

23 February 1981

LARGE MONDAY MEETING

On the platform: Dr. Roles, Lady Allan and Mr. Michael Fleming

Dr. R. For all kind enquirers the news about my wife is that she is making quite definite progress every day – you can notice the difference. She is now just about as breathless as I am, but no more! So our conversations have to be a bit short, but she is beginning to enjoy the posh nursing home a bit more and its amenities, and having better nights, eating something. But she won't be, I'm afraid, coming home for a week or two at least and then only keeping on one floor for some time. Nevertheless that's fine. She seems much more cheerful. Many thanks for all the enquiries and the very good letters. Where's the Cambridge contingent? She liked your letter, Eleanor, very much indeed – nice and newsy.

Now there are other announcements.

M.W.F. First of all, there will be a Meditation Meeting on Tuesday 10th March at 7.15. The next large Monday meeting will be on 30th March – the last this term. The lecture after the Annual General Meeting on Thursday 26th March will be given by Professor Glen Schaefer and he has called it 'The Universe and the Mind of Man – Which the Reflector?' He is a theoretical physicist as well as an ornithologist and entomologist. He is a world authority on animal migration and advises governments and bodies in many countries on pest control, using sophisticated radar techniques and mathematical models. He is very against wholesale pesticides – they don't work. He and his ecological research group at Cranfield try to work with nature, not against.

Dr. R. He is really well qualified to talk about this very intriguing title, being a top physicist who has refused to be on the Atomic Energy Board because of his beliefs; and also a top biologist. So I'm sure we will get something very worthwhile. What was the title again (repeated) I must say I think that's very intriguing.

M.W.F. The notice also says he keeps up with the latest work in cosmology and is very interested in the anthropic theory which combines a new interest in consciousness with a conception of total existential creation. That is everything happens all at once. Bill Anderson says he is one of the nicest geniuses he has ever met! (laughter)

Would members please collect their notices of the AGM from the landing and tick their names on the list to show they have one. Otherwise we are obliged to post you one at great expense. Associates are welcome at the lecture after the Meeting – the lecture will begin at about 8.30.

Finally there is still time for more names of people wanting Meditation with Initiations taking place next Sunday and the following Wednesday; but we might have to have an extra one on Wednesday week, the 11th, so there are chances still.

Dr. R. Two themes are taken up in this week's paper which aroused interest last Monday. One was your theme, Dr. Cox; he said he had never met anybody yet who really knew their body at first-hand. I quite agree with him. Mr. Ouspensky's teaching stressed that in the state of

self-consciousness or near it, one could come in contact with the instinctive mind behind the machine and learn very much about how the body is regulated and worked at first-hand. I've had experience of that. But really one needs a certain basic knowledge of physiology (which ought to be given in schools and isn't). What do you think, two doctors together there? Do you think people are learning enough about how mankind is made?

Dr. Witchalls. I'm surprised that the computer programmers who come to my surgery don't even know where their liver is or what it does. (laughter)

Dr. R. Yes quite. It's the schoolchildren that need to be programmed better!

One of the basic pieces of ignorance which arises is that nobody seems to have any idea about the third nervous system – about how the autonomic nervous system (which underlies our emotional life and introduces all 'feeling tone' works in with mind and sensory-motor body. The only thing that surgeons are taught is the parts of it that can be removed with safety and without any apparent effect. In this week's paper, we've put something about the possibilities which arise if there is a *union between heart and head*; between reason trained and acting truly without kinks and without false ideologies and the purified emotion which is free of negative sides. The union of heart and head, Mr. Ouspensky used to say, meant that together they could control the physical body and produce attentive actions; that together they could exercise 'will'. But either alone is too weak and undependable... another way of putting the story of the blind man and the cripple and the Overseer. Any questions about last week where those were touched on? Or perhaps you'd like to hear some of the questions sent in?

M.W.F. This from the Laleham group which was joined by Cicely Newington and Pam Wheatley. After reading part of the paper, Pam Wheatley asked. 'Does pure emotion only come when we are in a Sattvic state?'

