

Spiritual Subud Notes First Series

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SPIRITUAL
SUBUD NOTES
FIRST SERIES¹

¹ The original editor inserted “ SPIRITUAL
SUBUD NOTES
FIRST SERIES” by Hand

J.G. Bennett in the Subud Chronicle (vol 1. 1958)

ORGANISATION: (1) Like any other group of human beings working together to fulfil a common task Subud is compelled to have an external organisation. We are subject to subhuman, material or satanic forces; we need organisation to resist their action, but woe betide us if we allow it to become their instrument. This has been the downfall of nearly every org. promoting the welfare of mankind. We must regard it only as an instrument for the conduct of external arrangements. The true spiritual life can never be organised; the deeper the awakening the more remote it is from any need for external forms.

(2) It follows that "The Subud Chronicle" which is a manifestation of the outer life and moreover dependant upon material agencies can never be a vehicle for spiritual communications. Its explanations can be no more than indications the meaning of which can be recognised only by those who have passed thru the required experiences. Therefore it is intended only for those who follow spiritual meditation exercises and thus are able to some extent to catch the meaning.

(3) The practical organisation of Subud affairs is separate from the supervision of meditation, which is cared for by "Spiritual Helpers" appointed.

(4) The distinction between meditations and external life is arbitrary for every department of life can and should be dedicated to God.

(5) Societies and their activities can only very seldom be raised above the material or satanic level. The external form is the dragon needed complete St George (the opposition PB) but it is to be watched continually lest it destroy the inner life.

TO THOSE ABOUT TO BE OPENED BY MEDITATION: (6) You come here to ask for, and receive the Great Life Force which proceeds from the power of God and contains all in his love. We have turned our backs on it by relying too much on our senses, thinking and feeling minds. To return to the true state we need help from God, not from anything we can do. Meditation is the true worship of God. The contact we receive in it enables the LifeForce to flow in, purify, renew and strengthen us. It begins with the physical body, then goes to the instincts and feelings, next passes through the thoughts and understanding, finally thru consciousness; then it reaches the Soul.

(7) This process is at first quite unobservable: we have to discover the way to surrender ourselves to its action. It can work in us only when the instruments of instinct, feeling and thought are quiet and still. We cannot make a pool free from

ripples and mud² by any action of our own. We can do nothing but stand by and wait for it to clear. Just the same we can neither make the surface of our mind-feelings quiet nor the interior clear and calm by our own efforts. Only power of God acting from the depths of the Soul can produce complete stillness.

(8) Therefore when you start Subud exercises you are advised to abandon every kind of mental effort and all forms of meditation. Simply allow everything in you to go spontaneously by itself and you will become quiet. Then the LifeForce will begin to act. It will produce the action needed first, to make you healthy and strong, afterwards, to awaken the deeper levels of your being.

(9) You may on the first occasion of receiving the contact begin to feel an impulse to move your body. Such movements are good for you so allow them to proceed freely. But if you feel nothing at all, do not worry for these subjective experiences are purely incidental. Do not expect or look for anything. Put your trust in the power and love of God to give, in the way and at the time that are best, for your own true welfare.

(9) The merely curious should not be opened There is need of a test of sincerity, such as a waiting period. To ask for a contact is a serious matter, and means to accept a responsibility towards God, a sincere desire to worship God.³ One cannot ask and evade the consequences.

(10) After private group meditation, the God may give his talk.

(11) When those who were passed over in favour of others for invitation to the private initiation, their indignation is only a reaction of the personality like animals⁴

(12) At the first 'opening' several had strong reactions and howled and writhed on the floor. This was owing to the process of 'purification', the need to get rid of our poisons.

(13) The appointed "Spiritual Helpers" for a group appear outwardly to be ordinary men and women. Any external manifestation of power of force is contrary to the principles of Subud. It is only in the meditation exercise that the Helpers' inner qualities can be perceived.

(14) Profound inward change takes place in people who sincerely follow the meditation exercises for many years.

² The original editor circled the word "and mud" by hand for insert notation

³ The original editor circled the word "a sincere desire to worship God." by hand for insert notation

⁴ The original editor circled the word "like animals" by hand for insert notation

BENNETT⁵ on SUBUD

(15) Every race seems to have its own characteristic reactions to the med. exercise The Chinese seem to have a faculty for 'not-thinking' and their med has in consequence a pure quality that is rare. The response of Indians is more direct—they follow the indications that come in the exercise with much less interference from their self-will than most others. Since all who ask—irrespective of race, greed or caste—can receive exactly the same contact and achieve equally the aim of human existence without the help of teachers or masters, this may be a hindrance to acceptance of Subud by these two races. Subud can enter without teaching or preaching. The time has not yet come for large-scale attempt to bring Subud to these races. Bapak said Subud would come to India by a special way.⁶

(16) The chief obstacles to spread of Subud in Muslim countries are belief the Quranic⁷ revelation is final and unchangeable, and the suspicions due to numerous self-styled Imams and Mahdis claiming divine inspiration in the past. On the other hand, Muslims have aptitude for fulfilling the Subud requirements: trust and surrender to the Will of God. Suspicions evaporate when it is explained that Pak Subud makes no claim to Mahdihood, and that Subud is not a new revelation: it is an inward action of the power of God.

PAK SUBUH'S TALKS in 1957

(1) the word "Subud" is derived from "Susila Budhi Dharma": S is living entirely according to God's will, B is the inner force within man, D is surrender to receive the gift of Grace. The total condensed meaning is 'fulfilling the obligations of man in the best manner.'

(2) In our Symbol a circle or sphere with no limit means we need not cease to progress but can continue without limit: also all is for, and from, God so we do not identify ourself with anything whatsoever. In this Symbol there are 7 concentric circles, one within the other. These are the different powers or souls: the material, the plant, the animal, the human, the perfected man and the seventh which is beyond our knowledge, vision and visualisation. It is beyond forms and images; it is cognised only after purification when mind, desire, feelings and other powers in man are brought to a standstill or paralysed

(3) Although material things are not alive in the same way as men animals, nevertheless they are enveloped with Life Force within and without. This is why they

⁵ J. G. BENNETT in THE SUBUD CHRONICLE (vol 1. 1958)

⁶ The original editor circled the word "Bapak said Subud would come to India by a special way." by hand for insert notation

⁷ The original editor replaced "Quanic" to "Quranic" by hand

can influence our feelings such as seeing beauty in them.

(4) It is necessary that thoughts be rendered powerless and paralysed, then you can return to a clear state of consciousness. and that self-aware⁸ feelings be put aside

(5) Man can only receive grace when he has forgotten everything, put aside his human self-satisfaction, and been emptied to such an extent that hr will be completely taken by and filled with a force higher than the human. If he reaches such a level he will be more satisfied than all the satisfactions that the ordinary man can know; there will arise a great peace.

(6) God is quite beyond our thinking, picturing and understanding.

(7) If man would truly surrender himself and trust God, then without using his thinking-power he would still not loose his way

(8) Darkness and worry in man's heart have to be put aside; it belongs to the material power which wishes to stay with him.

(8) The meditation is a receiving, quite beyond the reach of logical thinking. What is received is outside (or inside or higher than)⁹ the ordinary thinking, desires and emotions and imaginations which occupy the physical body To receive this grace and enter a higher life it is necessary to put aside the lower nature and desires and thinking; abandoning these things is like meeting death.

(9) During the med. exercise the soul awakens and barriers in the brain and feelings are penetrated. As a result our heart will automatically become good, cease doing harm to or blaming others. This purification will render feelings stable instead of vacillating, certain instead of chaotic and disharmonious; it will make thinking clear and correct. Behaviour will no longer be bad but in accordance with God's Will.

(10) The penetration of the awakening soul will cure illnesses not only¹⁰ in the flesh, blood but also, which are harder to cure, in the feelings instincts and brain. Physical illnesses are harmful to one person only but bad instincts will in addition harm other people, sometimes hundreds.

(10) Ordinary advice is expressed from, and received by, the thinking-brain only; it is easily forgotten even though listened to with intention to follow it. There is no way to touch man except thrusomething coming from the power of God.

⁸ The original editor circled the word "self-aware" by hand for insert notation

⁹ The original editor circled the word "or higher than" by hand for insert notation

¹⁰ The original editor circled the word "not only" by hand for insert notation

(11) True meditation is worship of, and a prayer to, God, so as to receive a contact with him. In it we do not need mental powers.. Thought cannot reach God. All we need is¹¹ surrender, faith and sincerity; our emotional life must be purified. We can then receive direct from God. After receiving this awakening, we can bring our coarse body to health and then everything impure will be driven out of the inner nature of its own accord. During the meditation we really are surrendered to God, still and quiet and happy inside, purified, and receiving from God.

(12) Once we stop activities of mind, imagination and passions the inner contact will continue to work by itself and progressively purify our nature. That is received during meditation grows spontaneously; it is not the action of one person on another: it is beyond human influence; it dwells within one's own true self where it faces the power of God. Pak Subuh is not a teacher who teaches something—he merely opens for those who come to him the Way so they can follow it. This opening is an awakening of the inner self or soul. It purifies the physical organs and brings them to a healthy state. The process of healing is simply the action of the soul upon the body.

(13) The present state of ordinary men is not merely a loose connection between the inner life or self and the outer but a real unity. This union long ago existed without obstruction or hindrance and existence was then good. But since then the pressure of things of this world has worked on their feelings to hamper and close off the inner ones. The contact with the God power is not something new.

(14) It is not the will of God that man should be destroyed but rather that he should find salvation and happiness both in this worldly life and the in the life hereafter.

(15) In his heart man has been conquered by the worldly things he has made; they have made their home there. He has forgotten what is written deep in his breast

(16) It is not the will of God that man should renounce material things. He should fulfil his life on earth, beautify this world so as to provide a place suitable for harmonious life. On earth he gathers experience and is able to do good. When a perfected man will ascend to a sphere loftier than this earth. He has been created to be higher than animals, not to live fighting and quarrelling like them.

(17) When men die, every thing and every special skill acquired in this world will completely disappear. But if he has followed his ethical element, then his consciousness will be opened.

¹¹ J. G. BENNETT in THE SUBUD CHRONICLE (vol 1. 1958)

(18) What you who have been 'opened' felt then as a vibration in your innermost¹² will gradually penetrate the whole being, first the coarse then the fine. At present you are still like a child when it enters kindergarten; you have to learn ABC, how to write and even the way to school. It begins with the physical organs because we have been so concerned and entangled with this physical world that our nerves are changed and no longer in accordance with God's will as imprinted in the inner heart. What causes illness in man is thus his wrong imagination, thinking and emotion. The med exercise will rectify these errors and all will return to the original state intended by God and inscribed in the Self. It is necessary not only to help the body become healthy again but also heart and brain, feelings and intellect, which are now twisted and impure.

(19) In med it is not possible to use intellect or will, for they are constantly on the move, will not hold still, and so cannot receive the grace. In order to really work upon yourself it is necessary to stop, hold still inwardly, be calm & quiet. You must not think or try to understand what you receive, for you use your thought in understanding and strain your will in trying to be aware; you block the way for the work in you which has already begun. When heart and brain are purified you will understand and be conscious without difficulty.

(20) Bapak (guru himself) is an ordinary man, who is hungry when he does not eat and sleepy when he does not sleep. He does not want to put himself forward but he is really under the duty to pass on this contact to anyone who asks for it.

(21) Do not assume or fear that the grace or contact which Bapak has canalised toward you all and what you have received may not remain with you when Bapak leaves this place, or even this world. It is not a knowledge or teaching from man to man; it is from God himself. Bapak merely raises the curtain, opens the cover which has for so long oppressed this inner life or self. Once Bapak has planted the seed, the tree grows by itself.

(22) Do not be in a hurry, hoping for too much too soon. Be patient, resigned, do not worry; eventually you will receive proof, be witness of reality, free from entanglement in your emotions or thoughts – thru which the demons work being of the same nature. Time and patience are needed until the med exercise has brought you to understand the true situation; you are as a newborn child which cannot yet distinguish and discriminate. It is not you who can purify yourself; this is done for you by God's power. Do not obstruct it by trying to 'help' with your thoughts, feelings, desires; they are the elements responsible for the disorder.

(23) All¹³ who ask for it can receive a direct contact with God in their own souls.

¹² The original editor circled the word "as a vibration in your innermost" by hand for insert notation

¹³ J. G. BENNETT in THE SUBUD CHRONICLE (vol 1. 1958)

(24) Bapak was an unknown clerk with the very minimum of education, lacking in wealth and influence. Then 25 years ago he was vouchsafed a vision of his future travels and mission.

(25) Nowadays man has fallen so completely under the sway of conditions of life that he has great difficulty in resisting the pressure. Unlike the man of earlier days, who led a comparatively slow and quiet life, he is exposed to harmful and degrading conditions. This is perhaps why it is the will of God that today we should have this way of worship without neglecting, rejecting, or withdrawing from the world conditions we have to face. In this exercise-med you remain fully conscious. You worship without disclaiming obligations in the world or isolating yourself from fellow creatures. It allows you to continue relations with wife and children & friends, as an ordinary person. Consciousness is constantly defiled and swayed by sub-human forces, leading to undesirable action. This must be purified and after that it is possible to get in touch with the Force of God.

(26) You will have experiences as you continue in the exercise; the process will not stop when Bapak leaves the country.

(27) Various obstructions have accumulated in the body and confront you as the first and lowest barrier. Everything has to be purified.

(28) Your progress cannot be predicted; it depends on individual circumstances; nor will it have always the same tempo.

(29) Many people object that what has been received in our meditation cannot be true, since it is experienced in so short a time. But this has become possible because it is the will of God in view of the state in which mankind finds itself today. Also it is exactly suited to the needs of our age. In earlier days this method was not needed but present conditions are vastly different, and difficult. Man for generations has been under the rule and influence of subhuman forces so that his inner essence has been overcrusted by thoughts and passions. This Divine Essence enfolds every thing and yet at the same time is in the very centre of every thing. Man is sealed within his own desires and thoughts, unable to receive and feel contact of the LifeForce constantly surrounding him. It is very hard to set them aside and also very difficult to relinquish the demands of the working day. Hence it is will of God that we should have such a simple way; it is a boon and blessing but it is sinful if we neglect to make use of God's love and mercy for mankind.

(30) The newly awakened LifeForce has to work its way outward. As it pierces the first barrier-the physical body-it induces movements or vibrations. They are necessary because man believes on what he can see and touch, hence in his body, which will be purified by these movements he receives. This accomplished, feelings desires and passions must be entered, because they are swayed by material and other subhuman forces. Once this is pure one enters the third barrier—human understanding, which is full of forces of corruption and disturbance. This purified, one enters into consciousness of the inner Self

THE SUBUD CHRONICLE (various articles)

(1) The unique property of Subud consists in its potentiality for unlimited transmission without organised preparation and without verbal explanation or teaching

(2) We must sacrifice our suffering and let it go. Such acceptance, such submission to the will of God makes man free, for he can never free his will. His own surrender is met with the entry of a higher will.

(3) Man can never realise God but the power of God can fulfil man.

(4) The difficulties we had to go thru may serve as a warning to others who, in their eagerness overlook their limitations and consequently have to suffer.

(5) He is at home in himself. This is the extraordinary difference felt between him and others He is calm, unruffled, invariably smiling, and the same to all.

(6) During the 'purification' period, the diseased defective poisoned parts of the psyche rise to the surface for they must come out

(7) Pak Subuh told 'Helpers' that in order to answer fully a question concerning spiritual life, the helper had to experience it himself beforehand; Still some degree of help is possible such as information about principles or clarifying misunderstanding in an approach to Subud. Groups should not, nor indeed was it possible, discuss 'God'

(8) Those who come to Subud for spiritual help have to recognise that this entails the acceptance of material practical burdens. Organisation is needed but it should be flexible, not set, capable of contracting or expanding with changing needs.

SUBUD¹⁴ CHRONICLE:

(9) Bapak made a clear distinction between the attributes of God and those of

¹⁴ J. G. BENNETT in THE SUBUD CHRONICLE (vol 1. 1958)

creatures. God alone can work without instruments; he alone is beyond limitations. Man depends upon instruments and is bounded by them: they include his body, senses, instincts, feelings, intellect and understanding.

(10) Man's inner way can be opened only by the will and thru the power of God.

(11) There is in Subud something which is entirely new in our time, with potentialities for all people.

(12) Those more sensitive persons who object to group meditation do so because they say they are unwilling to be the 'dustbins' for other people's psychological garbage. This is selfishness.

(13) Occasional glimpses of something real and true are bound to be swamped by an ocean of nonsense where people fail to understand the process of receiving teaching from within.

