

Carbons 14 (1966)

Table of Contents

The Letters of Sri Aurobindo.....	2
Old i: Art and Inspiration ... NEW XIV: The Arts in Culture & XXII: Inspiration and the Overself	20
Old ii: Relax and Retreat ... NEW III: Relax and Retreat	24
Old iii: Meditation ... NEW IV: Elementary Meditation & XXIII: Advanced Contemplation.....	26
Old iv: The Path ... NEW I: Overview of the Quest	29
Old v: What is Philosophy ... NEW XX: What is Philosophy?	36
Old vi: Emotions and Ethics ... NEW VI: Emotions and Ethics.....	37
Old vii: The Intellect ... NEW VII: The Intellect	44
Old viii: The Body ... NEW V: The Body	46
Old ix: The Negatives ... NEW XI: The Negatives.....	50
Old x: Mentalism ... NEW XXI: Mentalism	54
Old xi: The Ego ... NEW VIII: The Ego.....	57
Old xii: The Overself ... NEW XXII: Inspiration and the Overself	59
Old xiii: The World-Mind ... NEW XXVII: The World-Mind	61
Old xiv: From Birth to Rebirth ... NEW IX: From Birth to Rebirth	65
Old xv: The Reign of Relativity ... NEW XIX: The Reign of Relativity.....	69
Old xvi: The Absolute Mind ... NEW XXVIII: The Alone	70
Old xvii: Way to Overself ... NEW II: Overview of Practices Involved & XXIII: Advanced Contemplation.....	73
Old xviii: The God Within ... NEW XXV: World-Mind in Individual Mind	78
Old xix: Religion ... NEW XVII: The Religious Urge.....	83
Old xx: The Sensitives ... NEW XVI: The Sensitives	87
Old xxi: The World-Idea ... NEW XXVI: The World-Idea	92
Old xxii: The Reverential Life ... NEW XVIII: The Reverential Life	95
Old xxiii: Orient and Occident ... NEW XV: The Orient.....	96
Old xxiv: General ... NEW XII: Reflections.....	103
Old xxv: Human Experience ... NEW XIII: Human Experience.....	106
Old xxvi: Mind-Body in Health and Sickness ... NEW X: Healing of the Self.....	110
Old xxvii: The Peace Within ... NEW XXIV: The Peace Within You	111
Old xxviii: Practices for the Quest ... NEW IV: Elementary Meditation	112

Editor's Note: This file is divided unevenly into two segments: The Letters of Sri Aurobindo, and The Old Category Paras of PB himself. Although the file is titled Carbons 14 (1966), the only part of it which is definitely from 1966 is the first 26 pages which are from The Letters of Sri Aurobindo (and other Aurobindo sources). The remainder, the PB paras themselves, appear to be from an earlier period. At the very least they were typed by a different person and from PB's handwritten notes, rather than dictation, which is the case for the Aurobindo section. That section was read into a dictation machine by PB himself who was soft-spoken; it was transcribed by Lorraine Stevens, who lacked much in the way of familiarity with Hindu Philosophy, and consequently mangled or missed many of the terms, as evidenced by the messy para 1-1. Lorraine refers to "Jeff" in this para; that is Jeff Cox who was a resident of Wisdom's Goldenrod Center at the time. (That organization was created and operated by PB's student Anthony Damiani in upstate New York, where Lorraine was living at the time.) PB did not intend these notes to be used for publication or necessarily to be made public at all; after long reflection we have decided to make such documents available, as they reflect PB's own process of study and analysis of the writings of his contemporaries. For whatever reason, many of the passages quoted as from The Letters of Sri Aurobindo are at best a loose paraphrase of pages from the book "Aurobindo: On Himself." Given the disparity between what got transcribed and the original Aurobindo passage, we have felt it advisable to properly quote the passage in question so as to ensure that the reader understand what is PB's (or Lorraine's) impression of a text, and the text itself. Where the differences are minor and do not affect the fundamental sense of Aurobindo's work, we have left the para 'as is.' We do recommend that anyone reading this section refer to the original Aurobindo papers, which are easily available online.

As for the rest of this document, it is thankfully straightforward. The paras all follow the Old Category themes; I believe that these were written and typed in the late 1950s and early 1960s based upon their subject-matter and their physical characteristics – but this is no more than an educated guess.

For more information about the people and texts PB quotes or references here, please see the file titled "Wiki Standard Info for Comments." For more information about the editorial standards, spelling changes, and formatting that we have implemented – including page and para numbering – please see the file titled "Introductory Readers' Guide." We have introduced minimal changes to the text; our changes deal with inconsistencies of spelling, educated guesses at illegible words, and the rare modification of grammar for clarity's sake. Whenever there is any question as to whether what is typed is what PB wrote, please consult the associated scan of the original pages, currently to be found in a pdf of the same name. – Timothy Smith (TJS), 2020

The Letters of Sri Aurobindo

1

THE LETTERS OF SRI AUROBINDO

(1-1)¹ I² got help from Jeff,³ at Wisdom's Goldenrod Centre for the Sanskrit word, [He

¹ The paras on this page are unnumbered.

found the page, I copied.]⁴

ADESHA in (Para 12) of Sri Aurobindo On Himself [Para 12]⁵

It's on Pg. 19⁶ of Monier Williams Dictionary SANSKRIT.

ADESHA⁷ = in the wrong place in time.

YUKTI - Pg. 853 in SANSKRIT DICTIONARY

VADA = doctrine, assertion

[The Para (4) Letters of Sri Aurobindo]⁸ YUKTI = union, junction, connection, combination, preparation, going to make ready for (*Locative or Comparative*), application, practise, usage, trick, contrivance, means, expedient, artifice, cunning device, magic, (*yuktim kri*, to find out or employ an expedient; *yukti, ibc*; by device or stratagem, artfully, skillfully, under pretext or pretense; *yuktya ifc* = by means of; reasoning, argument, proof, influence, induction, deduction from circumstances, (*yuktas* by means of an argument); reason, ground, motive, suitability, adaptedness, fitness, propriety, correctness, (*yuktya* and *yuktitas*, properly, suitably, fitly, justly, duly); meditation on the supreme being, contemplation, union with the universal spirit; (in law) enumeration of circumstances, specification of place and time, (in rhetoric) emblematic or mystical expression of purpose, (in drama) connection of the events in a plot, concatenation of incidents, intelligent weighing of the circumstances

DASAR: SAH: PRATAP: (in astronomy) conjunction (in grammar) connection of words, a sentence, of letters,

29

THE LETTERS OF SRI AUROBINDO

3

THE LETTERS OF SRI AUROBINDO

(continued from the previous page) VADA Pg. 939

VADA¹⁰ = speaking of or about (see *Brahma-vada*); causing to sound, playing, (see *vin:a-vada*); speech, discourse, talk, utterance, statement (*ifc*) speaking about, mentioning, advice, counsel, a thesis, proposition, argument, doctrine, discussion,

² The original handwritten notes for this para can be found in Carbons 19, pages 3-11.

³ This "I" is probably Lorraine Stevens, the original typist, and "Jeff" refers to Jeff Cox, who was living at Wisdom's Goldenrod at the time.

⁴ Lorraine Stevens inserted "He found the pg., I copied" by hand.

⁵ PB himself inserted "Para 12" by hand.

⁶ "939" in the original.

⁷ "ADESA" in the original

⁸ Lorraine Stevens inserted "The Para (4) Letters of Sri Aurobindo" in the left margin by hand.

⁹ Blank Page

¹⁰ I am fluent in Sanskrit, and have cleaned up PB's original excerpt, eliminating all of Monier-William's abbreviations for source references, which will only be meaningful to those already familiar with that dictionary. — TJS 2014

controversy, dispute, contest, quarrel; agreement, cry, song, (of a bird) sound, sounding (of a musical instrument) demonstrated, conclusion, result; a plaint, accusation, a reply; explanation, exposition (of holy texts etc.), report, rumour

4¹¹

THE LETTERS OF SRI AUROBINDO

5

THE LETTERS OF SRI AUROBINDO

Sri Aurobindo On Himself

(5-1)¹² Although Sri Aurobindo never had a definite guru, he had a helper temporarily during his years in Baroda who initiated him into meditation and then told him he would find his own further development himself. He also told Sri Aurobindo to make Namaste¹³ to an audience that he was about to address and wait, and speech would come to him from the source other than the mind. This happened. And ever since, all public speaking, all his writing, thinking and outward activity has come to him from the same source – above the brain-mind – during which, there is a condition of utter mental silence and mental serenity.

(5-2) It was the year 1908, in Baroda, that the yogi named Vishnu Bhaskar Lele, spent three days with him, an experience from which he entered the stillness in a full way. This was not his beginning with meditation; he already had gone far himself. After that, the only guru he had was the divine within himself; and there was no other.

(5-3)¹⁴ My own sadhana was by rejection of thought. ‘Sit down,’ I was told, ‘look and you will see that your thoughts come into you from outside. Before they enter, fling them back.’ I sat down and looked and saw to my astonishment that it was so; I saw and felt concretely the thought approaching as if to enter through or above the head and was able to push it back concretely before it came inside. In three days my mind became full of an eternal silence – it is still there. One who asked me how to do Yoga, I said: “Make your mind quiet first. Pause to look and see where your thoughts which you utter are coming from!” Anyway, the usual way, the easiest, if one can manage it at all, is to call down the silence from above you into the brain-mind-body. It was¹⁵

6

¹¹ Blank Page

¹² The paras on this page are numbered 1 to 3; they are not consecutive with the previous page.

¹³ “Namaste” in the original.

¹⁴ This para is an extract from “Aurobindo on Himself” Part One: Sri Aurobindo on Himself page 106-108 (120-122 in the PDF).

¹⁵ The paras on this page continue on page 7.

THE LETTERS OF SRI AUROBINDO
Sri Aurobindo On Himself

(6-1)¹⁶ The besetting sin of the Christian mind, even one so liberal as Dr Stanley Jones, is that they cannot get altogether free from sectarian narrowness, and leave each manifestation to its own inner world for those to follow who have an inner drawing to the one or the other.¹⁷

"Aurobindo On Himself" Page 179: That is the besetting sin of the Christian mind, even in those who are most liberal like Dr Stanley Jones: they cannot get altogether free from the sectarian narrowness and leave each manifestation to its own inner world for those to follow who have an inner drawing to the one or the other.

(6-2) When I succeeded in doing entirely the silencing of thought and feeling all the ordinary movements of consciousness except perception and recognition of things around without any accompanying concept or reaction. The sense of ego disappeared the movements of the ordinary life as well as speech and action were carried on by some habitual activity of Prakriti alone which was not felt as belonging to myself. But the perception which remained saw all things as utterly unreal; this sense of unreality was overwhelming and universal. Only some undefinable Reality was perceived as true. It was beyond space and time. After several months, the sense of unreality disappeared and there was a return to participation in the world-consciousness, but the inner peace of the realisation was not lost. Something else than himself took up his activity, spoke and acted through him but without any personal thought or initiative.

"Aurobindo On Himself" Page 111ff: This he succeeded in doing entirely in two or three days by following the method shown. There was an entire silence of thought and feeling and all the ordinary movements of consciousness except the perception and recognition of things around without any accompanying concept or other reaction. The sense of ego disappeared and the movements of the ordinary life as well as speech and action were carried on by some habitual activity of Prakriti alone which was not felt as belonging to oneself. But the perception which remained saw all things as utterly unreal; this sense of unreality was overwhelming and universal. Only some undefinable Reality was perceived as true which was beyond space and time and unconnected with any cosmic activity, but yet was met wherever one turned. This condition remained unimpaired for several months and even when the sense of unreality disappeared and there was a return to participation in the world-consciousness, the inner peace and freedom which resulted from this realisation remained permanently behind all surface

¹⁶ The paras on this page are numbered 6 to 8; they are not consecutive with the previous page., but follow the paras on page 7.

¹⁷ This para appears in "When Two Great Hearts Meet" by Edward De Meulder page 230, but the same para also appears in "Sri Aurobindo on Himself and on The Mother" by Sri Aurobindo page 211.. I found it on page 505 of "Letters on Yoga--II; Christianity and Theosophy" and finally in On Himself page 179.

movements and the essence of the realisation itself was not lost. At the same time an experience intervened: something else than himself took up his dynamic activity and spoke and acted through him but without any personal thought or initiative.

(6-3) This experience of silence in Nirvana, Brahman, etc., was absolute and blotted out mental, emotional, and other activities. Yet, the body continued to see, walk, speak, and do its other business. But as an automatic empty machine and nothing more. I did not become aware of any pure 'I' nor even of any Self, impersonal or other – there was only awareness of That as a sole reality – all else being unsubstantial, void, unreal. Neither¹⁸

7

THE LETTERS OF SRI AUROBINDO
Sri Aurobindo On Himself

(7-1)¹⁹ my great debt to the Yogi Lele, who showed me that thoughts come from outside sometimes formed and distinct, sometimes un-formed and given shape in us. The principle business of our mind is either a response of acceptance, or a refusal to these thought-waves. It was my great debt to the Yogi Lele that he showed me this. 'Sit in meditation,' he said, 'but do not think. Look only at your mind, and you will see thoughts coming into it, before they can enter throw these away from your mind till your mind is capable of entire silence.' I never heard before of thoughts coming visibly into the mind from outside. I sat down and did it. In a moment my mind became silent. And then I saw one thought and then another coming in from outside; I flung them away before they could enter and before they could take hold of the brain. In three days I was free. The mental being in me became a free Intelligence.

"Aurobindo On Himself" Page 106ff: My own way was by rejection of thought. "Sit down," I was told, "look and you will see that your thoughts come into you from outside. Before they enter, fling them back." I sat down and looked and saw to my astonishment that it was so; I saw and felt concretely the thought approaching as if to enter through or above the head and was able to push it back concretely before it came inside.

In three days – really in one – my mind became full of an eternal silence – it is still there. But that I don't know how many people can do. One (not a disciple – I had no disciples in those days) asked me how to do Yoga. I said: "Make your mind quiet first." He did and his mind became quite silent and empty. Then he rushed to me saying: "My brain is empty of thoughts, I cannot think. I am becoming an idiot." He did not pause to look and see where these thoughts he uttered were coming from! Nor did he realise that one who is already an idiot cannot become one. Anyhow I was not patient in those days and I dropped him and let him lose his miraculously

¹⁸ This para is an extract from "Aurobindo on Himself" Part One: Sri Aurobindo on Himself page 148-149. It continues on page 9.

¹⁹ The paras on this page are numbered 4 and 5; they are not consecutive with the previous page., but follow the paras on page 5. This page is an extract from "Letters on Himself and the Ashram," pages 243-245.

achieved silence.

The usual way, the easiest if one can manage it at all, is to call down the silence from above you into the brain mind and body.

All developed mental men, those who get beyond the average, have in one way or other, or at least at certain times and for certain purposes to separate the two parts of the mind, the active part, which is a factory of thoughts and the quiet masterful part which is at once a Witness and a Will, observing them, judging, rejecting, eliminating, accepting, ordering corrections and changes, the Master in the House of Mind, capable of self-empire, sāmrajya.

The Yogi goes still further, – he is not only a master there but even while in mind in a way, he gets out of it as it were, and stands above or quite back from it and free. For him the image of the factory of thoughts is no longer quite valid; for he sees that thoughts come from outside, from the universal Mind or universal Nature, sometimes formed and distinct, sometimes un-formed and then they are given shape somewhere in us. The principal business of our mind is either a response of acceptance or a refusal to these thought-waves (as also vital waves, subtle physical energy waves) or this giving a personal-mental form to thought-stuff (or vital movements) from the enviroing Nature-Force. It was my great debt to Lele that he showed me this. “Sit in meditation,” he said, “but do not think, look only at your mind; you will see thoughts coming into it, before they can enter throw these away from your mind till your mind is capable of entire silence.” I had never heard before of thoughts coming visibly into the mind from outside, but I did not think either of questioning the truth or the possibility, I simply sat down and did it. In a moment my mind became silent as a windless air on a high mountain summit and then I saw one thought and then another coming in a concrete way from outside; I flung them away before they could enter and take hold of the brain and in three days I was free. From that moment, in principle, the mental being in me became a free Intelligence, a universal Mind, not limited to the narrow circle of personal thought as a labourer in a thought factory, but a receiver of knowledge from all the hundred realms of being and free to choose what it willed in this vast sight-empire and thought-empire.

(7-1) One commences with a yogic method, but the work is taken up by a Grace from above, from That to which one aspires. It was in this last way that I myself came by the mind’s absolute silence, unimaginable to me before I had its actual experience.

“Aurobindo On Himself” Page 109: One commences with a method, but the work is taken up by a Grace from above, from That to which one aspires or an irruption of the infinitudes of the Spirit. It was in this last way that I myself came by the mind's absolute silence, unimaginable to me before I had its actual experience.

(7-2) A swami has remarked that I have the boldness to say I have done what the Vedic Rishis²⁰ could not do.

The reply is not only I have done this, but Chaitanya and others developed an intensity of Bhakti which is absent in the Veda. Why should the past be the limit of spiritual experience?

²⁰ “Rishees” in the original

"Aurobindo On Himself" Page 109: Q: In an article written by a Swami on your book 'The Riddle of this World,' he has remarked that you have the boldness to say that you have done what the Vedic Rishis could not do. What is the truth in this criticism?

A: It is not I only who have done what the Vedic Rishis did not do. Chaitanya and others developed an intensity of Bhakti which is absent in the Veda and many other instances can be given. Why should the past be the limit of spiritual experience? 19-12-1934

821

THE LETTERS OF SRI AUROBINDO
Sri Aurobindo On Himself

9

THE LETTERS OF SRI AUROBINDO
Sri Aurobindo On Himself

(9-1)²² was I aware of any lower self, or outer self, called by such and such a personal name that was performing this feat of arriving at the consciousness of Nirvana. So what becomes of your pure 'I,' and lower 'I,' in all that? Consciousness emptied itself of all inner contents, remaining aware only of unreal surroundings and something real.

"Aurobindo On Himself" Pages 148-149: I myself had my experience of Nirvana and silence in the Brahman, etc. long before there was any knowledge of the overhead spiritual planes; it came first simply by an absolute stillness and blotting out as it were of all mental, emotional and other inner activities – the body continued indeed to see, walk, speak and do its other business, but as an empty automatic machine and nothing more. I did not become aware of any pure 'I' nor even of any self, impersonal or other, – there was only an awareness of That as the sole Reality, all else being quite unsubstantial, void, non-real. As to what realised that Reality, it was a nameless consciousness which was not other than That; one could perhaps say this, though hardly even so much as this, since there was no mental concept of it, but not more. Neither was I aware of any lower soul or outer self called by such and such a personal name that was performing this feat of arriving at the consciousness of Nirvana. Well, then what becomes of your pure 'I' and lower 'I' in all that? Consciousness (not this or that part of consciousness or an 'I' of any kind) suddenly emptied itself of all inner contents and remained aware only of unreal surroundings and of Something real but ineffable.

(9-2) There is some vague ignorant idea of the mind, due, I suppose, to the ascetic tradition that the divine nature is something cold, bare, empty, austere, aloof, without the glorious riches of the egoistic human vital life. When the divine vital gets the means to manifest it will make the life on earth more full of beauty, love, radiance, warmth. I

²¹ PB himself inserted "Booknotes:" by hand, while Lorraine Stevens inserted "Sri Aurobindo (Con't) pg. 2" by hand.

²² The para on this page is numbered 9; it is not consecutive with the previous page., but follows the paras on page 6.

am accused of rude and arrogant behaviour because I refuse to see people, do not answer letters, and other misdemeanours. Politeness²³ in good society manners are not necessarily a test of spiritual experience any more than dressing nicely is. I am asked why does the Mother put on rich and beautiful dresses? My answer is, is it your notion that the Divine should be represented on earth by poverty and ugliness? For beauty is as much an expression of the Divine as Knowledge, Power, or Bliss. It would not be a more absurd or meaningless question than one put against her wearing artistic and beautiful dresses. The Divine Consciousness is not bound by these things and has no attachment, but is also not bound to abstain from them.

“Aurobindo On Himself” Page 159: Behind this fear there are usually two causes: first, there is the feeling of the vital that it will have to cease to be obscure, crude, muddy, egoistic, unrefined (spiritually), full of stimulating desires and small pleasures and interesting sufferings (for it shrinks even from the Ananda which will replace this); next there is some vague ignorant idea of the mind, due, I suppose, to the ascetic tradition, that the divine nature is something cold, bare, empty, austere, aloof, without the glorious riches of the egoistic human vital life. As if there were not a divine vital and as if that divine vital is not itself and, when it gets the means to manifest, will not make the life on earth also infinitely more full of beauty, love, radiance, warmth, fire, intensity and divine passion and capacity for bliss than the present impotent, suffering, pettily and transiently excited and soon tired vitality of the still so imperfect human creation.

“Aurobindo On Himself” Page 433: Just as there are very good and kind men who are boorish and rude in their manners, so there may be very spiritual men (I mean here by spiritual men those who have had deep spiritual experiences) who have no grasp over physical life of action (many intellectuals too, by the way, are like that) and are not at all careful about their manners. I suppose I myself am accused for rude and arrogant behaviour because I refuse to see people, do not answer letters, and a host of other misdemeanours.

Aurobindo On Himself” Page 433 {This excerpt precedes the preceding one!}: But when on earth were politeness and good society manners considered as a part or a test of spiritual experience or true Yogic Siddhi? It is no more a test than the capacity of dancing well or dressing nicely.

Aurobindo On the Mother: The Mother and the Expression of Beauty pages 393-394: Q: Why does the Mother put on rich and beautiful dresses?

A: Is it your notion that the Divine should be represented on earth by poverty and ugliness?

Beauty is as much an expression of the Divine as Knowledge, Power or Ananda. Does anyone ask why does the Mother want to manifest the divine consciousness by knowledge or by power and not by ignorance and weakness? It would not be a more absurd or meaningless question than the one put by the vital against her wearing artistic and beautiful dress. 27-2-1933

Q: Does it make any difference to the Mother's consciousness whether she puts on the best saris or the old ones, whether she lives in a palace or in a forest? What do these outer things

²³ “The likeness” in the original.

add to the inner reality? More probably they may be causing its diminution.

A: Outer things are the expression of something in the inner reality. A fine sari or a palace are expressions of the principle of beauty in things and that is their main value. The Divine Consciousness is not bound by these things and has no attachment, but it is also not bound to abstain from them if beauty in things is part of its intended action.

10²⁴

THE LETTERS OF SRI AUROBINDO
Sri Aurobindo On Himself

11

THE LETTERS OF SRI AUROBINDO
Sri Aurobindo On Himself

(11-1)²⁵ The spiritual silence is not a mere emptiness, nor is it indispensable to abstain from all activity in order to find it.

(11-2) The Mother speaks or writes pointedly and sharply to those whom she wishes to push rapidly on the way because they are capable of it, and they do not resent or suffer but are glad of the pressure and plainness because they know by experience that it helps them to see their obstacles and change. So if you wish to progress rapidly you must get rid of this wounded feeling and seeking for self-justification.

Aurobindo On the Mother: Part Two. Letters on the Mother page 281: The Mother speaks or writes much more pointedly and sharply to those whom she wishes to push rapidly on the way because they are capable of it, and they do not resent or suffer but are glad of the pressure and the plainness because they know by experience that it helps them to see their obstacles and change. If you wish to progress rapidly you must get rid of this vital reaction of abhimāna, suffering, wounded feeling, seeking for argument of self-justification, outcry against the touch that is intended to liberate – for so long as you have these, it is difficult for us to deal openly and firmly with the obstacles created by the vital nature.

(11-3) I did not leave politics because I felt I could do nothing more there. I came away because I did not want anything to interfere with my Yoga and because I got the very distinct adesha²⁶ in the matter. I have cut connection entirely with politics, but I knew from within that the work I began was destined to be carried forward by others. I have never known of any will of mine for any major event in the conduct of world affairs to

²⁴ Handwritten note from LS at top of page reads:

“Book Notes: Sri Aurobindo pg. 4.

((9) END of Disc #67”

²⁵ The paras on this page are numbered 10 through 14, making them consecutive with the previous page.

²⁶ “adesa” in the original

fail in the end, although it may take a long time for the world-forces to fulfil it.

Aurobindo On Himself" Pages 72-73: I may also say that I did not leave politics because I felt I could do nothing more there; such an idea was very far from me. I came away because I did not want anything to interfere with my Yoga and because I got a very distinct ādeśa in the matter. I have cut connection entirely with politics, but before I did so I knew from within that the work I had begun there was destined to be carried forward, on lines I had foreseen, by others, and that the ultimate triumph of the movement I had initiated was sure without my personal action or presence. There was not the least motive of despair or sense of futility behind my withdrawal. For the rest, I have never known any will of mine for any major event in the conduct of the world-affairs to fail in the end, although it may take a long time for the world-forces to fulfil it.

(11-4) A disciple in dream met the Mother and had a talk with her. The question is, was it the real Mother or some constructed figure of his dream mind? The answer: of course it was the Mother you met and the meeting must have been due to your thought about meeting her.

Aurobindo On the Mother: Part Two. Letters on the Mother page 300: Q: For a long time I was thinking of meeting the Mother but was hesitating to ask for an interview. Last night in dream I met her and had a talk with her. Was it the real Mother or some constructed figure of my dream-mind?

A: Of course, it was the Mother you met and the meeting must have been due to your thought about meeting her.

(11-5) It is not by the physical presence but by the Mother's concentration at the time of meditation which brings the quiet to those who can receive it.

Aurobindo On the Mother: Part Two. Letters on the Mother page 302: It is not by the physical presence but the Mother's concentration at the time of meditation which brings the quiet to those who can receive it. 6-3-1937

12²⁷

THE LETTERS OF SRI AUROBINDO
Sri Aurobindo On Himself

13

THE LETTERS OF SRI AUROBINDO
Sri Aurobindo On Himself

²⁷ Handwritten note from LS at top of page reads:

"((10) Start Disc #68: Sri Auro. ON HIM Self (Con't.) Pg. 5"
(10 refers to checking para 11-3 for the term adesha.