Dr. R. A whole lot of experience of small jets of Sattva released by good impulses leads to a gradual improvement in one's emotional tone and in the strength of one's emotion in the right direction. It's a quiet thing and people think that emotion is throwing your arms about and getting excited and going on strike. But it isn't. It's a quiet thing – strong and quiet. In the *Gita* the Shankaracharya keeps quoting a description – that the Realized man is a man who is steady and still in both his knowledge and his being, remaining firm whatever the circumstances – firmness. So don't think it means I'm advising people to get excited. Any comments there?

M.W.F. And then Rosemary Drew asked. 'Can one be a Realized person at a special moment?'

Dr. R. No. Once you have realized your full potentiality, you're Realized forever. But you can get glimpses of the next step ahead which are very encouraging. That's the main thing from that group.

Now at Cambridge, I believe you've been reading Hans Christian Andersen. We'll begin with the last bit of your letter.

M.W.F. Rosemary Holmes described a moment in her own life when she went out to feed her geese – sometimes just a chore. But as they flew towards her, she saw how beautiful they were.

Dr. R. And then you start off about ugly ducklings. (laughter)

M.W.F. 'We became unified in the idea that we can live under Fate and Will; that we are not ugly ducklings; and not only we who are so fortunate to have been told this, but everyone else in the world to whom we may bring a bit of light.'

Dr. R. Now that isn't quite true. We spoke about being under the Law of Fate as applying to great people – heroes and men of destiny. People who are used to bring about changes on a historical scale... Alexander the Great and so on. And then we said that where a collection of people have a special task to perform in a school, for instance, with a special assignment under conscious direction, that whole school comes under the Law of Fate, not as individuals but as a single body of people having a mission to accomplish. Otherwise the Law of Fate applies to large numbers of people. Our system described it as due to planetary influences. That some planets move slightly nearer to each other and then the whole world begins to fight and struggle. This happened about six years ago when five planets approached and people have been fighting ever since! We may or may not credit that but nevertheless there are influences arriving from above the earth which affect the physical lives of large numbers of people.

So it isn't quite true to say that the whole world could live under the Law of Fate and the Law of Will – it's special people. But if we do what we can, according to the instructions we have been lucky enough to have, then we can all be liberated together. This is what Bob Melville was asking. Is he here? (Yes) That's the answer to your question. You may not believe it but that's the official answer.

Tony Anholt. Dr. Roles, I'm not properly clear in my mind in what sense you are using the word Fate. Are you using it as the opposite of accident?

Dr. R. I'm using it as a different order of Laws from either Cause and Effect or Accident. Cause and Effect applies to the result of man's own actions and every person's life is the result of causes which arose in lives before and continue to produce effects in whatever life he may live after. Accident is where there are an enormous number of lines of Cause and Effect intersecting, so that no human being could possibly work it all out – as when two Jumbo planes crash and you couldn't say that all the people on board had deserved the same fate. His Holiness says that if you had a god-like vision, there would be no such thing as accident. It's only because you're on the flat or in a hollow and you can't see.

The Law of Will – until you get the Will of the Absolute working through you, you have to agree to accept the will of another, as we do with the Shankaracharya. We don't question what he says. Any comments – since we first heard this from Mr. Ouspensky? Do you think that's accurate Alan (Bray)?

A.B. I'm not sure, Dr. Roles.

Dr. R. In what way – because I would like you not to swallow the thing whole and repeat it.

Mr. Hodge. Dr. Roles, you say you don't question what the Shankaracharya says. Is that because he is so close to the Absolute?

Dr. R. Haven't got a map, I don't know! But (laughter) he strikes me as being more reliable

than anyone else I ever met and his influence more in the direction of good, of magnanimity, or benevolence, than anyone else I ever met; and the fact that he lives up to what he says. That's all I can go on – in accepting his example and teaching. (to Lady A) What do you feel? It could be put better...

Lady A. No, I think you've put it marvellously!

Dr. R. Is that the main thing you weren't sure about? It's difficult to be sure unless you've met.

Lady A. That was Mr. Hodge who asked that. Mr. Bray hasn't had a chance yet.

Dr. R. Oh, I'm sorry (laughter)

Mr. B. That's a very wonderful answer, Dr. Roles. If one is in touch with a man of complete goodness, magnanimity, vision and understanding, one can go to him for advice.

Dr. R. Yes, and it's up to each individual to judge. More questions – they are interesting.