(14) Trouble arises in group work not from newcomers but from those who either are capable of rapidly assimilating a special vocabulary and are endowed with a prolific thinking apparatus until they presume that the fruits of these aptitudes are symptoms of exceptional spiritual development; or from those who possess a certain amount of knowledge and some real though inadequate insight into the new inner experiences; or from helpers and committeemen nominated for organisational purposes who assume this is due to personal merit. Private presumptions would not hamper group activities but when they demand public recognition there is trouble, friction disunity, cliques¹⁵ Such events accompany or express the process of purification; the action of the Power manifests in accentuating behavior elements controlled by lower forces.

(14) Do not analyse or try to control what is received in meditation

(15) by M. Starr: Such initiation can only take place in the presence of those whose divine spark has already been kindled, energised and equilibrated. They alone mediate the current which can open the candidate to the innermost centre and depth of his being... It is the vital and immortal Principle which, acting independently of the human mind and will of the agent, is the Initiator. During the ceremony the human agent surrenders completely to God. This is the Direct Path. The Indirect Path comprises all systems in which advanced human beings (adepts) initiate other humans. Here the principal agent of initiation is the developed human will, which is surrendered on the Direct Path. They prepare the way for our path... I, the ego (a mind-created illusion) must decrease that the Christ (the Holy Spirit) may increase. The core of Subud is the mystical death, the purification without which the embryonic spiritual child cannot

¹⁵ The original editor circled the word "disunity, cliques" by hand for insert notation

become detached from the subhuman forces which have usurped the throne.

(16) IT speaks out of us, provided we are in the right internal state.

(17) Each who follows this course will start to go his own individual path

(18) The debris revealed by purification is rubbish and not worth preserving.

(19) Husein Rofe stressed he had come to bring a new form of spiritual training to the spiritual leaders rather than to the masses. At initiation he moved the furniture in the semi-dark room to make a wide space and began to breathe so deeply as I had never thought any human being could breathe; then broke into strange chanting which sounded like Arabic. After a few minutes I was bathed in spiritual sunshine My limbs shook vigorously, making many gestures. The med group exercise is done three times a week.

(20) The reactions to meditation are personal. They seldom happen twice to the same person and not initiatory necessarily in the same way to other persons. Everybody's experience is unique so each should not follow anybody's else's pattern but rely upon the indications received from within.

(21) Pak Subuh does not grant interviews to the general public until they have previously been "opened" by attending Subud group meditations.

Subud Group Meditation: are held twice weekly and must be followed for several months before private solitary meditation is permitted. The reason for this is that at the group meetings the official Helpers absorb mental garbage from the meditators and thus purify them to some extent. During meditation, beginners must keep their eyes closed but more proficient disciples may open or close them, as they choose.

Pak Subuh eats meat, is a chain smoker, and drinks lots of coffee.



Subud Newsletter – May 1, 1959

SUBUD New York¹⁶

NEWSLETTER - May 1, 1959

THE NEW YORK SUBUD CENTER -

As of this week, our new headquarters is in the building at 253-255 Seventh Avenue, New York City 1. There are three floors, plus a mezzanine with three offices, and a large clean basement; it is entirely air-conditioned. At last we have a private, capacious building of our own, which should be able to handle the expected vast increase of membership. Thanks are due Mrs Natalie Stork and Ted Osborn who successfully tracked down the site and arranged for its lease.

At this time, we have signed a lease for 12 months, cancellable on 45 days' notice any time after June 15, 1959. The first month's rent of \$1,500. was paid from existing Subud funds. Seven members also loaned \$1500 more for security, and another member deposited \$250 for the telephone. There will be maintenance costs to meet, in addition; but this heavier financial burden is a small price indeed for a place so suitable to our difficult requirements.

Meanwhile, much work needs to be done immediately on the building. Scraping, painting and other minor repairs must be done as soon as possible. All who can help are urged to call and make arrangements (if it is during the week) or to come in over this weekend, when work will start at 9 A.M. The telephone number is WAtkins 9-8460.

Also, furnishings are needed at once. Donations or temporary loans will be appreciated, of the following items: Several office desks and chairs; Filing cabinets; Several tables for offices, literature, coffee bar, etc.; Several comfortable chairs for the waiting room; Rugs both large and small; Typewriters; Floor and desk lamps, etc. Anyone with such equipment to offer should write a brief description, mentioning whether a loan or a donation, and whether you can deliver or pick-up is required, plus phone number, to: Subud Furnishing Committee, 255 Seventh Ave., New York 1, N.Y.

Cliff Owens has devised a chart for people to sign up on regarding refreshments. We would like to have a snack bar so that the lounge can be a sociable gathering place before and after latihan and lectures - but we will need again your help. Consult the chart for details.

TAPE RECORDINGS -

One new activity made possible by our private building will be regular times for playing tape recordings of Mr Bennett's Introductory Talks for people just becoming interested in Subud. These are presently scheduled for every Friday evening,

commencing at 5:30 P.M.

BAPAK'S VISIT -

Many members and probationers have worked very hard renovating the house at 26th street, which was kindly donated for Bapak's stay by Ann Soloway. Members are also helping at this time with the housework and cooking for the visitors, and more help is needed. Those with time and ability are urged to contact Miriam Schusterman at CH 3-2317.

In order to make the stay of our guests most pleasant and memorable, we wish to be able to take care of all their needs adequately. It has been estimated by the Financial Committee that to cover the needs of the party, plus the costs of the new building, we need to have on hand during May and June a minimum of \$6500. If every member will consider how much he is receiving and how relatively small is his responsibility to the group, we are certain that he will find a way to give enough so that this amount may be surpassed. At this time, we have less than \$800 in the bank, so the need is immediate.

Owing to delay in obtaining visas, Bapak and his party returned on April 19 from Buenos Aires to Lima, Peru. Thanks to the personal intervention of members in New York, visas were obtained on Tuesday, April 28, and the party is expected to arrive today (Friday, May 1).

In addition to Bapak's visit, there will be many other visitors arriving during May and June. It is hoped that many can be accommodated in the homes of Subud members. Anyone able to help in this way should contact Mrs Natalie Stork, 450 E. 63 St., TE 8-9161. Give particulars on how many people you can put up, men or women, couples, length of time, etc.

COMINGS¹⁷ AND GOINGS -

Lew Moore, who is a member of Europe's oldest Subud group, which started in Cyprus in 1956, passed through New York with his family, en route to California. A report from him recently says that he spoke with several interested people in Denver, and it is hoped that a group will begin there shortly.

A member from Clayton, Alabama, Winn F. Martin, is visiting New York. He is attending college in Boston.

Mrs Terah Cowart-Smith of Greensboro, N.C. is another visiting member from

¹⁷ 2

the Southern Subud groups.

Vic Torrey of Oakland is now publishing an informal newsletter of general interest to Subud members. Those wishing to receive copies should write him and ask for the "Extracts"; address is 1103 65th Ave., Oakland 21, Calif.

Reports from Santiago, Chile indicate what we must be ready to expect everywhere Bapak goes. 60 to 70 probationers were waiting when Bapak arrived there. During his visit of 7 days, 500 persons were opened!

THE NEWSLETTER -

In order to improve communications between Subud groups and to keep individual members informed, as well as helping to reach others who are interested, it has been decided to make the New York Newsletter available to all who wish to have it. Centers wishing to receive quantities to distribute to their members are asked to let us know the amount, and small donations to help toward the postage will be appreciated. We will be glad to print all news of general interest to Subud groups in America, which would include local developments, news of traveling members, descriptions of visits by Bapak and Bennett, etc. Write to Subud Newsletter, P.O. Box 453, Cooper Station, New York 3, N.Y. or contact the Bagbys at latihan.

Again, we wish to thank Ina Lowthorp, who is generously donating the entire cost of producing the Newsletter, despite many press problems at this time.

CHRONICLE -

In the last issue we erroneously stated the cost of the Subud Chronicle (for opened members only) at \$4.00 yearly. It is \$3.25 by surface mail from England, of \$6.50 by air. Send your subscriptions for this monthly magazine to the Subud Chronicle Secretary, P.O. Box 453, Cooper Sta., New York 3. The issues will be mailed to individuals from England.

BOOKS -

Pak Subuh's book SUSILA BUDDHI DHARMA will be available shortly, for \$4.00, from the P.O. Box or at the New York Center.

THE PATH OF SUBUD by Husein Rofe is available for \$3.00.

The American edition of CONCERNING SUBUD by Bennett (with a new foreword) is now available for \$3.95.

CORRECTION -

The chairman of the Subud group at Orlando, Florida is Lee Partlow, not Rentlow, as we misspelled it in the last issue.

THANKS -

Here are the names of some of those members and probationers who worked preparing the house for Bapak and are now working on the Center: David Jelliffe, Walter Anderson, Don Kirschner, Jack Bagby, John Kelly, Joe Filardo, Ann and Alick Bartholomew, Bob and Fran Bisagna, Art Goodman, Maria Nicolosi, Luane Ander, Karl Schaffer, Dick Scott, Josephine Spring, Rudi, Phyllis and Jim McGee, Dan Cahill, Pat Olds, Ed and Rita Kerner, Wyn and Iris Peck, Francis Von Kahler, Ted Osborn and many others. Niriam Schusterman, Lucienne Farkas, Paula Leslie and others of the ladies contributed sewing and other household preparations, and with Lia Kirschner and Rita Kerner are now performing various domestic chores. Furniture was donated by Gertrude Howe and Ann Soloway. The thanks of the entire group are due to these and the un-named others who have given so generously of their time and goods to make the visit a success.

Introductory talk by Mr J.G. Bennett in San Francisco

SUBUD¹⁸

Introductory talk by Mr J.G. Bennett in San Francisco

April 19th, 1958

I am going to try this afternoon to tell you as much as I can about Subud 'from the outside.' That means what one can say about it without having had direct experience of the inner action itself. Subud is not a new teaching; it has no theory that can be taught, nor any methods that have to be learnt. It is a direct action that can be understood only when one has experienced it. I will first tell you about the conditions in which one can come to it, and then you can ask yourselves whether you feel that those conditions correspond to your own case.

First of all, Subud is based on belief in Divine Providence. That means belief that there is a power that comes from God which really does work in the lives and affairs of men. Divine providence is a helping force that makes it possible for a man to live rightly on this earth, to fulfil his destiny - but it is not a compelling force - it does not act

upon a person against his own will. This is because man is of such a nature, and was so created, that he is free to accept or not to accept the help that is offered to him by Providence. The action in him of this providential, or helpful, power is thus always dependent upon human consent.

At the same time, as I said, Subud is founded on the belief that there really is such a power. We should believe it not just as a theory, but as a reality that requires us to face in ourselves what is implied by the existence of such a power.

To believe in Providence does not imply that one can understand it; or that one can know what we mean when we speak of God and His power or His providence. Even so, we can believe that there is an order, a purpose, in the Universe, and that behind that order and purpose there is a Power that really works here on this earth.

Many things that happen on the earth seem to contradict such a belief. It seems impossible that if there were really a providential power that is drawing us in a different direction men should behave as they do, and that the world should be so dominated by material forces as it is at the present time. But what we see in the world is the working of human freedom; the consequences of the basic fact that man is free to choose. And because he is very strongly acted upon by the outer forces in his life - particularly by the forces that come to him through his senses - through what he sees and touches; by the needs of his own body, of his own emotions, of his own mind, and so on - he loses touch with that other providential power, and tries to live without it. And when he does this, man always gets into trouble. All human history teaches us this truth; and at the present time many people recognize it, and agree that the one hope for mankind is that men should again feel themselves directed by the power of Providence, by the Will of God. Or, to put it in another way - that people should return to faith, to religion. But it is not sufficient to be convinced that this is really so, if one lacks in oneself the reality of the faith one preaches.

But very, very few people have the gift of faith. It is useless to tell those who lack it that they must have faith because one cannot have faith just by wishing it, or by trying to put oneself into a state of having faith in Providence. What one wishes comes only from one's own mind, what one does comes only from one's own will; but faith does not come from one's own feelings, or one's own mind, or one's own will. It is a gift, or as it is sometimes called, a Grace.

Therefore,¹⁹ really the most important thing in the world today is to know whether or not it is possible for people to receive that gift. If they can have it everything

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else will change in them; since it is through that gift that they are able to accept the working in themselves of the power of Divine Providence.

So when I say that Subud is based on belief in Divine Providence, I do not mean by that that those who come to it must already have the experience of faith, and be ready to trust its power more than any other power, including the power of their own intelligence, their own mind's experience, or what other people may tell them or even what great organizations may tell them. Such a demand would be utterly unreasonable. Faith and trust are that which is to be achieved by the real transformation, the awakening of man. It is only by such a transformation that he can acquire something in him capable of putting trust in the working of providence and of living with that trust; of having faith - that is, a living, immediate faith that this power can act on everyone who will accept its action freely.

A new question then arises. If there is such a power in the world, and if our contact with it depends upon our free choice, how are we to make that choice, how are we to really feel in ourselves that we are choosing to submit ourselves to the direction and support of this power so as to receive help from it? We can only too easily verify for ourselves that it is not enough to be told to do it. Faith is always being preached to people. Preachers come and teachers come, and they tell people to have faith. It may be that the people have an emotional reaction to such preaching and feel that everything is changed with them because they have this opening of their emotions towards the idea of trusting in God or in providence. But all experience shows that such an action is transient; that when that emotional state passes - as all emotional states do pass - the action ceases. No one can maintain or keep themselves in any particular emotional state; the fluctuation of emotions is inherent in our human nature. Our emotions depend upon the action that is taking place in us; and, when we are under one kind of action, we may feel religious fervour, but under another kind of action we feel something completely different from that. And we cannot resist that kind of action in our emotions: that is simply a fact about man. If he is to have this faith it must be in a part of him that lies deeper than his emotions and his feelings, a part which can be altogether more stable than they are. Also, it is not possible to have faith through our minds, through our thinking, because the nature of the thinking power of man is that it can never be directly in contact with its object. That is to say, we think with words and concepts and pictures, all of which have come from our senses. We think in terms of what we have seen and heard and so on; and we cannot think otherwise, and therefore, when we try with our thoughts to reach a reality which cannot be seen, cannot be heard, cannot be spoken of, cannot be put in the form of a concept, we are unable to reach it. We remain, inevitably, prisoners of the forms of our own thought. When we try, as people do try - philosophers, theologians and others - to go beyond the visible world and to speak about Reality and Truth and God, inevitably - whatever they may do - their speculations cannot get beyond forms of language which usually amount to what they have seen and heard and read about, and so on.

It is really not possible to receive faith from outside by the action of other people on us; because all external action must reach us through our senses - we have to hear what they say, we have to look at them and see them, to observe their actions and so on - and it is then filtered through to our emotions and our minds, but it cannot penetrate much deeper than that. This is a fact that we can all observe and verify - that although many attempts are made, both in the churches and out of the churches, to re-awaken in people the experience of religious faith that is to bring them back to God, the appeal to faith only works for those who already have the experience. Those who have not had it only respond by some passing condition which eventually sometimes²⁰ very, very soon - disappears and they are left with nothing that they can hold on to.

To understand what is possible, you must realize this: that man really does belong to more than one world; we really have in us something, or some part, which is not confined to this earth, to this earthly experience, to our senses, or to this physical body.

That other part, that invisible man in us, is the real man; that is, the man of the soul, who is not tied and limited by this body. And that man also has his own instruments - his own ways of perceiving, of understanding, of experiencing, but they do not work through the senses, nor through the mind; they have quite different instruments.

Some people have had experience of the awakening of the real man in them, and books have been written about it, especially in what we call 'mystical' writings. Those who write in that way, seeking to describe their experiences, are forced, however much they may wish to be direct and objective, to use images and descriptions which can be recognized by the ordinary man. Therefore, they cannot truly and fully convey to ordinary people what they have experienced. At the most, they can arouse in other people who meet them and feel that there is something different in them - perhaps sometimes people who only just read their books - that they have seen beyond some veil which separates ordinary people from the deeper realities. And those who meet them can say, 'Yes, he has seen something,' and from that they can feel that 'perhaps I also should be able to see that, and to know that other world.'

But if their own inner instrument, their own inner man, is not yet awakened, they are really no better off for knowing that someone else has got this, any more than a man starving, with no money to buy bread, who sees in front of him a millionaire.

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Each one of us, if we wish to see Reality, to get beyond the life of the senses and - what is really more important than this - wish to find ourselves under the action of Divine Providence, and to participate in the secret working of God's power in the world, must ourselves be awakened. We ourselves have to receive something that must be given to each one of us, not to someone else. That is what will help you to understand Subud.

