down.

Dr. R. Yes, very important. The influences we were taught about in the old days – 'A' influences were just what motivates us in the getting of our daily bread and the living of our ordinary physical lives; 'B' influences were those shed in life like works of art, or literature, or things 'written down' as you express it so well – things that everybody has access to, but which originated from higher sources; but 'C' influences mean direct contact between a liberated man and a pupil or even a partially liberated man or even a charlatan – but the spoken word with somebody with a little broader outlook and a little more experience. And by this way it must always be our attempt to try and *deliver a simple message verbally and in person*. Anything else?

Mrs. J. Lawrence. It doesn't imply any loss of reverence and love for those Eastern teachings if we look at and take as much notice of Western teaching. I remember it being said, I think, some time ago that it was a fruitful source of growth of a new beginning when two teachings came together.

Dr. R. Yes, and if we practise even for a few days what the Shankaracharya says, we would have a great belief in his way of actual liberation from prison. And we shouldn't talk to people about 'psychology' who aren't prepared to come and try and do it because so much so-called psychology is just hot air from people not practising anything!

The other thing is – Mrs. Gil, is she here? (No) Anybody in education will realise this. What a narrow picture the word 'psychology' is giving today, small and narrow. It takes into account only a small superficial intellectual part of the human endowment. Any psychology that Mr. Ouspensky envisaged, or the Shankaracharya, means much more than that.

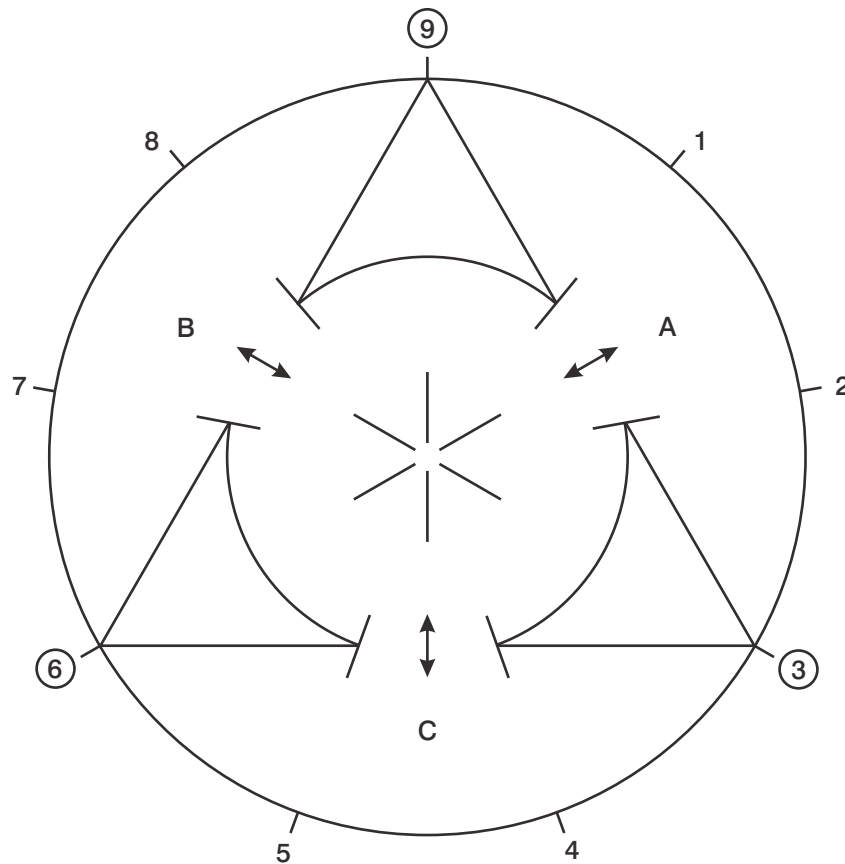
So in this first paper for this year, I have based it on a story of which we have heard a

truncated version, but of which there are fuller versions occurring in the Middle East since the time of about 800 AD some of which were included in Richard Burton's *Thousand and One Nights*, that is 'Arabian Nights' stories. Amongst these stories (there are about twenty volumes of them and we happen to have a limited edition which was privately printed) there is a bunch of stories told by a Prime Minister to his Prince in answer to questions. One of the questions was: 'What is the relation between the body (which moves around but can't see anything on its own, has no long vision), and the soul (which can't move without the body) in relation to reward or retribution?' And the answer given is that it is the same relation as is shown in the following story of the 'Blind Man and the Cripple and the Overseer of the Garden'. I'll give you a short account – some people object to the flowery language Burton uses, but you shouldn't be put off by things like that! I'll try and tell it to you just shortly.