Dr. Witchalls. Can I please take up this question of Fate? Do we have a personal fate, each one? You talked about the lines of cause and effect in our lives – and if there is a fate, can we modify it?

Dr. R. Fate is by definition destiny and can't be modified. You either have a good fate or a bad fate. Whereas Cause and Effect is subject to modification. So when the system uses the word Fate, it uses it in terms of destiny. We have to be very careful about the company we keep. If we keep bad company, then we share a bad fate. If we're careful about the company and find people who are good company and whose example is helpful, we can assure ourselves of a better or a good fate.

Dr. Cox. Can I tell a story?

Dr. R. Could you ring me up afterwards! (laughter)

Dr. C. It's just that I nearly got killed but I don't know if that's interesting! (roars of laughter)

Dr. R. Well, I don't want to go off the main line just yet, but you ring me up at 10 tomorrow.

Miss Wright. Is Fate the same as the Indian idea of Karma? In Karma you seem to deserve what you get. Is that the same with fate?

Dr. R. The idea of Karma has hardened. It has become different from how it was first put four or five thousand years ago. And it has hardened into something which is very like the idea of punishment (or retribution) and reward that is in the Jewish religion on which Christianity was based. When we talk about Fate, we use it in the sense of a special system; whereas when you talk about Karma, you use it as the masses use it; which is much more like Cause and Effect with the additional idea of punishment or reward.

Mr. P. Smith. Dr. Roles, the idea that Fate is fixed for one can be quite a disheartening idea. But possibly there could be some hope in the idea that one could take it differently.

Dr. R. I think that if your idea was that Philip Smith was fixed forever that would be very disheartening. (laughter) But there's nothing disheartening in the idea of joining a body of people whose fate or privilege it is to do work which pleases the Absolute.

Miss Cassini. I was just going to ask... If we remember ourSelves, I thought that the Self was free of these Laws and came under the Laws of the Absolute.

Dr. R. Yes, yes, it does; but for that it is necessary to do more than remember oneSelf. One has to *be and live* according to the Atman – to recognise no duality (no expression of negative emotion for example). Whereas half the time we are for the Atman and the other half we are against Him.

Lady A. Are we talking about very different time scales, Dr. Roles? (Yes) It struck me that Accident and Cause-and-Effect can apply to today, tomorrow or next week, but Fate and the life of a school and the work of the Absolute are on a scale that might take several of our lifetimes.

Dr. R. I'm so glad to be reminded of that. Fate applies to essence where time is longer. And in our system it was said that when a child is born, it is only body and essence. During the first three or four years (and which will eventually stop the Law of Fate from operating) it forms a kind of insulating sheath – the personality. Before that when a child is born with a certain combination of light, of planets approaching and receding, and this colours it afterwards – so it applies to the essence on a far longer time scale.

Q. Is one's ability to become enlightened or liberated governed by Fate?

Dr. R. I think the possibility of this is with the sphere of Fate; but it is not governed by Fate. You retain the possibility of free choice. And the Law of Will is higher. The story of the Mahatma who was given the pessimistic answer by the Absolute: 'As many leaves as are on this tree, that will be the number of years you will have to wait before you have audience with the Absolute.' This is a law applying to all organic life – evolution. But you remember the Absolute descended from his throne and came down almost instantaneously to this Mahatma, saying that there are special people who have other possibilities. So that's the idea of the difference.

But are we getting a bit too airy-fairy? Should we come down to brass tacks? What do you think Joy (Tobler)?

Mrs. T. No, I like it! (laughter)

Miss Scrutton. If one belongs to a school and this is a school of the Fourth Way – if the fate of the whole school is affected, one must be affected within that school. And I would like to hear Dr. Roles say something more about that because one feels this pull when one comes here, in however poor a state, and has this good company and its influences and immediately one feels a different purposefulness.

Dr. R. Yes, I believe this to be valid and felt by a great many people. It is, to my mind, the proof that what I am looking for is sober and sound. Also you take to somebody at once. For instance, I trusted Mr. Ouspensky from the beginning. He wasn't just changeable; he was a strong man and he did what he said. He fulfilled his promises and yet he was very humble about it. So it is not only people in the school but any single person that you trust.