It is possible now, through Subud, for anyone who asks for it to receive a contact which will awaken that other man in him, or that deeper self in him. From this contact, little by little, will develop in them those inner powers which we may have read about. Maybe, even, we have seen glimpses of them in ourselves, but have not been able to remain and live with them.

Now how can that be done: To give you one picture which may help you to see it: supposing that we are in a dark room and none of us can find our way about in that room because it is dark. We may ask, 'Does anyone know where the switch is?', and there may be some person in the room who knows, and can find the way, and can show us where we can turn on the light. We certainly would not say that the light came from that person, because the source of power that brings that light is far beyond; it does not pass through that person. The service that that person has done for us is that he happens to know where the switch is.

It is just the same here. Those of us who have received this contact, and have learnt our way about that room and therefore know where the switch is, can do just that simple service for others; we can take them to the switch, so that they can themselves turn on the light. The light then enters into the people so that they then begin²¹ to be able to see with it.

That is how we have found it in Subud; and the picture that I have just given you is extraordinarily like the reality. Turning on the switch is asking for this contact to be given to us. From that, we begin to have an action in us that begins to illuminate our inner world.

The source of the power in this case is not an electric power station, but it is the Divine Providence of which I spoke at the beginning. This envelops the whole world and is acting on everything; and it is even acting on mankind, at the present time, although few people are aware of it. There are many indications of this action. If I had longer time to speak, I could show you how strong is the evidence that at the present time there is a great power overshadowing or enveloping the earth - and particularly

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mankind - acting upon people so as to draw them towards the possibility of finding an inner awakening. At the present time, more than for centuries past, there is all over the world a feeling of need for this awakening. That feeling of need has in part certainly come from various teachers, and from various schools, disciplines and methods that, during the present century, have come to the West.

There is much, much more than that. There has been a direct action on all people; so that many who have never heard or read anything about such things are aware that there is something they must find, and that there will be no true welfare for humanity until it is found. As soon as this is made explicit for them, so that they can see what is the inner need that they feel, they quickly recognize it. Moreover, they can usually see that it is not something that can be confined to any one country, but is happening all over the world, quite irrespective of race, creed or religion; or of political or social system; or of education or lack of education. Many, many hundreds of thousands of people, all over the world, are feeling that there must be something that they could find; and that life is not complete with the material advantages alone that we have at the present time. And many such people have been led to take the initiative to seek for themselves. Some have returned to the religion in which they were brought up or, if they were dissatisfied with that, they have gone outside it. Others have found and followed one or another kind of teaching. The result of all this has been to make it clearer for them that something should happen for them, that some kind of inner change is necessary if they are to live their lives as they should.

But, on the whole, very, very few people have been able to find the help that they were looking for. The reason for this is that, until now, the earth, or mankind, has required a period of transition from the dominant materialism of the nineteenth century to a new outlook which is different from that. We now have gone a long way from the rigid dogmatism of the nineteenth century, not only in religion, but in science, in philosophy and even in politics, to a much more flexible, tolerant state of mind.

There are far more people today than there were, even in our own childhood, who are no longer bound by some narrow formula, either religious or scientific; and who feel that there must be something which is universal - something which could be common to all mankind. And side by side with this inner feeling is the obvious fact that the progress of science, technology, invention, engineering, and so on, has brought about a complete transformation of human life on the earth. This is felt particularly in the ever-increasing action of people on one another. Not only people who are close together, but all over the world, so that no event happens anywhere in the world without having repercussions on the rest of the world. It was not like this a century ago. Just over a hundred years ago, for example, there was the great Taiping Revolution in China and, although the whole of China was turned upside down, Europe hardly noticed it. Similarly, when there was the great year of revolution in 1848 in Europe, which turned Europe upside down, China hardly noticed. But now it is not

like that; now²² anything that happens anywhere touches everyone. That is not all. There has been a great change in the speed or tempo of human life. We have to live faster; we have to move faster, we have to act faster, and because of this speed we come under a much greater strain that people were under fifty or a hundred, or two hundred years ago. And this strain is really very hard to bear and it is affecting people all over the world.

A relatively small minority of people break down under this strain, and become psychopathic cases; but the great majority of people who do not break down are nevertheless affected by it; they are not able to live full free and normal lives, because life is pressing on them too hard. And it is impossible to doubt that the strain will increase from decade to decade. The speed of life will grow closer and closer, and people will not be able to stand up to such conditions of existence on this earth, unless they become much stronger in themselves.

The recognition of this need is widespread, and it has produced a whole flood of New Thought literature. In America especially, there are innumerable books on how to grow stronger in oneself. People clutch at these books, and hope by these methods that somehow or other they will be able to stand the strain of the life that they are living. But really, these things cannot help; their action inevitably remains too near the surface. If man is to grow stronger, he has to grow stronger from much deeper down. That is to say, his strength has to come not from the superficial man, but from the deep, real man.

And that is the action that we see in Subud. People who receive this find that, after a relatively short time, they become stronger in front of life. They become stronger because something begins to form in them, that is one important fruit of Subud.

Another point that I should mention here concerns physical health. In spite of all the progress of medicine, of hygiene, dietetics and other sciences that aim at maintaining normal health and vigour, the human race is still subject to a very great number of physical ills. All the evidence shows that as fast as one prevalent or troublesome condition is more or less mastered, new forms of disease make their appearance.

The great problem of medicine at the present time is to find means of dealing with those pathological states in which both body and mind are affected. These are referred to as psychosomatic diseases and in nearly every country they account for considerably more than half of the patients in all hospitals. Whereas most infectious and deficiency diseases can now be dealt with by remedies administered from the

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outside, when there are complex psychosomatic disorders, medicine alone will not help; the sick psyche must be cured before the body will respond.

The best medical authorities who have to study this problem closely consider that psychosomatic illnesses constitute the gravest problem in front of medicine in the next fifty years. They expect to see an increasing incidence of these conditions that ordinary medicine cannot handle. Here again we see in people following Subud that through the inner awakening these troublesome disorders can be helped; sometimes by the action of Subud alone, sometimes in combination with ordinary medical treatment.

Another action that we have observed, and that has made a deep impression on us in England - where we have seen more than a thousand people who have come to us and now follow Subud - is the change in human relationships that it is able to bring about. The happiness and welfare of mankind on this earth depend primarily upon harmony in human relationships - in families, societies, nations and in the whole human race.²³ But harmony cannot be imposed from without; nor can it be achieved by hiding and suppressing the secret forces that make for discord and disruption. Fears, suspicion, egoism, the desire for power and all the innumerable weaknesses of human nature are present in those who seek for reality and for God, just as much as in those whose hopes and expectations are confined to the visible world. There cannot be harmonious human relationships without inner purification. It has been our experience that the action of Subud, though invisible, does result in the gradual elimination of the basic human weaknesses. Of course, this elimination is slow, and whilst it is in process the results may not be reassuring. When a defect is being eliminated it usually comes to the surface, and the person concerned manifests his defect to an exaggerated degree. Therefore, it is necessary to observe the effects of Subud over a relatively long period of time and with a fairly large number of people. When this is done the conclusion is unmistakable - people who follow Subud are better husbands and wives, better parents better friends and better members of society.

All this happens because we come into contact with a great force that acts from within to drive out imperfections and revive and strengthen the whole nature of man. This only comes about when we are able to consent freely to experience contact with that power. The truth is that we cannot have that full contact with it until something in us is prepared; at least, not a conscious contact that will give us a direct help in dealing with all our problems.

One big difference between Subud and other methods that you may have heard about in that this is a process; that is to say, it is an action that requires time. The effects

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that I have been speaking about take a longer or shorter time for different people; sometimes months, sometimes years. A man who has been accustomed all his life to living only with what he sees and hears, what he thinks about, what his emotions drive him to or repel him from, cannot immediately have the full contact. He has to have something prepared in him, a way has to be opened in him by which he can reach the part of himself in which this contact is possible. Anyone who tells us that it is possible to have a spiritual regeneration without that preparation, without that inner transformation - or more properly, inner purification - is deceiving us. There is no easy short cut. What is easy, and indeed unprecedentedly easy, about Subud is that the starting does not require long preparation, does not require previous training or study. It is possible for anyone, under their ordinary conditions of life, however busy they may be and whatever their responsibilities may be. But, the process itself requires time, and it is not easy all the way.

So I must warn you that if you wish to come to this, it is not offered to you as an easy, quick solution to all life's problems, because it is not so. On the other hand, I do say that Subud is a miracle in the real, strict sense of the word; for 'miracle' means the intervention in human life of a power that is altogether beyond all human powers. For me, there is no doubt about that. But it is not a miracle of the kind that people picture to themselves, where a complete change suddenly happens and a man is transformed into something which he was not before. No, the miracle here is that: we are able to have contact with what is already in us, in spite of the fact that all our lives we have been cut off from that and turned away from it, and really have no idea how to get back to it.

Every man has this inner possibility in himself - everyone - but some people are more shut off from it than others. They are shut off from it in part by their own past actions; but they are also shut off from it, or at any rate hindered very much by the actions of parents and grandparents; that is, by the conditions of their coming into this world and also by their heredity, by qualities which are inherent in all human nature. But, in spite of all those hindrances, every man who asks for this contact is able to receive it. That is not only a miracle, but it is really a new kind of miracle²⁴ that has not appeared on this earth before. It is a new kind of miracle, because we are living in a new kind of world. The miracles that were performed in ancient times corresponded with what was necessary to awaken faith and to lead people towards true faith. Those no longer serve their purpose today, because all kinds of extraordinary things are happening all the time, as a result of human intelligence - that is, through science and so on - and no one knows what may not be discovered next year. So that, for example, if you were to see somebody sitting on the floor and floating off into the air, you might

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say that is a miracle; but perhaps in a few years' time, some ingenious device will be found that will enable you to do that, simply by pressing a button. And there is no more reason what that sort of miracle should be performed on this earth. The one kind of miracle that is needed is that men should be opened directly to faith - that a possibility should be opened to people of receiving in themselves a contact with higher power, so that they can have their own experience of it not depending upon someone else. Moreover, the action should be such that they can become strong enough to live in the conditions of this modern world, the increasingly difficult conditions of this new outer world; and not only to live for themselves, but also to be able to help others, like the example I gave you of the man who happens in that room to know where the switch is. That is very real help, although it is very simple, because if no one knows where the switch is, then everyone remains in darkness.

I have now told you as shortly as I could about Subud. Supposing that you now feel that there is something here which you feel is right. This is something that only you can tell. Then you may ask, "How is it to be done? What is required of me, if I ask for this; do I have to prepare myself in some way; is there some sort of work for me to do?" The answer is, one only has to be still in order to receive it. Our ordinary self is too noisy, too disturbed, for it to be able to be aware of an action which is very much finer and quieter than the ordinary sights and sounds of this world; very much finer than our thoughts, very much stiller than our feelings. Many people know that, if they are to receive something from a higher level, from Divine Providence or from the power of God, it is necessary to be still. And they try to make themselves still by forcing themselves in some way; by exercises or meditation or by ascetic practices that involve denying the demands of the body, such as fasting or going without sleep. They do all this with the aim of so reducing the activity of the body, and so of the ordinary self, that finally they become quiet and in that quietness they can receive what they need. I do not say that such a thing is impossible for people; but it is very hard. All the history of religion and mysticism teaches us that it is rare and exceptional that a man, by his own efforts, should be able to achieve that necessary stillness.

There is a much simpler and more certain way of becoming quiet. That is not to make any sort of effort at all. I will give you a picture to help you to see what I mean. It is a very well-known illustration which has been quoted over and over in mystical literature. If one wishes to see oneself exactly as one is in a pool of water then that perfect clear image will only appear when the water is still and clear. So long as there are ripples on the surface, and so long as there is mud in the water, we cannot see a clear image in it.

But we cannot make a pool of water clear and still by any kind of effort - by doing anything. If we try to smooth over the surface of the water we only make fresh ripples if we try to push the mud down to the bottom, we only stir up more mud. We cannot avoid breezes blowing, that will disturb the pool. If we wish the pool to be clear, we

have to be patient and wait until a time comes when the breeze stops blowing, and then the force of the earth's gravitational attraction will draw all the mud to the bottom and the surface will become free from ripples. Then the perfect image will appear in it.

It is the²⁵ same with our inner life. The best way to achieve stillness in one's inner life is to wait patiently for that stillness to come. But for that to happen there has to be some force that is analogous to the force of the earth's gravitation that can overcome all agitations. There is such a force; it is the very Power about which I have been speaking, the very force with which we wish to have contact. It is this same force that will produce stillness within us. In this lies the secret of the action of the spiritual exercises that we have in Subud.

If you wish to come to these exercises, you have to ask to do so. That is the first requirement. You have to ask, and understand that what you ask for is not something that any man can give you. All we can do is to show you how to reach that place in yourselves at which you have a contact with this universal power. For that, you yourself have only to wait, not attempting to do anything. That means not trying to quieten your mind or to direct it to anything. That would be like trying to hold the surface of a pool still by putting a plank of wood on it. You have not to try to make your emotional state tranquil, because that would be like trying to push down the mud in the pool. We have all sorts of emotional disturbances - everyone has. There is no real emotional tranquility in the ordinary condition of people, or very seldom; but we can become emotionally tranquil if we do nothing at all. Then this power with which we are in contact will of itself quieten all those emotional disturbances, and we shall find a state of peace in ourselves, and then the action begins.

The action itself is one that produces not merely a temporary state of inward peace. This is only the start. As it goes deeper, it brings a state, finally, in which man is always at peace with himself, untouched by anything outside, and so able to act from within himself. That, as I said before, is a long process. It is really a process of emptying and filling; or of purification; or sometimes it is also called a 'death and resurrection.' That means that we have to die to the action of the lower forces that disturb everything in us, and come alive to the action of the higher forces that will themselves transform us into higher beings. That action begins in our physical bodies, not in our minds or our feelings. They may become quiet, temporarily, as a result of this patience and waiting that I spoke about, but the real permanent action the real deep action, the permanent change begins with the physical body, and afterwards goes layer by layer deeper into us until everything is transformed.

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We have to understand something about this physical body of ours. It is the repository of our past lives. Everything that we have done and experienced has left traces in our bodies. These traces come not only from illnesses, but from all kinds of actions, voluntary and involuntary. Some of the traces are obvious, in the form of mannerisms, habitual way of reacting to other people, to conditions and so on; but the great majority of the traces remain unnoticed by us and even by others. Yet they are there in our bodies, and before we can become free, our bodies have to be liberated from all these traces of the past. That is the first great change that can happen in man, that his body can be rejuvenated, so that he is no longer influenced by his own past.

That is why, in these 'exercises,' or 'Latihan,' as they are called, of Subud, the first experiences and actions are in the body. Now I have used the word 'exercises' - and probably it evokes in your mind the picture of some sort of something that you are taught to do, like a mental or physical exercise which you learn and then practice. Such exercises come to us from outside, but the Subud latihan is not like that. We are really exercised by our own self, that is our own deeper or real self which begins to train our ordinary self. It takes some time before people can really be aware that this action is something that is coming from within themselves. Sometimes people do see this fairly early, but this depends upon their sensitivity, upon their character, upon how much they have been influenced by their past and by other people²⁶ and so on. But, once the contact is received the action is always present. With some it starts slowly and afterwards goes quickly, with others it starts quickly and afterwards goes slowly, sometimes it begins slowly and goes on slowly. Very rarely, it begins strongly, and goes on strongly. People are different; but I can say this - and now I speak from what I myself have observed over the past year or two, of having seen the action of Subud with more than fifteen hundred people in several countries - that everyone who wishes to receive this does so; and with everyone something does happen, and what happens is always in the direction of their becoming inwardly stronger, inwardly freer and more able to correct themselves, so that they do not require somebody from outside to tell them what they have to do. They begin to have, as it were, an inner teacher or inner guide that shows them what is necessary for them to do in all situations.

After a certain time, they begin to see also that they can call always on this force to help in every kind of difficulty they may meet with in life. But that only happens later. Sometimes it begins to happen within six or eight months.

I hope that what I have said has given you some idea at least of what Subud is about. I have spoken of it quite impersonally; in fact, it is an impersonal action. It does not depend on any one person, although it originated with Pak Subuh himself, who

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received this gift many years ago. He found, after this action had been completed in him, that other people could receive the same contact, and go through the same action as he had experienced himself. And after a time, when they begin really to know their way about inside this different world, they can also show other people. The great secrets of Subud are - first, that everyone who asks can receive; and second, that they receive not from man but from God, so that the medium of transmission has no importance. You can, at once, verify for yourselves that this is no human action. It depends upon your own consent - but you yourself do not produce it. It requires a contact before it starts, but once started it is quite independent of any person or any group.