There were two beggars who were great friends and always asked alms together – one was a cripple and one was blind. One day a wealthy landowner took pity on them and invited them in to one of his gardens and gave them a few samples of the fruit from his orchard, and said, 'You may have a little of these things but do no harm to the garden'; and went away. As the fruit became ripe the cripple said, 'There is the lovely scent of this ripe fruit and I can't get near it, I can't move, so you'll have to find it for me and bring some back.' And the blind man said, 'Now you mention it, it is the most glorious smell and I simply can't go on without getting some of it. I wouldn't have noticed it but for you.' Just at that moment, the overseer of the garden (who is not the Owner, but knows his wishes) appeared and asked them what they were arguing about and they explained the situation and he said, 'Stop thinking like that. You were asked by the Owner not to lay waste his garden or spoil it or steal his property. Stop thinking how you're going to get around.' But they pressed him so hard that, being a weak man, this overseer, he let out the secret which was that the blind man should take the lame man on his shoulders and the lame man would direct him to a given tree. And then he went away – a fatal thing to do – *he went away!* It wasn't long – knowing this trick – before they had laid waste the garden, trampled it all down, stolen the fruit, and stripped the trees; and the Owner suddenly came back, and when he saw what they were up to, he cursed them and flung them out of the garden, saying, 'I knew perfectly well what you were up to. I've watched it going on, but I told you not to and so you have to be punished.'

Now this isn't just another 'Garden of Eden' story. On the physical level it looks that way. But really it is a psychological story. It's about how the human structure is put together – it can be explained in many ways but one way is in connection with our Symbol (Enneagram on screen). As before, 'A' is the outward part, the sensory-motor and spinal mechanism performing external movements in space but with very, very short-sighted vision as to what it is moving round about, what the consequences of its actions will be. That would correspond to what in the story is the blind man – the body. 'B' is the emotional inner core of man's nature which can be in contact with the Owner but which is unable to move without the assistance of the body. So 'B' is what the story is calling the 'soul' – the cripple and 'A' is the body – the blind man. Either working alone without direction gets us into all the troubles we make.

According to our system and according to the Shankaracharya's system the *overseer* ('C' – the base of the triangle) which the Shankaracharya calls the Buddhi, the discriminating



mind, the Reason, has to stand in the middle and decide what is right according to the Owner's will; and must be there *all the time*. He mustn't go away, let out secrets and leave the place to destruction. He is our chief hope, bringing both the blind and the lame under the Owner's sway. Taken psychologically, it does show what a big scope psychology has always had, much bigger than what is allowed to be discussed today. Is that clear? I doubt it! (laughter) Are there any questions you can ask now?

Tony Anholt. Is the cripple inevitably a cripple or can he learn to walk?

Dr. R. Oh yes! This story represents these characters when they are working separately on their own, without guidance and without discipline or advice. Certainly the cripple, the emotional centre, ordinarily works very badly because of the negativeness – the negative emotions we have – fear and all the rest of it. If it is freed from rage and fear and negative emotion it can be godlike because it will come then under direct sway of the Owner who will then enlarge his whole influence so that He will feel like 'your own Self that lives in the hearts of all'. The future of human evolution is exactly along the line you suggest! But neither the cripple or the blind can develop on their own. The glorious moments of unity an actor must feel come when the overseer is right there and strong and doing his proper job; and we have all had experience of periods of this, haven't we? Moments, or hours, or even days when we are united (inner and outer, upper and lower) everything together as one. The actor has to be aware of the outside world, the audience; and he also has to be true to himself; and he also has to know through the overseer what is in keeping with the role he is playing. Something like that – you know more about it than I do! (he nods agreement)

Sue Cassini. Dr. Roles, I just wondered if that story...

Dr. R. Oh good, I wanted to hear what the BBC had to say! (laughter)

S.C. ...when you were telling it just then, it seemed to me that one has to be so careful with this energy and the powers one can get from the meditation and the turning and everything we're doing here, and that if one uses it wrongly the sort of thing can happen that was related in the story. And we've obviously got to learn not to let that happen.