(13-1)²⁸ The Mother does not usually give specific advice such as you ask for in regards to the Insurance Company. You must learn to get the true inspiration in your mind's silence.

Aurobindo On the Mother: Part Two. Letters on the Mother page 197: The Mother does not usually give specific advice such as you ask for in regard to the Insurance Company. You must learn to get the true inspiration in the mind's silence. 18-8-1932

(13-2) For the inner contact with the Mother the photo was necessary, as it is by the appearance and not by the name that the Mother identifies those who come to her inwardly.

Aurobindo On the Mother: Part Two. Letters on the Mother page 414: What you wanted to know was about X being here or not or being one of those in contact with the Mother. For that the photo was necessary as it is by the appearance, not the name, that Mother identifies those who come here to her – as she did from the photo of X. 26-1-1934

14²⁹

THE LETTERS OF SRI AUROBINDO
Sri Aurobindo On Himself

15³⁰

THE LETTERS OF SRI AUROBINDO

(15-1)³¹ The Shankara knowledge is, as your Guru pointed out, only one side of the Truth; it is the knowledge of the Supreme as realised by the spiritual Mind through the static silence of the pure Existence. It was because he went by this side only that Shankara was unable to accept or explain the origin of the universe except as illusion, a creation of Maya. Unless one realises the Supreme on the dynamic as well as the static side, one cannot experience the true origin of things and the equal reality of the active Brahman. The Power of the Eternal becomes then a power of illusion, only and the world becomes incomprehensible, a mystery of cosmic madness, an eternal delirium of the Eternal. Whatever verbal or ideative logic one may bring to support it, this way of seeing the universe explains nothing; it only erects a mental formula of the inexplicable. It is only if you approach the Supreme through his double aspect of Sat and Chit-Shakti,

²⁸ The paras on this page are numbered 15 through 16, making them consecutive with the previous page.

²⁹ Lorraine Stevens inserted:

“End Sri Auro. On Himself:

Disc #68” by hand.

³⁰ Lorraine Stevens inserted:

“Con’t. Disk #68 ____ Pg.1” by hand.

³¹ This para is numbered 1 in the original; it is not consecutive with the previous page.

double but inseparable, that the total truth of things can become manifest to the inner experience. This other side was developed by the Shakta³² Tantriks, the two together, Vedantic and Tantric truth, unified, can arrive at the integral knowledge. That is the truth in its completeness as far as the mind can formulate it. In the supermind these questions do not even arise: for it is the mind that creates the problem by creating oppositions between aspects of the Divine which are not really opposed to each other but are one and inseparable.

Aurobindo: Letters on Yoga: 2. Integral Yoga and Other Paths page 39 {online version}: The Shankara knowledge is, as your Guru pointed out, only one side of the Truth; it is the knowledge of the Supreme as realised by the spiritual Mind through the static silence of the pure Existence. It was because he went by this side only that Shankara was unable to accept or explain the origin of the universe except as illusion, a creation of Maya. Unless one realises the Supreme on the dynamic as well as the static side, one cannot experience the true origin of things and the equal reality of the active Brahman. The Shakti or Power of the Eternal becomes then a power of illusion only and the world becomes incomprehensible, a mystery of cosmic madness, an eternal delirium of the Eternal. Whatever verbal or ideative logic one may bring to support it, this way of seeing the universe explains nothing; it only erects a mental formula of the inexplicable. It is only if you approach the Supreme through his double aspect of Sat and Chit-Shakti, double but inseparable, that the total truth of things can become manifest to the inner experience. This other side was developed by the Shakta Tantriks. The two together, the Vedantic and the Tantric truth unified, can arrive at the integral knowledge.

But philosophically this is what your Guru's teaching comes to and it is obviously a completer truth and a wider knowledge than that given by the Shankara formula. It is already indicated in the Gita's teaching of the Purushottama and the Parashakti (Adya Shakti) who become the Jiva and uphold the universe. It is evident that Purushottama and Parashakti are both eternal and are inseparable and one in being; the Parashakti manifests the universe, manifests too the Divine in the universe as the Ishwara and Herself appears at His side as the Ishwari Shakti. Or, we may say, it is the Supreme Conscious Power of the Supreme that manifests or puts forth itself as Ishwara Ishwari, Atma Atma-shakti, Purusha Prakriti, Jiva Jagat. That is the truth in its completeness as far as the mind can formulate it. In the supermind these questions do not even arise: for it is the mind that creates the problem by creating oppositions between aspects of the Divine which are not really opposed to each other but are one and inseparable.

16³³

THE LETTERS OF SRI AUROBINDO

17³⁴

³² "Sakta" in the original

³³ Blank Page

³⁴ Handwritten note by PB I think at top of page reads:

"Disk # 68 Cont.

Letters of Sri A. Pg. 2"

(17-1)³⁵ If Shankara's conception of the undifferentiated pure Consciousness as Brahman is your view of it, then it is not the path of this yoga that you should choose; for here the realisation of pure Consciousness and Being is only a first step and not the goal. But an inner creative urge from within can have no place in an undifferentiated Consciousness – all action and creation must necessarily be foreign to it.

I do not base my Yoga on the insufficient ground that the Self (not the soul), is eternally free. That affirmation leads to nothing beyond itself, or, if used as a starting-point, could equally well lead to the conclusion that action and creation have no significance or value. The question is not that, but of the meaning of creation, whether there is a Supreme who is not merely a pure undifferentiated consciousness and Being, but the source and support also of the dynamic energy of creation and whether the cosmic existence has for It a significance and value. That is a question which cannot be settled by metaphysical logic which deals in words and ideas, but by spiritual experience which goes beyond Mind and enters into spiritual realities. Each mind is satisfied with its own reasoning, but for spiritual purposes that satisfaction has no validity, except as an indication of how far and on what line each one is prepared to go in the field of spiritual experience. If your reasoning leads you towards the Shankara idea of the Supreme, that might be an indication that the Vedanta Advaita (Mayavada) is your way of advance.

This yoga, here, accepts the value of cosmic existence and holds it to be a reality; its object is to then enter into a higher Truth-Consciousness.

Aurobindo: Letters on Yoga: 2. Integral Yoga and Other Paths page 41 {online version}: If Shankara's conception of the undifferentiated pure Consciousness as the Brahman is your view of it, then it is not the path of this yoga that you should choose; for here the realisation of pure Consciousness and Being is only a first step and not the goal. But an inner creative urge from within can have no place in an undifferentiated Consciousness – all action and creation must necessarily be foreign to it.

I do not base my yoga on the insufficient ground that the Self (not soul) is eternally free. That affirmation leads to nothing beyond itself, or, if used as a starting-point, it could equally well lead to the conclusion that action and creation have no significance or value. The question is not that but of the meaning of creation, whether there is a Supreme who is not merely a pure undifferentiated Consciousness and Being, but the source and support also of the dynamic energy of creation and whether the cosmic existence has for It a significance and a value. That is a question which cannot be settled by metaphysical logic which deals in words and ideas, but by a spiritual experience which goes beyond Mind and enters into spiritual realities. Each mind is satisfied with its own reasoning, but for spiritual purposes that satisfaction has no validity, except as an indication of how far and on what line each one is prepared to go in the field of spiritual experience. If your reasoning leads you towards the Shankara idea of the Supreme, that might be an indication that the Vedanta Advaita (Mayavada) is your way of advance.

³⁵ The para on this page is numbered 2, making it consecutive with the previous page.

This yoga accepts the value of cosmic existence and holds it to be a reality; its object is to enter into a higher Truth-Consciousness or Divine supramental Consciousness in which action and creation are the expression not of ignorance and imperfection, but of the Truth, the Light, the Divine Ananda.

18³⁶

THE LETTERS OF SRI AUROBINDO

19³⁷

THE LETTERS OF SRI AUROBINDO

(19-1)³⁸ It is rather difficult to say now-a-days what really was Shankara's philosophy: there are various exponents and none of them agrees with the others. I've read accounts given by many, and each followed his own line. Once we get into knowledge of Reality, we perceive that Maya and the world and all in it, have no abiding or true existence. It is, if non-existent, jaganmithya;³⁹ it⁴⁰ is a mistake of the consciousness, it is and is not; it is an irrational and inexplicable mystery in its origin, so⁴¹ we can see its process or at least how it keeps itself imposed on the consciousness. In the end, however, all this seems to be a myth of Maya, and not anything really true. If that is Shankara's philosophy it is to me unacceptable and incredible, however brilliantly ingenious it may be and however boldly and incisively reasoned; it does not satisfy my own reason and does not agree with my experience.

Aurobindo: Letters on Yoga: 2. Integral Yoga and Other Paths page 43 {online version}: It is rather difficult to say nowadays what really was Shankara's philosophy: there are numberless exponents and none of them agrees with any of the others. I have read accounts given by some scores of his exegetes and each followed his own line. We are even told by some that he was no Mayavadin at all, although he has always been famed as the greatest exponent of the theory of Maya, but rather, the greatest Realist in philosophical history. One eminent follower of Shankara even declared that my philosophy and Shankara's were identical, a statement which

³⁶ Lorraine Stevens inserted:

"Cont: Letters of Sri Aurobindo Pg. 2

Cont: Disc #68"

³⁷ Lorraine Stevens inserted:

"End of Disk #68 Con't. Letters of Sri Aurobindo Pg. 3"

³⁸ The para on this page is numbered 3, making it consecutive with the previous page.

³⁹ A blank space was left in the original because the original typist couldn't read PB's handwriting, or because PB himself left a blank in the para. Timothy Smith later inserted "jaganmithya."

⁴⁰ "9½ on dial JR." was handwritten in the gap in the typing in the original para (now filled in by the missing word). This is a reference to the time mark on the recording disk number 69;

"JR" references the fact he was using the smaller recording device called Junior. — TJS

⁴¹ "though" in the original. I think Lorraine misheard PB's dictation. — TJS

rather took my breath away. One used to think that Shankara's philosophy was this that the Supreme Reality is a spaceless and timeless Absolute (Parabrahman) which is beyond all feature or quality, beyond all action or creation, and that the world is a creation of Maya, not absolutely unreal, but real only in time and while one lives in time; once we get into a knowledge of the Reality, we perceive that Maya and the world and all in it have no abiding or true existence. It is, if not non-existent, yet false, *jaganmithyā*; it is a mistake of the consciousness, it is and it is not; it is an irrational and inexplicable mystery in its origin, though we can see its process or at least how it keeps itself imposed on the consciousness. Brahman is seen in Maya as *Īshvara* upholding the works of Maya and the apparently individual soul is really nothing but Brahman itself. In the end, however, all this seems to be a myth of Maya, *mithyā*, and not anything really true. If that is Shankara's philosophy, it is to me unacceptable and incredible, however brilliantly ingenious it may be and however boldly and incisively reasoned; it does not satisfy my reason and it does not agree with my experience.

20⁴²

THE LETTERS OF SRI AUROBINDO

21

THE LETTERS OF SRI AUROBINDO

(21-1)⁴³ If {*yuktivada*} is meant merely for the sake of arguing down opponents, than this part of the philosophy has no fundamental validity; Shankara's theory destroys itself. Either he meant it as a sufficient explanation of the universe or he did not. If he did, it is no use dismissing it as *Yuktivada*. I can understand that thorough-going Mayavadin's declaration that the whole question is illegitimate, because Maya and the world do not really exist; in fact, the problem of how the world came into existence is only a part of Maya, is like Maya unreal and does not truly arise; but if an explanation is to be given it must be a real and valid satisfying explanation.

*Aurobindo: Letters on Yoga: 2. Integral Yoga and Other Paths page 43 {online version}: I don't know exactly what is meant by this *yuktivāda*. If it is meant that it is merely for the sake of arguing down opponents, then this part of the philosophy has no fundamental validity; Shankara's theory destroys itself. Either he meant it as a sufficient explanation of the universe or he did not. If he did, it is no use dismissing it as *Yuktivāda*. I can understand that thorough-going Mayavadin's declaration that the whole question is illegitimate, because Maya and the world do not really exist; in fact, the problem how the world came into existence is only a part of Maya, is like Maya unreal and does not truly arise; but if an explanation is to be given, it must be a real, valid and satisfying explanation. If there are two planes and in putting the question we are confusing the two planes, that argument can only be of value if both planes have some kind of existence and the reasoning and explanation are true in the lower plane but cease to have any*

⁴² Blank Page

⁴³ The paras on this page are numbered 4 through 5, making them consecutive with the previous page.

meaning for a consciousness which has passed out of it.

(21-2) There are several forms of Indian philosophy which base themselves upon the One Reality, but they admit also the reality of the world, the reality of the Many, the reality of the differences of the Many as well as the sameness of the One. The Supreme Reality is an Absolute not limited by either oneness or multiplicity but simultaneously capable of both; for both are its aspects, although the oneness is fundamental and the multiplicity depends upon the oneness.

The Divine by his power has created the world or rather manifested it in his own infinite being. But here in the material world or at its basis he has hidden himself in what seems to be his opposites, Non-being, Inconscience and Insentience. We find in the end that all the dispositions of the world can only have been arranged by the working of a supreme secret Intelligence. A silence of eternal rest and peace supports an eternal action and movement. The one Reality, the Divine Being, [is bound by neither, since it is in no way limited; it possesses both. There is no]⁴⁴

22⁴⁵

THE LETTERS OF SRI AUROBINDO

23⁴⁶

THE LETTERS OF SRI AUROBINDO

(continued from the previous page) incompatibility between the two as there is none between the many and the One, the sameness and the difference. It is the idea and experience of the individuality that disappears and ceases. He may say a _____⁴⁷ is extinguished (nirvana) in the true Light, or it may be the experience of a loss of individuality in a transcendent being and consciousness in which the sense of cosmos as well as the individual disappears. Or again, it may be in a transcendence which is aware of, and supports the cosmic action. But what do we mean by the individual? What we usually call by that name is a natural ego, a device of Nature which helps her action in the mind and body. The ego has to be extinguished, otherwise no complete liberation is possible. But the individual self, or soul, is not this ego. The individual soul is a spiritual being, a portion of the Divine. It can also be described as the Divine

⁴⁴ PB himself inserted "is bound by neither, since it is in no way limited; it possesses both. There is no" as an edit (different colour in the original). This phrase is directly from the Aurobindo book. – TJS 14

⁴⁵ Handwritten notes at top of page read:

"((4) Start Disc #69: Cont: Letters of Sri Aurobindo Pg. 4

⁴⁶ Handwritten notes at bottom of page read:

"END Book Notes On Sri Aurobindo

Disk # 69 4 ½ on Disk Dial"

⁴⁷ A blank space was left in the original because the original typist couldn't read PB's handwriting, or because PB himself left a blank in the para.

himself. This is the true spiritual individual which appears in its complete truth when we get rid of the ego. Nirvana is a step towards Divine Mind, a disappearance of the false separative individuality, a necessary condition for our realising and living in our true eternal being, living divinely in the Divine. But this we can do in the world and in life.

Aurobindo: Letters on Yoga: 2. Integral Yoga and Other Paths page 44 {online version}: There are several forms of Indian philosophy which base themselves upon the One Reality, but they admit also the reality of the world, the reality of the Many, the reality of the differences of the Many as well as the sameness of the One (bhedābheda). But the Many exist in the One and by the One, the differences are variations in manifestation of that which is fundamentally ever the same. This we actually see as the universal law of existence where oneness is always the basis with an endless multiplicity and difference in the oneness; as, for instance, there is one mankind but many kinds of man, one thing called leaf or flower but many forms, patterns, colours of leaf and flower. Through this we can look back into one of the fundamental secrets of existence, the secret which is contained in the one Reality itself. The oneness of the Infinite is not something limited, fettered to its unity; it is capable of an infinite multiplicity. The Supreme Reality is an Absolute not limited by either oneness or multiplicity but simultaneously capable of both; for both are its aspects, although the oneness is fundamental and the multiplicity depends upon the oneness.

There is possible a realistic as well as an illusionist Advaita. The philosophy of The Life Divine is such a realistic Advaita. The world is a manifestation of the Real and therefore is itself real. The reality is the infinite and eternal Divine, infinite and eternal Being, Consciousness-Force and Bliss. This Divine by his power has created the world or rather manifested it in his own infinite Being. But here in the material world or at its basis he has hidden himself in what seem to be his opposites, Non-Being, Inconscience and Insentience. This is what we nowadays call the Inconscient which seems to have created the material universe by its inconscient Energy, but this is only an appearance, for we find in the end that all the dispositions of the world can only have been arranged by the working of a supreme secret Intelligence. The Being which is hidden in what seems to be an inconscient void emerges in the world first in Matter, then in Life, then in Mind and finally as the Spirit. The apparently inconscient Energy which creates is in fact the Consciousness-Force of the Divine and its aspect of consciousness, secret in Matter, begins to emerge in Life, finds something more of itself in Mind and finds its true self in a spiritual consciousness and finally a supramental Consciousness through which we become aware of the Reality, enter into it and unite ourselves with it. This is what we call evolution which is an evolution of Consciousness and an evolution of the Spirit in things and only outwardly an evolution of species. Thus also, the delight of existence emerges from the original insentience, first in the contrary forms of pleasure and pain, and then has to find itself in the bliss of the Spirit or, as it is called in the Upanishads, the bliss of the Brahman. That is the central idea in the explanation of the universe put forward in The Life Divine.

In a realistic Advaita there is no need to regard the Saguna as a creation from the Nirguna or even secondary or subordinate to it: both are equal aspects of the one Reality, its position of silent status and rest and its position of action and dynamic force; a silence of eternal rest and peace supports an eternal action and movement. The one Reality, the Divine Being, is

bound by neither, since it is in no way limited; it possesses both. There is no incompatibility between the two, as there is none between the Many and the One, the sameness and the difference. They are all eternal aspects of the universe which could not exist if either of them were eliminated, and it is reasonable to suppose that they both came from the Reality which has manifested the universe and are both real. We can only get rid of the apparent contradiction – which is not really a contradiction but only a natural concomitance – by treating one or the other as an illusion. But it is hardly reasonable to suppose that the eternal Reality allows the existence of an eternal illusion with which it has nothing to do or that it supports and enforces on being a vain cosmic illusion and has no power for any other and real action. The force of the Divine is always there in silence as in action, inactive in silence, active in the manifestation. It is hardly possible to suppose that the Divine Reality has no power or force or that its only power is to create a universal falsehood, a cosmic lie – *mithyā*

What then is Nirvana? In orthodox Buddhism it does mean a disintegration, not of the soul – for that does not exist – but of a mental compound or stream of associations or *saṃskāras* which we mistake for ourself. In illusionist Vedanta it means, not a disintegration but a disappearance of a false and unreal individual self into the one real Self or Brahman; it is the idea and experience of individuality that so disappears and ceases, – we may say a false light that is extinguished (*nirvāṇa*) in the true Light. In spiritual experience it is sometimes the loss of all sense of individuality in a boundless cosmic consciousness; what was the individual remains only as a centre or a channel for the flow of a cosmic consciousness and a cosmic force and action. Or it may be the experience of the loss of individuality in a transcendent being and consciousness in which the sense of cosmos as well as the individual disappears. Or again, it may be in a transcendence which is aware of and supports the cosmic action. But what do we mean by the individual? What we usually call by that name is a natural ego, a device of Nature which holds together her action in the mind and body.** This ego has to be extinguished, otherwise there is no complete liberation possible; but the individual self or soul is not this ego. The individual soul is the spiritual being which is sometimes described as an eternal portion of the Divine, but can also be described as the Divine himself supporting his manifestation as the Many. This is the true spiritual individual which appears in its complete truth when we get rid of the ego and our false separative sense of individuality, realise our oneness with the transcendent and cosmic Divine and with all beings. It is this which makes possible the Divine Life. Nirvana is a step towards it; the disappearance of the false separative individuality is a necessary condition for our realising and living in our true eternal being, living divinely in the Divine. But this we can do in the world and in life.

24⁴⁸

THE LETTERS OF SRI AUROBINDO

25⁴⁹

⁴⁸ Handwritten note at top of page reads:

“Con’t para (5) Letters of Sri Aurobindo Booknotes Pg.5
Disk #69”

**Old i: Art and Inspiration ... NEW XIV: The Arts in
Culture & XXII: Inspiration and the Overself**

27
I

(27-1)⁵² The artist, the poet, the musician, who gives nothing beautiful to the world, may give everything else, may titivate, excoriate, narrate or adumbrate, may entertain or thrill, but he has failed in the mission of art.

(27-2) If so much modern painting, sculpture and poetry is incomprehensible to older minds, it may well be that there is nothing worth comprehending in it at all!

⁴⁹ Handwritten notes at tope of page read:

“DUPLICATE

1966 Lit Para Sheets”

note: pages 25 and 26 are originally an envelope in which the material which follows was probably contained. —TJS

⁵⁰ Blank Page except for postmark

⁵¹ This postmark appears on page 26. I believe it is dated May 5, 1966, but I’m not sure where it is from —TJS 2014

⁵² The paras on this page are unnumbered.

(27-3) A creative work leads to a feeling of sharing in the creation; it impregnates intellect or emotion or will.

(27-4) What man cannot receive directly through the intuition, he must receive in a different form through the physical senses. This is why music, for example, takes the place of a spiritual medium, as it can be heard by anyone, whereas intuition is unfelt by the insensitive.

(27-5) Those who are insensible to the mystical in its ordinary form may be responsive to its musical form.

(27-6) The strength shown in Greek male statues, the gracefulness shown in their female ones are matched by the equipoise shown in Greek philosophy.

(27-7) How many an author has written better than he knew!

(27-8) If through a book we can associate ourselves with a mastermind, it represents an opportunity we cannot afford to miss.

(27-9) It may be that those whose taste has been formed around the modern expressions by contemporary artists will have some difficulty in adapting it to the completely different masterpieces of Byzantine art, and in appreciating them. Those who are confronted by them for the first time may need a sufficient period of adjustment to the highly ornamental character of Byzantine painting.

(27-10) Despite its success as a current fad, artificially worked up in part though it be, much contemporary art in poetry, painting, music and sculpture is mere wearying or boring nonsense.

(27-11) What Buddha taught about the transient, the changing, the elusive character of all human joy is plainly true: he went further and declared it unsatisfactory because of these reasons. Still further and on the same grounds, he rejected the Beautiful. We are not to be ensnared by these perfections of form, that shapeliness of figure, that stateliness of architecture and those symmetries of pattern such as engaged the Greek artist. So what if they do pass, if they have had their day! Why can we not enjoy them to the utmost _____⁵³ there?

(27-12) It would be absurd to believe that the creative power of inspiration exhausts itself with the arts alone. It could appear in any and every kind of human activity, in the making of a home or a decision, for example.

⁵³ A blank space was left in the original because the original typist couldn't read PB's handwriting, or because PB himself left a blank in the para.

(27-13) The swift irruption of art on the mass scene brings it to the millions in every commercial form.

(27-14) Buildings that are like boxes, without any identity or individuality of their own, show the decay of imagination.

28⁵⁴

I

(28-1)⁵⁵ Correct taste is more easily and correctly formed if we deliberately seek for the best and continually ignore the worst, that is, if we discriminate under proper guidance.

(28-2) PB – Investigate the possibility that the hidden and real origin of abstract art – where it is genuine and drawn from the Unconscious as is usually claimed where it is not produced by the ordinary conscious methods to profit financially by a current fad – is in past evolutionary prehistoric periods, especially those which Subud meditations and LSD drug taking reveal?

(28-3) The artist's productions may be most inspired; he may glorify art and put it on a pinnacle as the noblest and loftiest human activity when at its best. But it is still a manifestation of man's ego, the finest and final one. He must transcend it in the end. Like yoga it prepares the way, is a step not a stop.

(28-4) With all their insanity and futility and ugliness, these modern movements in art possess a dynamic spirit, a youthful vigour, a readiness to discard the debris of the past, a forward-looking attitude which knows that the artist cannot remain creative if he stops rigidly with the copying of old petrified forms.

(28-5) So much that passes for art, in painting, sculpture, music – is not real art at all. It is either a racket, a pestilence, a poison, a swindle, a piece of charlatanry.

(28-6) It is one more sign of the unbalance of our times that architects over-concentrate on the straight line in their designs for the massive new buildings which appear in all major cities, and ignore its counterpoise the curve.

(28-7) Writing can remain a way of expressing the narrowest and basest parts of the ego, a stimulant to violence and coarseness and animality. Or, in the hands of a more evolved person, it can become a source of uplift to others and, like any other art, even a way of development for the writer.

⁵⁴ PB himself inserted "carbon" at the top of the page by hand.

⁵⁵ The paras on this page are unnumbered.

(28-8) It is understandable why the would-be saints tend to belittle culture; why they find stumbling blocks in the intellect and obstacles in art.

(28-9) Goethe knew, and said, that if he could find out why an artistic production interested and impressed, excited or fascinated him, he could advance another step forward towards saying the Truth.

(28-10) What readers get from an inspired book depends on their own capacity. It can communicate the truth or beauty, the sublimity or goodness found in the inspiration only to the extent that the reader can feel something of such a thing himself. The better it is written, the more effective is the communication done.

(28-11) Can his mind reflect the intuitions of truth without any admixture of his own opinion?

(28-12) Foolish persons who stand in galleries awe-struck before meaningless blobs of colour called contemporary pictures.

(28-13) Much modern art is ridiculously trivial and quite unspiritual, therefore uninspired.

(28-14) Like the benevolent dictatorship of a parent.

29

I

(29-1)⁵⁶ So much in writing, art, music has degenerated since my boyhood days: quality is lower, rubbish dribbles from self-conscious, pretentious writers, juvenile emotional composers, disorderly poets, boring playwrights and slap-dash talentless painters.

(29-2) The painter must not only have the talents of drawing and colouring, but also the bodily gift of seeing sharply and the mental gift of visualising, imaging.

(29-3) The singer gifted with a voice which can exalt and inspire men, the artist endowed with a talent which compels them to pause and behold, may each be used as a channel for Overself.