We can trust only that which does not infringe our human freedom and responsibility - here in Subud, we remain entirely free and entirely responsible, for nothing happens except by our own consent. Moreover, this consent can be withdrawn at any moment, and then the action ceases. If you come to it, you will be able to verify further and become aware that it is you yourself that awakens through this action and that it is your own force and your own understanding that come to life and grow through it. Later still, you will begin to receive direct revelations that will show you that the source is far beyond this earth and even beyond the Solar System. Sometimes, people ask how Pak Subuh received it. He did not come to it by study, nor was it transmitted to him by any teacher or guru. It came to him spontaneously by the mysterious working of the Power of Providence. It came not for himself alone, but so that it could be a help for mankind at this critical period of human history. I believe that, as time goes on, more and more people will come to realize that Subud is a gift of Divine Providence that - if men will only consent to its action - can change the whole future of mankind.

Mr Bennett's First Talk to Subud Probationers

Mr Bennett's²⁷ First Talk to Subud Probationers

SUBUD
P.O. Box 453
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December 3rd, 1957

J.G.B. You have now reached the stage where you want to know something about what

is the process of this work and what happens to people in the exercises. To help you to understand why and how we can speak about this I would like, first of all, to explain the difference between the spontaneous working of a force that comes from inside us and the carrying out of exercises that we learn from outside.

There are exercises for improving the state of the body - gymnastics or yoga exercises - that are of a very general character and that, on the whole, cannot harm anyone. But as soon as exercises begin to touch something deeper in people and thus to affect the flow of the finer and stronger energies, it is necessary to be very, very careful with them. For that reason, in schools which have real knowledge of methods, that is, traditional knowledge, great care is taken not to let this knowledge pass to people who are not prepared for it. And for that reason these schools are sometimes called 'esoteric schools' and their knowledge is referred to as 'esoteric knowledge' - because it is kept secret within the circle of people who are ready to receive it. The real reason for this is that any exercises, of whatever kind they may be, can be adapted to the need of individuals only approximately. Therefore, where such exercises are used, it is necessary to adjust them all the time so that when changes take place in a person as a result of the exercise, the necessary changes are made in the exercise also, so as not to disturb the general balance.

I will give you an example to show what I mean by 'general balance.' Let us take so-called 'breathing exercises.' Now any special kind of breathing exercises which involves intentional changing of the rhythm of breathing, or the manner of breathing, does change the whole balance of energies in the organism and can produce very rapid and strong results in people. But this change in breathing, which may produce certain kinds of psychic experiences or psychic changes, produces also organic changes. For example, if we change the rate and way in which we breathe, we change the way in which the blood is oxygenated in our lungs, and if our heart continues to beat in exactly the same way as before, the balance between the air circulation and the blood circulation is disturbed, and as a result of that, people who do breathing exercises without supervision run a very grave risk. Although these exercises may seem to have, at the end of a short time, very beneficial results for them, yet after perhaps six months or a year, they may find themselves very ill and not understand why. It is because there was no adjustment of the other organs to balance the alteration made artificially in the rate of breathing.

This kind of thing really applied to every kind of exercise that people do according to some prescribed plan, or scheme, or programme. Where there is real knowledge, and where there is a teacher who can observe what is happening to the people and is ready to take responsibility for them, then the effect of various exercises can be watched and the necessary adjustments made. This is one of the principal reasons why people who work in such ways in order to develop their inner powers as quickly as possible, are dependent upon a teacher who has real experience and real

understanding of all that goes on in the human organism and in the human psyche. What I have said in relation to breathing applies also to our psychic or mental functions. For example, if artificial changes are made in the way we think, in the way we use our mental attention, in what is called 'meditation' or 'concentration' these also produce changes in the mental energies which require to be balanced with what happens in the feelings. If nothing is done to change the working of the feelings, of the emotional life, to correspond²⁸ to the change that takes place in the mental life, again a very serious lack of balance may result from that and although that may not be seen in the form of an actual illness, it may affect the inner state of people in a way that is even more serious and perhaps may permanently disturb or even destroy their possibilities of a right and normal development. Similar bad effects are often observed in people who make excessive use of mental attention such as accountants and statisticians.

Therefore anyone who undertakes any kind of exercise that involves artificial alterations in any of the processes - whether physical, or mental, or psychic - without knowing what is required to balance those changes in other parts of the organism and in other parts of the psyche, is really doing something very dangerous for himself. Now it is really hard in these days to find teachers who have, first of all, the necessary knowledge - which has been built up over literally thousands of years of experience of the changes that can be brought about in man through the development of his inner powers - and secondly, in addition to that knowledge, have actual practical experience in themselves of what such changes mean, and so are able to follow them in others and watch what is happening to them and advise them when to make the necessary adjustments. As I said before, it is just because of these risks that people who have this knowledge are very careful to whom they give it; because if it is half-taken by someone who has not got the necessary experience in himself, he may do harm - not only to himself, but also to others - if he, for example, sets out to help others on the basis of this half-knowledge. That is why, in any serious group or school that uses methods for the development of man's inner powers, it is always required that people should not speak about what they are receiving to those who are not in the same group, unless they have been given permission or authority from their teacher to do so. That provision is necessary for the protection of everyone, for themselves, their teachers and for any people to whom they might convey this knowledge.

Quite another situation arises when the working is not from our own intention and not according to some programme which is given to us from outside. When it is a spontaneous movement that comes from inside, then the force that brings about the exercise or the process is transmitted through the nature of the person himself and adjusts itself spontaneously to the needs of that person - not only to his general needs

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but to his needs at any given time. If there is some change taking place in the psychic nature, then the working of the process adapts itself to that change and, as it were, follows it according to the needs of each stage of development. That kind of process cannot be imitated, it cannot be taught from outside, it cannot be learnt from another person, and of course therefore it cannot be transmitted or given away. For that reason there is no need, in the case of such working, to have any secrets at all, because what each one experiences, he experiences for himself alone, and, although it may be of interest to other people, it cannot be used by other people, and it cannot be misused by other people. Since it is not based upon a knowledge that is shared or transmitted, in such work there is no need for secrecy, and it is possible to speak quite freely about anything that happens without danger of the bringing anyone else to harm or being misused by someone else.

This Subud work is of the second kind; it is not something that is taught or acquired from outside or copied in any way, but comes from inside ourselves and is adapted to the nature of each one of us. Therefore, there is nothing to prevent people from telling others what they themselves have experienced. For this reason, those who approach this work with idea of asking to be admitted to it, can have explanations from other people about what happens to them in the exercises as this will help them to see more clearly what it is they will have to ask for if they come to the point of having to make such a decision.

This²⁹ evening, I shall leave it to you to ask questions about anything that you want to be clarified about this Subud work. I only gave this preamble so as to help you to understand why it is that I am free to answer your question as well as I can.

Q. If these exercises are not taught by anyone, how is one to do them?

J.O.B. In this work, the real teacher is inside ourselves. Everyone has an inner teacher, but we have not yet learnt to go to that school. The real question is: "How can one learn from one's own inner teacher?" which is really one's own highest consciousness. But this consciousness is much too fine for us to follow its indications in our ordinary state - we require to be much more sensitive than we are now in order to recognize what comes from that deeper consciousness. The process of the exercises is, in part, to bring about this higher inner sensitivity, so that, as it were, an inner ear becomes opened that is able to hear what our ordinary ear cannot; an inner attention comes which can attend to what our ordinary attention misses altogether. When we come to the stage when we can really recognize and listen to the voice of the inner teacher, then we become conscious of the whole process and recognize what it is and what it does.

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But that is really a very distant stage, which may take years to reach, and until then one must have something or other which will enable process to work in us. This means that there is a gap to be bridged. And really, it is precisely for that reason that we require this contact which we are able to receive through Subud. If it were not for that gap, then everyone would be able to live according to their own deepest conscience or consciousness. They would know what is true and what is right for them without having to ask anyone else, because this deepest consciousness already knows that. It is just because we are not in this state that we require this start or initial impulse, so that a process can begin in us which will eventually lead to our being able to follow our own inner teacher, or guide.

Q. Are we taught to get into contact with our own inner selves? Or is this very naive?

J.G.B We are not taught anything. No! Still, it is right to ask these questions - you say they are naive - but they are necessary, because it is hard to grasp that we can learn something without being taught - that we can receive something without it having been given to us. We could be compared to a very complicated piece of electrical machinery which is provided with many different parts to do a certain kind of work, but it is not connected to the electric mains. The high voltage current does not flow through it, and all we have is something like a small battery which can be taken round and connected to different parts so that they each will work a little bit, but there is no big supply of current to make them all work together. But if that machine can really be connected to a big source, to a big generating station, then it can work as it was made to work, in the way it was constructed for. Each one of us has been made in such a way that a process can go on in us, that is no less than the gradual coming to life of all our different parts so that we can acquire the inner sensitivity I spoke of. Only, the contact with this source has to be made in the right place. There is only one point where it can be made. Every human being is constructed in such a way that he has a central point where the connection can be made, or 'plugged' into him. And when it is made, he has in him a power which enables himself to work - it is not something else working in him. He himself works, be he can do so only because this necessary energy can flow into him. Since the machine has been made and constructed in such a way that it is able to do what is required, it does not need to be taught, has no need to learn³⁰ anything. But so long as it is only able to work piecemeal and someone has to go round with a small battery and put a little electricity through one piece or another piece - then all that kind of care and attention that I was talking about before is needed. The difference between work from within and work from outside is in the source from which the power to work comes. We do not need to learn how to do this work, because we are already made for that. That is what man is made for, only he has not got the necessary force or

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strength inside himself to be able to do it. That is what he needs. But there is, of course, another way of getting round this difficulty; if you do not know how to become connected with a great source of power - a great source of energy - then you can make connections from various outside sources and get things to work little by little. This corresponds to the first way I was speaking of before. But to answer your question now more exactly, you say: "How can we start this if no one teaches us how to?" Really, all that is needed is that it should be switched on, then it will go by itself. And you will find that it is so.

Q. What is the source we are to be connected with? Is it inside ourselves?

J.O.B. When I said 'a big generator' I was referring to a truly great Source, that is universal. One could call it 'the Source of Life.' Everything participates in that to the extent that is necessary for automatic existence. But for the transformation of man into his complete being - his complete self - something more is needed that, as it were, a trickle, a small flow of energy. You asked if the source is inside ourselves. To that I must answer: "No, the source of this energy is not inside ourselves, it is beyond us." Our machine is able to work because we are made for that very purpose. If you ask how this recording machine learns to work when it is connected to the electric mains to take down what I am saying, I answer: "It is because it is made for that, it does not need to be taught how to do it, that is what it was made for. "But it will not work unless it is connected.

Q. (Inaudible.)

J.G.B. I did not really say that, I said that one should understand as clearly as possible what it means. Supposing that the time comes when you have to make up your mind whether or not you will ask to come to the Subud exercises - you have to know what 'come to the Subud exercises' means. That is all that I am trying to do now, to help you - as far as I can - to understand what is meant when one talks about 'coming to the Subud exercises.'

Q. Is this force the same as that which produces the 'shocks' in the octave that Burdjieff and Ouspensky write about?

J.G.B. Yes. Only they do not anywhere explain what the 'shock' really means, so that when I say 'yes', you are not much advanced. I think that you would have to be very clever, just by reading those books, to recognize what is really meant by those 'shocks,' but once you know, then it is easy to see. This is one strange thing about Subud, that whereas in other ways or methods we know of that are intended to help man to develop towards his complete being, you start by being taught something, by having some explanations about what you have to do, in Subud it begins the opposite way round. You begin with the experience itself, you begin with what has to happen, and

then afterwards you are able to understand the explanations as to what it really means.

This is particularly striking in regard to your question. Maybe later on you will find, you will see for yourself that you understood quite well what these shocks³¹ mean and you will then see for yourself that this could not have been explained to you, that it would have been quite useless to have given you some theoretical explanation about it.

Q. Would it be possible that a person such as an artist, by way of his art, could approach without realizing what was happening, this full inner sensitiveness about which you have spoken?

J.G.B. Yes, it is possible, but very rare. It happens not quite so rarely that one part becomes sensitive and another not; so that, for example, the artist is very sensitive - more than ordinarily sensitive - to certain fine distinctions, but he remains quite insensitive to others. It is quite obvious to others that whereas he is very sensitive in one way, he is quite insensitive in another, and therefore he is not really balanced, and so cannot develop beyond a certain point. But very, very rarely it can happen that a sensitivity that is more balanced is given to people through their art.

Q. What I really meant actually, was that those forces that can be released that seem to be of an intuitive or an occult nature in an artist, if you are capable of such an experience, is it to your knowledge the same sort of way?

J.G.B. No. That I really can say, surely not. Because those forces are still limited by the nature of the person himself, they are not beyond his own nature. At the very most, they are human forces - may be not individual - but a sensitivity to a general kind of human experience, not beyond that. The reason why I answer that quite definitely is that anything that is beyond that, has to come from a quite different source.

Q. Is there in this work a 'point of no return?' If that is so, has one necessarily found and if not, is one by the wayside? (Rest inaudible.)

J.G.B. It is difficult to know just how to answer that simply. One more or less simple answer is this - that the real inner work is an unending act of choice. It is always something that one chooses, and not something at any point that is imposed, or compulsive. Therefore one cannot speak of a point of no return, because really every act of choice, every time we choose, we have put aside what we did not choose, so that what we rejected does not return.

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But I think you really have in mind to ask whether there are any special kinds of danger involved in such work. Really all dangers arise for a man when he forgets that he is free, and forgetting that he is free, allows lower forces to act on him and so becomes a slave to those forces and then maybe will not be able to disentangle himself from them. All that I was saying at the beginning, about work coming from outside, really has dangers connected with it because one is to some extent dependent upon someone else, and no human being can have the necessary knowledge - even if he has the necessary good will - to be able to be entirely responsible for the inner life of another. If anyone puts himself in that position - of being dependent upon a teacher for the adjustment of his own inner processes which he does not yet understand himself - he has to remember what he is doing, and realize that he cannot really throw away his own responsibility and he cannot expect someone else to be entirely responsible for him. Gurdjieff was pre-eminently a teacher who understood this need for adjustment and the nature of these processes. In the 'study-house' in the Institute at Fontainebleau, right over the door was written the aphorism: "If you have not a well-developed critical faculty, it is no use your coming here." This is a warning, from the very start, that if you go to someone else³² for help and advice, you have no right to abdicate your own critical faculty. We have no right to do that towards any creature, including a human teacher, however wise he may be. But it is different if you really turn to God, because all work is ultimately based upon belief in the infinite wisdom and goodness of the Creator. However we may express it, whatever creed we may have, there is one common pre-supposition, that there is one Supreme Power which disposes all things for good, but has left us men free to accept or not accept its dispositions. One may put it in many different ways - but something like that is pre-supposed in all such work as ours. If we put ourselves in relation only to that power, then the process has a continuity, an order that it cannot have otherwise, because it really happens according to our own nature, not according to anything outside our own nature. It is necessary to have responsibility for oneself whenever one has dealings with human beings, because no one man has the right to take responsibility for another and nobody has the right to expect that the responsibility will be taken off his own shoulders. We have to be responsible for ourselves and we never can throw off this responsibility upon any other human being. But it is quite different in relation to the will of God. In relation to that, we can wholly put ourselves in the hands of that will, if for no other reason than that we are already in its power - whether we like it or not. At the most we can only kick or not kick against the pricks.

I shall try to reduce this long explanation to a short answer and say that the kind of danger you speak about - that one may get to a point of no return, where the inability to go further for lack of strength in oneself may leave one suspended between two

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worlds, and therefore in a very bad position - arises only if we try ourselves to interfere in the process. Or if we allow someone else to interfere in it. So long as the process proceeds naturally, according to its own laws, then that danger cannot arise because it is like the growth of a plant, It would be very dangerous if one were to try to produce growth entirely out of measure of the laws of development of the plant. If it develops cell by cell, tissue by tissue, each such stage, each division, is a point of no return. But it is an organic and natural thing and there is no danger.

Q. Is it necessary to have faith or belief in God before one can start Subud?

J.G.B. With what instrument could one have belief or faith? Everything requires an instrument. What, do you suppose, is the instrument of faith? It is best to use the word faith in the sense that would be applicable only to God. I might believe a story or not believe a story, but faith applies only in relation to God. What, do you suppose, is the instrument by which one could have faith in God?

Q. I don't understand what you mean by instrument.

J.G.B. You ask: "Is it necessary to have faith?" But I ask you to think, for a moment, what could have it? Do you think you could have faith in God with your mind?