I would like to deal with another topic. The Guyatts were a little bit surprised that the new people who are coming to the group didn't seem to realise what an immensely potent

and valuable force Emotion was. We are so confined to logic and reason only, that we have forgotten that if the emotion is working at its full stretch and purified, it is not only a way of cognition, an immediate intuition (which may have to be verified afterwards) but which gets to the goal much quicker than by the operation of reason. It also provides the motive force which makes the world go round. Without the *feeling* aroused by things, everything would be flat. Our attention would be scattered. Our motive force would not be roused.

And I would like to read to you and to perhaps meditate for five minutes afterwards – an address which the Shankaracharya gave to the crowds at the Festival. By the way when we meditate afterwards, I want you to put into practice this idea of five minutes during which you should think of nothing else but the Mantra, the rhythm of the Mantra.

Lady A. The Shankaracharya said:

Love is the motive force behind all the processes at work in the world to sustain it.

Dr. R. I want you to realise that positive emotion includes love, joy, peace, faith. It has many aspects but it is an emotion which cannot turn negative; and until you cannot have negative emotions, you don't get it. The word love in the mouth of His Holiness refers to positive emotion.

Mr. Bray. Could that quotation be started again please?

Lady A. (reading)

Love is the motive force behind all the processes at work in the world to sustain it. Unless some feeling of love existed, nothing could be sustained. In the case of human life, its examples are the love of parents, love of brothers, love of friends and colleagues, etc. Even the behaviour of insects and moths seems to be based on some form of love. So much so that the ultimate cause of hostility is also love, because hostility springs up when love is hindered. Thus a duality of love and hostility prevails everywhere. We want a thing that we love and if we don't get it, we turn hostile. A love free from this duality is True Love.

Dr. R. That's the first point – a love which cannot turn negative if it meets with resistance is a form of Positive Emotion.

Lady A. (continues reading)

Love for something which you haven't got is self-deception. The whole drama enacted by Param-Atman depicts this one thing only, but there is none to understand it. As it were, a perennial game of hide and seek seems to be going on. We are all seeking something. Some seek it in annihilation; some in creation; some in light; some in darkness; some in intellect, etc. But actually it is Param-Atman all are seeking. And Param-Atman is hidden in all these and in everything else.

But while seeking, people have forgotten what actually they are seeking. (This story follows:)

A Man wanted to go to his father-in-law's house to meet his wife. He went to the railway station where the train was already standing at the platform and he shouted at the booking clerk, 'A ticket to my father-in-law's place please!' 'Name of place,' quipped the booking clerk. 'Oh, my father-in-law's place, please, please, quick.' 'Won't you speak out the name at

once?’ ‘I’m telling you – my father-in-law’s place. For God’s sake, quick, the train is about to start!’ And the train started, leaving the man behind.

Something like that is happening to all of us. Ramana Maharshi went on meditating for fourteen years over the question ‘Who am I?’ As soon as he was on the right path, it took him only a minute to realise that he was everything. This is what is happening with all of us. In a state of perpetual senselessness we have been searching for something without finding it. We want to know what we are. We want to be happy. That is, we are seeking Param-Atman. But Param-Atman is sitting in everything though there is a curtain of ignorance between Him and us.

We should see Param-Atman in everything. If we do that, we receive special favours from Him. Then this curtain of ignorance lifts up and the Maya which has been cheating us all the time no longer does so and begins to help us instead.

(Record, 29 April 1973)

MEDITATION

Dr. R. That’s five minutes, but we’ll go on.

(After another ten minutes:)

That was peaceful; I didn’t see any signs of struggle going on. Indeed we must avoid that. We’re not asked to put out of our minds all thoughts. We’re asked to start repeating the Mantra *and let the Mantra take us away from the field of thought*. There’s a great deal of difference. You come away from the ordinary tempo of your thoughts and maybe it goes faster or maybe it goes slower; but you bring your attention back to the rhythm.

There is just one thing I’d like to end with and that is that we were taught that there were three levels of school. Contrary to the ordinary point of view, the lowest level of school is the philosophical school, far above human life or about some future life. The next is theoretical, as one might learn a particular branch of science – that one would study and learn. But the highest form of school is the practical one where one might actually escape from prison; or be shown how to overcome some weakness that dogs one’s footsteps. So let us not despise the material level, not despise the body, because without the body nothing of the Soul or the Absolute would be manifested.

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