30⁵⁷

I

⁵⁶ The paras on this page are unnumbered.

⁵⁷ Blank Page

Old ii: Relax and Retreat ... NEW III: Relax and Retreat

31

II

(31-1)⁵⁸ The power to commune with the Overself is within us all but most do not trouble to exert themselves in the nurture and cultivation of it, hence in actuality they do not possess it.

(31-2) The boredom which might have visited rural life too often, the backwardness which might have irritated a modern man, the lack of cultured company have, to some extent, been countered by the radio bringing Beethoven and brainy speakers, by electricity enabling all kinds of gadgets to be used.

(31-3) The practices of meditation were common in the first centuries of Christian Egypt but largely dropped out of the Church for a considerable period thereafter. Then came its revival – first in Roman then in Eastern sections.

(31-4) Han Yu, more than a thousand years ago, a rigidly orthodox Confucian and noted writer, seriously suggested that Buddhist monks should be made “human beings once more!”

(31-5) As in a number of Zen temples and in the Maharshi’s⁵⁹ ashram in the period when I knew him, the ordinary layman follower may come in the morning, or evening, or both, to read, reflect and especially to meditate.

(31-6) The tendency to withdraw into oneself in disgust with the world, is useful so long as it does not end in a withdrawal to some other part of the ego. The result is likely to be that one shuts oneself up in sulkiness, if not morbidity – a sterile move.

(31-7) There is a calm which falls upon the harassed mind when it succeeds in shutting-off the world’s cares, the world’s noise, the world’s strains and pressures.

(31-8) If he is willing to segregate several minutes to this higher purpose, keeping them quite distinct from the rest of his activities, he may win some spiritual profit from them.

(31-9) It is this period of communion which enables him to keep steady and persistent the dedication of his purposes to the Overself and the consecration of his person by it.

⁵⁸ The paras on this page are unnumbered.

⁵⁹ “Maharishis” in the original

(31-10) If he can find, or make for himself, a secluded nook for this practice so much the better.

(31-11) The Stillness has so much to give mankind, yet mankind ignores or neglects it.

(31-12) The world clamours for attention and participation. God alone is silent, undemanding and unaggressive.

(31-13) We lament the lack of time. But if we critically scrutinised our actions, and even made some kind of schedule beforehand, we would find that some activities are unnecessary and others are useless. These not only rob us of time but they deprive us of some of the energy needed for meditation, rendering it harder or even impossible.

(31-14) Monastic life was wiped out by Russia's revolution with special violence.

(31-15) The mind moves unrestingly from thought to thought. How can it know peace, touch the Divine, exercise its deeper powers?

32

II

(32-1)⁶⁰ It is possible happily to enjoy the pleasures of life in the world, the sense of power which position gives in the world, the securities afforded by properties and possessions in the world, without clinging inordinately to their ownership in the mind. It is possible to hold them without uncontrolled attachment, to take or leave them as fate or inclination dictates. This is not to say that human feelings are to be expunged and human nature crushed: but only that they are to be freed from avoidable and unnecessary miseries by the practice of philosophy.

(32-2) It is important to his success or failure that this temporary isolation be protected against unwanted intrusion.

(32-3) What is needed by the West is an institution to supplement, co-operate with, churches, chapels, synagogues, where people could go into creative retreat, into stillness, for short periods.

(32-4) Who has not felt at some time in his life the need of getting away from everything familiar and everyone known for a while, however hard or impossible it may have been to satisfy?

⁶⁰ The paras on this page are unnumbered.

(32-5) In Hindu circles, as in Eastern Orthodox Christian ones, only the monk is looked up to as the perfect religious type.

(32-6) Should he hide himself away from the world?

(32-7) St. Symeon, Byzantine mystic, theologian and saint, who flourished near Constantinople 900 years ago, thus explains the foundation principle of meditation: "Sitting alone, withdrawn mentally from the world around, search into your innermost heart."

(32-8) Prayer is a help but some method that not only goes still deeper into the human heart but helps to silence the ego is also needed. This can be found through the practice of contemplation.

(32-9) There are times when a man needs to be alone, apart from others, to be wholly himself and think his own thoughts.

(32-10) The monks who drop the selfishness of worldly desire, adopt the selfishness of worldly desertion.

(32-11) It is a foolish notion to believe that by complicating life still further we come closer to happiness.

(32-12) In the stillness we find the perfect shelter from the unease brought by so many human presences, with all their radiating auras.

Old iii: Meditation ... NEW IV: Elementary Meditation & XXIII: Advanced Contemplation

33
III

(33-1)⁶¹ What can I do to improve my meditation? How can I get better control of the unwanted, and sometimes undesirable, thoughts which distract the sessions devoted to it?

(33-2) Voodoo musicians and African witchdoctors use the rhythmic beating of drums to induce either the trance state or emotional crescendos.

(33-3) In this state the world is presented to consciousness consequently none of the

⁶¹ The paras on this page are unnumbered.

problems associated with it are present. No ego is active with personal emotions and particular thoughts. No inner conflicts disturb the still centre of being.

(33-4) Those who know this method and can practise it successfully, know also the extraordinary change which comes over their whole being when the mind is stilled.

(33-5) When the mind is uneasy, the body uncomfortable, the feelings disturbed or excited, meditation practices cannot bear fruit.

(33-6) There are different kinds of resistances to his beginning meditation, and different kinds of obstructions to his continuing after he has begun.

(33-7) "Little by little, and by constant practice" as the Gita says, this act of sitting mentally still is learnt.

(33-8) The dilettantes soon tire of the hard work, unremitting patience and regular practice which meditation calls for.

(33-9) If he has succeeded in holding his mind somewhat still and empty, his next step is to find his centre.

(33-10) It is important to note that the two (or even more) hour meditation period which is the rule in most Zen monasteries is prescribed for their particular milieu and not for the world outside it. Thus a modern Zen master told his American disciple that a third to a half hour daily would suffice for meditation when back in his own country.

(33-11) "The action of the mind which is best" declared St. Gregory Palamas, Greek Orthodox Archbishop of Thessalonica 700 years ago "is that in which it is sometimes raised above itself and unites with God."

(33-12) If the innate capacity is lacking, as it usually is, then the aspirant requires some skill gathered from repeated experience, to shut out sounds which bring the mind back to physical situations.

(33-13) The ego is so taken up with itself that the time of meditation, which ought to be its gradual emptying-out, remains merely another field for its own activity.

(33-14) Only he is able to think his own thought, uninfluenced by others, who has trained himself to enter the Stillness, where alone he is able to transcend all thought.

(33-15) Any method which settles the mind upon a fixed subject, or concentrates attention upon a single object, may be used. But the result must be elevating and in accord with his ultimate purpose.

(33-16) Memory goes, the personal will leaves, and thinking simply ceases, as he enters this deep phase.

(33-17) It is when the mind is still that high spiritual forces, be they from God or guru, can reach a man.

34
III

(34-1)⁶² Standing aside from one's thoughts, as if one were no longer identified with them, observing their nature and results quite critically, becomes a means of self-betterment if repeated regularly.

(34-2) To make the mind acquainted with itself by watching its thought while in a state of detachment, is a main purpose of such spiritual exercises.

(34-3) A mere emptiness of mind is not enough, is not the objective of these practices. Some idiots possess this naturally but they do not possess the wisdom of the Overself, the understanding of Who and What they are.

(34-4) The gazing exercise can be suitably applied to the empty sky by day or night, to a star, a tree, etc.

(34-5) The session comes to an end; and then he must go about his worldly business. Between the two states of consciousness there is a deep abyss. How to construct a bridge across it, to make contemplation meaningful in action.

(34-6) There is a strange dislocation of consciousness's seat, pushing it out of his body slightly, up above his head and somewhat behind his torso.

(34-7) Meditation can be informally practised, as when walking or working, or formally, which means when sitting.

(34-8) Exclude all thoughts other than the one which is the point of concentration. If, as is likely, you weaken and permit them to intrude, renew the battle and drive them out by will. Return again and again if necessary to your focus.

(34-9) He feels that to advance a single step farther is to place himself at the mercy of unpredictable forces and unfamiliar powers.

⁶² The paras on this page are unnumbered.

(34-10) If thoughts cannot be kept out of the mind, patience can be kept in it.

(34-11) Heavy curtains help to protect the meditation-chamber from disturbing sounds.

(34-12) The instructions and directions which are of first importance must be separated from those which are merely second in importance or confusion will result.

(34-13) It is difficult, often impossible, to stop thinking by one's own effort. But by grace's help it gets done. With thinking no longer in the way, consciousness ceases to be broken up, nothing is there to impede movement into stillness.

(34-14) Quietness of breathing is also important, during most of the meditation period.

(34-15) At predetermined times the mind's attention must be made to move more slowly than it usually does. This effort of control may last a few minutes or an entire hour, as one wishes or progresses.

Old iv: The Path ... NEW I: Overview of the Quest

35

IV

(35-1)⁶³ We sometimes hear impatient words about the elderly and the old-aged with their censorious attitudes toward the young, their real or imaginary grievances, their fondness for talking about themselves or their past.

(35-2) It was formerly believed that one advantage – or disadvantage, depending on the point of view – of old age was the reduction or even disappearance of youthful passions, especially sexual passions. But this is true in some cases, not in others.

(35-3) The 'dark night' does more to detach a man from his ego, his interests and his desires than the rapturous joys and emotional ecstasies. The awful feeling of being separated from, or even lost forever to the higher power, works as a hidden training and secret discipline of all personal feelings.

(35-4) This is the secret way inside a man's heart and mind. Those who search for it search also for what, in the end, will also be his only way.

(35-5) Disciples will seldom accept their guru for what he is – human, and all that – but must endow him with perfections and powers that would be more fitting for angels at

⁶³ The paras on this page are unnumbered.

least, the gods at most.

(35-6) The pressure to make all people members of organisations, to herd them together and affix labels, is a kind of mania. Why should there not be room for untrammelled, independent minds, who prefer to remain free and uninfluenced, untied to any one group.

(35-7) Deterioration of the body moves in as middle age moves out. This may encourage the kind of pessimistic view which Buddha held in India, the author of Ecclesiastes in Israel, and Schopenhauer in Germany, and turn the mind toward spiritual consolation and spiritual seeking. If it does not, it may even have the very opposite effect.

(35-8) His intellect needs to understand what are the real facts of his situation, while his moral nature needs to be willing to fulfil the sacrificial and disciplinary demands made.

(35-9) It is when one reaches the end of a particular phase and has first to find, then to begin a new one that help from outside is useful. The same is true when one reaches a difficult place on the Quest. This help may be found in a book, a lecture, a guru, a chance meeting, or in some way.

(35-10) The man who announces his readiness to go upon this quest usually looks forward to its exhilarations and illuminations. Does he understand that he must be ready also for its vicissitudes, must expect its depressions and darknesses?

(35-11) Emerson: "People wish to be settled: only as far as they are unsettled is there any hope for them!"

(35-12) Think more deeply than the conventional mass of guru-followers dare to do and you will come to perceive that in the end there is only one Teacher for each man, his own Overself; that all other and outer gurus are merely channels which IT uses. "It is He who lives inside and speaks through the outer guru's voice," declares a Tibetan text. Why not go direct to the source?

(35-13) Those who take philosophic truth seriously take to the Quest.

36

IV

(36-1)⁶⁴ It is a mark of the quester that he is utterly sincere in seeking truth, and that he has some depth, enough not to be content with shallow presentations of it.

⁶⁴ The paras on this page are unnumbered.

(36-2) Every puzzle which fascinates innumerable persons and induces them to attempt its solution - be it mathematical and profound or ordinary and simple - is an echo on a lower level of the Supreme Enigma that is forever accompanying man and demanding an answer: What is he, whence and whither? The quester puts the problem into his conscious mind and keeps it there.

(36-3) The student who rushes to narrate to everyone his inner experiences, his occult visions or messages, his high glimpses, may fall into the pit of self-advertisement, vanity, conceit. He may then lose through the ego what he has gained through his efforts.

(36-4) The young naturally need good models - whether in social behaviour or in written penmanship - for sedulous imitation; they will profit by it. Those who are young in quest experience need them too but it will not be easy to find them. This is why the beginner who finds one, may attach himself as a disciple without loss. The time will come, however, when he must stop this copying, or else stop his own creative progress.

(36-5) It is unfortunate and regrettable but all history bears out the fact that among religious believers and mystical followers, organisation soon or late leads to exploitation. It is more likely to happen of course, after the prophet, teacher, guru, has passed away but in a number of recent cases it was by no means absent even during his lifetime.

(36-6) The coming of middle age brings a process which the coming of old age completes - youthful dreams are shown up as impracticable; naive illusions are relinquished as unrealistic.

(36-7) All observation and experience suggests that when the things of the spirit are brought into organised forms, such as societies and sects, the harm done to members counterbalances the good.

(36-8) Meditation is a practice which cannot be sundered from the quest, which is essential to it.

(36-9) He may deem himself ill-repaid for the long years of interest, time, study, sacrifice and effort given to this quest.

(36-10) The young must be taught to govern themselves, and how it is best done. They must be instructed in the higher laws and especially the law of consequences, so that they may avoid punishing themselves. They must learn the power of thought, the harm of anger, the benefit of surrendering the ego. They must regain the old-fashioned

virtues of good manners, tolerance and respect for the older generation.

(36-11) What can he gain by adhesion to a spiritual organisation? The beginner may gain a limited profit, the proficient may retrogress.

(36-12) I like Browning's⁶⁵ line: "Man is not man as yet."

(36-13) Zen Master Fan-Chi: "Everyone will be fully realised."

(36-14) Woman's capacity to love is supposed to exceed man's by far.

37

IV

(37-1)⁶⁶ I have never forgotten the statement made to me somewhere in India by a young man who had recently joined the Society of Friends and been sent out to what was then a famine-stricken tropic country on a Quaker relief project. "Why, when you admit to all these queries and doubts, and feel you are searching, do you then make yourself a member of a sect, admittedly one of the noblest and finest of all, but still a sect, with all the limitations which go with it?" I had asked him. He thought for a while and then broke the long silence to reply: "I quite understand and admit what you say about sectarian limitations. But I feel my youth and inexperience and weakness. At my age there is need for some kind of support from outside, some group to give me not merely fellowship but also a feeling of solidity and stability, something to lean upon, in short." What he said taught me a lesson and made me understand sympathetically that the love of independence to ensure a free search, and the desire for self-reliance do not belong to everybody, and that others, certainly most people, have other needs, prefer other ways, for which there is room in human life too.

(37-2) There is no single universal rule for all men: their outer circumstances and inner conditions, their historical background and geographical locality, their karmic destiny and evolutionary need, their differences in competence, renders it unwise, unfair and impracticable to write a single prescription for them.

(37-3) Anyone may launch himself on the sea of life without having learnt navigation, without having been equipped with the needed training, knowledge and qualifications which fit him to assume life's responsibilities – be they choosing a wife, rearing a family, following a profession or keeping his body healthy. A true education would prepare the young adequately from kindergarten to university in the art of how to live. The prevalence of so much avoidable distress, misery, ignorance and evil shows up this

⁶⁵ Referring to Robert Browning, specifically his poem Paracelsus.

⁶⁶ The paras on this page are unnumbered.

lack. But the teachers, the masters and the professors themselves need to be taught first.

(37-4) The organisation usually comes in the end to consider the furthering of its own interest as more important than that of the message which it was supposed to spread or preserve.

(37-5) For some persons the truth needs only to be stated by a knowing person or a printed book for it to be recognised; but others have to battle their way toward it over the years.

(37-6) To believe that this quest is only for religious people, or for impractical dreamers, and not for reasonable people or for men active in the world is to believe something that is untrue.

(37-7) To keep to this inner work steadfastly and persistently, to make of its exercises and practices a regular routine, is to make the undertaking easier for oneself in the end, as well as more successful in its results.

(37-8) Truth is open to all, if only all can receive it. But they cannot – until a preparation and purification open the way.

(37-9) The only group he is likely to be a member of is the human race!

38
IV

(38-1)⁶⁷ When he is unreceptive to new ideas unless they have first been authenticated by a certain particular teacher, cult or book, he is trapped in a closed system.

(38-2) We need instruction while yet young in the proper use of our bodies and the proper management of our minds and feelings. The place where this should be given is the school at elementary levels and the college at advanced one. But we get little of such instruction, err, and suffer.

(38-3) The ancient civilisations of China and India traditionally respected, even venerated the aged. Such was the high value assigned to experience. But modern civilisation has reversed this attitude, denounced its older generation, and lets its younger ones take the lead. The less experience, the more honours! The defiant ones, the angry ones, the rebellious ones, shape our thought, clothes, ideas, manners, morals.

(38-4) The constricting pressure which an institution exercises on a free mind must be

⁶⁷ The paras on this page are unnumbered.

accommodated if the man is to continue living in, or with, it. But if a point is reached where this pressure becomes intolerable, then the time for parting may have come, the time to change into an uncommitted and unengaged person.

(38-5) This is the higher purpose of life; to this men must in the end dedicate themselves: for this they must work, study and meditate.

(38-6) The world has enough fenced-in cults which keep their members within rigidly limited views, which are more concerned with their entanglements of money, power and prestige, than with the higher aims they are supposed to pursue.

(38-7) All men seek for truth either consciously and deliberately, or unconsciously and blindly, but they can seek only according to their capacity and ability, circumstances and preparedness.

(38-8) How can any institution, whether it be the family or the government or the church, be of better character than the character of the persons who comprise it, and certainly of those who rule or lead it?

(38-9) We must not only acknowledge the differences between men but respect them. Consequently we must accept the fact of variations in responsive capacity and not demand that all should think alike, believe alike, behave alike.

(38-10) The organised group too often falls into the hands of one man, or a few men, whose personal ambitions make them sooner or later oppressors and tyrants, imposing their will, ideas, demands upon the others.

(38-11) Let him look to the condition of his consciousness: Is it steady or fluctuating? Is it permeated with egoism to the point of being shrivelled-up? Is it widely impersonal? These and several other signs may give the measure of his progress.

(38-12) He is not likely to take most institutions at their own appraisal.

(38-13) In what way can the seeker's enquiring mind protect itself from errors?

39
IV

(39-1)⁶⁸ The dogmatic established church viewpoint does not permit any variant of its own doctrine to arise within its enclosure; does not acknowledge, and allow for, the differing capacities of reception.

⁶⁸ The paras on this page are unnumbered.

(39-2) If he comes to the quest with his whole being, turning every side of it to the quest's light and discipline, he may confidently expect the full insight, the full transformation and not a partial, incomplete result.

(39-3) To concentrate attention and devotion upon the guru with fanatic extremism, is to desert correct balance, to stray from the middle way.

(39-4) Youth, with its vigour gets needed action; with its hope formulates needed changes.

(39-5) What should be done to travel this path, and what should be avoided to remove its obstructions.

(39-6) Too often organised institutions have become hindrances to the spread of that very truth they were supposed to foster.

(39-7) The Indian sage Valmiki⁶⁹, like the Chinese sage Confucius, praised the values of old age.

(39-8) How often does man pass by the truth, leaving it unrecognised, ignored or rejected.

(39-9) The feeling of complete abandonment which comes during "the dark night" brings an acute depression.

(39-10) The disciples who turn themselves into copies of their guru do well for themselves up to a certain point. But after that their mimesis actually retards their growth.

(39-11) If he joins a monastic order he will usually have to take a vow to practise certain restraints and renunciations. To a lesser degree this also occurs with joining certain groups and circles in the world outside such orders. The value of the vow is that it sets up a standard to be followed, a course to be travelled and a goal to be reached. He may fall from the standard, deviate from the course and fail to approach the goal, but their existence may help him come closer to the object of the vow than he might otherwise have come. On the other hand, the layman who is not interested in vows but simply resolves to improve himself lacks their stimulus. There is nothing but the inner force of his own ideal to keep him from abandoning the self-imposed rigours of his discipline. He depends on the power which he will have to summon up from somewhere within

⁶⁹ The original reads "Vasistha" but that is the text written by the sage Valmiki, so I changed it.
—TJS

himself. The weakness of binding himself to the new regime, which he himself has imposed, is that it can easily be shirked at any time, that if he yields to the inclination to do so, the restraints upon it will be weaker and fewer.

(39-12) The enthusiastic devotion to a guru has its value and renders the disciple good service at certain stages. But they are stages: the goal of life does not end in a person, however noble he be.

40⁷⁰
IV

Old v: What is Philosophy ... NEW XX: What is Philosophy?

41
V

(41-1)⁷¹ He who studies the tenets communicated by the knowers of truth, studies philosophy – “that venerable name,” in Coleridge’s words. He who tries to conform his character and behaviour, his thoughts and reactions, to its teaching is a philosopher.

(41-2) Here in philosophy he will find thought become mature, mysticism become lucid and sane, everything in his life put into balance and proportion. Here all that is bizarre and eccentric, unrealistic and exaggerated has no footing.

(41-3) When men cannot push beyond half-truths, they may easily fall into the errors of fanaticism and imbalance.

(41-4) Be on your guard against a crippling one-sidedness. It brings exaggeration, distortion, fanaticism, confusion. Seek equilibrium in growth, development, practice, if you would have the equilibrium which is indispensable to the discovery of truth.

(41-5) Our schools teach many subjects to the young to prepare them for life, to train them for a career, to show them how to discipline the mind, or merely to instil information. But none teaches them the much-needed subject of balance.... Where there is too much of one thing, or too little of it, there is unbalance. Where certain attributes preponderate and others are deficient, there is the same result. It is not only extremists and fanatics who suffer from this trouble, but millions who pass as ordinary citizens, for it takes widely different forms.

(41-6) The very nature of man as a psycho-physical organism with spiritual possibilities

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⁷¹ The paras on this page are unnumbered.

and animal actualities, compels him to attend at some time or other to all his sides. No amount of denying or ignoring any one of them will succeed in the end, any more than exaggerating or over-emphasising some other side will escape Nature's eventual attempt to correct the unbalance and regain equilibrium.

(41-7) So to magnify a fact as to render it out of proper proportion to other facts, is to make it a cause of imbalance in the mind and error in judgment.

(41-8) We must learn to avoid the foolishness of extremes and the dangers of fanaticism by being securely pivoted to the fulcrum of our being. In such mental and emotional equilibrium lies our true safety.

(41-9) Whether in architecture or life, the Greeks tried to keep a sense of proportion.

(41-10) Without balance in the recipient there can be no proper transmission or perfect reception of truth. The different parts of his being will absorb and, in consequence, express it unequally. But, granted that the development of these parts is sufficient, where equilibrium is accomplished, there will be the best conditions for the experience of enlightenment to be really what it should be.

(41-11) When any of the mind's functions asserts itself unduly, the other functions are thrown out of equilibrium.

(41-12) All influences, contacts, persons or places which destroy our balance are to be shunned as undesirable, if not evil.

42⁷²
V

Old vi: Emotions and Ethics ... NEW VI: Emotions and Ethics

43
VI

(43-1)⁷³ The young masses need to be taught the significance of courtesy, the importance of good manners, the value of refinement, long before they are taught the name of Chile's capital city.

(43-2) It is not useful to discuss here the ethics of suicide, and the morality of mercy-killing. Those who have borne the crushing misery of chronic disease, or suffered the

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⁷³ The paras on this page are unnumbered.

worst mutilations of war are at least entitled to their point of view. But what shall we say of the priest who urged Hindu widows to immolate themselves on fire and thus attain divinity and spiritual reward or, more recently, of Vietnamese monks who did the same for what was mostly a political cause?

(43-3) Etiquette That so many younger rebellious persons in our time have discarded these values as false, these rules as hypocritical, is obvious. They prefer rudeness to manners, crudeness to the exchange of merely formal and superficial courtesies.

(43-4) As all worries and fears are aroused in the ego, they are lulled when, by meditation, the ego-thought is lulled and the meditator feels peace. But when the ego is rooted out by the entire philosophic effort, they are then rooted out too.

(43-5) We may profess goodwill to all men, sincerely believe in it and repeatedly speak of its importance. But in practice we may find it quite difficult to profess goodwill to certain particular men.

(43-6) There is some evil connected with every good, as there is some good connected with every evil.

(43-7) (Greek) It is better to adopt the principle of adoption, that is, for the king to recommend his successor and for the Senate to give the final decision for or against his recommendation.

(43-8) I cannot recall any statement by mystics, ancient, medieval or modern, that one aspect of spiritual union is an exquisite refinement. Everyone writes of its moral fruits, its religious insights, even its creativity, artistic or intellectual, but who seems to note this aesthetic effect on manners, feelings, speech and living?

(43-9) The impulses of Nature push men helplessly onward until necessity, suffering, reason or aspiration forces them to make a stand and practise control.

(43-10) He who looks forward to the future with sick anxiety or gay prevision, according to time and circumstance, would be all the better to go through that future with acquired calm.

(43-11) Violently emotional exaggerated statements, reckless hysterical extremist screams should warn us that they come out of some sort of imbalance, that it is a time for caution, prudence, reserve.

(43-12) What is to be done where a weakness becomes abnormally strong, overpowering the will and forcing him to do what his better nature rejects? The cure in the end must be based on his willingness to regard it as something not really part of

himself, something alien and parasitic. If there is to be any way out toward freedom from it, he must stop identifying himself with the weakness.

(43-13) We forget our wrong actions, excuse our follies.

(43-14) Can he alter his basic nature?

44

VI

(44-1) In the world we find no perfect situation, look where we can. In the individual person we find no perfect character, behaviour, speech. There is no environment, no human arrangement, which is without any fault.

(44-2) He cultivates detachment for this is a means to becoming a truly free man.

(44-3) Mencius thought that the poor could not be gentlemen, in the full sense, because their condition prevented them from carrying out all the duties of such a standard. Mencius admitted that poverty had something to teach us and could assist the formation of character up to a point, but he believed the middle state between being poor and being wealthy was the best.

(44-4) Whether it be brutal criticism or bountiful praise, he learns to take other men's appraisals of him with equanimity.