Q. Not the logical mind, but that is not the important part of it.

J.G.B. It has been shown long ago, that there is no way of arriving at faith by any mental process, by any kind of thinking. Quite apart from that, it is simply a quite easily observable fact, that if I try to put myself in a position with my thoughts of having faith in God, I just do not have faith in God, that is all. That can be tested by anyone. Sometimes people say: "All right, then if it is not with one's head, it is at least with one's feelings." In other words they say that religious faith is an emotional experience. But really this is not true either. This also³³ can be tested and verified. Because, if one has faith in God, then one has it always and in all circumstances. It couldn't possibly be something that comes and goes. If I had faith at this moment, and no faith five minutes later, it cannot be called faith. But all the emotional experience of all people is incessantly fluctuating. People may have what we call a 'religious experience' which they call 'faith' but when that state passes and is no longer there, then their faith becomes only a memory in the mind. Faith in that sense is really not faith at all. When faith is only a certain kind of emotion, it can be replaced by another kind of emotion. This can very easily be verified by very simple observations of one's own experience and by a number of people sharing it. All will come to the same

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conclusion; that there is no emotion in man that cannot be displaced by another emotion. Anyone can verify that one emotion can drive out another, including the emotion we call religious experience or religious faith. Therefore, anything that we experience emotionally cannot be faith. I can be called a religious emotion, or a feeling for something extraordinary and wonderful, very great, but the next minute we have feelings for something extremely petty and small and the opposite of great. When we have the one, we don't have the other.

That is how man is, and we can study similarly, one by one, the different instruments that we have and say: "Can we have faith with our hands, or with our eyes?" and we find that we cannot, because really none of these are instruments for the kind of work that consists in having faith in God.

Therefore, when you ask: "Must one have faith in God?" I say you cannot have faith in God until you have access to the instrument in you that is capable of having faith, and you have not yet got access to that instrument, because it is an instrument that works with quite a different quality of energy from any of our ordinary instruments. And part of the whole process of this work is to bring you to be able to have that instrument really working in you so that you can be fully conscious of it.

Therefore, it cannot be said that one is required to have faith before one can begin. On the contrary, if one can recognize that one hasn't got faith, and is not deceiving oneself or pret/ending that one has got faith which one has not and cannot have, it is much better. But one can wish to have faith; that is another thing. One may realize that it is really a terrible state for men to live without faith, and one can also really know and honestly accept that one has not got it. When one is in that way sincere with oneself, then one can come and say: "This is something that I wish and hope will be possible for me." Then it is right.

Q. I am sad that Subuh is leaving this country. Will people be cut off from his help when he goes?

J.G.B. It does not depend upon his being here. Let me give you an illustration: Suppose there are many people with torches in their hands. One man has a light. He can light a torch for someone else or even for several people. He can then go away, because more and more torches can be lit from the others. It is no longer necessary that the person who lit the first torch should be there. Subud is like that. Once Subud is awakened in one person, then that one person can be a source from which it can be awakened in another, and maybe many others. And certainly this is something very surprising. We can more or less understand that in relation to ideas, but not in relation to inner awakening. For example, supposing that Pak Subuh had come here and had taught me a number of tricks, then I could teach these tricks to some other people and he no longer would have to be there in order to teach them to other people. But this is

not like that, there are no tricks here, at all. So you may say, "But if one man has received this extraordinary gift, and it is not transmitted through teaching,³⁴ it is not transmitted through anything that he does, how is it possible for it to be transmitted if he is not there himself to give it?" In times past many saints and men with extraordinary powers have appeared and there are even such men in the world today. They had some extraordinary force in themselves, and other people coming into contact with them experienced something altogether new and different. Such people are like a kind of fire, from which something can be heated. But it is also true that when people go away from that fire, they become cold, and when that fire dies, then nothing else can replace it.

But here it is not any man's fire, nor any man's force. It really is something which is beyond any person, beyond humanity altogether. It is a great source, which, although it is very great, far greater than the earth, is all the same everywhere, if only means can be found of connecting oneself with it. Once that means is found, then there is no limit to the number of people that can be connected with it.

For example, I have just been to Germany, to see some people there, and I met a considerable number of people who were much interested and wished Pak Subuh to go to Germany; but two exceptional men whom I saw had real quality of being ready for that connection, and with them I was able at once to give it to them without Pak Subuh being in Germany at all. It was not in me and yet it could pass to them. It does not depend upon any person. It was because I found that quality in it in the start that I saw that this was something quite extraordinary, and perhaps even unprecedented.

Q. I would like to have your definition of the word "God." What do you mean by "God?" And also the question about faith. By "faith" I understand believing in something that cannot be proved.

J.G.B. That is credulity. Faith is certainty, but as I said before, it cannot be experienced with the mind or the feelings. One kind of instrument is needed to tell you that the earth is round, another kind of instrument is needed to tell you that you live after your death; it only depends on which instrument you have to use, that is all.

You ask me how I define God. If God could be defined, then He would be something like us, there would be some common measure connecting man and God. But if God is entirely unlike anything else, then God cannot be defined. I will illustrate what I mean by an actual experience. About five years ago, I went to New York, to give some lectures, and I went to visit Madame Ouspensky, the widow of P.D. Ouspensky,

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the writer, whom I have known for nearly forty years; she is one of the people in this world for whom I have the greatest respect. I went to visit her - not having seen her for several years. When I went into her room, her first question - before asking anything else - was: "What do you understand by God?" Because she is not an ordinary woman, and is really near to death, I had really to look into myself to see how I would answer, and I answered like this: "I am sure that God exists, but I am also sure that I know nothing at all about Him." I really cannot change now from that answer I gave five years ago. But I would add something: not only am I sure that God exists, but I am sure also that the Power of God, or the Spirit of God, does work in a special way in us men. And that it is possible to recognize something of that working. Therefore, although we cannot know God, and we really cannot have any knowledge about God, yet we can recognize a certain working in ourselves that cannot be reduced to any ordinary terms. It has a quality in it that we describe by words as 'miraculous.' And when one begins to recognize this kind of miraculous working in oneself, one then can begin to recognize it outside of oneself. In that way one can begin to see - not to know or to define, but to see - that within nature there is something more than nature that is not against nature but is able to use nature to produce something that is beyond nature.

Q. Would³⁵ you say that is an agnostic attitude? By agnostic, I mean somebody who believes in the existence of God but presumes that God does not take any interest in us.

J.G.B. I have just been saying the very contrary? that God does participate, and does 'take an interest,' as you put it. I am certain that one can recognize, beyond any doubt, how that 'interest' changes our inner life if we will respond to it.

We cannot know anything about God, but we can recognize that there is a working which is different from the ordinary working when we find that something can happen inside us that certainly does not come from our own thoughts and feelings and instincts; that doesn't even come from our own nature. It acts upon our nature, not from it. When we begin to recognize that there is this inner, regulative, harmonizing power and really feel for ourselves that it is something beyond human, we can call it the Spirit of God or the Holy Spirit that works in us. But even then we never can know what or Who that Spirit is.

Q. You say "Holy Spirit." Is that in the sense that it is understood in the Christian religion or is it just an attempt to enlarge the reality of God?

J.G.B. Not enlarge - God cannot be enlarged.

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Q. What is your attitude, either Christian, or have you got your own philosophy or idea of God?

J.G.B. About one thing I have no doubt: that today I have more faith than I had fifteen years ago. And then a great deal more faith than I had when I was a young man. But to say that I have complete faith would be saying far too much because to have perfect faith is the sign of a perfect man, which I am very, very far from being. Only one can recognize and have no doubt at all, looking over one's life, that something has grown, not merely a mental conviction, which is really nothing, or an emotional attitude, which is really nothing; but the power to see for oneself that there is in this world something more than the action of matter and forces. Faith is really to be able to see, and that kind of instrument that can see can develop in us only slowly.

Mr Bennett's Second Talk to Subud Probationers

Mr³⁶ Bennett's Second Talk to Subud Probationers

SUBUD
P.O. Box 453
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New York 3, N.Y.

7th January, 1958

I take it that you have either heard or read the Introductory and the first talk to Probationers that I have already given and now you are coming to the point at which you have to make up your own mind whether you will ask to be brought to the Subud work. If any of you have come without that preliminary information about it, I am sorry, and you must understand that I am speaking to those who already have some idea of what Subud means. Really the fact that all of you have already signed the probation forms means that you have set yourself a period of three months during which you will find out as much as you can about Subud, and at the end of that time you will decide for yourselves whether or not you wish to be admitted to it. Again, if any of you are not in that position, I must apologize, because I shall be speaking as if you all were.

You now need to know what it is that you ask for when you ask to be accepted in the Subud. As I have already said, in speaking about this before, there are some things which can be spoken about because they can be thought about, but there are other

things which are beyond our thought and therefore are really beyond the possibility of being explained or conveyed from one person to another by anything that is said or done. Therefore, there must necessarily be one part of this Subud which I am unable to tell you about and which you will only find out for yourselves when you have started and you see in your own experience what is this inner awakening that comes when something is touched deep in our own souls. The best way - perhaps the only way - in which I can help you to come to this decision, which must be your own decision, is if I tell you how I myself have experienced this work and why I myself took what was a very great responsibility; that is, of introducing many hundreds of people who were already working with me to this work, knowing very well that it was likely that the majority of these people would wish to enter it just because they had confidence in me. And I knew, and know, that this is not a sufficient reason, nor the right reason for doing anything. I have always warned people "Do not do this because of me." or "Do not say: because it is right for him, it is probably right for me" because this is really not at all a basis for taking a decision of this kind. We all of us have quite a definite way for taking such a decision, and that is by asking ourselves whether it is something which is right for us. Because there is - in every human being - a certain power of knowing what is right for himself. That power is called 'conscience.' For the most part we cannot experience the working of this power in us, because it has been covered up by every kind of instruction, training and education, and by the influence of other people who try to teach us what is right and what is wrong - what we ought to do and what we ought not to do - and we have become accustomed to listening to what other people have told us and to copy what we see other people doing or, sometimes, to revolt against what we see other people doing. In either case we base our behaviour and our ideas of what is right and wrong on what we pick up from other people and do not really use the power that is in all of us to have direct certainty as to what is right and what is not right for us; that is, what comes from our own conscience. But in spite of the fact that this habit of listening to others and taking all our opinions about everything second-hand from other people - in spite of the strength of this habit - our conscience remains what it is, was and always will be, and also, where it is. For it can always be found, if only we are able to look for it. Only unfortunately, the direction in which it is necessary to look for our conscience is a direction to which we are unable to turn with our minds, with our feelings, with our attention, or with our ordinary understanding. And so when we look for conscience and try to listen to the voice of conscience³⁷ in ourselves, we do not know where to look, we do not know how to listen and we cannot easily recognize it. So, although it is able to give us quite complete and even detailed guidance as to how we should be living our lives, we are reduced to something very much less complete than that, that is just able to receive the answer 'yes' or 'no' to some simple questions that we are able to ask ourselves. And in this case

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it is possible to ask a simple question: 'Is it right for me to try this, to enter upon this, or is it not right?' With many people - perhaps even with most of you - it is possible to have a clear answer then, and if you have a clear answer in that way - either yes or no - that is the best that you can have, and much better than listening to other people and much better also than trying to reach a reasoned conclusion by thinking about it. Because our conscience is much wiser and can see much further than our thought, which is, as I have said in the other talks, only an instrument for the affairs of this world, and can no more penetrate into another world than our eyes can see through a brick wall, perhaps even less. When you have heard what I am going to say this evening and if you do not have the opportunity of hearing another such talk, I advise you not to go away and think about it, as some people say they will do, because in this case thought only confuses. But go away, and when the time comes for taking a decision, simply ask yourself that one simple question, 'Is it right that I should try this or not?' You just trust that and that only.

I think that most of you know that for something like nearly thirty-seven years now I have been a student and follower of the teachings and methods of Gurdjieff, who was a very extraordinary teacher and who brought to the West both knowledge and methods that have probably not been available in the Western world before. And thanks to that teaching and those methods, I found out a great many things about myself and came to understand a little bit about the laws that govern the inner, invisible life of man, and our relationship not just to the material universe we see around us, but to the invisible universe which is incomparably greater and richer than the visible one. Thanks to that teaching and many other contacts that I was lucky enough to have with people who had searched along different ways arising from nearly all the great religions and teaching of the world, I can say that I had come to have some idea of the nature of the process of this inner development by which we men can come to what is destined for us: that is, conscious, free individuality. Freedom in this sense means especially freedom from the laws that govern this earth and bind us to this earth. Only at the same time as I acquired this knowledge and came to understand many things, I also saw that the possibility of realizing this destiny depends upon a force that is not our own and that has its origin on a much higher level than the human; that everything really depends upon the possibility for us to come into contact with this great force.

What I have been saying about conscience is closely connected with that, because it is really through our own conscience that we become connected with that force. When we have that connection, it not only enables us to see what is right for us, but it also gives us the strength to do what is right for us, and really those are very different things. I think everyone knows that often we really do see - perhaps in a limited way, but still quite clearly - how we ought to be and how we ought to behave in a given situation and find that we have not the inward strength to overcome our fears, and the resistances and doubts in us, which would enable us to face a situation as we know it ought to be faced. So that having come to all those conclusions a good long time ago, I

realized that it would be very necessary that what we had learnt in these ways about how man's life can be lived and how it should be lived, should be supplemented by a way to find a contact with that force without having to give up everything in our ordinary life, without neglecting the external, ordinary obligations of a man or a woman. On the contrary, the world in which we live³⁸ now is such that those who have found something real in themselves cannot be satisfied by finding the way for themselves alone, but they are, and must be, under the obligation to share what they have found with others, because the world is in such a situation that kind of help is really desperately needed. Therefore, people who have the possibility of finding this contact should not look for it under such conditions that, having found it for themselves they cannot use it for the benefit of others, as would be the case if they could find it only at the price of complete solitude, in a complete isolation from their fellow-men in which they could be peaceful and quiet enough not to be disturbed by all the forces in this world. But having found it there, in entering the world again they would be disturbed and distracted, and lose what they had previously found and would be compelled again to return to solitude, as has happened many times already and happens all the time to the rare people who do find something. It is necessary that we should find something that is very extraordinary; that we should find the possibility of a contact with this great force through which the whole transformation of our nature can be accomplished; and yet to find it without turning our backs on our ordinary life, and what is more, the ordinary life of this present-day world with its immensely powerful external forces of every kind that are acting on us.

It happens that Gurdjieff himself had predicted that such a possibility would come into the world. I was going to say 'such a force should come,' but that is really putting it wrongly, because the force is always there - it neither comes nor goes, it pervades everything, it is in and outside of everything. It is not the force that has to come, but the possibility of a contact with it that has to come. And it was the possibility of that contact that Gurdjieff predicted many years ago as the only possible means of helping mankind in the situation in which we are today. It is in fact thirty-three years ago since he made that prediction, and in just that form: that a force was to come into the world, or a possibility was to come into the world whereby people could again find a direct contact with their own conscience and to be so transformed that they would be able to live in their ordinary lives both by the light of conscience and also with the strength that comes to us through conscience. And again at the end of his life, Gurdjieff spoke to me and to others about this as something which was not very far distant. He said that someone was to come who would bring this possibility to the world after he himself had gone. And it was not only Gurdjieff, but other people who had certain sensitive properties that enabled them to be aware of the kind of things that were

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happening and were to happen in the world - such as Alice Bailey, who made exactly the same prediction in almost the same terms and, I think, without any contact or knowledge of what Gurdjieff had said on the same subject. And apart from those people who have written books in the West, there are in many Eastern countries and also in South America others who have made such predictions during the last twenty, thirty or forty years.

As far as I am personally concerned, these predictions, began to take even more specific form after Gurdjieff himself died, when I travelled for a certain time in some of the countries of the Near and Middle East. There I also met men with unusual powers who undoubtedly had contact with higher sources of understanding and insight and who made quite specific predictions about the coming of someone through whom there would be a spiritual regeneration of the world. In several different places and in almost the same terms they also told me that I myself would see this and would be one who would help in that coming. So that several years ago I had already been told to expect that someone would come who would bring that possibility of a contact, and I may say that the very building of this hall in which we are sitting now was a direct consequence of my being told several years ago that it was my duty, among other things, to prepare a place here. When I returned to England, we set about preparing such a place. I could tell you many interesting things about the really extraordinary events which made possible the building of this hall in this particular way.

But³⁹ now I come to events of the last year and a half. It was nearly two years ago that I first heard of Mohammed Subuh, and that he had given to many people in his own country and also to a small number off Europeans - chiefly Dutch - a certain contact which awakened an inner force which led first of all to a gradual transformation of their bodily, physical or organic life and later of their inner or spiritual nature. It is, in fact, from a Dutchman living in Japan that I first beard about it. I was very much struck by various things in his letters to me because they corresponding rather exactly to what I had been led to expect as the way in which we should find a contact with this force. This was all the more striking because Gurdjieff himself had said - about eight years ago - that we should have a special interest in what was then called the Dutch East Indies. Like many other things that he let fall, this was of such a nature that it was clear that it had a significance and that we must remember it and wait for the moment when the meaning would become clear. He himself would not explain why said this.

