

22 February 1982

READING 5

THREE JUMPS

Our envoys to the Shankaracharya (who assures us that he remains permanently our guide in spite of his retirement from routine activities) returned a week ago. It is already clear that, having now removed the final difficulties in translating the meaning of his words, he expects us to set about using the ensuing flow of Grace to expand the influence of our Society in our own country without more delay.

That makes two immediate demands of us. First we have to liberate ourselves from the load of mental rubbish with which we have been impeding our own meditation these 20 years; and then we shall see how to apply the new discoveries made by science about man and his nature, by providing simple and cogent answers to the younger generation (like our own children and their friends) who realise the need for a radical change of outlook about ourselves and the nature of man, and who approach us to know how to begin.

This week let us lead towards the solution of both these problems with this quotation from the first of their two recent audiences which gives a short and cogent answer to the question 'Why Meditate?'

The shortest and one of the oldest of the Upanishads is the Mandukya, which really means 'frog'. The sage who wrote it had evolved a System, and says 'that with three jumps one can get into the deepest layer of the Self, just as a frog which happens to be on dry land and is getting scorched by the tropical sun and wants to be cool, can in three jumps get to the cool depths of the deepest water'. Similarly we need three jumps, and with these three jumps it should be possible to establish stillness of the Mind.

(Record, 9 February 1982)

Although at the level of the Upanishads the 3 big jumps are prescribed to give total stillness for human nature on physical, mental and emotional (spiritual) levels, yet to get started at all, one needs three little jumps and three still smaller jumps between any two small steps. It must first be recalled that:

The Way does not begin on the level of ordinary life. Between life and the Way lies the stairway. To get a step up this stairway one needs to put someone else on one's place. The people who can get up this stairway are ordinary honest and responsible citizens – householders. But two types of people fall down and break their heads – 'lunatics' and 'tramps'. 'Lunatics' are people misled with wrong values, and 'tramps' are people with no values at all.

Some years ago the Shankaracharya gave to the crowds at the big religious festival, just such a 'mini-ladder'. (*A Method of Self-Realization*,[†] 29 January 1973)

There are seven successive stages, each leading to the next, till the final stage, which is 'freedom from all thoughts about one's own small self and its personal profit'. They are:

1. *Attentive actions* – doing one's own job and fulfilling one's own obligations, simply because they are one's duty. These lead to:

[†]Published as *The Orange Book*

2. The second stage which is *good thoughts* – a job well done with nothing to reproach oneself over.
3. Good thoughts lead to the third stage which is *decrease in bad thoughts*: worries and fears about the future, unkind thoughts about other people, self-reproach about the past.

Let each frog practise those 3 jumps every day and then he'll reach the cool water and get experiences like those expressed in this letter from one of our old hands (S.H. 14 February 82).

Recently I have had an experience which I feel I would like to tell you about as perhaps it could be of some use to other people in Colet. About two weeks ago while meditating, the realization that 'I *do* love the Param Atman and indeed have always loved him' came to me in a flash. And then, suddenly, a tremendous feeling of love swept through me – in fact it was just like 'being in love'. And although the feeling of love remained only a few hours, I do know now with the utmost certainty that the most important thing is to cultivate this love at every possible moment. Nothing else really matters!

And I would like to thank you for your help, and particularly for giving me *A Method of Self-Realization* which I have copied out into a pocket-book and is my constant companion. I have been much influenced of late also by Mr. O's new translation of *Tertium Organum*. It seems to me that many of the keys to what we are studying at the moment lie in this book.

Finally, why should we frogs constantly through life have to make bigger and bigger jumps? Because the movements of the frog attract the attention of all sorts of predators and life on the surface of land or water becomes more and more hazardous until he can really get into those cool depths in three quick jumps!

So, above all, don't stop to think and talk about it – just *jump* mentally whenever that 'good impulse' is felt.

* * *