(44-5) Emerson: "Not satisfied myself, how can I expect to satisfy others?"

(44-6) Most human duties may be classified as obligatory, unnecessary, harmful or fated, that is, unavoidable.

(44-7) Does detachment mean that he becomes cold and heartless? It does not.

(44-8) What really moves a man to act is his feeling; this is why the passions, which are strong feelings, need more deliberate effort of the will to bring them under restraint.

(44-9) There are two kinds of inner peace. The first is somewhat like that which the ancient Stoics cultivated: the result of controlling emotions and disciplining thoughts; the result of will and effort applied to the mastery of self. It brings with it, at best, a contentment with what one has, at least, a resignation to one's lot. The second is much deeper, for it comes out of the Overself. It is the blessed result of Divine Grace liberating one from the craving for existence.

(44-10) He will undergo periods of purification, when the animal appetites such as lust

and gluttony, and the animal passions such as wrath and hate, will have to be brought under better control. The discipline involved is both a kind of penance for past sins and a preparation for future enlightenment. It may be that these baser attributes need to be pushed up out of latency nearer the surface, in order to deal with them more effectually. If so, this will come about through some sort of crisis. He need not be distressed for it will be ultimately beneficent.

(44-11) Shrill denunciations are not his way of putting forward an opposite view, excited hysterical criticism does not enter his speech.

(44-12) It is of the highest importance for older people to look after the manners of younger ones. But the bad behaviour of many parents towards one another as well as in society is reflected in that of their children.

(44-13) There is a much larger chance of regaining self-control if the impulse or emotion is crushed the moment after it springs up.

(44-14) Where reason serves vanity, and imagination moves only at the ego's behest, a man makes his own pitfalls.

45

VI

(45-1)⁷⁴ Etiquette The refinement, manners and culture which Confucius wished to see in a properly developed human being may be different in outer form from those which a modern sage would wish to see, but they are not different in spirit. Those who now denounce them angrily as class-marks must therefore praise grossness, crudeness, coarseness and ignorance as ideal. And others who can see no spiritual usefulness being served by fine quality simply do not look far enough. The practice of true philosophy should reduce, or remove, coarseness of character, behaviour and speech.

(45-2) He is friendly without becoming familiar, brief in speech without becoming discourteous.

(45-3) A rebuke can be uttered, a criticism can be made, in a dignified, courteous and constructive way. Yet how rare to see both sides to a dispute, both parties to a break from orthodoxy to heterodoxy, behave in a gentlemanly manner, even in a civilised manner, without recrimination, without personal abuse!

(45-4) Why should we not give great genius a little extra latitude to break society's rules? In a few years he will be gone forever but the power of his work will continue to impregnate so many minds for so long a time. And it is this that really matters to us,

⁷⁴ The paras on this page are unnumbered.

not his brief peccadilloes or shortcomings.

(45-5) With time and growth there comes the refinement which Confucius praised and whose worth societies and civilisations have acknowledged in their caste and class systems, however used for selfish advantage. It remains as a measure of the improvement which surroundings and instruction, ambition and standards, can effect on man as he rises from crude savagery to polished civilisation.

(45-6) Once having understood the past's lessons and repaired it where possible, let him not bemoan its blunders or fall into disheartenments. Let dead history bury its own dead. His peace of mind is worth more than useless negative moods, and worth keeping.

(45-7) Where is the human being who is not an emotional as well as a physical creature? If the body's acts are to be brought under some measure of control, the ego's feelings must be dealt with likewise.

(45-8) The ego explorations of psycho-analysis are not directly concerned with securing a liberation from the ego itself, but only with improving, adjusting or altering its mental attitudes and emotional stresses.

(45-9) That which moves other things, but which itself always remains unmoved, is the Mind.

(45-10) He becomes more conscious of the meaning of what he says or writes and consequently more careful of the effects of his speech and writing.

(45-11) He begins to feel that an inner strength and untroubled calm is coming to him from the practice, the study and the reflection.

(45-12) Courteous manners have a meaning deeper than the surface one.

46
VI

(46-1)⁷⁵ Regrets over what ought not to have been done, or what ought to have been better done, or the fact that nothing can now be done over both, are useful if they give lessons for the future and humiliation for the ego. But they are harmful if overdone.

(46-2) In the end a man's own conscience is his judge. But in practice we find that it is seldom impartial, often clouded, beset on all sides by his desires, fears, prejudices and

⁷⁵ The paras on this page are unnumbered.

egoism.

(46-3) He learns to be emotionally detached from the personal remarks of other people concerning himself, whether the tone is abusive or effusive. But this does not prevent him examining such remarks, more particularly the critical ones, to find how much truth they contain.

(46-4) Kant saw how the mind forms its ideas under definitely limited conditions, and how it cannot help but do so, and that these ideas are merely the best it can produce under those conditions, not at all the truest ones.

(46-5) There are those who dismiss the subject as unconnected with philosophy, unessential to spiritual self-cultivation. But a sage like Confucius thought otherwise and constantly exhorted his disciples to cultivated courteous manners and gentlemanly behaviour.

(46-6) Where is the earthly thing, attraction, creature, which can compete successfully with THAT in the deepest heart of men? Without knowing what he is really doing, he is seeking THAT amid all other activities, loving THAT behind all other loves.

(46-7) If each attack of adverse force, each temptation that tries a weakness, is instantly met with the Short Path attitude, he will have an infinitely better chance of overcoming it. The secret is to remember the Overself, to turn the battle over to IT. Then, what he is unable to conquer by himself, will be easily conquered for him by the higher power.

(46-8) The ability to throw negative thoughts out of the mind is so valuable that a deliberate and daily effort to cultivate it is well worth while. This is as true of one's self-originated thoughts as of those picked up from outside, whether unwittingly from other persons, or absorbed through susceptibility from environments.

(46-9) The true gentleman does not cast aside fine manners however much one may become intimate, familiar, or friendly with him.

(46-10) He does not consider that he has any right to make censorious moral judgments on other persons.

(46-11) However much we may deplore the fact, Nature opposes the man who would free himself of his past, his tendencies, his animality. He must deliberately cultivate and use his will.

(46-12) It is not necessary to be surly and irritable in order to be an individualist. One can still be affable, genial, civil and courteous, even radiant with goodwill. It is all a matter of inner equilibrium.

(46-13) He needs to be as fastidious when allowing thoughts to enter his mind as when allowing strangers to enter his home.

(46-14) It is the difference between resented suffering and accepted suffering.

47

VI

(47-1)⁷⁶ The discipline of emotion comes hard to most men. They do not really know how much weakness there is in them until they try it seriously.

(47-2) He laments that he is not what he should be, that he is far from the ability to realise his ideals.

(47-3) Something of this inner calm may be reflected in the eyes, as they look out on the world from their high-placed apertures.

(47-4) When the truth about oneself is unwelcome one may listen to it despairingly or refute it egotistically.

(47-5) Man is dragged along by his emotions and his thoughts: then calls himself a free being.

(47-6) We must begin self-reform by facing ourselves in our little human existences. Are we failing in our relationship with others. Are there negative elements in our lives, making us melancholy, dissatisfied, unhappy?

(47-7) In most human relations, egoism in one person is replied by egoism in the other.

(47-8) There is a vital difference between being merely callous in the presence of other people's suffering and being philosophically calm.

(47-9) Those who can only find their fun by the wanton killing of harmless animals, show no mercy and, at the appropriate time, will receive none.

(47-10) The withdrawals from activity and worldliness which he refuses to make willingly at the behest of reason, may have to be made unwillingly with the coming of age.

(47-11) But sometimes when we do not like a place or a person, what is wrong is in

⁷⁶ The paras on this page are unnumbered.

ourselves, not in the place or person.

(47-12) Few of us are eager to scrutinize our own conduct, to examine thought, speech, motive, adequacy and deficiency, yet this is a valuable exercise to perform before retiring for the night.

(47-13) The criminal is a victim, too, but of his own criminality; he is injured by his own crime.

48⁷⁷

VI

Old vii: The Intellect ... NEW VII: The Intellect

49

VII

(49-1)⁷⁸ Both for good and ill, science has imposed a dictatorship over the other ways of knowing, and the other ways and results of experience. It has admittedly earned its position by the immense value and utility of its practical application, so visible all around us, as well as respect by the quality of its thinking – usually exact, factual and accurate.

(49-2) If any chapter in any book has some nutriment for you, accept it, but if not then skip that chapter. No one is bound to accept every thought of any writer, nor is likely to, human mentalities being as widely variant as they are. No author is fit and qualified to meet and remove all the doubts of the same human being, let alone of all human beings.

(49-3) Books can be used to stimulate thought or to escape from it: it depends on the reader whether they are used to help fulfil the duty of thinking for oneself or to evade it.

(49-4) Correct thinking may annihilate superstitions and uncover deceptions, but unbalanced thinking may create new ones.

(49-5) The intellect cannot go beyond its own limitations, as Kant showed, but it can make the effort to see clearly what those limitations are. In this way, it can avoid traps and pitfalls, and then voluntarily make that surrender of itself, and especially of its thought-forming activity, which can open the way to enlightenment.

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⁷⁸ The paras on this page are unnumbered.

(49-6) Even those who take philosophy as a merely academic pursuit are not wasting their time. Learning what the world's thinkers have put forward as their best wisdom or sharpest observation has its place and value in the intellectual life, just as comparative study of religions has its value in the religious life.

(49-7) When I meet with certain persons or certain books, I am often reminded of a certain sentence in Roman Seneca's writings: "There are many who might have attained to wisdom, had they not fancied they had attained it already."

(49-8) After the intellect has finished analysing this experience, judging it by science's light and with science's critical rigour, the subtle essence is lost.

(49-9) The need for advancing men is to go beyond the intellect; to draw from the intuition or to find inspiration.

(49-10) The world's need today is not really for more new ideas, which means more thoughts, but for more wisdom, which means how to manage the thoughts which humanity has already accumulated through the centuries.

(49-11) The scientific attitude should have been used to keep superstition and imposture, fanaticism and fancy, confusion and untruth out of religion. Instead it was used to destroy religion in many minds.

(49-12) Only when the intellect, after admiring its own massive historical achievement, will turn upon itself and perceive how puny is that by contrast with the still-awaited answer to the question, What Am I? – only then will the possibility of higher forces coming to its aid be realisable.

(49-13) We are moving toward the day when science, instead of negating religious faith, will actually nourish it.

50
VII

(50-1)⁷⁹ Swedenborg: "Without the utmost devotion to the Supreme Being, the Origin of all things, no one can be a complete and truly erudite philosopher. Veneration for the Infinite Being can never be separated from philosophy."⁸⁰

(50-2) Thinking achieves its highest object when it leads to its own rest and the mind transcends all thoughts.

⁷⁹ The paras on this page are unnumbered.

⁸⁰ Original source: Harris, William Torrey. The Journal of Speculative Philosophy, 1867. Vol. 1. 1867. Reprint. London: Forgotten Books, 2013. 291-2. Print.

(50-3) Scepticism must in the end, after it has criticised and destroyed everything else, turn its criticism on itself and doubt itself.

(50-4) Our universities turn out educated men in ever-increasing numbers, but they do not necessarily turn out wise men.

(50-5) Why, with a few noted exceptions, do not the best minds, the sharpest intelligences, take to the truths of mysticism? Why do they gravitate instead to business, science, industry and worldly professions?

(50-6) Too many simple persons, whether Orientals or Occidentals, do not seem able to distinguish between mere mythology and authentic history. The development of a discriminating faculty is as necessary in religion as in the market place.

(50-7) Colin Wilson: "All thought chases its own tail" seems to be Lao Tzu's⁸¹ meaning in his line "going far means returning."

(50-8) P. Wienpahl:⁸² "Reading is all right so long as it does not interfere with zazen though it usually does."

(50-9) He who denies the reality of the Overself, deceives himself.

(50-10) Any fool can say "I know," that is, have an opinion.

Old viii: The Body ... NEW V: The Body

51
VIII

(51-1)⁸³ Emmet Fox, who wrote some widely circulated little books on positive thinking, was able to fill Carnegie Hall, New York, to capacity whenever he lectured there. He was a tall good-looking man and attracted the admiration of women, but he kept himself aloof and reserved from them. One of his followers, a spinster lady in her late thirties, became infatuated with him to the point of complete helplessness. Finally she had to confess her love to him. He stood up behind her, placed one hand on her hand and the other on the back of her neck. She felt Kundalini force being drawn up the spine to head. Thereafter she was free of this sexual obsession.

⁸¹ "Lao-tse's" in the original

⁸² Paul Wienpahl, author of *The Radical Spinoza*.

⁸³ The paras on this page are unnumbered.

(51-2) Unless we learn something about how to live, or rather, how not to live, we have suffered in vain. And this applies either to physical or mental life. I like the words used by R.W. Emerson in conversation with a friend: "Why be sick, if to no purpose?"

(51-3) A direct line of affiliation can be traced from sexual perversion to the dietetic perversion which expresses itself in eating baby mice, both long practised in China. The evil in men's diet reflects itself in the evil in their behaviour, relationships, thoughts.

(51-4) I may know that the world is maya, illusion, that the body's desires are for things that pass away within a few minutes, or a few years, but food can be very enjoyable and the body's life very comfortable, despite this knowledge!

(51-5) There is a stage in the disease of "progressive" syphilis (which is much harder to cure than ordinary syphilis) where the sufferer may have illusions of personal grandeur and be swept off his feet by ego-centric ideas arising from his mental deterioration and unbalance. Hitler was one such sufferer. There is another curious fact about syphilis and that is the course followed by the disease in the body itself. This course is identical with the path followed by the Serpent-Power (Kundalini) as it moves upward from the sex centre to the brain centre, where it gives the true enlightenment. The imaginary enlightenment of a syphilitic dictator is thus its counterfeit satanic copy.

(51-6) Claude Bragdon - on sex - "Lured by the prospect of felicity into abysses of suffering; the couch of their conjunction darkened by shames, boredom, corruptions of the blood, they yet can resist one another as little as moths can resist the flame; love draws them to itself, consumes them."

(51-7) He can take the stand that a man cannot help being what he is, the victim of blind animal urges that are inborn as well as acquired, that belong to Nature not to the individual alone.

(51-8) It is comfortable for the sensitive type to live alone. The continual and perpetual presence of a second person must create unease at times.

(51-9) When this care of the body, or play with it, through hatha yoga, sports, health culture or cosmetics, gives it more attention than is its proper due, what was originally good becomes bad.

(51-10) As my friend Claude Bragdon used to say, "the sexual batteries are overloaded."

(52-1)⁸⁴ The early Church Father Tertullian made a good point (albeit for a bad superstition) that if men had been made in the image of God it was so in his whole person, and it was a ridiculous stand to denounce the flesh as worthless. Irenaeus and Justin took the same stand (for the same bad reason) and even proclaimed that spirit was interblent with flesh.

(52-2) We are so tied to the foolish idea which regards body and mind as two wholly separate and different entities, that all-too-many regard it as undignified to practise physical exercises in order to influence the mind. The discoveries of mentalism show how foolish is such an attitude, how much we miss in outer helps to inner attainment.

(52-3) The kind of asceticism which considers the body as an enemy to the spirit, is a kind of sickness. The two dwell together, belong to one another, and in a proper life co-operate together. To consider them otherwise, to torment the body in order to gain the spirit's favour, is to twist the very meaning of its existence.

(52-4) The idea of sexual pleasure is derived from, based upon, the pair of opposites – masculine, feminine. Like all other ideas it has to be transcended; like all other pairs of opposites, it has to be brought into equilibrium.

(52-5) The asceticism has its place, just like the Long Path, of which it is a component, but when it is stressed to an unnatural point, fanaticism is born, equilibrium is lost and tolerance is destroyed.

(52-6) The Tantric practice has been distorted in Northern India where, under the name of Sahaja, a childless woman may approach a sadhu and request him to father her child. If he does so without seeking to experience pleasure, he is considered to be as moral and righteous and sinless as before!

(52-7) Tea. When one remembers the profoundly social meaning formerly given to the tea-drinking ritual by China, and the spiritual meaning given to it by Japan, its importance over and above being an article of diet is hinted at.

(52-8) It is philosophically advantageous to preserve a comprehensive equanimity amid the vicissitudes of human fortune and to practise a reasonable indifference toward outer conditions. But it is inhuman and unreasonable to demand, as the price of spiritual peace, that we shall renounce all earthly satisfactions to the point of neither enjoying delicious food nor feeling aversion to repulsive food – a rule set down in the chief manual of yoga.

(52-9) Philosophical view of the matter must discount the value of certain injunctions

⁸⁴ The paras on this page are unnumbered.

given by eminent spiritual authorities, such as several traditional Hindu manuals which say 'the yogi is to eat what is put before him' (as a sign of his freedom from aversion and attraction), or such as Keizan, the Japanese Zen master's rule: "Food exists only to support life: do not cling to the taste of it."

(52-10) The body can be quickly energised by repeatedly and noisily forcing the breath out.

(52-11) So many couples are yoked but not united, married but not mated.

53
VIII

(53-1)⁸⁵ Hatha yoga operates on the physical body only, and only so far as it is an instrument useful for inner development. Its ultimate use is to awaken the Serpent Power.

(53-2) Even breathing measured as the regular tick-tock of a clock adds to inner calm.

(53-3) The modern taste seeks milder forms of ascetic self-discipline and rejects severer ones as unbearable.

(53-4) Just as Nature has hidden the mind's deepest secret and sublimates satisfaction in the centre of its being, so has she hidden woman's most mysterious function and joyous activity in the centre of her body.

(53-5) An ascetic attitude which denies the senses their pleasure may be useful in a limited way and at certain periods. But if it falls into the imbalance of a one-sided fanaticism, its profit is cancelled by its loss.

(53-6) Do what he will he cannot estrange himself from the body, except for brief abnormal periods when total fasting is practised or total trance is achieved.

(53-7) Tea. If the British had not taken so large a part in the tea trade, young eighteenth-century America might not have taken herself out of the British Empire! Consider too that England drinks more tea per head than any other country.

(53-8) This thing, this fleshly body, which ascetics have hated and saints have despised, is a holy temple. The divine Life-force is always latently present in it and, aroused, can sweep through every cell making it sacred.

⁸⁵ The paras on this page are unnumbered.

(53-9) Claude Bragdon speaking of lovers, refers to “the convulsive eagerness of their embraces.”

(53-10) Self-discipline must be balanced or it will become needless torment, fanatic self-injury.

(53-11) If some commend him, others condemn him.

(53-12) Asceticism is useful as a training of the self but harmful as a shrivelling of it.

54⁸⁶

VIII

Old ix: The Negatives ... NEW XI: The Negatives

55

IX

(55-1)⁸⁷ It is a sin to deny the Power from which his body draws its life, his mind its consciousness and intelligence, his soul its very existence. It invites punishment, which comes through being left alone with the opposing force in Nature, with its physical, intellectual, psychical and subtle forces unguided by the intuitive and unprotected by the divine. Man then tries to live by his own light alone. He fails, stumbles, falls and suffers. This is his position today and this is why there is a world-crisis of stupendous proportions. This is his hour of real need. This is when he must turn, as in Biblical history, to his true Deliverer. Every other way out except this one is closing for him.

(55-2) Is it a mistake to warn individual persons and collective nations against a certain mental-emotional attitude and resultant actions; and to predict dire calamity if they are continued?

(55-3) The disciples of Materialism say that the execution of 3000 odd persons in the French Revolution was a small price to pay for the beneficial reforms which it brought about. But only the philosopher can trace the line of connection between its hatred and violence and the Napoleonic wars which soon followed it, taking a half million French lives and hundreds of thousands wounded, mutilated or crippled French bodies; these too must be added to the cost of hatred, the price of violence.

(55-4) Religion, with its rites, credos and ceremonies; metaphysics, with its speculations and subtlety; yoga, with its emotional apathy and physical rigidity, have come in for much discussion since the last war.

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⁸⁷ The paras on this page are unnumbered.

(55-5) In a world which has the conflict of opposites as part of its inherent nature, peace is an illusory goal. Nor in reality is there even such a thing as neutrality and non-alignment.

(55-6) Why does God allow the evil and suffering when the same result of spiritual advantage could be got in other ways? There are some questions to which there is no answer because God alone can answer them, and this is one. We can however find what human intuition, human mystical revelation, has to say about these things and accept such contributions at their own value.

(55-7) A prominent American pacifist stated that "someone somewhere must make a start to end war." This is true and laudable and certainly a needed reminder to mankind of its higher goal, but the problem involved in the current world crisis is not solved as simply as that. But just as in philosophic practice the ultimate view has to be coupled with the immediate one, so here with human nature in its present stage of evolvment, the recognition of basic difference between a just and an unjust war must be given.

(55-8) The malign powers of evil in the world, which have been so widely spread, so active and so violent in our own generation, are not to be ignored by dreaming optimism.

(55-9) In the presence of such widespread evil-doing, it may be hard to share the confidence of the Japanese master Rinzai who asserted "There is not a living being who cannot be liberated!"

(55-10) The evil forces have stirred up evil events and provocative crises, and striven to get the masses to react to them in an evil way.

56⁸⁸

IX

57

IX

(57-1)⁸⁹ "The Greek theory of monarchy started with man and made of him its God; the Oriental notion started with God and made the monarch in his image." —Quotation.⁹⁰

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⁸⁹ The paras on this page are unnumbered.

⁹⁰ by Shirley Jackson Case, *The Evolution of Early Christianity: A Genetic Study of First-Century Christianity in Relation to its Religious Environment*, page 205. —TJS

(57-2) The mistake which so many monarchs fell into and which led in the end to the virtual downfall of monarchy, was that they regarded their subjects as persons to be exploited rather than as persons to be served.

(57-3) There is nothing wrong or evil in the development of Power, the spread of Prosperity, or the fostering of Education. The wrong comes in when these things are not utilised with wisdom.

(57-4) The power of past habit, thought and belief shows itself in the unwillingness to change.

(57-5) Bhagavad Gita. IV:7. "Wherever there comes about a collapse of dharma and an uprising of adharma, then I emanate myself. For the protection of the good, and for the destruction of the evil-doers, for the purpose of re-establishing dharma, I become manifest in every age."

(57-6) Wide travels among all kinds have shown me more and more that the endless tale of wars and strifes between races, nations, classes, tribes and individual persons must be met on two levels if they are to be brought to any end. It is not to meet them on the level of their outward visible causes; that has to be done, of course: but it is even more important to get out of the seething cauldron of hates and wraths, resentments and egotisms and greeds, for here are the unseen causes of the visible ones. This calls for a leap: the recognition that one's real enemy is not so much the person outside as the person inside oneself.

(57-7) The principle of adoption seems less faulty than both the principles of monarchy and republicanism. It allows the existing ruler to choose his successor, provided the Senate confirms his choice. None of the three systems is perfect, but this seems to offer more than the other two.

(57-8) Where are the purified characters, the ennobled minds which have come out of the past two world wars? They exist, of course, but only as individuals. In the mass, more people were brutalised, more lost their faith in ideals and ethics than kept it. A third world war could produce only a still greater and graver deterioration. This is why the cause of peace must be helped - now, while there is yet time.

(57-9) Do not gaze overlong upon that person, that thing, that place, whose history is evil, whose nature is evil, lest you imperil yourself, or your health, or your fortunes. Better, avoid them if you can.

(57-10) The collisions within a family, an institution, a nation, all humanity, show how hard it is to make this dream of universal brotherhood a fact.

(57-11) If the shattering roars and the lightning flashes of nuclear bombs announce the war's outbreak, it will not be because mankind has not been warned.

(57-12) Some observation of what goes on behind the scenes made me sceptical of political sincerity.

58

IX

(58-1)⁹¹ If there is infinite love in or behind the world, there is also infinite suffering in the world, as Buddha noted.

(58-2) Wm. J. Macmillan⁹² (I) Evil exists by necessity in the duality of life – love and hate, ego and non-ego.

(58-3) If men will not use their intelligence to examine and sift their traditional inheritances, social and individual, they must expect to suffer the sins of the fathers being visited upon the children.

(58-4) He allows other creatures the right to live, even to the point of eating no meat, but if they encroach on his own right, and endanger his own survival, then he will defend himself as resolutely as other men. Nor is the situation changed if these creatures are not animal but human. Pacifism is useful as a protest against human proneness to resort to violence, so he sympathises with it in specific cases. But its usefulness ends when unscrupulous aggression seeks to triumph and needs the education of defeat.

(58-5) Never before was there so much of the reality exposed to the world. Yet behind appearances, ideas and institutions, never before was there so much falsehood, too.

(58-6) Human existence puts pressures and demands upon the human beings of contemporary civilisation which unquestionably make the realisation of the Overself more difficult. Take only the demand that they shall submit to intolerable maddening persistent noise!

(58-7) If the younger generation seems unmanageable, violent, destructive, it is largely because they were born within the orb of the World War, which stamped its own destructiveness upon their tendencies and impulses. Thus “the sins of the fathers are visited upon the children,” for that war was made within the lifetime of their parents.

⁹¹ The paras on this page are unnumbered.

⁹² William J Macmillan “the reluctant healer” was a personal friend of PB himself – TJS

(58-8) I remember the Mother telling me at Pondicherry that Sri Aurobindo thought that money, with the power that belongs to it, was mainly in the wrong hands, and that this was also true of political power.

(58-9) The correct way to get out of the world's economic problems is co-operation.

(58-10) "Who should lead the leaders?" asked Emerson.

(58-11) We live in a society driven by compulsive restlessness, knowing no peace either on its surface or at its centre.

(58-12) We may be moving toward the most terrible catastrophe in world history.

Old x: Mentalism ... NEW XXI: Mentalism

59

X

(59-1)⁹³ His first and obvious explanation is that the real world is outside him, independent of him, that this is proven by his capacity to touch and feel things; that his ideas of it are all photographic copies reflected upon his mind.

(59-2) Consider the changes in a man's state of consciousness brought about by a physical thing like the drug Lysergic Acid Disulfonate, by physical acts like applying electric shock waves or performing brain surgery. Does this show that all mental phenomena, awareness itself, depend entirely on flesh, tissue, bone and blood, as the materialists say?