So far as I was concerned, it was about two years ago that the threads began to come together. Many different lines that I had seen and been in contact with in my life led me to think that perhaps the time was now approaching when all these predictions

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would be fulfilled. Then there came to England - by way of Hong Kong and Cyprus - an Englishman who had been to Java and had received the contact a number of years ago. While in Cyprus he met a friend of mind, and so about the middle of last year I had the first possibility of a direct contact. Various things prevented me from following this up and it was not before September of last year that I first had the possibility of ascertaining, as seriously as I could, what this all amounted to. And as I am really trying as sincerely as possible to share with you my own experience I must tell you that what I heard produced a very mixed impression on me. In one way it corresponded to what I had expected, but in other ways it was very disconcerting. For example, I was told many things about strange cures of various illnesses and even the revival of people on the point of death, and apart from that of people acquiring various powers of clairvoyance and so on as a result of these exercises. I must say to you at once that, so far from being encouraging or convincing, all that made me extremely sceptical. Because I was not interested either in anything like healing or curing of illnesses nor in the acquisition of what seemed to me to be special kinds of tricks, and almost approaching what I knew to be magic. And I knew that anything that had the flavour of magic in it was really not to be trusted at all. And yet, in spite of that, I also could recognize that here were other factors that could not possibly be ignored in view of all that I had learnt and all that I had been led to expect. In those circumstances I saw nothing else for it but that I myself should make the experiment. At that time I had many hundreds of people connected with Coombe Springs and also people all over the world who in one way or another had been in connection with me on account of my own connection with Gurdjieff and Ouspensky. In several ways this made it particularly difficult for me to embark on anything new, because I had no doubt that both the essential teaching and conception of human nature and human destiny that Gurdjieff had taught and also the methods which he had given to us were fundamentally sound and right and could do a very great deal for people. In addition to that, of course, I had the responsibility that if I were to introduce something new to people - as I said before - there would be a danger that they would take it from me on trust, and that if I had made a mistake, not only I but many others would suffer from that. So as I say, it was clear that the only thing I could do to start with was to experiment on myself. Fortunately for me there were a number of others - a small number, six or seven men and four or five women - who had, quite independently, reached conclusions like mine; that is, that what was necessary for us was to find a way of coming into contact with this great force which is the great vivifying force of the universe, and not only to follow methods that depended on one's own efforts and one's own knowledge. And this little group of people⁴⁰ began - just over a year ago - in the way that it will be possible for you, if you wish to, to begin also; that is to say, we received the contact through what is called the 'latihan' - and the meaning of the word

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'latihan' is really 'training.' And that means a process by which the whole of our nature is 'trained' to be able to be as instrument of our own conscience, our own real self.

These latihan - or as they sometimes called, rather misleadingly, 'exercises' - are quite different from what we are accustomed to call an exercise, because they do not begin by our learning something - like one might learn to do exercise of meditation, or a mental concentration, or some physical exercise, or dance, or music, or those kind of exercise, for example, that Loyola used for the foundation for the training of the first members of the Society of Jesus, and which have since been followed for centuries by the members of the Society. All those exercises - as I said in the earlier talks - are learned from outside and are followed by an effort of one's own will, whereas here there was something which was not taught, which cannot be copied from someone else, which does not depend at all upon our own will, but only upon our own asking.

The role of the person who helps, or initiates or starts the process, is like that of a witness - and I have compared it very often to the real meaning of the role of the godfather in the baptism, when the godfather simply answers on behalf of the child, questions which the child does not yet understand, and says 'yes' to the question: 'Do you wish to be received' and so on. But still, the question is presumed to be addressed to the child and it is the child that answers. And it is really very much like that in this case, because the question is not addressed to our ordinary self. When I put it to you that you will at some time have to say whether or not you wish to come to these exercises, this question is not really addressed to the 'you' that you yourself know, but really to a child - an inner child - that you do not yet know. That child is the real man or the real woman which you are not yet conscious of, and it is really on behalf of that still unborn real man and real woman in you that someone else has to answer the question, 'yes, I wish.' So that really, when you come to that, you and the person who is the sponsor are like the two godparents, because you are no more the real man than I am. We can only speak for that real person in you. You can say, as well as you can: 'yes, I wish to receive this,' and I can say as well as I can: 'Yes, he wished to receive it.' The truth is that 'he', that person, that yet unborn real being, does know. And, as I said before, that real self in us speaks through conscience. When that question is asked and answered, and those who are to receive the contact and those who are the sponsors, the witnesses, stand together - or stand round a circle together or however it may be - then something awakens in that yet unborn self of ours, and from that there begins to be an action upon this ordinary self of ours which includes this body which we can see. And it is that action which is really the training or the exercise. It is an action that comes from inside and not as a result of our own thinking and our own feeling and so on, all of which belong to this outer, temporary and perishable self which is all that at present we know of.

I must say - to go back to my own story of this - that when I first asked for and received this contact, the very first time, I experienced something that was very

remarkable. I knew one thing: that it is really impossible for a man - by any effort of his own will - to remain in an unbroken state of consciousness of his own existence for more than a few minutes. And yet the first time that I came to this Latvian I experienced for half an hour a state of unbroken consciousness of myself, and this was to me, a really astonishing thing, because I have had many, many years of experience of trying to attain a state of unbroken consciousness and had only done so a few times under conditions of very great difficulty and at a price of very prolonged effort and much suffering. And here it suddenly came, as it were, just for the asking. Now⁴¹ the next thing is really rather strange: that having had some clear evidence, the very first time, that there was some extraordinary force here, I experienced immediately a very great reluctance to have anything more to do with it. And when I went home that evening I really made up my mind that I was not going to go on with this. I had said that I would go again in a day or two. When this time approached, when I asked myself whether I should go or not, I found that I clearly had to go, in spite of the fact that I did not want to at all. I did not like the idea of repeating this experience.

I think - if I try to tell you now, throwing my memory back about fourteen months - that it was chiefly that I dared not hope that something so extraordinary could have happened and I just did not want to be disappointed, combined with various other things that I have already told you about - that I was so disagreeably impressed by what seemed to me very pretentious claims that were made about curing and the acquisition of strange powers and so on - which really was rather foolish of me, considering that I myself had experienced in the first half hour something that I know to be quite impossible in the ordinary way. Anyhow, this went on for a certain time, and almost exactly a year ago now, I went to the Channel Islands and spent about a week, together with two or three others, and then began really seriously to study this and to find out about it. Again, to show you the kind of division in oneself that can be produced in this, when it was suggested that a few of us should go away from London in order to have more opportunity both of hearing about it and of repeating these exercises, I at once said 'No, this is impossible,' I had far too much to do and could not get away, and this was very true. But in a very strange way the situation so cleared that suddenly I found myself with about eight or nine days free, with nothing to do, and I saw that the only sensible thing was to go and do it. So I did. Shortly after this I began to compare notes with the other people who had also started this, at the same time as I did. I may say that all of these people had had at least twenty years of experience of following the methods of Gurdjieff and Ouspensky and Maurice Nicoll, and so on. That means they were people with rather unusual experience and material for judging such matters. And everyone had had the some astonishment to find that just for the asking, they had been able to have a state of clear, unbroken consciousness that they only could

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attain at the price of great efforts, using different sorts of exercises. I ought to say here that I myself though and still think that the possibility of receiving this so quickly was not unconnected with the fact that for twenty or thirty years or more, we had been struggling for it, and do not think that that would necessarily happen to everyone at the beginning or that they would recognize the extraordinary character of what happened

The next step that was of interest that I must tell you about was that after about six or eight weeks - from the time I first began to follow these exercises - I myself had a verification of this action on one's own health. Just thirty-eight years ago - in 1919 - I had a very bad attack of dysentery in Asia Minor which never cleared up properly so that all my life I have been liable to trouble from this latent weakness, and many times in my life I have been made very ill by food and so on. After about six to eight weeks doing these exercise, I had a sudden recurrence of this, without any apparent cause. It lasted I think three days, with all the symptoms of a real direct attack of amoebic dysentery. Then it equally suddenly stopped, and it was quite clear to me what I had been through was really a clearing out a latent weakness in myself, just by repetition of the symptoms in that way. And it so happens that only a little time afterwards I had complete verification that this had been eliminated, because I had some food poisoning of a kind that in the past has always made me ill for two or three weeks, and really made me suffer very much from skin eruptions and so on, and this time I had a really bad one from some shell-fish, and the whole of it was eliminated by midnight of the same night, and the next day I was perfectly well. I remember, when I realized that I had eaten bad shell-fish, I thought,⁴² 'This is three weeks of misery for me, and that is my own fault, for being greedy.' When it was completely cleared in the morning, I had no doubt for myself that this was the result of what had happened six or eight weeks earlier, and had no doubt also that it was this action which I had heard about in connection with these exercises. I must say that later - a little bit later - I had a repetition of exactly the same kind of elimination in connection with latent symptoms of T.B. that I had also suffered from and been reduced to a very dangerous state twenty-five years ago and had recovered from but never fully eliminated, so that I had remained with A certain weakness in my lungs. I am telling all this because there is no other way except to speak about one's own experience. But I must just add- so as to show that it is not something peculiar to me - that several of the other people who had started with me had one or another rather chronic trouble, and in each case these troubles had quite cleared up. I cannot speak about other people's illnesses because some of you may know who they are, but I can say that in the case of one man in particular it was very striking - that the trouble that was progressively crippling him really was quite eliminated in four or five months.

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So that what I had thought was very much beside the point and not interesting to me at all - even rather I felt repelled by this aspect of benefit to one's physical health - I came to understand that was really a part of the whole process. And I realized also that I had had rather a wrong attitude towards the question of physical health, as if this does not really matter. And I was not justified in having that wrong attitude because I must say here in passing that I myself had seen during the time that I was with Gurdjieff, in my presence and in cases of which I knew very well, he had also been instrumental in curing people from some illnesses that could not be cured by ordinary medical means, so that it was not as if it was something that was entirely strange; I think that it was just that something was closed in my own mind to this idea.

It was then about March of this last year, 1957, that the question of Pak Subuh himself coming to the West began to be discussed, and Rofe - that is, the Englishman of whom I was speaking - told us that Pak Subuh himself had, a long time ago, predicted that he would come to the West and that the first country he would come to was England, and that in England he would find people who were prepared and who would be able, without difficulty, to understand and accept what it was that he was bringing and would serve, as it were, as a bridge, so that this very astonishing possibility should become available to people in the West. And also, he told us, it was one principle of Pak Subuh's whole life and existence that he never did anything from himself, that he went where he was asked to go, and that he gave what he was asked to give. So that he himself would never take the initiative, for example, of coming to England, but that if we took the initiative and invited him, he probably would come. And that if, when he came, people asked for the contact, in the same way as it had been given to us, he would give it to them. And clearly the time had then come when it was essential that we should understand more about this, because what we had experienced was sufficiently remarkable in itself to make it impossible to just stand still with what we had got. Therefore, those of us who had started at the end of 1956, decided that we would take it upon ourselves to send this invitation, and he did in fact come and arrived here on 22nd of May of last year. By that time, I myself in these exercises which I had been doing for about six months, had begun to have experiences of quite a different kind - of the very kind that I myself previously had been pooh-poohing, that is, the experience of clairvoyance and of seeing things in quite a new and different way. And I saw that I was being, to a great extent, forced to eat my words about all the things I had said I was not at all interested in, and that I was beginning, in spite of myself, to be interested in these possibilities, which I saw really were part of the whole process of the development of the inner nature and of the coming to life of the inner or real man who⁴³ really has quite different powers from our ordinary, or outer man.

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Another thing I must tell you about that time was that I myself began to see the meaning of many symbols that I had studied many years, but to see them in quite a different way, as something direct and living in front of me, so that I realized, apart from the physical action there were certain changes in the inner consciousness that came about with this. That really takes my story up to the 22nd of May. That day I met Pak Subuh at the airport here at London, and I happened to go to the immigration section where there appeared to be some sort of turmoil as so often occurs because various people's passports were not in order, and there was a disturbed, tense atmosphere that one finds around immigration; he was sitting on a chair, waiting for the rest of his party to come through. I had an impression of complete quiet, as if there was something quite unmoving. At the same time, what struck me very much, having seen in my life many remarkable men, was that there was absolutely nothing external to make an impression on anyone. In literally all other cases that I have known of men who are really outstanding in their spiritual gifts, there was also something visible that impressed you, so that you thought. 'This is an extraordinary man' as soon as you saw him; but as soon as one saw Pak Subuh one thought 'This is an ordinary man' and the only thing that made an impression was the feeling of inward peace. That first impression has only strengthened ever since, that here in front of one is an ordinary man, who has not in himself any extraordinary powers, and when he says 'I am an ordinary man' it is not just a kind of modesty, real or false, but he speaks just how things are. But although he is ordinary, at the same time he is also extraordinary and even perhaps unique in that he is able to let all the light through. And just because it is perfectly transparent you do not even see it. Because he has that peculiar quality of being completely transparent, you do not see anything extraordinary about him at all. Many people have spoken to me about this same impression that they have had with him.

I think you all know the story of how - driving back in the car from the airport I spoke to him about the telephone conversation I had from Hollywood with Miss Bartok, and all her affairs, and how he took in hand, almost from the next day, as something that should be attempted, this possibility of helping her with the really dangerous and difficult organic situation in which she was. What struck me then was his quickness of decision, and in spite of the fact that at that time I knew no Indonesian and was speaking through an interpreter, the way in which he grasped, in a matter of ten minutes, what was really quite a complicated situation - not only medically, but I explained there were many other complications, and I must say I warned him at the time that Miss Bartok happened to be a lady round whom publicity easily arises and, if this was undertaken, one did not know what would happen. He said that nothing like that matters - if it is to be like that, it will be like that, if she has asked for this help, she must be given it.

That evening - he was staying in the North of London - I went to the first exercise with him. In one way it was not different from the exercises I had been doing for six

months before, but in another way there was something very extraordinary because I myself had just no possibility of doubting there were other beings in the room, ordinarily invisible, and what is more, very great beings, and that he was being helped by them. Later on, even within the next week or so, I was even sure of who one or two of these were. Of course it is impossible for you to verify anything that I am saying now about this and it must inevitably be so.