Dr. R. That's a very good point to make. In the ordinary way people are pretty weak and of course there are fools around, but it is chiefly the very active fools that do the damage. But once you begin to get a psychological system and meditation and an inner life, you can become dangerous unless somebody is curbing your ego. You can use it in very many evil ways – I don't like name-dropping but we can all point to some examples! What matters to us is that *we shouldn't be like that*. More! These are very helpful, these remarks.

Q. Dr. Roles, it seems that a certain stage of awareness is necessary for Buddhi to be attentive all the time.

Dr. R. Yes, you're right. In the ordinary way, Buddhi not only is weak but he tends to run along with everything that's going on in the mechanical roving mind.

The Shankaracharya said something which surprised me a little bit. He said that to the celibate devotee, like himself, the Buddhi was like a wife. You could have lots of different kinds of wives. (laughter) Some could welcome you home and give you a nice ordered house and a family to enjoy. Others would nag you from the moment you got home. And so on. In the *Ramayana*, Rama and Sita represent not the ordinary sex differentiation but the Buddhi and the Realized man. So these three sides of one's nature show themselves there.

(to Lady A) Is there anything you'd have said better than that – I wasn't awfully clear! (laughter)

Lady A. No; but I remember once when I asked a question, the Shankaracharya said to me (in relation to the Owner or the Self) that at any moment there is a prompting of right or wrong and that if you began to listen to these promptings, they would get louder.

Dr. R. Yes, that's the thing. The mind tends to become what it admits and what it encourages. So encourage what you want, what's good for you; and simply don't notice the things which you don't want, or they'll take root!

Suppose we were to meditate for a little. This would be getting to the silence, giving up all the usual stuff that's going on, and just as if coming home, feel as if you were going to meet your dearest love.

MEDITATION

For this overseer to work, one has to be *giving up* all the time, from both sides. The lame man must be giving up all sorts of superstitions and selfish desires and so on; and the blind man must avoid being terribly active in his blindness and going round trampling on everything, particularly trampling on the lame man! (laughter)

Some people don't have this clash between essence and personality. Essence is like the lame man; personality is like the blind man. In some people there is an awful clash all the

time. People are very different in relation to this. Mrs. Moore – is she here? (yes) Your letter mentions that it gave you a shock when it was suggested that the soul could have evil in it! Didn't it?

Z.M. Yes, and I've heard other people say that too.

Dr. R. And did you get my letter back? (yes) I'll try to explain: In the Shankaracharya's tradition, the soul is a seedbed containing all possibilities of human nature *in potentia* – the Antahkarana or Inner Organ. What seeds the individual sows in this bed, those he will reap. If you see evil everywhere around it is only what individuals have sown in their own souls, you see? Anything bad never comes from the Atman, the Self, or the Self of the Universe. It is always produced by man who, unlike gods and angels and archangels and also all subhuman lower forms, was given the capacity of choice – to free himself or to be in bondage – a choice between heaven and hell. And all the troubles of mankind come from this privilege he has of having choice.

John Hersey – have you come across in the *Mathnawi* any version of the blind man and the cripple? If you do come across it, let us know; (yes) because of course Mevlana is a man for all seasons. The *Mathnawi* has everything for everybody in the most liberal way.

Now, I'd like you just to hear a short quote from the first meeting Lady Allan had with the Shankaracharya:

S. When you go on a street and want to take a turn at a crossing, you may see a traffic controller or traffic signals, and you may be signalled to stop until you find the road free for you to turn into and move on. One needs to wait as long as the *Go* signal is not given. Wisdom demands slowing down and waiting until the opportunity comes to move on. If you become impatient and try to fight, you will run amok and either find the end of the journey is an accident or you'll be liable to punishment by the law. (laughter) So in a moment of disturbance or at a crossing, one should slow down, see the situation, keep your attention on the present moment, find the answer which is itself there and then negotiate this in a peaceful manner and move on to the next stage of one's journey in due course.

Dr. R. And if there's a crisis, the worse the crisis is, the better that advice pays off. My meditation has never been all that good, but just now it's absolutely marvellous for the two of us together – one can meditate for both in this crisis. Many people feel that they're not getting very much from all this work, but that's just because there isn't a crucial need. You have no idea what will come when the need arises. I must be getting home. You entertain them a bit! (laughter)

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