(59-3) We experience the world through the activity of a Power greater than ourselves, yet in another sense, it is still our own activity.

(59-4) The objection is made that even if the world does not exist for us when we do not think it, it still exists for all the other human beings. The answer to this is How does it exist for each of this multitude of persons? It is in his thought just as much as in ours.

(59-5) The notion that one's own brain originates all one's own thoughts is shallow and erroneous. It may originate most of them in most cases, but only some of them in other cases. For possible sources are one's physical surroundings, other people's thought directed to one, one's mental-emotional surroundings, other people's mental-emotional atmosphere (aura) as it impinges on our own when brought close together.

(59-6) When there is no weight, no volume, no inertia to be found in the ultimate atom,

⁹³ The paras on this page are unnumbered.

where is “matter”? It is no longer existent. But was it ever existent? Obviously deep and sustained reflection upon this question could only turn a physicist into a metaphysicist – and that is not permissible! Science must remain science: having started with the dogma that it has nothing to do with metaphysics or religion it ends with it!

(59-7) A thousand years ago Johannes Scotus Eriugena,⁹⁴ Irish scholar, theologian, metaphysician, taught that man is an idea in the Divine Mind.

(59-8) When a man begins to make Thought the subject of his thoughts, he opens a path to great discoveries.

(59-9) If the world’s life is like a dream, then we ourselves must be like figures in a dream too.

(59-10) He presupposes that mind is a power or activity of the flesh (brain and nerve system) and then, not knowing what he has done, asserts that he can find no separate independent thing that can be called Mind.

(59-11) That the world exists for us only as we think it, is the assertion of mentalism.

(59-12) Those who have never thought through their physical experience, find the tenet of mentalism incredible, its contradiction of sense-evidence, imaginary.

(59-13) The world is to be sought within consciousness, not outside it.

60
X

(60-1)⁹⁵ The falsity of this view that the real world is outside consciousness and that the mental copy of it alone is inside consciousness, becomes known only after thoroughly deep penetrative thought. There is no world apart and separate to be copied, for the idea is the world.

(60-2) Mental processes are involved in the reception, interpretation and communication of this experience, this truth, this light. These processes are our own. Human mind, human faculty and human nature is involved. Therefore a danger exists here.

(60-3) Bishop Berkeley contributed valuably to these mentalistic teachings, and we of

⁹⁴ “John Scotus Eriugena” in the original

⁹⁵ The paras on this page are unnumbered.

the West should be grateful to him. But there were a few weaknesses in them, which the best Asiatic thinkers immediately detect and consistently avoid. For instance Berkeley accepted an experience as being true if the idea of it cohered and persisted strongly. Again and again Shankaracarya⁹⁶ pointed out that these conditions were also present in powerful illusions.

(60-4) Just as it is the dreamer himself who unknowingly makes the figures and creates the things which appear to him, so the waking man experiences only his own thoughts of the world. When those thoughts are not there, he is not there. And his world is not there: he and his experiences are contents of the mind. It is not, as commonly fancied, that he has a mind but that he-the ego-thought-is in the mind and never apart from it. The world comes before the waking dreamer just as it comes before the sleeping dreamer, only it comes more coherently and consistently and logically. The mystery of the universe is in the end the mystery of mind. The reasonable question to which scientists should address themselves, and will in the end have to, is "What is Mind?" To call it brain, flesh, is a misleading answer.

(60-5) Brain tissue is not mind. The five senses which are connected by nerves with it, could not operate without mind, but mind can operate without the senses. Where are the senses when we work out a mathematical problem 'in the head'?

(60-6) "What we know by our senses alone has reality," wrote D'Holbach, the French Encyclopaedist, "all is matter and force." He meant that matter was the real thing, and force was what pushed it about to take a variety of forms. But how did he know that matter was there? Was it not his own mind that told him so?

(60-7) If each object of human experience is but an idea in the human mind, all the objects, including all the human beings themselves constitute but a single idea in the divine Mind - the World-Idea.

(60-8) The mere definition of mentalism startles the common mind, antagonises the materialistic mind but comforts the spiritual-oriented mind.

(60-9) The old fashioned medicine identified the mind's working with the brain's. The newer psychosomatic medicine begins to see how mind can of itself affect brain, that is, body. But its perception is unclear, its conclusions still shaky and uncertain.

⁹⁶ "Shankara Charaya" in the original

(61-1)⁹⁷ The world is to be sought within consciousness, not outside it.

(61-2) He will seek the protection of secrecy if he is not prepared to suffer contumely.

62⁹⁸

X

Old xi: The Ego ... NEW VIII: The Ego

63

XI

(63-1)⁹⁹ What men of our modern age, bewildered by tremendous worldwide happenings, crushed by the forces of an apparently uncontrollable destiny, deafened by the noises of a scientifically-mechanical civilisation are really yearning after is simply Stillness. This, which would seem to be the simplest of all things is inwardly the hardest to find of all things. This is what Jesus spoke when he said "Few there be that find it." Why is it so hard to find? The answer is a price must be paid, as with all things. That price is the giving up of self. For Stillness is behind the self.

(63-2) Charity, service, helpfulness, character-building – all such activities are good, but they take and leave the ego as a given fact. They are willing to curb, discipline, correct, reform, polish or purify the ego, but its permanent and real existence is accepted not only as true but as a part of things as they are in nature.

(63-3) Only by looking deeper, on another level, in another dimension, can we see that this pitiful creature, this feeble-willed flesh-subservient ego-limited human is not less a showing forth of the Divine Mind, a fragment of the World-Idea, than any other of Its expressions.

(63-4) How the little ego wants to be admired, whether worthy of admiration or not! How it admires itself and, especially, how it thinks all the time about itself!

(63-5) "The truth shall make you free" promised Jesus. What kind of freedom was he talking about? The answer can only be – from the ego! And this is corroborated by his own statements, uttered at other times, concerning the need to die to oneself.

(63-6) So few seem to know that surrender of the ego – what Jesus called denying self and also losing life – must be absolute. It does not stop with the more obvious and grosser weaknesses, so-called sins. It must include clinging to religious organisations

⁹⁷ The paras on this page are unnumbered.

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⁹⁹ The paras on this page are unnumbered.

and beliefs, religious dogmas and groups. The attachments which hold us to the self are not only concerned with material possessions and material things. They are also concerned with social conventions and prejudices, with inherited habits and traditions. We remain deluded by the self until we are denuded of the self.

(63-7) The ego gets in its own way and shuts out the truth. It is so immersed in itself that it sees nothing else than its own views, its own opinions. And this is true even when it apparently undergoes a mental change, or emotional conversion, for in the end it is the ego itself which sanctions the newly-accepted idea or belief.

(63-8) The ego stands in the way: its own presence annuls awareness of the presence of the Overself. But this need not be so. Correct and deeper understanding of what the self is, proper adjustment between the individual and universal in consciousness, will bring enlightenment.

(63-9) Thoughts form themselves, emotions rise up, moods come and go in a rhythm; the ego lives and moves behind them all.

(63-10) The glimpse may come on a man suddenly and abruptly, or it may come slowly and gently.

64

XI

(64-1)¹⁰⁰ When all of a man's thoughts are put together, this total constitutes his ego. By giving them up to the Stillness, he gives up his ego, denies his self, in Jesus' phrase.

(64-2) His first mental act is to think himself into being. He is the maker of his own 'I.' This does not mean that the ego is his own personal invention alone. The whole world-process brings everything about, including the ego and the ego's own self-making.

(64-3) The constant movement of thoughts and the ego's fascination with itself hide from us the divine Overself, from which both are derived.

(64-4) It is necessary to forestall a possible miscomprehension. Subordinating one's own ego does not mean submitting it to someone else's ego.

(64-5) What is man? Is he Mind pretending to be what it is not? Or is he really something basically physical and material?

(64-6) The ego is behind each point of resistance in a man which holds him down from

¹⁰⁰ The paras on this page are unnumbered.

advancing further on this quest.

(64-7) A fuller life will recognise not only the spirituality of man but also the individuality of man.

(64-8) The ego finds every kind of pretext to resist the practice required of it.

(64-9) The disease of egoitis is neither easily nor quickly cured.

(64-10) What is this thing I call I? This is the question for which he has to find an answer.

(64-11) Whoever wants the 'I' to yield up its mysterious and tremendous secret must stop it from looking perpetually in the mirror, must stop the little ego's fascination with its own image.

(64-12) The ego is enamoured of itself.

(64-13) He can cultivate his ego, or try to cut it out.

(64-14) The ego always seeks to promote its own interests.

(64-15) His duty to himself calls on him to protect the personal interests. But his duty to the All calls on him to respect others' interests too.

Old xii: The Overself ... NEW XXII: Inspiration and the Overself

65
XII

(65-1)¹⁰¹ In that wonderful state the feeling of tension, the troubling by fear and the suffering from insecurity vanish away. Why? Because the particular problems involved have been taken over by the Overself. Second, because no negative thinking is possible in that peaceful atmosphere. From this we may deduce two excellent practical rules for daily living. First, surrender all problems to the Overself by turning them out of your mind and handing them over (but not in the wrong way by refusing to face them. The Secret Path and The Quest of the Overself show the right way). Jesus taught the same method in simpler language: while Psalm 55 holds out the promise "Cast thy burden upon the Deity, and he shall sustain thee." And in the Bhagavad Gita among the final words addressed to the troubled Prince Arjuna, there is almost identical

¹⁰¹ The paras on this page are unnumbered.

counsel.

(65-2) The glimpse affords its own proof, supplies its own evidence, certifies by itself the truths it yields. But if its experiencer falls back into his ego and lets its prejudice, opinion and expectation intrude into those truths, that is his own fault, not the Glimpse's.

(65-3) When the quiet receptivity is deep enough, we enter the stillness. When the stillness is deep enough, we cease to think, to desire and to will anything.

(65-4) In that condition of passive emotions and paralysed thoughts consciousness can receive That which otherwise it shuts out.

(65-5) The glimpse has lighted his way. Shall he follow it to splendid self-denials or betray it by refusal?

(65-6) He waits for an inner event that shall be thrilling and spectacular. He does not wait for one that shall be as gentle, as silent, as the fall of dew, so of course he is disappointed and falls into some kind of negative thought.

(65-7) Christianity talks of salvation, Hinduism of liberation, Buddhism of the mysterious nirvana and the mystics aspire to union with God. All these are really

102

(65-8) Both the dreamer and his dream, the thinker and his thought, will merge into this sublime stillness.

(65-9) The multitude of objects which make up the experienced world fades out in this incredible state; the ego, that is their observer, fades out with them.

(65-10) The sensitive informed and experienced person may get intimations, may feel the glimpse coming even before the actual joyous event.

(65-11) Truth utters itself anew whenever a human mind comes fully to its self-discovery.

(65-12) He knows now that his life-experience can be as boundless or as confined as his own thought.

(65-13) For him the most worthy achievement is to live in this state of being and to love

¹⁰² A blank space was left in the original because the original typist couldn't read PB's handwriting, or because PB himself left a blank in the para.

it.

(65-14) But the glimpse, after all, is isolated from the remainder of our experience.

(65-15) The more eagerly he tries to hold the glimpse, the more anxiously his thoughts surround it, the more quickly it leaves him.

66
XII

(66-1)¹⁰³ Turn away from your self. Leave your ego behind. Do this in thought and deed and in emotion and mood. Change your attitude – and thus change your life.

(66-2) The glimpses are not controllable. They come or go without consulting us.

Old xiii: The World-Mind ... NEW XXVII: The World-Mind

67
XIII

(67-1)¹⁰⁴ How old is the series of experiences through which we moved unknowingly towards our present evolutionary position! How lofty is the level toward which we have yet to climb! How ironic is the discovery that what we thought was being done by free personal choice was merely blind obedience to universal force; that where we believed free will was exercised, there we merely conformed to the World-Idea!

(67-2) The Deity cannot be limited like a finite human being, using a personal will to achieve a particular end, or thinking in a series of successive ideas that move through time. A less erroneous picture is that of the electronic computing machine, which performs thousands of different operations in a few seconds.

(67-3) How senseless it is to demand permanency and immortality for an ego which has already undergone countless changes of inner nature and outer form, only the resolute truth-seeker, unwilling to live by illusions can perceive.

(67-4) This is the universe's final fact, life's last twin-secret. The pairs of opposites really secretly combine, co-operate and assist each other, despite their outward appearance of antagonism.

¹⁰³ The paras on this page are unnumbered.

¹⁰⁴ The paras on this page are unnumbered.

(67-5) Three of the most frequently asked foundational questions of life were set down on the first page of "HTBY."¹⁰⁵ They also happen to be three of the least answered. Theories, opinions and dogmas abound in reference to them, but of direct insight there is little sign.

(67-6) Spinoza saw that the whole universe conformed to a world-order under what he named "laws of necessity." But the source of these laws was God. He saw too that Man, in the effort to understand all this, and drawn by an intellectual love of God, would unfold intuition and come closer to God.

(67-7) The World-Mind works in, and through, everything. The World-Idea reveals a mere hint of its wisdom and intelligence to that projection from Itself which is man.

(67-8) The view held by Ouspensky and Gurdjieff, and by certain Buddhist sects from whom the latter derived it, that Eternal Recurrence is the eternal law, that perpetual repetitive movement is the universal condition, is questionable at the very least, unjustifiable at the very most. If the human race, for example, were doomed to repeat all its mistakes and misdeeds again and again, its life would be senseless. Such an outlook is not far from the merely materialistic one.

(67-9) Each phase of this to-and-fro movement covers long periods. When the impetus in one direction exhausts itself, the opposing impetus awakens from tranquillity and is active.

(67-10) Not only are no two creatures alike, but no creature ever has two experiences which are alike.

(67-11) It is the increase of one movement which runs parallel with the decrease of the other movement. One is constructive even while the other is destructive.

(67-12) The World-Idea is the whole idea that no human mind can grasp in its time-long entirety and its spiralled cycles.

(67-13) The World-Mind grasps in one eternal thought the entire World-Idea.

68
XIII

(68-1)¹⁰⁶ Despite the ever-confronting evidence that change is ceaseless throughout the universe and through all human experience, we persistently get the feeling of solidity in

¹⁰⁵ PB's book "The Hidden Teaching Beyond Yoga"

¹⁰⁶ The paras on this page are unnumbered.

the universe and permanency in experience. Is this only an illusion and the world merely a phantasm? The answer is that there IS something unending behind both.

(68-2) In the world's life there is every kind of joy and every kind of suffering, because there is every kind of creature. The world could not have been manifested at all if it had not manifested infinite variety as an expression of the infinitude of the divine power behind it. Surely this is what Plato saw when he described time as the moving image of eternity?

(68-3) There is no stability anywhere in the universe, given enough time, and there is none in human life. Yet the craving for it exists. There is a metaphysical meaning behind this phenomenon. It exists because THAT which is behind the craving person is the only stable thing there is, or rather no-thing, because IT has no shape, no colour, is soundless and invisible, and beyond the grasp of ordinary thoughts. It is this hidden contact, or connection, which keeps man seeking for what he never finds, hoping for what he never attains, refusing to accept the message of ceaseless change which Nature and Life continue to utter in his ears and opposing the adjustments experience and events demand periodically from him.

(68-4) How to live well while in this world does not only mean how to live comfortably, nor even morally, but also how to live in harmony with the World-Idea. To be unaware that there is any such meaning to existence is to be unable to live really well and truly wisely as a human being.

(68-5) He lives in the knowledge of the World-Idea – not in its fullness of detail but in its general outline – which is fulfilling itself in the whole universe and with which he tries to co-operate according to his knowledge. This it is which supports his inner being, counters his everyday experience of human weakness and evil and transfigures him when leaving the hour of communion to resume that experience.

(68-6) “Is there a possibility that men are but fireflies, and that this all is without a father?” asked John Adams, and proceeded to reject the atheistic answer. Yet he was no supporter of the older Churches, this brilliant intellectual who helped to formulate the Constitution at the founding of the United States of America, and later became one of its first Presidents.

(68-7) When the movement in one direction has exhausted itself, there is a pause, and then a reversal directs the movement into the opposite direction.

(68-8) Nature gives her message to man, and gives it all the time all at once. But man hears it only in bits and pieces, even when and if he hears it at all.

(68-9) All things in Nature show this polarity of opposed characters. All forces and

movements in Nature show it in their striving to adjust, balance, reconcile or unite their contradictory activities and conflicting rhythms.

69
XIII

(69-1)¹⁰⁷ By his own reaction to the fragments of knowledge of the World-Idea which come to a man, he reveals himself, his kind of character and stage of development.

(69-2) That One Mind could possibly comprehend all could only be possible if that one Mind were behind all.

(69-3) Each member of the pair of opposites is a counter-poise to the other one.

(69-4) The World-Idea authentically exists but not in the way that physical things exist. No human mind can receive and hold it in the same definite way it can receive and hold all other ideas. Even in those exalted psychological states or mystical experiences when the world's meaning is perceived, its inner drama understood during a brief glimpse, the seer gets only the fragment which his mind can take in, limited and conditioned as he is.

(69-5) It may be unusual, inconsistent, startling, to propose that we think in terms of opposing ideas, of conflicting statements, and find identity in variety, but that is Nature's own way. Her Yin and Yang.

(69-6) Not only is everything subject to change but everything also exists in relation to something else. Thus change and relativity dominate the world scene.

(69-7) Wise men co-operate voluntarily with the World Mind before they are forced into going along with it and its expression, the World-Idea.

(69-8) If man upsets Nature's equilibrium by excess, she sets up a reversal in compensation, a movement toward lack, restraint. This is the endless oscillation of things, history.

(69-9) Newton's third law of motion: that to every force there is an equal and opposite reaction.

(69-10) Everywhere in Nature, as in human existence, nothing is given without its opposite: health along with disease, or death along with life, for example.

¹⁰⁷ The paras on this page are unnumbered.

(69-11) Every conceivable kind of form comes out of the seeming Void into time and space.

(69-12) The tremendous monumentality of the World-Idea, the staggering breadth of its scope and variety are a mere hint of the divine wisdom behind both.

(69-13) If life be a dream, World-Mind is the eternal dreamer.

(69-14) The World-Mind grasps in one eternal thought the entire World-Idea.

70¹⁰⁸

XIII

Old xiv: From Birth to Rebirth ... NEW IX: From Birth to Rebirth

71

XIV

(71-1)¹⁰⁹ The variations between men are very real. A simple-minded peasant cannot be put on the same level as Shakespeare. If we seek and find out why the peasant did not and could not become a Shakespeare and why the poet did not become a tiller of the fields, we will find no more probable or explanatory or useful answer than the one given by reincarnation.

(71-2) What we have to do with, and for ourselves, cannot be done in the space of one life-time.

(71-3) He who asserts that he is free to do what he wishes to do would more correctly state his situation by confessing that he is enslaved by his ego and goes up or down as its emotional see-saw moves.

(71-4) What sort of a death experience is he likely to have? What if he dies, as the Maharshi¹¹⁰ died, as Ramakrishna died, as heroes of the Spirit, some anonymous and obscure, others famous, known to this author died, of that dreadful and contemporary malady, cancer? I can only tell what I have seen and heard when present during the last days and privileged co-sharer of the unbelievable atmosphere. To each there came a vision, a light seen, first far off, later all around; first a pinpoint, later a ray, then a wide shaft, lastly filling the whole room. And with the Light came peace; it came as an accompaniment to the cancer's pain, a compensation that as it grew made the peace

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¹⁰⁹ The paras on this page are unnumbered.

¹¹⁰ "Maharishee" in the original

grow and gave detachment, until to the amazement of doctors, nurses, family, the triumphant words were uttered before the final act, Spirit's victory over matter proclaimed. This is not to say that it makes no difference whether one dies quietly in sleep through nothing worse than age, or whether one dies through cancer, that peace and pain are equally acceptable to the emotions of an illumined man. I do not write here of the extreme fanatical ascetic. To him it may be a matter of indifference.

(71-5) Where is the freedom for the immense masses of men who are ego-bound? They are held hand and foot: it is only their illusion that they move freely. Where is the free choice for those who merely, unwittingly, blindly, express the tendencies with which they were born?

(71-6) If we have all had many many previous lives on earth, we have also had many many previous deaths on earth. The actual experience of dying must leave some residual lesson or meaning or message behind in the subconscious.

(71-7) Some upper rank members of the Catholic hierarchy who privately believed but publicly rejected the tenet of reincarnation gave me, as the principle objection among a few others, that it allowed too long a time for people either to work for salvation or receive punishment for sins.

(71-8) It is not only the karma of a man which may oppose itself to his free choice and free will; there are also the possibilities of opposition by human institutions and organisations, natural calamities and catastrophes, genetic heredity and racial predisposition.

(71-9) Ordinarily, the date and even the place where one is to die is preordained.

72
XIV

(72-1)¹¹¹ The movement of personal destiny is beyond man's control so far as it is part of the World-Idea, but it is not totally beyond his control. To some extent, varying with his own development, with his own knowledge of and obedience to the higher laws, his own intelligent or intuitive foresight, it is possible to control this movement.

(72-2) What has accumulated through many births – destiny, tendency, capacity and character – must express itself, in its entirety or in part, in this birth.

(72-3) In the very fact of time's illusoriness, in the actuality of the eternal present, there is our best hope, our finest opportunity. For it means that the future can be shaped,

¹¹¹ The paras on this page are unnumbered.

within due limits. We can help to make tomorrow, can contribute something to it, at least by bringing it into today. But all this remains only a mere possibility if we do not take advantage of the paradoxical and astounding truth. We must begin by clearing away some of the debris with which past habit, thought, feeling and attitude have cluttered up our insides.

(72-4) Most people experience events brought about by a mixture of heredity, environment, other people's influence and karma; not many exert their will determinedly, use their thinking power correctly and control their energy and time to create chosen results.

(72-5) If the qualities and attributes which make up a man's character and mentality are put together, we have not only to take account of his bodily ancestry but also of his reincarnatory ancestry.

(72-6) He is free to identify his own purposes with the pattern of the World-Idea, or to disregard it. In both cases he must take the consequences. In the one case he will have again and again, voluntarily if reluctantly, to subordinate his ego. In the other, he will seek to satisfy it and may at times succeed in doing so. But then he will meet those consequences because the law of karma has to give him back his own.

(72-7) Gurdjieff and his one-time disciple Ouspensky, revived the doctrine of Eternal Recurrence, and put it forward as a better alternative to the doctrine of Reincarnation. If we examine the historic Tibetan Buddhist symbol called "The Wheel of Life" we see pictures of human beings being moved through contrasting phases of experience as the wheel turns round. But after it comes full circle they are subjected to exactly the same conditions, the same phases as before. It is pertinent to remember that Gurdjieff learnt about Eternal Recurrence in a Buddhist monastery in Central Asia (where the spiritual head is the Dalai Lama, of Lhasa,¹¹² and where the same version of Buddhism prevails as in Tibet). It is also pertinent to remember the monotonous movement of life for the somewhat primitive inhabitants of that wild region for centuries until very lately. The pattern of their existence recurred again and again in the same way. What more fitting in their beliefs than that their rebirths would be similar too.

(72-8) The natural differences among men can be most plausibly explained only by the doctrine of reincarnation.

(72-9) The same opportunity does not recur because it cannot.

¹¹² "Lhasa" in the original

(73-1)¹¹³ If generations are born and die in spiritual ignorance, it is because they and their forbears have known no other way of thought.

(73-2) He cannot foresee future events with absolute certainty, nor foretell, while ignorant of the circumstances at the time, how he will react to them.

(73-3) What they will not do from heeding the guidance of illumined prophets, they will be forced to do from suffering the pressure of the consequences of their disobedience.

(73-4) All through history we see men inflicting suffering upon other men. This shows their ignorance of the higher laws, for by their own sin they punish themselves.

(73-5) Until he finds his Overself, no man can escape this coming-back to the earthly life. And this remains true whether he loves the world or is disgusted by it.

(73-6) The theory is simple: that acts produce their own consequences and that these consequences may not appear until a later reincarnation.

(73-7) If he must seek to remember previous existences now lost to consciousness, let him seek only those wherein he rose to his spiritual best, wherein he came closer to God than in the others.

(73-8) Whoever fails to take advantage of the right time for beginning an enterprise, or the right opportunity that fortune thrusts in his path, by his co-operation and effort, will never again be able to do so to the same extent, if at all, for neither he nor circumstance can remain the same.

(73-9) Every creature comes to earth with a certain potential of life-force which, ordinarily, must exhaust itself before it leaves.

(73-10) There are times when we have no capacity to choose our immediate future, when we must submit to destiny.

(73-11) There are certain tendencies in him which make him think, feel and act in the way he does. They are his inheritance from former lives.

(73-12) For some of us suffering has a chastening effect, but for others it has the opposite effect, so that the sufferers profit little or are even stirred into worse actions than before.

¹¹³ The paras on this page are unnumbered.

Old xv: The Reign of Relativity ... NEW XIX: The Reign of Relativity

(75-1)¹¹⁵ Is it not strange to observe that the same men who are so attached to their personality when active in waking state, become indifferent to it when inert in the sleeping state! Can it be that there is something which transcends it and which ordinarily is hidden, covered up by the thoughts of waking state? That in the stillness which dissolves such thoughts, the Overself can reveal itself? That deep sleep stops short of the revelation because, although it dissolves thoughts, it annuls consciousness?

(75-2) In some dreams time shrinks a whole day into a mere half-hour or, in others, it expands a single minute into several hours. This is what happens to the mind under the influence of certain drugs: nay, even still more fantastic disproportions between waking time and sleeping time have been brought about.

(75-3) There is a difference between eternity and timelessness. It is one of kind, not merely of extent. Too many people fail to perceive this and so slur the one into the other.

(75-4) We know that each object in the universe, as certainly each living creature, and the entire universe itself, must have had a commencement in time as well as a source in space.