During these weeks also I began to see more and more how we can be taught through symbolism. In the exercises I began to receive teaching about myself and what I had to do in the form of quite definite, concrete symbols which actually appeared in front of me,⁴⁴ and I then understood a great deal more than I had in the previous thirty or forty years of study, about what are called the higher centres in man, and the difference between the two centres, one of which gives of objective true knowledge about ourselves and our own destiny, and the other one which enables us to know about the universal existence. Then, almost at once, I was faced with the situation that I had frankly very much dreaded, and hoped that somehow I would avoid, that is of bringing all the people that are here at Coombe Springs - many hundreds of them connected with the various study groups that I have - in contact with this. I had hoped somehow that it would be possible to pick out a few stout-hearted people who had gone through the same kind of experiences as I had and later, little by little, bring in other people. When I suggested this to Pak Subuh and said: 'Shall I pick out a few people that I think are suitable?' He said 'That cannot be, there cannot be any selection. Everyone who asks must be given it, because no one can tell whom God will choose. It is not by external appearances or by any quality that we can see that we could know who is to receive more and who is to receive less, and if you begin to choose, you may reject the people whom God has chosen.' I could not argue with that, and therefore I had to tell everyone, and the result of that was that there was an avalanche of people. Within a few weeks several hundred people came to these exercises - and that is not like people coming to hear a talk, because coming to these exercises means bringing yourself into contact with a very great force, and what happens to each person is quite different to what happens to other people. I had only, at the best, some theoretical understanding of the process as a whole and just my own very limited practical experience. On the other hand, there was Pak Subuh and the people he had brought from Indonesia, who could speak hardly any English, but who fortunately - especially Pak Subuh himself - had a quite unbelievable understanding of the people that were brought here. I say unbelievable, because I have seen many teachers from the Asiatic countries come in one way or another to the West and be completely helpless in front of the mentality and habits of Western people, and make all kinds of mistakes about them - and in that I also include Gurdjieff himself when he first came to the West forty years ago. But it was not

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like that with Pak Subuh. From the very first day eh showed that he understood the people that were in front of him; and thanks to that we were able to cope with what would otherwise have been a quite impossible situation, with hundreds of people having all kinds of experiences and desperately wanting to have them explained, to know what was happening to them, where they were going and what they should do next and so on. I can really tell you that the months of June and July of last year were about as tough an experience as any I have had in my life. But at the same time it was very clear to me - beyond possibility of doubt - that there was a protection, that what we did for the best - but with terrible ignorance of what it was that we were doing - somehow turned out for the best; not as so often happens in ordinary life, that what one does for the best produces anything but the best results and that to act in ignorance - even with the best of intentions - is sheer folly. So that really, in truth, what we did in June and July of last year was something that from an ordinary, common-sense point of view was sheer folly; to bring hundreds of people into contact with something that we barely understood ourselves. And yet it all worked out, and little by little people began to come to the fore who understood something about it. During this time I had some quite unmistakable evidences of a different kind from those I have described until now. There were some moments of really great stress, when our faith was sorely tested by things that we could not understand. There was a situation that was really impossible, and yet I saw that I was shown quite clearly what I had to do and was able to go forward along an impossible path with absolute confidence and see, in advance, what was going to be the result of a series of what - from the common-sense point of view - were quite absurd actions. It is very difficult to convey to you what all that really means, but I can only tell you what I myself experienced. Then again there came a period⁴⁵ later - which I must tell you about just to finish this story - when suddenly there burst upon us this fresh avalanche of publicity. I must tell you that we have had this place here at Coombe Springs for something like twelve years; there have been many hundreds of people here and many remarkable and interesting things have happened. Sometimes some of the newspapers have heard about it and wanted to send people to write it up and that sort of thing, but we have always managed to avoid publicity with extraordinary success. I have always felt that in this kind of place publicity can only be harmful, because anything that is written by people who do not understand is bound to be misleading. And I must tell you here in passing one remarkable even connected again with Miss Bartok; when she first came here in May for this work, somehow the papers heard that she had come and dozens of reporters turned up to ask what she was doing. This is a real example of how this was protected. The most flimsy and absurd reasons were given why nothing should be said to them - and people who know something about the press know that they are not easily put off by a story - but all of them went meekly away, and no one wrote a word. It happened two

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or three times that events occurred here that would have been very, very troublesome if they had been written about widely in the papers - but always somehow a veil was drawn and the papers wrote nothing at all. Really, I had come to the point where I thought, 'We are immune from publicity.' It was too good to be true. All of a sudden, everything changed round completely and suddenly the papers began to write all about this. I think you will understand that it could have been written about in the most absurd or harmful way - and on one or two occasions in fact was. But what one would have expected - especially with the sort of sensational associations that were with all this - one would have expected it to be at least a hundred times worse than it in fact was. So that although we squirmed and wriggled whenever we opened our papers in the morning to see what we were going to read next, it was not as bad as it might have been. What did become clear was that this had been taken out of our hands and there was a reason for it that was considerably bigger than our own comfort and peace of mind, and that it was really necessary that people who would not hear about this otherwise, should hear about it. Because this work is of such a nature that it can help many, many people; and what is more, it can help people who have not got the kind of training and preparation that comes through reading a lot of books - the kinds of people who formed the great majority of those who used to come to these studies we had, and who formed the majority of those who surrounded Gurdjieff and Ouspensky. It was really a very small circle of people who were attracted to that kind of work. Where as this kind of work - what we have in Subud - is of such a nature that anyone, who maybe has never read a book in his life, could start just well - perhaps even better - than somebody who has a great philosophical training. And precisely those kinds of people can only be reached through the kind of things that are written in the papers, which is perhaps all they come in contact with. Therefore, we had to accept that this kind of thing would happen. And no doubt there are some of you here who came to this because you read about it or heard about it from the newspapers. And maybe some among you are people who really are destined to receive very much from this.

If I were to go further now with speaking about my own experiences, I would really go beyond what it is possible to say, but I will finish by telling you this about it: that, so far as I am concerned, a short period - very short in a lifetime - of little over a year has given me more than anything else that I have had in my life, and what is more, without taking away from me, or spoiling, anything that I had previously received and really tested and verified for myself. Because really - as I have said many times before in these talks - there is no new teaching here. If you find that a language is introduced which is necessary for speaking about these things such as the language of Theosophy, or Sufism, or Zen Buddhism, or the orthodox Christian theological terminology - any of these would be equally appropriate for speaking about this,⁴⁶ because these are all

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simply languages for talking about one thing that can only very, very imperfectly be talked about at all. What we have here is something that does not depend upon words, but when it is received it is something more than a physical process. That is unquestionable. There is, side by side with this physical change, also an inner change, and it is the inner change that is the important one because that can continue without limit.

I am sorry that I cannot tell you more about what I myself have experienced in the last five or six months, because really there is no language to speak about it, and there is no reason why you should believe me if I did tell you.

Now we have finished these talks. There are many other people here who have had all kinds of varied experiences. Those of you who come now and who are in this probationary period, are fully entitled to ask anyone else you like to do what I have done - that they will tell you what they have found for themselves in this. Because this is an obligation that we are under, whether we like it or not - and one does not really want to talk about one's own personal experiences, but it so happens that this is the only thing that can be done to help someone else to reach the point where they can ask that question. If I were to give you theoretical talks, which I could do in half a dozen systems and terminologies about what this all means and what the working is, they would still be only something that enters your mind, whereas if I try, as I have done, to speak to you as sincerely as I can about what I have seen, you will meet with that from somewhere else in yourselves. But still, it is as I have said at the beginning not what I say, but what your own conscience tells you that is going to matter.

In case I do not have the chance to speak with you again, I want to say one more thing: that if, when this period of probation is up, you do decide to ask for the contact, you are not committing yourself to anything. You can come, and if you like, go away again, and many of you will no doubt do just as I did and say: 'I will not go near that again' - and then find that you do go! What I would advise all of you to do is at least to give it a fair trial, which in our experience means that you give it a trial for at least three months. And only at the end of the period of three months after you have begun the exercises, really make up your mind whether you will go on with them or not. That on the whole seems to work out very well, because there are some people with whom it does start much more slowly. They put something in the way without wishing to and without knowing that they are doing it, and it takes a little time before they learn how they can get it out of the way. Within three months it should be clear for anyone that this is what they really want or not. And if you do give it a fair trial for three months and then decide not, then you can say with a clear conscience that you have played fair with it.

All the other people, who have started already, are really under an obligation to help you in any way they can to form an idea of what this means. You can come down

here or arrange to meet any of them and ask to speak to someone - preferably for women to ask women and men to ask men - and in that way you may perhaps be able to clarify things that I have not been able to make clear in these talks.

The Potentialities of Subud (First Talk)

THE⁴⁷ POTENTIALITIES OF SUBUD

SUBUD
P.O. Box 453
Cooper Station
New York 3, N.Y.

J.G. Bennett's First Talk at Conway Hall, February 4, 1958

I want to start by explaining a little how I propose to set about the task that we have to do in these talks. We have to speak about a subject that belongs to our inner experience. Our inner life cannot be described like external objects, and from the start we are faced with a great difficulty of language. If I wish to tell you what I have experienced inside myself it is really necessary that you should have had the same experience if you are to recognize what I am talking about. And as that is impossible, we really have a serious difficulty to overcome. But something may be done if we try to make a language that we can speak together in. I cannot begin by telling you the things which are the most interesting and which perhaps you have come to hear; they will have to be for the second and third talks. So you must forgive me if what I say this evening is not very interesting to you, but unless we prepare the ground in that way we shall almost certainly be talking at cross-purposes. And I care more that you should not go away with a false impression than that you should simply be interested or impressed by what is really an exciting story.

What I want to talk about first is something that happens inside man. As a result of 'something happening' inside us there can be outer changes, but they are consequences of that 'something happening' inside. So we must have some way of talking about the 'inside' of man which we cannot see or even think about.

I am going to begin by showing you a symbol or diagram that will give us a beginning of a language in which to speak about these things, but of course you must understand that a diagram of this kind can only tell you something you already know. We deceive ourselves if we think we can learn something from a diagram or a

description, unless we already have material to connect with it – that is, material of our own experience. This diagram simply consists of four circles with a point in the centre like this:



The Four Levels and the Soul

This diagram represents the complete state of man, and enables us to speak about all the possibilities that there are in us; that is, not only of man such as we are now, but of man such as it is possible that we may become.

The outermost circle here represents the outside part of man. That includes his body, his mind or brain, his feelings, his instincts and so on, in so far as these are connected with and dependent upon the working of this physical body of ours. So we can say that the outer circle represents the physical man.

The second circle represents a deeper layer that there is in us that is connected with the inner or hidden forces that influence our actions. It is the source of our desires, of our interests, of our likes and dislikes and so on, and a great deal of what we call our 'character.'

The⁴⁸ third circle represents a part of man that we know very little about indeed. It is very much deeper than the first or the second circles. It is the source of our motives, what is sometimes called our 'will.' From this circle come the urges and the impulses that we are not aware of but that make us all the time try to complete ourselves, try to be ourselves, and so on.

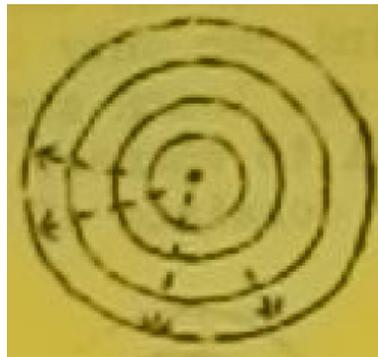
The fourth and innermost of these circles is the real 'self' of man, the real man that is somewhere or other hidden away deeper than these first three layers.

The point in the centre is something different, that is, a deeper – and one can also call it a higher – part of us than our own selves: something greater even than the real man that there is somewhere hidden in us. And this point at the centre I shall call the Soul.

Roughly speaking, we can say that the outer circle or layer contains all the parts

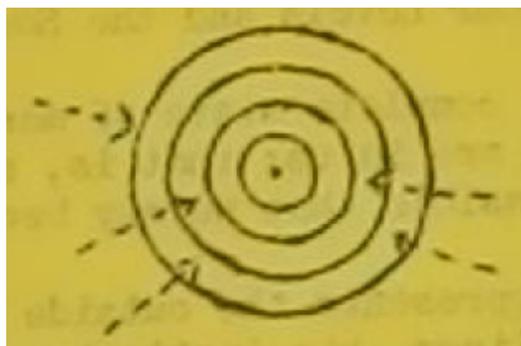
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of man that we know about, which is sometimes called the conscious part of man; the inner circles are sometimes called the sub-conscious or the supra-conscious or various other names that have come to be used in psychology. Each of these form circles - that is, the parts of us which are represented by these circles - has certain powers, certain possibilities of perceiving, of knowing and of understanding. In ordinary people, in whom some inner transformation has not yet taken place, these powers are dormant and hardly ever play any part in their ordinary lives. So that although man really has hidden depths in himself, these hidden depths contribute very little to his experience except as sources from which various impulses flow into his ordinary experience without his knowing why, or what they mean, and certainly without understanding them at all.



Inner Influences Acting on Man

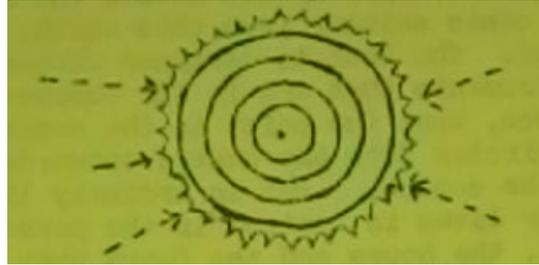
But apart from these impulses that flow from the deeper parts of himself, man is also subject to all kinds of influences that come from outside - that is, from outside the outer circle - and these influences come on to the outer part of man.



External Influences Acting on Man

These really are the influences of the world in which we live, into which we came when we were born, and which began to act on us from that moment. Now, some of the outer influences are able to penetrate and have some action on the deeper layers.

But for the most part people live under influences that really do not correspond to anything that is really human, that really belongs to man. And as a result of that, a whole lot of influences come to us that cannot penetrate through these circles at all, and⁴⁹ they begin to accumulate on the outer layer like this:



Essence and Personality

That wavy line on the outside represents the accumulation of all the influences that begin to act, particularly from other people, on a child, quite literally from the moment of birth. And they continue to accumulate for a number of years. After a time they make a sort of film or covering over the parts that are represented by the circles and stop influences from coming in, even those which really do belong to the inside or the real part of man.

I shall use two words in these talks to distinguish between these two parts. That outer part which is represented by the wavy line I shall call the Personality of man, and all that is comprised in the inner part, that is the four circles, I shall call the Essence. The Soul is really quite apart from these, and we have to speak about it separately.

By essence I mean that which belongs to us because we are human beings, that comes to us from the moment of conception: partly from our heredity, partly from the conditions under which we are conceived by our fathers and mothers, and partly from various remains and fragments of existences in which we had some part before. So that this essence of ours is a very complicated thing and is made up of material from different sources.

All of that, which really comes into existence at the moment of conception, contains the real possibilities for each human being. Every human essence is unique. This means that every human essence has a unique set of possibilities of fulfilling the life of a man. After conception there are certain changes and additions to the essence before and at the moment of birth, and some changes continue for a time even after birth, so that the essence is not quite fixed once and for all at the moment of conception.

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The personality is formed in quite a different way, almost entirely after the moment of birth and, as I said, as a result of the action of all kinds of external influences. Influences such as those of parents and brothers and sisters, of education, companions, books that are read, and so on, form all the habits and tastes and attitudes and points of view and all our memories of past experience and our feelings and attitudes towards them. All these tend to accumulate in this external layer that is the personality, and are the formative material of the personality itself.

Underneath the personality is the essence. There is a great difference in the potentialities of the two because the personality is formed entirely under influences of this world and it has no real organic shape or pattern or form of its own. But the essence is quite different. The essence is a real organism: a complete whole – that is, existing on different levels – and having, one can say, unlimited potentialities. That is, potentialities that can go far beyond those of this one single life here on the earth. So that when a human essence comes into existence, there arises with it an unlimited set of possibilities.

The⁵⁰ third part that I have not yet spoken about, the Soul, comes from quite a different source. The Soul comes neither from this earth, nor from the parents, nor from past lives, but from God. The Soul is destined ultimately to become the Master that will use all these instruments that are in the essence. And this is the real fulfillment of human existence, that the point in the centre should be the Ruler of the whole, and each of the circles from the centre outwards should become instruments for the ruler or master in the centre. But in ordinary life it is just the opposite: the rule or government of our lives is centred in the personality. The likes and dislikes, the habits of thought, the hopes and the fears that are in the personality, are the master forces in the ordinary life of man.

So it is possible to say that there are two quite different ways in which man can live: one way is that in which the forces penetrate from this central point outwards to all the different levels or layers. Another way of existence, which is the ordinary way in life of man nowadays, is that everything that he does, everything that he thinks and feels, is the result of outside forces that work on the personality and produce reactions from it. And really all I am going to speak about in these lectures is connected with the possibility of transforming our existence from that kind in which we live under the domination of outward forces to the kind where there is a central master that itself, or Himself, is greater than we are ourselves. You remember that I said that the real man is hidden in the fourth circle, so that when one speaks about the Soul one speaks about

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something which is in us and yet is greater than we are

I think that with the help of that diagram I shall be able to speak to you in a way that we shall understand about different processes in the life of man.

First of all I want to come back to what I was saying about the condition of the personality acted upon by outer forces. This happens to be particularly important at the present time. We live in a period of world history when the outer forces in the life of man have gained an extraordinary power. They have been evoked by man himself: he has learned how to liberate energies from coal and oil and so on, how to construct machines that enable him to do and to produce things on a scale and with an ease that was quite unknown in earlier times. But as a result of these achievements man has placed himself under the influences of very powerful forces. And these forces are acting now on all the peoples of the earth, and they act particularly on the personality and increase the dependence of the personality on outside things.

For example at the present time people are much more dependent upon machinery for doing things than they were before, whereas this other part of man, the essence, really needs physical work, really needs efforts of different kinds. There is no feeling of this sort in the personality because it is not connected with what man really is, and therefore the personality does not feel this need, does not understand and cannot understand that it is necessary for us for our own growth to be active in our own bodies. Therefore the personality without any feeling of the harm that it may be doing the essence that is within it, quickly takes advantage of anything that may avoid it doing physical work, and in general of avoiding work of different kinds, because the way in which the personality has been made is such as to produce something that really is passive. The personality of man has been made by the action of external forces, as a table or a chair is made also from the action of things working from outside. And that means that the personality of man is really something that is very passive. Even when it is doing a lot of things and full of activity, it is still passive. And because of this passivity it adapts itself very quickly to any way of avoiding effort. And in doing so it robs the essence of influences that are really required for the development of the essence. And that is happening in the world now on a very great scale.