(75-5) The late President Kennedy was another man who drew many of his best ideas intuitively from the waking-up period each morning. He was also one of those, like Napoleon and Churchill, who fall asleep immediately the eyes are shut.

(75-6) The world-illusion not only obscures the Reality behind it but deceives us into thinking of the Many as being Real, instead of being One.

(75-7) When the mind unites itself with the world outside, we call it waking; when it withdraws attention from the world and unites with its own thoughts or fancies, we call it dreaming; and when it lies settled in itself, uninterested in anything, we call it deep sleep.

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¹¹⁵ The paras on this page are unnumbered.

(75-8) There is a deep, very deep, level of meditation where we have the same experience as dreamless sleep but keep our awareness. Because the ego with its thoughts and emotions, its motives, desires and calculations is no longer present, it must be described as a condition of generalised being. (The oft-used term 'universal' is not quite accurate).

76¹¹⁶

XV

Old xvi: The Absolute Mind ... NEW XXVIII: The Alone

77

XVI

(77-1)¹¹⁷ Whether enlightenment is reached by steps as an outcome of practice unremittingly done, or that it comes suddenly all at once, it must be a concept-free phenomenon, a dogma-less understanding and a recognition of what always was, is, and will be.

(77-2) When it is said that all is opinion, it must further be said that all views of God exist in the minds of men as their opinions, too. The value of such opinions is only what these men give to it. For a view which is beyond the mental capacity of an unevolved person is of little value to him, whereas it may be life-saving to an evolved truth-seeker.

(77-3) The emptiness of space is a symbol. The universe spread out in that space is also a symbol. Both speak of the Real that is in them, but each in a different way. Yes, within every localised point, every timed instant, That which Is proclaims Itself as the unique Fact outside relationship and beyond change.

(77-4) A man must choose: does he wish to live in the moving instant or in the fixed eternal? Waiting for what the subsequent years will bring him, whether he waits in joy or in anxiety, is to be imprisoned by time. But remaining in the place where time pauses, the mind is to be kept serenely unrippled. He is to apply this attitude of detachment not only to objects but also to thoughts, not only to present possessions but also to past memories.

(77-5) Try as it might, the finite thinking mind cannot break through this sound-barrier of mystery which surrounds the Unique Being, That which is ever the same. All thoughts simply pile up, leaving the last one unanswered, if not unanswerable; or else

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¹¹⁷ The paras on this page are unnumbered.

ending in an involved labyrinth from which there is no outlet. IT cannot be investigated, but the fact of its necessary existence can be stated more emphatically than it can of any other of the innumerable or observable facts.

(77-6) Such a truth will never need to be replaced by a newer one: it will hold its place, and satisfy the searching mind, in a thousand years' time as much as it does today.

(77-7) When I feel the divine presence in my heart, I acknowledge God as Personal, but when, going deeper in silent contemplation I vanish in the infinite immeasurable Void, I must afterwards call Him Impersonal.

(77-8) When we dig down into the under-surface conditions which give rise to such a question, we find that the question itself vanishes and so there is no longer any need to try to find an answer to it. For it depended upon the mind's agitation, turbulence, curiosity or imbalance, and when the mind's activity died down, when above all stillness lulled ego, the question died down with it.

(77-9) God is neither to be looked upon with human eyes or comprehended with human intellect. For the eyes see only things and the intellect takes hold only of thoughts.

(77-10) To put a label on that which is nameless, is to tumble into a pitfall.

(77-11) The Holy Ghost was called by Origen "the active force of God."

78
XVI

(78-1)¹¹⁸ The knowledge of Allah follows upon the dissolving of the ego fana, says Sufism. But some Sufi masters go even farther and assert that it follows only on the dissolving of this dissolving (fana-el-fana). What does this strange statement mean? The answer is non-duality. What non-duality itself means is to be gleaned from another Sufi declaration: "The outer path: I and Thou. The inner path: I am Thou and Thou are I. The final insight: neither I nor Thou."

(78-2) Every man who has enough capacity to reflect upon his life-experience, has also to acknowledge that some power superior to himself – let him call it chance or God, fate or spirit – exists.

(78-3) Everything else can be known, as things and ideas are known, as something apart or possessed, but the Overself cannot be truly known in this way. Only by identifying oneself with It can this happen.

¹¹⁸ The paras on this page are unnumbered.

(78-4) So long as men fail to understand they are able to know that they are experiencing the world only because there is an infinite Consciousness which is behind and which makes possible their own little consciousnesses, so long will they spurn truth and sneer at truth-revealers.

(78-5) Are we to conclude despairingly that the knowledge of opinions is all we may allow ourselves to hope for; that the knowledge of truth is barred from us forever? Are we to accept Kant's final word that all we know is appearance, and it is better to leave it at that instead of indulging in futile imaginings which may end in absurdity?

(78-6) To say that the world does not exist helps neither the cause of truth nor the seeker after truth. To admit that it does exist but to qualify the admission by adding "but not materially, only mentally" is to describe experience accurately. The dream exists in the dreaming mind as a series of thoughts, even though its world is not physical.

(78-7) Freed from obsession with the past as well as anticipation of the future, he will regard each day as unique, and live through it as if he were here for the first time.

(78-8) Mind, which forever is, can undergo no change in itself, and no multiplication of itself. If it could, it would not be what it is – the Ultimate, the Absolute, the Unconditioned and the Unique. Nor, being perfect, complete, could it have desire, purpose, aim or motive for itself. Therefore it could not have projected the universe on account of any benefit sought or gain needed. There is no answer to the question why the universe was sent forth.

(78-9) To enter this strange state, a primeval yet delightful void, where the ego, the intellect, the emotional desires and the body do not intrude, is to be born again.

(78-10) God is unpicturable by human imagination, truth is unattainable by human thinking. There is a grand mystery at the heart of things. Why then degrade the Unique by confounding its symbols or traditions (in all religions) with its reality?

(78-11) The world-illusion: it projects the unreal but hides the real.

79
XVI

(79-1)¹¹⁹ Only as a result of being liberated from himself, taken out of himself, can he find the universal being.

¹¹⁹ The paras on this page are unnumbered.

(79-2) We ordinarily know any object while we are both separate and distant from it.

(79-3) Nothing that words could say could give any proper description of That Which Is, for it belongs to a totally different dimension. So this is God, or more correctly, as near as man can get to God.

(79-4) The awareness of It as being It is something other, and more than the mere emptiness of mind.

(79-5) Pentateuch: "I am the One who am," was the Deity's statement when questioned for His name.

(79-6) The mystery of That Which Is baffles not only the comprehension of the ordinary mind but also that of the philosophic mind.

(79-7) When the mind enters into this imageless and thoughtless state, there is nothing in it to resist the union with divine consciousness.

(79-8) Since all things are limited in some way or other, or conditioned by some circumstance or other, THAT which is unlimited and unconditioned, which does not exist as they do, cannot rightly be called a thing. It is no-thing, the Void.

(79-9) There is no single term satisfactory on all points for use when referring to THAT. The name "Overself" is no exception to this situation. But to those who object to this coinage of a new word, the answer is best given by the editor of the latest edition of Fowler's "Modern English Usage," Sir Ernest Gowers: "I'm all in favour of new words. How else would a language live and flourish?"

(79-10) He must begin by ceasing to think of the Divine Being as if it were one object put among others, but preferred to them.

(79-11) Such truths must amaze the outsider or the beginner by their boldness.

80¹²⁰
XVI

Old xvii: Way to Overself ... NEW II: Overview of Practices Involved & XXIII: Advanced Contemplation

81
XVII

(81-1)¹²¹ All pruning of the ego is of little use; for as one fault is removed a new one springs out of latency. Why? Because the ego is the imperfect, and all it can find will only be fresh imperfections. The Short Path is the only genuine approach to truth, the only one offering real possibility of liberation. It is endorsed by Atmananda and Krishnamurti and Maharshi.¹²² Lifetimes have been spent by seekers who have travelled the Long Path but arrived nowhere, or are not much nearer the goal, whereas others have made swift advance from their first steps on the Short Path. The assertion that the Long Path is a necessary complement to, or preparation for the Short One is correct only for those who are still under the thralldom of illusion, who are asleep. Its followers merely travel in a circle: they never get out of the illusion or awake from the sleep. That is why in the end it has to be given up, abandoned, understood for the egoistic effort that it really is. The entire length of the Long Path is an attempt at self-improvement and self-purification planned, managed, operated and supervised by the ego itself. Is it conceivable that the ego will work for its own destruction? No! – it will never do that however much it pretends to do so, however subtle the bluff with which it deceives itself or others. Even when the ego rebels against itself, it is merely playing a part. It has played many different parts in the past. Appearing as a rebel is merely one more disguise in the whole series.

(81-2) Why create needless frustrations by an over-eager attitude, by overdoing spiritual activity? You are in the Overself's hands even now and if the fundamental aspiration is present, your development will go on without your having to be anxious about it. Let the burden go. Do not become the victim of too much suggestion got from reading too much spiritual literature creating an artificial conception of enlightenment, just as too much reading of medical literature by a layman may make him the victim of hypochondriac tendencies. Do not be satisfied with the self-conscious spirituality which comes from forced growth and harsh unnatural asceticisms, or from egocentrically watching personal progress. That is a better and truer spirituality which is natural, as natural as waking from sleep; which is unforced, because not the result of following technique and practising exercises; which is unconscious growing and blooming as the flower does which is drawn by the Overself's beauty and warmth and peace.

(81-3) Bring tomorrow into today by doing that which renders non-existent the unnecessary grief which would otherwise come tomorrow. This is related to, but not identical with, the idea that prevention is better than cure. For it is based on impersonal metaphysical truth which provides a higher philosophical motive, whereas the other is based on personal advantage which provides a lower, merely practical motive.

¹²¹ The paras on this page are unnumbered.

¹²² "Maharshee" in the original

(81-4) He has reached a point where he can digest such food no longer, repeat such thoughts and moods no more; where all this must come to an end.

(81-5) The Long Path produces self-consciousness.

82
XVII

(82-1)¹²³ Must he work through the Long Path's full cycle of study, discipline, self-betterment and exercises before he tries the Short Path? No – not necessarily. It was the opinion of Govindananda Bharati, the sage who died in Nepal in 1963, that both could and should be followed simultaneously.

(82-2) Not many are intuitive enough, knowledgeable enough and strong enough to take to the Short Path without previous preparation through the Long Path's disciplines.

(82-3) It is an error, although a reasonable one, to believe that attainment comes only when the whole distance of this path has been travelled. This is to make it depend on measurement, calculation, that is, on the ego's own effort, management and control. On the contrary, attainment depends on relinquishment of the ego, and hence of the idea of progress which accompanies it. It is then that a man can be still; then that he can, as the Bible promises, "know that I am God."

(82-4) He has not attained who is conscious that he has attained, for this very consciousness cunningly hides the ego and delivers him into its power. That alone is attainment which is natural, spontaneous, unforced, unaware and unadvertised, whether to the man himself or to others.

(82-5) The intention is to shock him into new thought, awakened consideration by means of bold surprising statements. But if the shock is too concentrated, the attack on too narrow a front and not distributed more widely, it may do more harm than good. This is the danger of methods like Krishnamurti's and Zen's.

(82-6) Time continues itself, and the time-bound consciousness with it. The Long Path does not liberate a man from it but only improves him, at the best, prepares him. For what? For the Short Path, which alone offers freedom.

(82-7) The Long Path man makes himself miserable through the contemplation of his own shortcomings and failures, just as the Short Path man becomes joyful through contemplation of his identity with Overself.

¹²³ The paras on this page are unnumbered.

(82-8) “Yuan-chiao ching” – this book states that the Buddhist phrase “obscuration by Principle” means not knowing that the mind itself is principle but seeking it in the mind, so that principle itself becomes an obstacle. (The reference here is to the Principle of Nature, Spirit).

(82-9) On the Long Path he masters himself to some extent. On the Short Path he allows himself to be mastered by the Overself.

(82-10) If he totally lacks the qualities, virtues, controls and capacities developed on the Long Path, he will get little benefit from the Short Path, have little understanding of it and have little ability for it.

(82-11) It is better, and brings life more into right balance, if both are followed simultaneously. But even so, in most cases it will be found necessary to emphasise the Long Path’s practice of disciplines and cultivation of virtues.

(82-12) It is possible to put most religious approaches and many mystic cults or teachings under one or the other category, although the others are a mixture of both.

83
XVII

(83-1)¹²⁴ It is possible to run to such extremes on this Long Path as to lose all sense of humour, all need of lighter entertainment, all capacity to relax, looking only for meaning in outer life, for progress in inner life, to lose in short the art of being serious without becoming too solemn.

(83-2) The Short Path provides him with the chance of making a fresh start, of gaining new inspiration, more joy.

(83-3) Once we can grasp this psychic fact that tomorrow exists today, as precognition has finally grasped it, we are ready to mount up to the higher philosophic fact that the spiritual goal is already within our reach, and only needs claiming.

(83-4) The Short Path is light-hearted.

(83-5) ‘Make tomorrow today’ – this is injunction of the Short Path teaching.

(83-6) When the Long Path appears to be unprofitable, its endeavours boring, it is time to consider the Short Path.

¹²⁴ The paras on this page are unnumbered.

(83-7) Man, fascinated by his own ego is always gazing at it just as Narcissus was fascinated by the image of his own body reflected in the water. Even when he takes to the spiritual quest, the fascination persists: it is only the things and desires that preoccupy the ego which change their names; from being objects of the physical senses they are transferred to emotional, intellectual and/or psychical fields. These may be praiseworthy and noble in themselves but they are still within the circle of the ego, although on its finest and highest levels. This is why Long Path cannot yield enlightenment.

(83-8) This is a work which calls for the interaction of two powers – man's will and Overself's grace. The will's work is to engage in some measure of self-discipline, and yet to surrender itself entirely at the proper moment.

(83-9) He views it not as a future condition to be attained at some future time.

(83-10) It seeks to establish a relationship with the Overself that will be natural.

(83-11) What he feels on the Short Path is confidence and peace.

(83-12) The Long Path adherents may come to the point where they flagellate themselves mentally in the search for faults and the lament over them.

(83-13) It is the Long Path votary's work to bring his lower nature under check, discipline and control.

(83-14) Plato's man in the cave turned his head the other way, towards its opening, and there saw a pinpoint of light.

(83-15) Why should a man strain himself to the point of having a nervous breakdown, or acquiring an ulcer, in trying to get the inner peace which is preventive of nervous breakdowns and renders him immune to ulcers?

(83-16) All spiritual approaches may be put under the head of Long Path or Short Path.

(83-17) Does truth come suddenly like a cataclysm?

(83-18) The Long Path seeks what can be achieved by human disciplines, whereas the Short Path waits passively for the Overself's action upon the human being.

Old xviii: The God Within ... NEW XXV: World-Mind in Individual Mind

85
XVIII

(85-1)¹²⁶ Oriental wisdom enjoins in general withholding truth from the unready, and in particular from those who do not want or seek it, from inebriated or agitated persons, from those in whom lust or greed, wrath or impatience predominates and, understandably, from lunatics.

(85-2) If he only holds before the aspirant a prophetic picture of man's higher possibilities, an ideal that transcends the commonplace trivialities of everyday, his service is sufficient. But in actuality he does very much more than that.

(85-3) It is not necessary for disciples to indulge in fulsome panegyrics about their master. This helps no one, for it raises extravagant hopes in their hearers; it lowers their own capacity to receive truth; and it embarrasses the master himself. They need to learn that his greatness can be far more sincerely appreciated by restrained description, that the grandeur of his inner being is better pictured, and more readily believed, by dignified statement of the truth as it is. If others can be impressed only by fanciful embellishment and foolish exaggeration, they are not ready for him and should seek elsewhere among the cults which cater to the naive.

(85-4) The attempt to improve other peoples' lives can easily mask a presumptuous interference with them. This is especially true when the hidden realities and long-term causes of a situation are not known, or misread, or when the higher laws which govern mankind are ignored. In all these causes the old evils may merely be replaced by new ones, so that the improvement is entirely fictitious. In the early Christian times St. Cyril saw and said what, much more than a thousand years later, Ananda Metteya the Buddhist and Ramana Maharshi the Hindu told me, that one best saved society by first saving oneself. This is why the philosopher does not try to impose on others the Idea or the Way which he has espoused. For the itch to improve them or alter them is, he now knows, a form of interference. He minds his own business. But if the higher power wants to use him to affect others, he will not resist it!

(85-5) One danger to a guru is that he may become surrounded by sycophantic followers, who will nourish and strengthen whatever undesirable egoism may still remain behind in him because his training was never completed. Another is that he

¹²⁶ The paras on this page are unnumbered.

may attract dilettante followers, who will waste his time and create needless useless disputes of interpretation among his more serious disciples.

(85-6) The Greeks knew that the crowd were not fit for more than a very limited development, did not want more anyway. So the exoteric was for them. But for the few who did want higher ideals and the truer ideas beyond popular understanding, the esoteric was also available, at least in earlier Greek history, when the Orphic, the Pythagorean and the Eleusinian Mysteries flourished.

(85-7) He will seek the protection of secrecy if he is not prepared to suffer contumely.

(85-8) He prefers to remain anonymous, but if the mission requires it, he submits to publicity's glare.

(85-9) We see these great men, the sages, lifted high above the darkness which contains the mass of humanity.

86
XVIII

(86-1)¹²⁷ It was written in the opening pages of "The Hidden Teaching Beyond Yoga" that the higher truth would be proclaimed in our era more publicly than in the past. This was misread to mean that every esoteric piece of knowledge would be proclaimed. This is not what was meant. The whole truth cannot be given to the whole of mankind. This is because of possible breakdown in religious relations or misunderstanding in moral connections. But much larger portions can now safely be revealed, or traditional teaching translated, with only the most necessary restraints.

(86-2) His presence in the world may pass unnoticed; his power may be effective only on a mental level: but even so there will usually be at least a few who feel that his life here has been a blessing to them.

(86-3) It may be his allotted duty to publish the news that there is a divine world order in which man has his part and place. If so, he will do it in his own way according to his own circumstances, and through the use of his own capacities.

(86-4) It is not the actual meeting with a master that constitutes its importance, but the recognition that he is a master.

(86-5) The sage may tell of truth, as he knows it, by refraining from speech and entering the Stillness. But if his interlocutors have not been previously prepared to understand

¹²⁷ The paras on this page are unnumbered.

what lies behind his silence, they may not benefit by it.

(86-6) Nature sends her messages to man through his body and mind. But his denseness obscures them altogether, or receives confused versions of them. This is one reason why he needs interpreters and prophets. So long as he remains unaware of what she is saying to him, so long must others with better hearing appear in his history.

(86-7) Those who do not like philosophy and cannot understand it, are simply not ready for it. We cannot compel them to take it up. But we can keep it available for them, whenever the time comes that they do feel a need for it.

(86-8) Quite a number get a mysterious support and consolation from simply knowing at second hand that the Overself is there, even though they themselves cannot make any contact with it.

(86-9) These ideas are too distant from common public understanding, too subtle for physically-oriented minds, for communication to be easily or successfully established without a contest.

(86-10) He has travelled a long way from the passions of savagery or the illusions of civilisation.

(86-11) The impossibility of realising Bodhisattva ideal alone shows it was not meant to be taken literally. For not only would Bodhisattva have to wait until the 2 billion inhabitants presently occupying this planet had been saved, but what of the others who would have been added to this number by that time? The Bodhisattva ideal is supposedly set up in contrast with that of the Pratyeka Buddha, who is alleged to seek his own welfare alone.

(86-12) A wise man makes allowances for the feebleness of intuitive faculty in the herd, and does not attempt to lead them on spiritual flights beyond their capacity.

87

XVIII

(87-1)¹²⁸ He is quite agreeable to help humanity but he must be left to do it on his own terms and according to his own ideas in his own way.

(87-2) Young and inexperienced persons as well as old and gullible ones, have been led to believe that some small¹²⁹ closed esoteric organised group has a monopoly of truth.

¹²⁸ The paras on this page are unnumbered.

¹²⁹ "shall" -typo in the original

This is not so, as those who have been properly instructed, and those who have travelled widely and investigated thoroughly confirm.

(87-3) It is the mark of a well qualified teacher that he adapts his advice to fit each disciple individually. If everyone is recommended to practise the same method irrespective of his competence, his personal history and temperament, his grade of development and capacity, his character-traits and tendencies, in a number of cases it will be largely ineffectual.

(87-4) To treat the masses as feeble-minded, incapable of understanding truth and fit only to be nourished on falsehood, is to disregard two facts: first, their evolutionary character: second, their inner identity with truth's divine source. Why disguise or dilute? Why appeal only to their lowest and dullest; if you reach their highest and best once out of twenty tries, this is much better and more important than never reaching it at all. That was Emerson's way.

(87-5) Is it too presumptuous for an ordinary man to attempt to follow the philosophic path? We answer that no man who feels the need of truth to support or guide his life should be regarded as presumptuous in this matter. He need not be discouraged. He may dabble or penetrate deeply. The path is for him also. But it is so only to the extent that he is willing to pay the cost; no more. He is free to pay as little, and get as little, as he wishes. No one has the right to force him to give more.

(87-6) It is better for both master and disciple if their times together are short and well-spaced apart. For then the master will be better regarded, more respected and found mentally, while the disciple will be less manacled, more independent, less imitative and more correctly related inwardly. In brief the actuality will be more commensurate with the expectation.

(87-7) To listen properly to a guru, is not to bring in the ego with its interpretations. To read correctly from an inspired guru's book is to keep out the common tendency to put in one's own personal meanings. In short, let the mind Be Still and know the Truth!

(87-8) With all my Western education and intellectual outlook, I am still simple enough to believe, with Eastern people, it is worth while making a journey to get the blessing of a superior person.

(87-9) "You are full of your own opinions," said a modern Japanese master to an inquiring intellectual. "How can I show you Zen? First empty your cup."

(87-10) Even if a man is qualified to receive truth he may not be in the mood to do so, that is, he is not ready and willing to meet the cost. His interests or his desires or his emotions at that particular time lie elsewhere.

(88-1)¹³⁰ He is detached, watching the passing show go by, but not so detached as if he were far away. For his interest in the world's affairs is vivid; his intelligence active, seeing the interplay of cyclic impetus and karmic result.

(88-2) The help provided by a master during a joint meditation period is provided by his simply being there! His presence may help to deepen the student's own meditation.

(88-3) If you take another man's duty off his shoulders and put it on your own, or lift his responsibility and leave him without it, because you have a laudable desire to serve mankind, you may in the end render him a disservice as well as put an unnecessary obstacle on your quest.

(88-4) It is said that Indian gurus giving initiation can transfer some of their own state of consciousness to a new disciple, thus temporarily stilling his mind and queries and doubts.

(88-5) What harm is done to Truth if it is rescued from obsolete cumbersome sentences, foreign unfamiliar terms, rare obscure volumes, distant and different peoples and made applicable to our times?

(88-6) If the guru did nothing more than prevent his disciples from going astray, he would have done enough.

(88-7) Truth does not need man's support, for even if left unuttered it will survive and spread by the force which inheres in it. But man needs truth's support, for without it he remains insecure and peaceless.

(88-8) He may keep such ideas in the privacy of his own head, but when it comes to communicating them publicly, he must consider well how far he may go.

(88-9) Today the truth is to be spread in a wide general way, not as in former times in a narrow half-secret way.

(88-10) Is he invulnerable? Does no arrow of suffering ever penetrate his skin?

(88-11) It is not a question of selfishly withholding truth, or of sentimentally sharing it, but of acting with wisdom.

¹³⁰ The paras on this page are unnumbered.

(88-12) The truth is best expressed in words and phrases understandable by the society of his century.

(88-13) The sage sees so much more clearly and so much farther into consequences.

(88-14) Does he stand apart from the rest of mankind?

(88-15) When truth is popularised, it suffers in consequence.

(88-16) All men should have access to these truths.

(88-17) What is unpardonable in an ordinary man may be excusable in a sage.

Old xix: Religion ... NEW XVII: The Religious Urge

89
XIX

(89-1¹³¹) The pious man may keep his religious denomination when he adds philosophy, so long as he does not try to keep its conformism and dogmatism and smug monopolism. The one attitude is incompatible with the other. But the original living spirit behind its beginnings, the essential reverence of the higher power, the beautiful communion, the fervent devotion – these are perfectly philosophical.

(89-2) Christ's supposed despairing exclamation on the cross, and also his last uttered words "My God, why has thou forsaken me" have been wrongly translated, according to the Nestorian Christians, one of the oldest sects, whose Bible in the Aramaic language, which was the one Jesus used, gives the phrase as: "My God; For this was I kept," meaning, this is my destiny.

(89-3) In the end, and in the cases of so many Christians, it may be said of Jesus, what Fichte¹³² said of Kant, "What he has been understood to teach, is exactly what he intended to eradicate."

(89-4) The philosopher has no general need to identify himself with any particular religion, with its bias and limitation, but he may have a special need to do so because of personal circumstances or of service to humanity.

(89-5) The theory based on economics, according to which religion was invented to help

¹³¹ The paras on this page are unnumbered.

¹³² Properly "Johann Gottlieb Fichte"

despoil the working class is unscientific: it is also unworthy of those who boast that they are led by reason. The very adherence to such a theory proves that they are led much more by strong emotion.

(89-6) To search widely as well as variously in the records left by those who seem to have some insight, is a wise procedure. How much better than remaining imprisoned in the limitations of a single geographical culture, a single period of thought! How much more likely to lead to broader, truer understanding of life!

(89-7) We need not accept a primitive form of religious revelation if our own intellect has developed too far beyond such a level. But we ought not despise those who do accept it, who find in it an answer to their need of belief in the higher power. However imperfect and unevolved, it is at base an affirmation that God is.

(89-8) What does it mean to take the name of God in vain, against which the Bible warns us? It means thinking of the Deity without accompanying reverence. It means using the word "God" thoughtlessly and carelessly.

(89-9) The Greek Mysteries provided an open religious experience for the populace, and a hidden mystical experience for the cultivated minority. The initiates kept their secret so well that even today very little is known about either the doctrine or the ritual.

(89-10) Men may be exposed to the loftiest influence but if they are not willing and therefore ready to receive it, if they have not been prepared by their past history and reflection to recognise it for what it is, they will not appreciate its worth, let alone become affected or excited by it.

(89-11) Each religious sect and esoteric cult assumes its own superiority over all the others.

(89-12) Over-organisation is dangerous to religious institutions.

90
XIX

(90-1)¹³³ Gnosticism was banned as heresy by the Church Councils, its books destroyed, its teachers persecuted. The truth in it was banned indiscriminately along with the untruth. The differing sects in it were treated all alike. That, during Rome's luxurious and decadent periods, some sects said we should give to the spirit what is of the spirit and to the flesh what is of the flesh, and practised immorality, is true. But it is also true that other sects presented the struggle by good forces against the evil ones in most

¹³³ The paras on this page are unnumbered.

dramatic and forcible terms. Its recognition of the meaning, place and importance of "Light" seen in meditation was a prominent and valuable feature of Gnosticism.

(90-2) A more authentic and correct view of any religion, and particularly of the Christian religion, may only be had by going back to the first centuries of its history.

(90-3) Those who feel they must apply a personal pronoun to Deity should do so. But they in turn should accord equal liberty to others who are unable to share this feeling, and not regard them as apostates or heretics.

(90-4) Any ecclesiastical organisation or any prophetic person who claims exclusive knowledge of higher things, exclusive communication with heavenly spheres goes beyond whatever real mandate of authority it possesses. None has the right to make such a claim. Instead of honouring the organisation, the latter is dishonoured by it, by its arrogance and falsity.

(90-5) If you want to know what Christianity really is and should be, not what it has become, study widely its early beginnings.

(90-6) Why did Jesus not tell people where he had been, and what he had been doing, from his twelfth to thirtieth years of age?

(90-7) Religion is to be appreciated for whatever higher ideal it holds before its followers.

(90-8) What suited an earlier state of religious culture is not necessarily to be fastened to that culture forever.

(90-9) More than anything men need today to find some kind of contact with the Higher Power which is behind them, and behind the universe.

(90-10) Is it not better to give to those who are unable to comprehend that there is a divine reality – which is anyway beyond human grasp – a symbol which stands for it and which can be grasped by ordinary human faculty or human sense? At the least it will remind them of it, at the most it will help to lead them to acknowledge its factuality.

(90-11) There is no need for anyone to leave his own religion, but there is a need for him to go deeper into it.

(90-12) If Paul had not busied himself with turning Jesus' inspiring message "The Kingdom of Heaven is within you!" – meaning it is within you NOW – into an ascetic message of long-drawn war against the carnal body; if he had listened better and learnt

more from that flash which lighted his road to Damascus, instead of returning to the bias and prejudice of his innate nature, he might have given history a higher, less Judaic, version of Christianity.

91
XIX

(91-1)¹³⁴ Some modern theologians of Protestant faith say that as God is no longer part of human experience, it is irrelevant to discuss Him.

(91-2) It is very difficult to find any organised form of religion which does not exaggerate its own value, or denigrate other forms.

(91-3) The physical and mental images of religion exist because men need, and must necessarily make, symbols of That which they cannot conceive directly.

(91-4) The sage is in himself a non-sectarian, yet his people's need or his personal destiny, or both, may make him active on behalf of religious sect. He is mentally non-political, yet the same pressure may make him work for some political cause.

(91-5) There is not seldom a kernel of truth with the shell of legend, myth and fable.

(91-6) In spite of their personal preoccupations, all men are fundamentally the impersonal Overself. They do not need to know it, if only they will believe it.

(91-7) A religion which would satisfy man's higher yearnings and yet be reasonable and practical, would be welcomed by many.

(91-8) Some learned authorities like Seydel and Garbe¹³⁵ find Buddhist influences in Christianity, others like Hopkins¹³⁶ and Wecker¹³⁷, find Christian influence in Buddhism.

(91-9) A philosophically-based religion would give all its worshippers a chance to move up higher whenever they wished, felt ready, or began to express doubts.

(91-10) Religious life does not necessarily suffer if religious form is creatively adjusted to suit the times.

¹³⁴ The paras on this page are unnumbered.

¹³⁵ Referring to Rudolf Seydel and Richard Garbe.

¹³⁶ Probably referring to Edward Washburn Hopkins, Ph.D., LL.D. (September 8, 1857 – 1932)

¹³⁷ Referring to Otto Wecker.

(91-11) The most intellectual early Christians were those who abode in Alexandria, for it was the greatest Mediterranean centre of philosophical learning before Christianity appeared in it.

(91-12) The mission of founding a separate community, with a separate organisation, was not Jesus' mission. Those who assert that it was have wandered far from his plain statements.

(91-13) Every temple, ancient or Oriental, if built on a philosophically traditional plan, acts also as a diagram of the human mind, with the shrine representing the Overself.

(91-14) Temples have been built all over the ancient, medieval and modern worlds to honour the First Cause.

(91-15) A prophet is primarily one who brings a revelation to mankind, who gives out what has been given to him from on high, not reasoned out by him from available facts.

(91-16) The Japanese¹³⁸ master Rinzai said earlier "Scriptures are but steps to enlightenment" what the Indian master Ramana Maharshi¹³⁹ said later,

(91-17) "You snivelling priest," exclaimed Voltaire, "you are imposing delusions upon society for your own aggrandisement."

(91-18) This is the point where religion intersects mysticism.

92¹⁴⁰

XIX

Old xx: The Sensitives ... NEW XVI: The Sensitives

93

XX

(93-1)¹⁴¹ It is his own mind, using its imaginative power, which creates the vision he sees. But it is not a false vision since it assumes the form which appeals most to him, and because its purpose is to enable him to believe, accept, the divine presence as a real fact. That presence is what matters most in all such experiences and is their chief inspirer.

¹³⁸ "Jap" in the original.

¹³⁹ "Maharishee" in the original

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¹⁴¹ The paras on this page are unnumbered.

(93-2) What men communicate to others is not the Real which they actually touch, however authentically, but their human reaction to it. This is one reason why the religious world is divided, why religious and mystic revelations are contradictory, why truth-seekers get confused and bewildered, why they move on from one sect to another.

(93-3) Those who find the work of meditation too arduous, its diurnal regularity too tiresome, either abandon it or take to a substitute. This may be ceremonial magic or narcotic drug.

(93-4) The claim that these drugs can reveal Reality is a false one. They only reveal duplicates.

(93-5) It need not surprise anyone that some persons, lacking competent personal guidance, are so astonished by their inner experiences that they come to believe that they have been specially favoured by the Deity.

(93-6) There is no room for fanaticism if the feet are kept on the solid earth of rationality, practicality and history, however high the mind flies.

(93-7) Looking for extraordinary experiences or supernatural results or mysterious occurrences merely deviates one from the correct path.

(93-8) Few mystics can let the inspiration come through as it is. Most give it a form derived from their own personal make-up.

(93-9) Extravagant assertions and erroneous ideas constitute another peril which besets the developing beginner.

(93-10) They believe that in touching these objects left by holy men or in visiting these places where such men resided, they touch holiness itself. A few even believe that they commune with it.

(93-11) How many aspirants have travelled in circles arriving, like Omar Khayyam, in the end at the same door by which they entered in!

(93-12) It is understandable that some should seek in mystical states a refuge from calamity.

(93-13) Too many beatniks are exhibitionists: their bodily attitudes, dress, language and mode of life generally are different too often only to draw attention to themselves – a typical symptom of neurotics. (And if) they have rejected the process of refinement which through the incarnations alters boorish disgusting habits into gentlemanly

fastidious ones, it is only because they have yet to undergo it!

(93-14) All communications of a psychical or intuitive, visioned or heard character must be tested warily and judged critically by their results in experience. Otherwise the false, the fraudulent, the unfactual, the misleading, may be accepted as the true and real. This of course is a rule mainly for beginners.

(93-15) Inspiration has to filter through a human mind and there it begins to falter, to colour, to adulterate itself.

94
XX

(94-1)¹⁴² Everything that stimulates us to follow the quest is worth encouraging if its demerits be not too large; but everything which paralyses this aspiration is rendering a disservice to humanity.

(94-2) It is dangerous to use terminologies and vocabularies which the past and the present have associated with particular cults, movements, groups and organisations. It is better to find new ways of presenting spiritual truths, new words with which to name them.

(94-3) Because certain drugs seem to duplicate the psychic or mystic experiences, in their effects, superficial minds have leapt to the conclusion that it is unnecessary to put in the hard unremitting labour which inner practices require.

(94-4) One often hears the followers of one cult disparage the teaching of a different cult, or the disciples of one guru denigrate the person of another guru.

(94-5) Mystery exists where the facts are plain and simple. The naive inexperienced student is kept back by imbalance in teachings, over-weighty emphases wrongly applied, and confusion between what is only a means with what is properly its end and goal. The results are unnecessary complication and avoidable obfuscation. The beginner himself helps the incompetent teacher by his own tendency to refuse to believe that the truth is so utterly simple.

(94-6) DRUGS: (LSD) It intensifies perceptions, vivifies colours, re-animates long forgotten memories. A common experience with it duplicates one that comes to mystics. It is as if one part of the man is entirely outside the other part, as if he were two persons. As mind, pure 'I'-consciousness, he is invisible. As physical body, he is the object looked at a short distance in front of the 'I.' Some subjects found the

¹⁴² The paras on this page are unnumbered.

experience horrible and would have no more of it. But others found it delightful and could not get too much.

The normal safe dose of LSD is 100 micrograms, hardly a pin's head. The tremendous power of this chemical drug far exceeds all the old natural drugs hitherto known.

In "The Island," his last novel, Aldous Huxley seemed to recommend drug-taking as a means of procuring spiritual glimpses, and to assert that there is no difference in result between them and orthodox ones. This is no more correct than the assertion that there is no difference between a real object and its duplicate in a glass mirror.

Drugs destroy character, weaken the will and sabotage the memory. They pervert the reasoning faculty. Drugs taken long enough turn the taker into an addict. In the end, when dependence is complete, he will be a nervous, moral or physical wreck, depending on the kind of person he is.

(94-7) There is always the risk in this kind of activity of beginning with sincerity and ending with charlatanry.

(94-8) Too many times he assumes that what he desires for himself must be the same as what God desires for him.

(94-9) It is better not to try to get inner experiences but to let them unfold as and when they will.

(94-10) Men put forward their own errors as messages from God.

95
XX

(95-1)¹⁴³ The mind's power is being unscrupulously misused when it seeks to influence others against their own interest and for its selfish purpose.

(95-2) If there is so much more interest in the spiritual truth, there is also much more interest in its sinister reversions and perversions, in black magic, satanic forces, the misuse of drugs and the abuse of sex, witchcraft, sorcery, influencing others through mental means for selfish ends and worship of the powers of darkness. Young naive and unbalanced persons seeking occult thrills and excitements, or recklessly curious about (to them) psychical novelties, are brought into foul malignant circles where their character is degraded and their understanding twisted.

(95-3) The uninstructed, the simple, the pious, the mystic are apt to be satisfied with

¹⁴³ The paras on this page are unnumbered.

their personal reactions to gurus, temples, rituals, mantras and meditations. But the reactions may be pleasant illusions, giving birth to comforting fallacies or false consolations. That is, the seekers get beyond their ordinary selves and believe that they are experiencing the Transcendental, the Absolute. They do not know that counterfeits exist, or that there are inferior states which may be joyful or peaceful or exciting or sensational but are still not the real, the authentic goal.

(95-4) The Christian Science Church achieved success not at all because it taught mentalism, which is too hard and too subtle for most to grasp, but because of two reasons. First, it gave visible results in the healing of sick people. If some of the cases were quite trivial, others were spectacular. Second, it taught a practical method of not letting the ego's "mortal mind" manage its own affairs (since it is so faulty and so limited) but of turning them over or surrendering them to the Overself for management. This is similar to the Maharshi's¹⁴⁴ passenger in a railway carriage who was advised to put his parcel down from his shoulder and let the train carry it.

(95-5) The claim by both hypnotism and spiritualism that another human mind is capable, under certain conditions, of entering another human mind is true enough. It is also capable of dominating the other one. These two possibilities exist mostly in those situations where a person has willingly thrown himself open to another person's influence, has sat in the hypnotist's chair or at the spiritist's table. They also exist outside of these situations, particularly if someone sits for meditation by trying to make his mind a blank, without previously trying also over a sufficient period to purify his character, uplift his motives and achieve some balance between his emotions and reason.

(95-6) It is not the inspiration, the source, that is at fault. It is the human medium, which to some extent, varying from person to person, is unreliable.

(95-7) Their faith is not really in God, but in what they think is God, and so is their communion or communication, i.e. their prayer or meditation.

(95-8) The inspired truth must be sifted out from the human opinion.

96
XX

(96-1) The danger of occult experience is inflation of the ego, regarding oneself too highly, to appraise one's position beyond its real one.

(96-2) Not all his thoughts are a man's own.

¹⁴⁴ "Maharishi's" in the original

Old xxi: The World-Idea ... NEW XXVI: The World-Idea

97
XXI

(97-1)¹⁴⁵ All memory of my worldly business fell away. Whereupon Truth smiled and raised her hand as if to signify that she understood very well that I came from a lower world, where the getting of food and drink or the mating of bodies in love were profoundly important things, but here, whence one could view the coming and going of time itself, they could well be disregarded. A great sense stole over me that I had indeed been deceived and that the detail of my personal life was less important than I had believed. Happiness stood not therein but was ever at the side, if we would but turn the head and acknowledge her presence. As I breathed that air which seemed to come from a land of immortal youth, I learned a few things. I do not know whether they can be spoken of, for there are things which the tongue is not fully equal to telling, and these seem some of them. Yet I must try. I must pause to pay homage to those glorious truths And then my vision fell away from me but the mood did not. I became aware of my physical surroundings.

(97-2) The first book which brought me into mystical ideas was a curious fictional composition by Abu Bakr Ibn Abu Tufail. The title was "The Life of Hayy ibn Yaqdhan¹⁴⁶, the self-taught Philosopher." Ibn-Tufail flourished in the twelfth century in Spain and Morocco. He was a practising physician, a mathematician and a Sufi. The book opened my knowledge in a vague general way to the possibilities of meditation, so I embarked upon the practice – unguided, uninstructed, groping my way in what, at first, was absolute darkness.

(97-3) When I think back to those days, I remember when Michael Juste¹⁴⁷ shared an apartment with me on Tavistock Square in a massive eighteenth century late Georgian house with lofty ceilings and thick walls, where two or three years later Leonard and Virginia Woolf turned the rooms into a publishing office for "The Hogarth Press" and

¹⁴⁵ The paras on this page are unnumbered.

¹⁴⁶ "Hai Ebn Yokdan" in the original

¹⁴⁷ "Michael Juste" was the pseudonym of Michael Houghton, a Hungarian Jew who founded the well-known "Atlantis" book shop in London in the 1920's. The shop still flourishes in Bloomsbury and may be familiar to some of you. Houghton was an odd character who mixed with many well-known and many more completely unknown occultists of the last century. He published several books in his own name as well as the works of other writers, and was the editor of the Occult Observer from 1949-51 – a quarterly journal that contained contributions from many well-known occultists and mystics of the time.

helped to foster the so-called Bloomsbury Tradition in English literary life, with its high rationality, fastidious stylistic prose and irreverent youthful and unconventional criticism. Juste wrote brief inspired verses, his first publication a yellow covered little booklet, aroused the London Times reviewer to enthusiastic appreciation, and I never understood why he did not continue with poetic creation connected with spiritual sources, for which he had extraordinary genius, but turned his head to other and less creative kinds of work. I lost contact with him when *A Search in Secret India* was published, as he quarrelled with me for leaving out a dozen lines which he believed it was my duty to put in. We never met again after that dispute, and I am sorry for it. He published an occult periodical for a few years and I know that he opened a bookshop near the British Museum.

(97-4) I lived once, in my early manhood, in what was then called Highgate Village but now alas! swallowed up in London's great hungry mouth. Coleridge had lived there too a century earlier, an ornament to English literature.

(97-5) The Overself extends its grace to all men, but all men are not able to get it. This may be due to different reasons, some physical and others, the most numerous, emotional or mental.

98
XXI

(98-1)¹⁴⁸ If those books had any merit at all, it is at least because they tried to offer precise instruction in a subject usually wrapped up in a vagueness and dream.

(98-2) The Writer who sometimes sits behind the writer of these lines smiling at my puny attempts to translate the Untranslatable, once bade me put away for an indefinite period the thought of any future publications. I obeyed and there was a long silence in the outer world – so long that two obituary notices were printed by newspapers! I had enough leisure to discover the faultiness of the earlier work and felt acutely that the world was better off without my lucubrations. But a day came when I felt the presence of the Presence and I received clear guidance to take the pen again.

(98-3) Robert Louis Stevenson: “By the time a man gets well into the seventies, his continued existence is a mere miracle; and when he lays his old bones in bed for the night, there is an overwhelming probability that he will never see the day.”

(98-4) Men feel the need of some kind of communion or communication with the Higher Power, be it ceremonial worship, verbal prayer or silent meditation. He whose job is to state in words the possibility of such communion, to describe its actual

¹⁴⁸ The paras on this page are unnumbered.

realisation and to portray its supreme upliftings of emotion and sublime openings of consciousness is as needed by the world as is any other worker whose contribution is useful, worthwhile or needed.

(98-5) New Zealand probably waited longer for the appearance or evolution of human beings than any other inhabited area of this earth. I thought it might therefore have a purer aura, less polluted by human evil. But alas! I found that it slaughters more animals than any other inhabited country, leaving the atmosphere no less polluted than elsewhere. Thus a golden chance to establish a new and better way of life was passed by.

(98-6) The Spiritual Crisis of Man was indifferently received, it got neither attention nor circulation of any account. This was regrettable, for I had been allowed a peep behind the curtain of world events, behind the present pattern of the human scene on this planet and there was a real necessity for knowledge of it if all of us were not to go down into the gravest catastrophe.

(98-7) I felt that this was a primary task; that someone needed to call the attention of laymen, not only of theological students or religious aspirants to this now uncommon, obscure, unfamiliar and neglected yet important side of the spiritual life.

(98-8) I am not ordinarily able to organise my paragraphs into coherent pages.

(98-9) What can I do if my thoughts persist in emerging in odd fragments which leave their logical connections to be filled in later?

(98-10) I write a few paragraphs or single pages as they come to me, not in coherent order, and then bring them together weeks, months or years later.

(98-11) I feel much in the position of Wen Chu Hsi who wrote many books eight hundred years ago when he was young but repented doing so when he was old, although for a different reason.

99

XXI

(99-1)¹⁴⁹ A strict coherence of paragraphs and sentences is something I manage somehow sometimes to achieve, but only with great difficulty and by some kind of underground travel.

(99-2) The West not only needed instruction in the art (of mediation) but it needed

¹⁴⁹ The paras on this page are unnumbered.

specific instruction.

(99-3) I was just one more fallen idol of the literary world.

(99-4) _____¹⁵⁰ is depicted with sword in hand, meaning that he cuts away one's illusions.

100¹⁵¹
XXI

Old xxii: The Reverential Life ... NEW XVIII: The Reverential Life

101
XXII

(101-1)¹⁵² When men pray it is mostly the ego praying, and for itself. If this attitude is maintained until the end of the session, God gets very little chance to say anything to the devotee.

(101-2) It is better to pray to be led into truth for then, as Jesus knew and remarked, "All these (other) things shall be added unto you."

(101-3) The 18th chapter of the Gita promises that the aspirant will partake of God's grace if he seeks refuge in Him alone.

(101-4) The Overself sends us its messages in different ways, and through different channels.

(101-5) What I mean by Grace may easily be misunderstood, or only half-understood. Its full meaning is only partly suggested by the Tamil word arul – divine blessing, the Greek word charis – free and beautiful gift.

(101-6) The capacity to commune with the Overself exists in all men; it is a universal one. But it does not exist to an equal degree. For those who can accept the doctrine of rebirth, the explanation of this inequality lies there.

(101-7) He who has not learnt to lower his head before the higher power, to surrender

¹⁵⁰ A blank space was left in the original because the original typist couldn't read PB's handwriting, or because PB himself left a blank in the para.

¹⁵¹ Blank Page

¹⁵² The paras on this page are unnumbered.

his personal aims to the World-Idea, to submit his desires to the need for self-governance, will suffer in the end.

(101-8) The Grace comes into his mind when thoughts are still and quiet, and into his life when ego is stilled and relinquished.

(101-9) There is an incalculable factor in this game of self with Overself, an unpredictable element in this quest – the Grace!

(101-10) Ignoring one's own contribution toward present calamity and moaning at the feet of God; failing to use one's own intelligence and will while requesting Him to satisfy a need – this is not correct prayer.

(101-11) All men must find in the end that they are insufficient.

(101-12) Whimpering is not praying. It is another form of the self's long littleness.

(101-13) R.W. Emerson put it pithily: "Into grace all our goodness is resolved."¹⁵³ These were his words, as far as I can remember them.

102¹⁵⁴

XXII

Old xxiii: Orient and Occident ... NEW XV: The Orient

103

XXIII

(103-1)¹⁵⁵ There are hazards in a physical plane meeting, whether between master and disciple or author and admirer, which do not exist if sufficient land or sea is kept between the two.

(103-2) Goto Roshi contemporary Zen guru claims* that "Zen has been misinterpreted to the West because the interpreters have not finished their training. So they have talked of goals instead of the method." (By method he meant zazen, sitting still in meditation – PB.) *(in Paul Wienpahl's¹⁵⁶ "The Matter of Zen" New York University

¹⁵³ From "A Discourse in West Church" (or in a book by that name about Emerson) – TJS 2014

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¹⁵⁵ The paras on this page are unnumbered.

¹⁵⁶ "Menpahl" typo in the original (Paul Wienpahl, author of The Radical Spinoza and Matter of Zen a Brief Account of Zazen

Press).

(103-3) Lafcadio Hearn. On Tropical Location. "His muscles ached and breathing was difficult. Clothing, even a sheet at night, was almost unbearable. The slightest physical effort made his heart race madly while he dripped perspiration. At the same time his whole range of thought contracted, became a prisoner of his ailing body. His mind functioned faintly, slowly, incoherently, and even his memory was clouded. He dozed over his writing and fell asleep if he tried to read. When he deliberately forced himself to think or study, his eyes and temples throbbed with pain and a great weight in his head crushed him down into a semi-stupor. His skin prickled and tingled, and the night sweats drenched him. Toward morning he would drop off into an exhausted sleep; but when he awakened and stood up, it was like rising from the grave. While he was going through these trying days, all the disadvantages of living in the tropics were accentuated. The thoughts and habits of other centuries still prevailed here simply because Time itself moved slowly, as though it too were enfeebled by the heat. The violence of tropical colours irritated him; the luscious tropical fruits sickened him; and he grew tired of the curse of insects and the threat of snakes. In desperation he asked himself how much longer he could endure the heat of blinding glaring days and the empty misery of sleepless nights. After a few steps however, he was transfixed by the malignant power of the light."

(103-4) Pondicherry was a little French colony sending a deputy to represent it in the legislature at distant Paris. Its life has changed under its newer Indian Republican Government but in those days it was becoming shabby, with a pathetic air of lost affluence. The houses in the better part of the town were European in style, but their whitewashed walls peeling and stained, their little gardens overrun by weeds and flowering shrubs tangled and unkempt. In the early evening, just before lamps were lit, the tropic twilight made the place seem unreal and illusive.

(103-5) It is an extraordinary and to many incredible discovery that there were more known practising or studying mystics in England during all the centuries than in any other country of Europe.

(103-6) The former mayor of a little Greek town exemplified for me, in our talks, the ancient Greek sceptic who asserted that infinite Being as it is in itself is not reachable and therefore finding the truth about it is not possible.

(103-7) The interior of the monastery was gloomy; its guttering oil lamps too small and too few; its walls – once painted with the Tibetan pantheon – too sooty and grimy.

(104-1)¹⁵⁷ The Asiatic people, like the African, want more of the good things of this world. They want it more than they want spirituality. So more and more most of their spiritual guides denounce what they call the growing “materialistic tendencies.” Thus these guides reap the harvest they have sown. Since most of them have taken monkish vows they teach the laity similar ideals: – to renounce the world is regarded as the highest way and the only way to God! But the masses have had enough of a poverty-stricken existence, enough too of negative teaching. So if they turn away from the spiritual guides to materialistic ones, the blame is not all theirs. Some of it must be in the faulty emphasis of the teaching, too. If the sight of a yellow-garbed holy man no longer arouses abject reverence in all hearts, if Gandhi’s own disciple and heir tried to emulate the West in raising the standard of material living, perhaps the pendulum-like activity of the world-movement is countering the upset balance of things.

(104-2) Why do seeking souls run off to India, and now to Japan, as they ran off to Europe in Emerson’s time? If they had a less confused conception of the Overself, a clearer idea of what they sought, none of them would feel that he had to go to this or that country, place, person. But the tendencies inherited from former births and pushing him one way or pulling him toward somewhere else, set up this urge to move away and meet new experience, new people, perhaps new masters. In particular, they draw him back to the scene of previous lives which powerfully affected his spiritual seeking. This is attractive to him, perhaps even emotionally romantic, but it gives him nothing really that he has not in fact had before.

(104-3) Anna C. Brackett¹⁵⁸ (U.S.A. 1867)

- “The Ideal” (1) Hands that seek it here, or there,
It eludeth everywhere.
(2) Through and round the changing show
Learn its changeless self to know.
(3) One, it waits and comes to thee.

(104-4) Krishnamurti has rightly criticised the various kinds of spiritual attachment which aspirants tend to form; but in doing so he has leaned over too far in the opposite direction and nurtured in himself and then transmitted to his hearers or readers a detachment which is so rabid that it becomes compulsive. Thus a new and paradoxical kind of attachment is, ironically yet unwittingly, created by them to replace the old ones they have forsaken.

¹⁵⁷ The paras on this page are unnumbered.

¹⁵⁸ Anna Brackett (1836-1911) was a female philosopher known for being a translator, feminist, and an educator. She is known for being one of the most important educators among women, but her philosophical achievements are oftentimes overlooked. She translated Karl Rosenkranz's *Pedagogics as a System* and wrote *The Education of American Girls*, a response to arguments against the coeducation of males and females. – TJS

(104-5) Henry Miller in "The Colossus of Maroussi." Greece is of the utmost importance to every man who is seeking to find himself." "Spiritually Greece is the fountain-head of wisdom and inspiration."

(104-6) In a so-called History of Indian Philosophy published in a country whose government espouses atheism, Buddha is denounced as a purveyor of narcotic teachings intended to keep the workers asleep exploited, while yoga is described as an invention intended to keep the masses superstitious, apathetic and stupid, and thus keep them from using their brains! The goal itself – Nirvana, Samadhi – is a state of stone-like unfeelingness and unconsciousness.

105
XXIII

(105-1)¹⁵⁹ D.T. Suzuki was a lay disciple of Soyen Shaku, a roshi (guru) at Engaku-ji Temple who went on invitation to attend the World Parliament of Religions in 1893 held at Chicago – the same one where Vivekananda spoke. D.T.S. travelled with him to act as translator and later remained in the U.S.A. alone. Thus was Zen launched in the West but it was Suzuki's steady unremitting work which continued the impulse given by Soyen. He did this by lectures, translations of texts, a periodical journal and finally books. The reward of marked attention did not come however until the World War II ended, when the interest in Zen suddenly erupted.

(105-2) There was a sanity, a wholeness, about the goal of the best Greeks, which we do not find easily elsewhere in the antique or Oriental world. They appreciated art created by man, beauty created by Nature and reason applied by man. They developed the body's health, strength, shapely form; disciplined it at certain periods for special purposes but did so without falling into the fanaticism and extremism of those ascetic religions which abjure enjoyment merely because it is enjoyment.

(105-3) Since the war so many reports, interviews, articles, books, talks and photos have come out about the East, that the mystery of the East is hardly a mystery at all. In particular, its traditional wisdom and religion are well documented.

(105-4) Heinrich Zimmer, the Jungian, wrote in German a book based on Maharshi's teaching. He had to gather his materials from other books of which very few existed at that time, and from correspondence, as he never went to India and consequently never talked to Maharshi.

¹⁵⁹ The paras on this page are unnumbered.

(105-5) Lao Tzu's¹⁶⁰ trip to the West was traditionally supposed to be intended to convert the barbarians.

(105-6) "Wei Shu" a Taoist book written about the middle of sixth century. "Since the people on the earth find the practising of the doctrine very difficult, merely have them erect altars and shrines where they may worship morning and evening. Altars and shrines serve as a refuge from worldly concerns."

(105-7) Unlike the Western divisions of Christianity, Protestant and Catholic, the Eastern Church has not troubled itself with propaganda or engaged in proselytism.

(105-8) Just as the chief place in a Greek temple was assigned to the statue of a god, so the holy of holies in an Indian temple was assigned to the jewelled image of a worshipped deity.

(105-9) The icons are sacred objects used in the decoration of churches, presenting on panels of painted wood, portraits of Jesus, Mary, Joseph, Prophets, Apostles or Saints.

(105-10) How much of the sharp, bright clarity of the Mediterranean region contributed to the creation of Greek thought at its best?

(105-11) After nearly 1000 years of useful existence, Confucianism had sunk to a low level; it had become feeble, corrupt. Wang Yang Ming was the man who aroused it to new life and strength and inspired it afresh.

(105-12) Meals were served at Ramanashram on enormously large flat banana tree leaves.

106
XXIII

(106-1)¹⁶¹ Just as the ancient Greek language could adequately put human ideas into words and do so even better than English, so the ancient Sanskrit language could express spiritual and metaphysical ideas better than any other tongue could.

(106-2) Atmananda moved through the paces of a rhythmic dance with light graceful steps. They alternated as he danced, first forwards and then backwards.

(106-3) It is unlikely that the many centuries devoted by Mount Athos to the mysteries of contemplation have not produced a wider and deeper knowledge than the simple

¹⁶⁰ "Lao-tze's" in the original

¹⁶¹ The paras on this page are unnumbered.

Jesus prayer which is publicly given out as its highest wisdom. It is more than likely that its locked trunks or coffers filled with ancient scripts have occult mystic and metaphysical lore comparable to some of the Indian.

(106-4) They run off to India because they do not want Western materialism, only to be encircled by a different kind – Indian materialism! They may not discover what has really happened and may remain victims of suggestion for many years.

(106-5) Confucius recommended gentlemanly conduct and polished propriety, refined manners and a cultured mind. It is true that he was primarily a social law-giver, but he was also a sage. It was not only that he sought to provide a fixed pattern for keeping the society of his time peaceful and orderly. His wisdom was not merely worldly wisdom. But its spiritual depth will not be recognised by ordinary persons.

(106-6) The Orient gave us something just as good as silks and teas, spaghetti and curry. It gave religious, mystic and philosophic texts, commentaries and poems which, in translations, have nourished discerning Occidental minds.

(106-7) What happened to Confucius is what happened to other great teachers. His doctrines were crystallised so rigidly that they prevented further new creativity, denied mental freedom and restricted adaptability to contemporary needs.

(106-8) Since Eastern Orthodox Church is the earliest formed, the oldest historically, of all Christian groups, it is not surprising that some basic truths, neglected or lightly weighed by the other groups, is here still to be found, the mysticism of the early Greek fathers particularly.

(106-9) The Maharshi's¹⁶² own wish and nature made a sequestered existence much more attractive than a public one. It was something ironical that destiny allotted him almost no privacy at all. Nearly the whole of waking and certainly the whole of sleeping life kept him in front of all our eyes as a spectacle. He accepted the anomaly as "God's will"!

(106-10) Lao Tzu,¹⁶³ which is a title of honour (the Old Sage) and not a personal name (the surname was Li), called the higher power "the Great Tao." He wrote "How still the Tao is!"

(106-11) Pantaenus was sent as a preacher of the Gospel to India so early as the first century.

¹⁶² "Maharshee's" in the original

¹⁶³ "Lao-tze" in the original

(106-12) The name Sri Maharshi¹⁶⁴ is an honorific one: his real name being Venkataraman – (PB check this).

107
XXIII

(107-1)¹⁶⁵ Byzantine art is so largely a sacred one because the Orthodox Church claimed that effigies and portraits of Jesus Christ and His saints held a spark of divine energy, and that to meditate on them was spiritually helpful.

(107-2) There, on Mount Athos, the monks live with few civilised amenities and far from the sophisticated society of metropolitan cities.

(107-3) No critic has ever appeared to question the impeccable probity of Buddha's mind, however much bias and prejudice may have opposed the products of that mind.

(107-4) Atmananda claimed that apart from the spoken communication there was another which was unspoken, a silent spiritual emanation which would enlighten his hearers immeasurably more than mere words could, but which was so subtle and elusive that only a fraction of them could pick it up.

(107-5) Chinese Taoist mystics reduced their intake of ordinary food and replaced the deficient portion by eating substances believed to contain or to crystallise a high proportion of Tao: these were gold, jade, pearls, mica, cinnabar and silver. The mixtures containing them were regarded as elixirs of life.

(107-6) The gold background which so many Byzantine artists gave to their frescoes and icons and mosaic pictures, combines with the sacred subject to convey a feeling of sublimity to the beholder. And when the subject is a portrayed figure – Jesus, an Apostle, a Saint – then this golden surround fittingly signifies his aura or nimbus.

(107-7) Balanced outward living together with an unperturbed nature was the ideal set up by Confucius. This was his "Doctrine of the Mean."

(107-8) Just like Hazlitt and Cobbett in the England of an earlier century, Gandhi's ideas were simply expressed in print, lucidly expounded on platforms.

(107-9) No one need find himself faced with the choice between Orient and Occident in his search for truth. It is a false choice: the real one is within himself.

¹⁶⁴ Maharishee in the original

¹⁶⁵ The paras on this page are unnumbered.

(107-10) The Orient, once so alien and mysterious, has altered so rapidly in our own time that the change must be called 'stupendous.'

(107-11) A half-dozen or so hibiscus bushes grew in the little front garden of his villa, just behind the wrought-iron gate and on both sides of the path, with their pink petals and soft textures.

(107-12) We moderns do not have to go along with all Confucius' teachings; his support of the practice of elaborate costly rituals during funerals and prolonged mourning after them is regrettable.

(107-13) Oriental paintings and scrolls, bronzes and porcelains, statues and prints, furnitures and silks have been transported to Occidental apartments, houses, mansions and palaces for many centuries.

(107-14) The time when idealised pictures of Oriental spirituality were naively formed and wonderingly accepted has gone, with the rapid going of Oriental traditional life.

(107-15) Tao means the Way or Course of Nature.

108
XXIII

(108-1)¹⁶⁶ Those carved figures showing the Buddha's upstretched palm in blessing or in preaching have a psychic as well as a physical meaning.

(108-2) The old Greek Mysteries celebrated in religious rites or in occult demonstrations, the spiritual essence of man.

(108-3) Confucius gave a group of standards to guide social life and to discipline moral impulses.

(108-4) The search for spiritual identity has increased in the West, decreased in the East.

(108-5) Confucius' model was the man who was righteous, benevolent, well-behaved and wise.

Old xxiv: General ... NEW XII: Reflections

109
XXIV

¹⁶⁶ The paras on this page are unnumbered.

(109-1)¹⁶⁷ Is it not better to force illusions into accord with the realities than to go on being pleasantly deceived by them?

(109-2) Titles should be earned by merit, not by the chance of distant ancestry.

(109-3) Of what use is an education if it does not teach the young how to use their minds so as to promote their own welfare, instead of their own harm? All ought to be made aware of the value and need of emotional and thought control, of discriminating between destructive or negative thoughts and constructive or positive ones.

(109-4) With what pleasure do I put the dry green or black leaves of Chinese tea in a little earthen pot when the daily rituals of leisurely relaxed refreshment come round! How pleasant to balance in one's hand a cup of the delicately aromatic and fragrant liquid! I have long since lost the taste for Indian Darjeeling, Ceylonese and Japanese teas, finding satisfaction only in those which come from Cathay or Taiwan – Young Hyson green for breakfast, semi-black Oolong for mid-morning, smoky Lapsang or flowered Jasmine for mid-afternoon.

(109-5) One may not agree with all of his views and believe some of them mistaken, but this need not diminish the regard, the admiration, one has for his character and his ideals.

(109-6) Francis Bacon makes a new sentence hold a new idea. He requires an audience of busy thinkers, rather than mere readers. I refer of course to his Essays.

(109-7) Bishop Butler: "Things are what they are and the consequences of them will be what they will be." We may apply this statement to the whole of mankind's condition, or to our own small private circle.

(109-8) All rules and institutions, habits and traditions should be adjustable if they are to remain relevant to actual needs.

(109-9) No man remains exactly the same throughout life. His face, body, diet, mind, feelings and even attitude go through a cycle of change.

(109-10) Right Timing Twenty-two hundred years ago in China Li Szu said "I have heard that when one arrives at the opportune moment, one ought not be dilatory."

(109-11) No true reform is likely to be created by a committee. It is the single uncommon outstanding person who is usually responsible for bringing it brilliantly about. A committee can also achieve results but they will be of a mediocre kind.

¹⁶⁷ The paras on this page are unnumbered.

(109-12) It is the tragedy of one who knows too much to believe that the universe is an accidental conjunction of atoms but too little to believe that man himself is divine in essence, in origin and in destiny.

(109-13) These truths have been lost in the lapse of time, but not lost everywhere nor to everyone.

(109-14) The falsity of such doctrines must be revealed; their existence must be annulled.

(109-15) In turning his problem over to the Higher Power, he turns away from his ego.

(109-16) How can such a man find himself bad company? How can he be bored, lonely or morbid?

110
XXIV

(110-1)¹⁶⁸ The firm idealist who scorns compromise and the bold reformer who scorns discretion have their place in society, to which indeed their very stubbornness acts as spur or goad.

(110-2) Such exaggerated claims irritate reasonable minds and acerbate free discussion.

(110-3) It is only a beginning but it is a very necessary beginning.

(110-4) We make so many mistakes, especially when young, through sheer inexperience that it is not fair to ourselves to accept the blame for them.

(110-5) Such a statement is written to explain, not to apologise.

(110-6) His ideas are unsupported by any evidence, and unsupportable by any reasoning.

(110-7) Every author knows those boring hours of lingering at the writing desk with no lines coming up worth the trouble of penning.

(110-8) Little men who create great works of art or literature had better keep themselves unseen by their admirers or readers, unmet physically, lest illusionary images are shattered, preconceived pictures falsified, and the good their work might still do,

¹⁶⁸ The paras on this page are unnumbered.

nullified. The same is true of ugly men although in this case it is mostly the female admirers who are affected. Unattractive reformers, prophets, artists and mental creators of all kinds who seek to influence the public may reach more people if they remove themselves from the visible scene!

Old xxv: Human Experience ... NEW XIII: Human Experience

111
XXV

(111-1)¹⁶⁹ Ananda Coomaraswamy: "The doctrine of the Tao, the path of non-pursuit:- All that is best for us comes of itself into our hands but if we strive to overtake it, it eludes us."

(111-2) It was a contemporary Japanese Zen master, Goto Roshi, who asserted that the Orient, in contrast with the Occident, owed its spirituality to its material poverty.

(111-3) The essential point is that the more an executive is involved in the world's affairs, the more he needs this quest which leads him out of the world. The more his life is devoted to acquiring money and goods and position, the more he needs a firm base within himself from which properly to use these things as they ought to be used.

(111-4) It is not only in the special periods given over to the practice that mental quiet may be striven for, but also in the quite ordinary occupations of routine existence. But here a very short time – perhaps even a minute or two – will have to suffice. Nor can it go very deep. And it may have to be disguised or hidden to avoid drawing attention. Yet if it is repeated at every opportunity during the day some spiritual profit must emerge.

(111-5) It is in the hour of tribulation that the practice of philosophy proves its worth. In every human life there are critical situations when external resources and loving consolation are simply not enough to meet the emotional need. It is then that we must draw on inner resources and tap our spiritual reserves.

(111-6) His active everyday life gets in the way of his passive inner life: the conflict seems insoluble.

(111-7) If we turn ourselves over to the higher power, surrendering our personal spiritual future to it, we must also turn over the personal physical future, with all its

¹⁶⁹ The paras on this page are unnumbered.

problems, at the same time.

(111-8) There is a common notion that the perception of spiritual truth is useless to worldly life and that the development of spiritual character is even harmful to a worldly career. This is erroneous and must be disputed.

(111-9) The occasion, the event, the place and the person contribute their influence and affect one man more, another less. But if aspiration is to come nearer to achievement, if he is not to be satisfied with a merely ordinary inner existence, then there is a point beyond which he cannot afford to let conditions impose the decisive factor, the determining fiat.

(111-10) The truths found in philosophy are just as valuable for our practical life as for our intellectual life. It would be a grave error to consider them useless in the day-to-day matters and pursuits which engage so much of our time.

(111-11) Why let that situation, event or circumstance be born which can only bring you harm? If a little forethought, a little precautionary effort, can prevent its birth, why not give it?

(111-12) Even Emerson did not live always in transcendental ideas and dreams. He took his share in the anti-slavery agitation, bought railway and bank shares, married twice and often travelled the rough pioneering West on lecture tours. Was he any less spiritual than the saintly or the sequestered ascetics of Asia Minor, or of Hindustan?

112
XXV

(112-1)¹⁷⁰ This is what he has to learn – and it can be learnt only by personal practice, not from any book – how to keep in beautiful equipoise receptivity to his sacred Centre and efficiency in attending to the world's demands. This is answering Jesus' call to be in the world but not of it. This is the union of busy actuality with central tranquillity.

(112-2) Philo sadly noted that only a few of the young men of his time took philosophy seriously enough to heed its counsels and study its wisdom. True they often went to lectures (since this was in Alexandria) but, he complained, they took their business affairs with them, so that what they heard was not listened to properly, or if listened to, forgotten as soon as they made their exit from the hall.

(112-3) He need not deny the world if he accepts it to make use of its experience as a means to fulfil his higher aims.

¹⁷⁰ The paras on this page are unnumbered.

(112-4) He sees his personality playing its role on the world stage and, although he recognises its connection with him, it is felt as an object, as an 'other.'

(112-5) Even he who is active, efficient, practical and worldly, may also be touched by this heavenly light: it is not reserved for the dreamers and poets, the artists and saints alone. I have known men who blue-printed public buildings, engineered factories, managed office personnel, filled the lowest and the highest positions in a nation, who themselves had known ITS visitations, who recognised and revered it.

(112-6) How can the sensitive susceptible man defend himself psychically against the evil or neurotic auras impacted constantly on him if he is forced to live in a monstrous overgrown city?

(112-7) Those who engage in unselfish service are temporarily loosened somewhat from the ego. This of course is true only to the extent that the service is done with pure, and not with ulterior or mixed or quite selfish, motives.

(112-8) Such teachings are ignored or rejected as being of interest only to dreamers, idlers or misfits. There is some truth in this criticism, some basis for this attitude. Plain normal people who have to make a living, who are busy with the world's work, politics and economics, who have personal and family problems most of the time, find all this to be unrealistic, out of touch with things as they are, humanity as it is and has been.

(112-9) The lessons of past experience are not enough in themselves to provide all the guidance needed for present living. We need also the ideals held up by intuition, the principles and ideas presented from within by the higher part of our nature, and from without by the spiritual teachers and religious prophets of mankind.

(112-10) I mentioned in The Hidden Teaching Beyond Yoga my admiration for the Japanese method of returning some monks back to the World's life. Those who do not want to go back, who fail to accept the training period as a preparatory one and the monastery as a school for life, are regarded as stuck in a cave and unwilling, or unable, to get out of it and progress further.

(112-11) He has put himself into certain environments and situations or been put into them by karma.

(113-1)¹⁷¹ It is not that truth has to be made practical, for it is the most practical thing which exists. It is that men have to become better instructed in it, as well as in the higher laws which reflect it and then live out what they have learnt.

(113-2) Amid the trouble and clamour created by one's own weaknesses and other peoples' misunderstandings, it is better to remain silent, to rest content with entering the stillness and turn the problem over to the Higher Power.

(113-3) It is not only that the action must be right; the time and place must also be right.

(113-4) Not to perform that you will have to regret later, is part of the practical wisdom learned from life.

(113-5) The worldly realities have to be recognised for what they are, treated with respect and behaviour brought into accordance with them. What is the use of denying the world as 'unreal' or dismissing the body as 'nothing' as I have heard Indian mystics do, when all the time both are obstinately present to the senses and dominant in the mind? The world has to be dealt with, the body has to be tended, whatever views, opinions or beliefs they hold.

(113-6) Is philosophy capable of transforming society? Yes – but not in one day or one year. How much time it would need depends on several factors.

(113-7) To perform any action in the best way is to aim at the least strain and the most effectiveness and the greatest economy of movement.

(113-8) Our outer lives to some extent reflect the state of our minds. Many of the trials we have to bear would dissolve after we faced ourselves and removed the negative characteristics within our minds. But there are some karmic difficulties which cannot be altered, no matter how clear and pure the mind becomes.

(113-9) Human life shifts from scene to scene, human vicissitude shows the widest imaginable difference, but the divine Presence behind it is ever the same, immutable and timeless.

(113-10) Stillness at the Centre, activity on the circumference – this is equilibrium that is set by Nature (God) as the human ideal.

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¹⁷² Blank Page

Old xxvi: Mind-Body in Health and Sickness ... NEW

X: Healing of the Self

115
XXVI

(115-1)¹⁷³ Whether this man was an imposter, a sorcerer or a quack, a genuine religious mystic or a self-deceived visionary, his willingness to help the poor without charging them any fee ought to be remembered. And there are other points that ought to be remembered in the Count {de St-Germaine}'s¹⁷⁴ favour.

(115-2) Too many Indian, and a few Western, gurus and cults reject the development and use of healing power. It is, they argue, an obstruction in the spiritual path because it keeps its practitioner captive to the ego, which may even become stronger through conceit. There is the historic case of Ramakrishna. He went to his prayer shrine in his temple three times to request a healing for the throat cancer which troubled him, but each time failed to utter the words. The merit of argument based on increased egotism and vanity, the danger of being sidetracked from seeking the highest goal, is admitted. But is this enough ground to ban spiritual healing completely and always? Must it be denied to all people at all times, universally because some healers may be obstructed spiritually by its practice? The answer of common sense agrees with the example of Jesus.

(115-3) The healing of disease was well identified with Jesus' work, with Asklepan Greek sanctuaries, with Egyptian exorcism, with many a mystic throughout the Orient, and even with a number in the modern world, Eastern and Western. How, then, with such a religious background, can it be fair to deny divine inspiration to the man who performs it while allowing such inspiration to the man who only preaches?

(115-4) The imbalances in human character, nature, mind appear in more visible form as diseases in human body.

(115-5) That psychological disturbance may express itself in physical symptoms is an idea that is being increasingly accepted by the most materialistic medical practitioners.

(115-6) Vedantic thought usually regards the siddhis - occult powers - as obstacles to attaining truth. Among them the healing of the body's sicknesses and the mind's disorders is included.

¹⁷³ The paras on this page are unnumbered.

¹⁷⁴ PB himself was very interested in the writings, claims and stories about Comte de St-Germaine, so we presume that this is who he's referring to here.

(115-7) Anxiety, grief, nerve tension, emotional conflict, fear, or any other psychic factor may appear physical and as symptoms of illness.

(115-8) Quite clearly it is as disorders of the various organs, as functional troubles, abnormal conditions in one or another part of the body that emotional, nervous and mental disharmonies first show themselves physically.

116¹⁷⁵
XXVI

Old xxvii: The Peace Within ... NEW XXIV: The Peace Within You

117
XXVII

(117-1)¹⁷⁶ This is the true insight, the permanent illumination that neither comes nor goes but always is. While being serious, where the event or situation requires it, he will not be solemn. For behind this seriousness there is detachment. He cannot take the world of Appearances as being Reality's final form. If he is a sharer in this world's experiences, he is also a witness and especially a witness of his own ego, its acts and desires, its thoughts and speech. And because he sees its littleness, he keeps a sense of humour about all things concerning it, a touch of lightness, a basic humility. Others may believe that he stands in the Great Light, but he himself has no particular or ponderous self-importance.

(117-2) So many useless sacrifices, so much unnecessary suffering, so oft-repeated avoidable hurts both to oneself and to others! This is part of the history of most of us.

(117-3) All that is needful to a man's happiness must come from both these sources – the spiritual and the physical – from the ability to rest in the still centre, in the developed intellectual and aesthetic natures, in the good health and vigour of the body.

(117-4) He who is unhappy in himself, or whose home is discordant and unhappy, can show the way to happiness only out of intellect, not out of experience.

(117-5) Several scientists and some authors have taken the trouble to draw up lists of those characteristics which differentiate man from animals, and which show his superiority. I did this once too and published the result but I do not think that anyone pointed to man's capacity to smile as such a characteristic!

¹⁷⁵ Blank Page

¹⁷⁶ The paras on this page are unnumbered.

(117-6) However much we may embellish life it is never far, in time or place, from sorrow in some form.

(117-7) The life which one man regards as a burden another regards as a blessing. It is not only that their point of view is different. It is also that their circumstances, surroundings, fortunes and ages are different.

(117-8) A meditation like this puts sunshine into every day.

(117-9) Gautama's assertion that "life is suffering" may be matched with Socrates' assertion that "life is terrible." But both Indian and Greek sage referred solely to life in the ego. Is it quite fair to stress the misery of human existence without pointing to its mystery? For that is just as much there even if attention is seldom turned toward it. Man, in order to complete and fulfil himself, will and must rise to life in the Overself with the ego put into place, belittled and broken.

118¹⁷⁷
XXVII

Old xxviii: Practices for the Quest ... NEW IV: Elementary Meditation

119
XXVIII

(119-1)¹⁷⁸ Pretend to be what you aim to become. Think, speak, act, behave as a master, if you would be one. But play this game for and to yourself alone, not for others, lest you sow the seed of a great vanity.

(119-2) It is these contradictions of spiritual experience, and these paradoxes of metaphysical reflection which finally lead the quester to the belief that all he has hitherto learnt is relative, is only opinion, and useful merely as steps up which he climbed to a more developed mentality, not as truth.

(119-3) It is a good technique to dramatize the quest, to act as if the goal were already his, mentally to cast away the actual, with its limiting conditions, and treat the ideal as being the reality.

(119-4) While an affirmation has an obvious and immediate effect through applying the power of suggestion, if repeated constantly or frequently or rhythmically, it has a long term effect upon the subconscious.

¹⁷⁷ Blank Page

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(119-5) A further value of mantram yoga is that it keeps the practiser from thinking about himself. The two things – a specific mantram and a personal matter – cannot coexist in his consciousness.

(119-6) The best way to honour this immense truth of the ever-present reality of the Overself is to remember it – as often, as continuously and as determinedly as possible. It is not only the best way but also the most rewarding one. For then its saving grace may bestow great blessing.

(119-7) What the mantra does for sound, the yantra does for sight. It is a graphic representation, pictorial or geometrical, full of philosophic significance about the vanity of earthly existence. In shape it is either square or circular (when it is renamed ‘mandala’). It is used first to fix the mind and then to pass beyond it.

(119-8) The practice of mantram repetition is to be accompanied by rhythmic control of the heart’s beating, and the lungs’ breathing.

(119-9) Affirmations are of two kinds: those for use in meditation and those for constant repetition aloud, whispered or silently.

(119-10) An affirmation fixes attention and elevates emotion: this is its primary purpose, but it may also offer wise counsel.

(119-11) He who is too attached to his religious beliefs is enslaved by them. His mind is not free.

120¹⁷⁹
XXVIII