Again,⁵¹ in the deeper parts of the essence, it is necessary for example for the development of the second circle that man should learn how to face things: that he should learn how to face the conflict of like and dislike. That is, that he should come to terms with all the forces that are in his feelings, and so on. But the personality does not understand it and it therefore runs away from difficulties whenever it can, which really

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means from the action of two forces which produce friction in us. And one of the consequences of that is that in the personal relations of people there comes impatience and unreadiness to accept that human relations are difficult, and it is necessary to be prepared to make sacrifices of one's likes and dislike and of one's own wishes and the rest of it. And because people are constantly shirking the difficulties of life in this way, what is necessary for the development and growth of this second circle does not reach it, and it is starved.

And again, really for the development of the third circle it is necessary for people to be able to have their own judgment, to take their own decisions; that is, to be inwardly free and not influenced by the opinions and so on of other people, and able to take all these things and decide for themselves. This is just one example that I am giving you now of what is necessary for the development and growth of the third part of the essence. But people in our times become more and more accustomed to accepting opinions ready made and allow everything to be suggested to them as to how things should be done and so on, and very seldom people really are able to judge and to face what is required for having one's own judgment.

All these things come from the fact that the personality is really there and, not having a connection with the real part of ourselves, has not a sense of responsibility, and therefore avoids all kinds of difficulties and refuses to pay the price of many things which are necessary for the growth and development of what is really inside us. In former times, when on the whole conditions of life were more difficult, the personality could not so easily have its own way, and really this was a benefit to the essence. Because many more influences were able to penetrate and there were more possibilities of people becoming themselves. But now, at the present time, on the whole the personalities of men are too comfortable to mind about what is inside. It is too easy for them to avoid the real difficulties that there are in becoming a man - that is, one in whom all these are fully developed. There has also grown up in the world a tremendous machinery for making use of the weaknesses of the personality of man, and of those weaknesses the worst are suggestibility and dependence upon external forces. Everyone knows only too well how people, now more than at any other time, live just by suggestion. What they eat, what they wear, what they put in their houses, what they do in their leisure time, what they think about the world and so on, is almost exclusively what is suggested to them by any one of the great mechanisms of suggestion or instruments of propaganda that have been developed in the world at the present time.

This really creates a very serious situation, because although this goes on very comfortably for a time, it results gradually in man's losing contact with his own essence and becoming nothing more than a personality surrounding an empty shell. And if we look at the rate at which these instruments of suggestion and also the outer world forces that I have spoken about before are developing in the world, you must see that within

two or three generations, perhaps within a century at the most – if things continue to go on as they do now – the vast majority of people in the world will have lost all possibility of independent judgment and of free choice. They will have lost contact with their own essence – that is, with what they really are as human beings. Which is nothing less than to say that if things go on as they are now, there will be only shells of personality surrounding essences which have lost their possibilities of development. And what would happen after that no one can say.

Of⁵² course many people do see all this, perhaps not describing it in exactly the words that I have used, but what I have said must be familiar enough to you. Most people who discuss such questions propose the same remedy; that is, they say that if man is to be delivered from this domination of outer world forces these must be a development in him of inner world forces. Or, as it is sometimes said, if man is to be delivered from the action of material forces there must be found a way to bring into human life a greater intensity of inner or spiritual forces. And although the general diagnosis is common to many people who talk and write about these things, and the proposed remedy to it is also common ground, no one can say how it is to be done.

All sorts of ways have been tried: it was thought and even taken for granted by many people a hundred years ago that if there could be universal education the result would be that the inner or spiritual life of all people would develop much more naturally and much more strongly than before. And that education would be a spiritual and not only a material benefit. Later people began to be concerned with the material benefits of education and saw that it would help people to earn their living more easily, to have more leisure, to make better use of their leisure, and so on. In all sincerity, it must be said that the great development of education all over the world has not proved a remedy for our condition. Although many educationalists have set themselves to produce men and women with independent judgment and good inner qualities - what may be called qualities of character - and have really tried to give them something more than the means of gaining a better material life; in fact, we can see that the result of it all has been that the suggestibility of people remains unchanged, and the more educated people are, the more varied are the instruments of suggestion that can be brought to bear upon them.

Again, in every part of the world it has been said that if there could be a revival of religion, if people could be brought back to faith, if they could be brought back to the churches or the synagogues or the temples or the mosques, they would find there a new spiritual life that would make it possible to stand up to the outer material forces. Very great and sincere efforts have been made, and one can say that they have been made in

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all the great religions of the world. And in fact much has been done and more people go to religious worship than before. But if we honestly examine what happens as a result of all this, we see again that in the very great majority of people this does not penetrate deeper than the personality, even among those who do follow the teaching and participate in the worship of their religion. Because really the personality of man has such an absorbing power that anything that reaches man through the senses, from what he sees and hears and touches and so on, is intercepted by the personality and has very little chance of reaching the essence where the real change has to take place.

Apart from this, all kinds of efforts have been made in the world to produce better social conditions, to avoid international conflicts by having great world organizations for peace and international co-operation and so on. And all these things do also very much good, but they never touch, and for the most part hardly even try to touch, the deeper problem which is that of the general passivity and suggestibility of mankind at the present time, and the increasing dependence of people upon external supports. And in fact we must honestly say that this is inevitable and not only inevitable but right, and that it is a good thing that people should be given every kind of external support and relieved of the necessity of making more efforts than they themselves choose to make.

But the result of all that is that today the world is in such a situation that the inner world forces and the outer world forces of man really are like mice compared with elephants. Very few people indeed have anything inside themselves that can⁵³ withstand the constant pressure of external forces acting on their personality. But what do those few do? Can we look to them to be an example to see whether by following their way some great change could perhaps be brought about? And that is the last thing that I think I will speak about this evening, because it will prepare the way for what I want to speak about next week.

Some people really do understand what is represented in the diagram of Essence and Personality, even though they may never have seen or heard of it. They may have seen something similar, or simply felt the truth of it: that what really matters is something that is inside and not the personality that is outside.

They may have realized that to reach that something within, the personality has to be made quiet: it has to be made transparent so that it will not intercept and obstruct influences that are needed for the inner development. Such people may then try to find ways of coming to this inner quiet and peace. Sometimes they are ready to make really great sacrifices for this, giving up everything in the outer world so as to diminish as far

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as possible the outer world forces that act on them. They hope in this way that the personality can become quiet, so that the essence can awaken and begin to receive what is necessary for it. And for that they may go into monasteries or retire in some way from the world and occupy themselves only with various kinds of exercises and ascetic practices, denying themselves in order to achieve a state in which they are free from outer world forces and can become conscious of what is real inside, that is, conscious of their own Soul and its relationship to God. It may be they know very well that it is possible to become conscious of God's presence only if one has really become quiet. And if we look at the lives of such people, we can see how great are the sacrifices that men and women have been ready to make in order to reach that consciousness.

But the truth is that although these people who go on such a search are such a small proportion of the whole of mankind; only a very small proportion among them ever achieve it. The truth is that they set themselves an almost impossible task; because they are trying all the time to act from what is weaker and more superficial upon what is stronger and deeper. This is because each of these circles has a more intense energy and stronger kind of experience as we go inwards.

The experience that belongs to the outermost circle is really only something very mechanical and automatic; it comprises all the automatic movements of our bodies, all our automatic instincts, all the automatic associations that go on all the time in our minds - what we call 'thinking' - and all the feelings, movements, likes and dislikes, attraction and aversion that come in our superficial emotional states. All of these really belong to the outermost circle. The energies which are associated with all these automatic processes are really quite low-grade energies. This is all that people are ordinarily conscious of, and so, if they begin from their personality - which is still more superficial because it is outside our essence - and try to look into themselves and see who they really are, all that the personality is able to find is the outside shell of the essence. It cannot see beyond this outer shell into the depths of our human nature. And even if the personality has a great aspiration to reach the innermost centre, it has first of all to contrive such a way that the essence itself will be exposed to the influences that will enable it to wake up and get a life of its own.

This is the true meaning of the various ascetic practices, self-denials and so on of all kinds that are followed in various religions all over the world. It is the same with the various ways of self-development and self-perfecting that are known - all of these aim at bringing about a change in the outer part of man that will enable influences to begin to penetrate more deeply.

Let⁵⁴ us suppose that the first step has been accomplished and something has

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been prepared in this outer layer by various kinds of what is called 'work on oneself.' There next begins to be an action on the second layer, which in turn will bring that part of the essence to life, and passing through all the various kinds of experiences I have spoken of which can be described under the general name of 'facing things,' of being prepared to see oneself, to see one's own contradictions, to face one's relationships with other people, a man finally becomes sincere with himself and able to go through with all that implies. All that belongs to the bringing of life to the second circle. And only when a man is really free of likes and dislikes, from attachments and from being influenced by other people in his relations with them and in his attitudes and so on, and really free from our chief curse - that is, suggestibility - only then can something begin to penetrate and produce an action on the third circle.

So when people try to arrive at what it is to be a true man, they are embarking on something very difficult and very long, and by no means everyone is able to go through with it, even among those who wish to and have enough decision to do something about the first stage. Certainly it does not mean that such efforts are wasted. Life becomes much more tolerable and much more normal to the person who has succeeded in bringing even the outermost layer of his existence to life. He is not just living in the shell of his personality, but begins to become aware of his body as his own body, of his thoughts as his own thoughts and so on. He sees them for what they are: that is, machines that work with very low-grade energy. People become much more tolerant and better able to understand one another when they become aware of this working in themselves, because they see that what is happening in them is also happening in others. So, as I say, although it may be very difficult to penetrate beyond the first stage, this does not mean that to reach even this is a waste of time or fruitless. But it is very little compared with what is possible for man, and what really is necessary for man if he is to fulfill his destiny here on the earth, because that, that only comes when this innermost circle, or the 'fourth room' has really been awakened and brought to life and has become a place in which it is possible for the Soul of man to be present and to take the rule over all the rest.

Apart from the especial and extraordinary efforts that can be made by people who devote their entire lives to this kind of work, there are of course general rules of behaviour in life, general commandments and rule of morality, and there are all the general observances and practices of religion, which, if faithfully followed, do produce what is required because they really belong in their real nature to the whole of man and are intended to lead him eventually to be conscious of his own Soul. But in general what is called religious observance, the following of commandments and rules of morality, does not go beyond what belongs to the first or outermost circle of the mechanical functions of man, of his bodily, emotional and mental functions, and so on.

Now, all of what I have been saying can be summarized in one phrase: that is, it can be called 'Working from without' - that is, working from the outer circles inwards, towards the centre, with the aim ultimately of reaching the centre where the real man is, the real man who can become the seat or the vehicle or the instrument of the Soul.

There is the possibility of another kind of working, where instead of the movement being from the outside towards the centre, the movement can be from the centre to the outside.

This can happen of course in various ways. For example, if something were to be awakened in the second layer, if some means could be found by which there could be a direct⁵⁵ action on this part of man, then there could be some sort of influence from that on the outside. This could happen, for example, through some very great shock which annihilates for a time feelings of like and dislike, wish and not wish. A man learns that his mother has died, and as he hears the news, everything comes back to him of all that he has done and failed to do for her in his life. Then all the likes and dislikes, all attractions and antagonisms and criticisms and the rest of it disappear, and he feels the need to be different from what he is. That is because that kind of shock can penetrate right through to the second circle and awaken something that ought to be awake in man anyhow - that is, something in him which really is not the slave of these yes-and-no and like-and-dislike forces. And so long as he is in this state there begins to be an action of this kind - from that second circle upon the outer one.

Sometimes still more rarely it can happen that people have an experience and see how things really are, not like the one I have described of merely seeing themselves in a certain definite situation like the one I have described of the death of one's mother, but by some accident or some combination there is a real inner awakening of understanding. So that one sees what really matters is that the inside should be awake and strong, and that one should not be the slave of external things. Through such an experience, if it comes about, there can be an awakening also of the third circle, and from that will start an action on the likes and dislikes, and in turn an action on all the automatic and mechanical functions of the outer function.

Probably most of you have experienced something or other like one of these things I have described. But that kind of action from within is really inevitably short-lived, temporary in its effect, because there is not a real coming to life of the deeper parts of the self, but only a shock which has made them wake up, and after a time - sometimes after only a very short time - everything is forgotten, and there is no longer an action from within and once again people fall under the influence of external forces

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and become just as they were before.

Next week I am going to speak about the possibility of the true, the real, action from within which is the action which begins from the centre. If this centre is itself brought to life, then, because this part of man is not something which is temporal or passing or ephemereal, what enters it does not go again. If therefore there can be an action from that central point, it is like being connected with a reservoir which does not empty itself - like in the simile that is so often given of being connected with the ocean which always has the possibility of filling our little cups.

Today I have only been concerned to explain to you what I shall mean when I talk about working from without and working from within. The true working from within is that which comes from the centre and penetrates through all these different layers and produces an action which is continuing and permanent. All kinds of working from without, whether in the form of general codes of conduct, or special methods and exercises, all begin with the outermost layer and work their way as far as they can towards the centre.

I would also like you to remember the distinction between the essence and the personality and something of what I mean by these four levels or layers that there are in man, that go together to make up his essence.

So you see this evening I have done nothing more than prepare the ground to talk about an action which is really something very extraordinary and interesting, but which could not have been spoken about until I had given you these preliminary explanations - so I hope you will forgive me if this evening's talk has seemed rather dull and theoretical⁵⁶ to you. We have a little more time before we stop, so if you have any questions you would like to ask before next week, please ask them now.

Q. I think that some of us are not quite clear as to whether you show preference for working from the centre or the Soul outwards, or for working from the outside inwards.

J.G.B. No, I did not show any preference, and indeed I wished not to. If I have managed to seem unprejudiced about it I am very pleased! Really and truly today I only wanted to have some language so that we really can talk about these very serious things together when we meet during the next two weeks.

Working from without has this: that it depends upon our own will and choice, and therefore it is accessible to anyone who really known enough to try. For example:

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the preparation and bringing to life of the first layer of the essence depends upon a change in the condition of the physical body. This change in the physical body can be brought about by various exercises of relaxation, or by learning how to bring one's attention into one's body and become connected with one's body not through one's thoughts, but as a direct experience. Most people do not know about this, but there are various schools or methods which have the necessary knowledge. And it is possible to go to such a school or follow such a method and be taught how to do that kind of work, and through that kind of work a man who is persistent and sincere in what he does will arrive at experiencing a real change in his relationship to his own body. That means really that instead of living in this outer crust of personality, he is beginning to live in his essence; that is, he has made the first step towards being really himself.

Certainly this is only the first step, and this is by no means all, because he has also to come into conscious contact and relationship with his own feelings and his own thoughts - both of which belong also to this outer or mechanical layer. And there are various practices and exercises by which one can learn to do that also, and there are schools and there are methods which have the necessary knowledge for it, and anyone who chooses to ask for this and finds a person who knows and who is willing to tell them can, by following the teaching that they are given, make that first step - that is, of working from their personality into the first layer of their essence.

Working from within cannot be started by our own will, because our 'will; the ordinary will of man, is really in the personality only, and so it has no power at all to reach the innermost layer. At the most, a man can expose himself to conditions which will have such a powerful action on him that something can be awakened - but probably very seldom any more than the second or third layers. Therefore the difficulty about working from within is that even if one 'preferred' it, as you say, the question has still to be answered, 'How is it to be done?' And no one knows how that is to be done, because no one knows how to act on more than what they are immediately in contact with: that is, for example, their own body and their own mind, which are quite superficial.

But I did forget to say one thing about the two kinds of working. You remember that I said earlier that every essence is unique. But all methods of working from without are inevitably standardized. The most obviously standardized method of working from without is, let us say, the Ten Commandments. They are a general rule for a whole nation of people, or for all peoples who accept them. Or, let us say, another one is the American Constitution or the oath of Hippocrates which is taken by doctors. These are general rules of conduct and behaviour that all people who belong to a certain community accept. Where these are very detailed so that they require a response which really comes from inside, a real difficulty arises: that whilst⁵⁷ the requirements are

standardized, the people are not standardized. Therefore only a very small proportion of people can adapt themselves without strain to such requirements, and it is like the bed of Procrustes - some have to be stretched in order to get on to it, others have to have their feet chopped off. And the same applies even to specialized methods and ways which have high and deep and great knowledge of human nature and are able to show those who follow them how to work on themselves on these different paths, because they always make use of various special exercises and means of working. But such exercises are also standardized, but again people are not standardized. And what works very well for one will not work at all for another. And that is not all: what will work for one man for one year ceases to be appropriate for him after two or three years - because the method is static and the person is not static. So that we are not only unique in that we are all different from one another, but we are also different at every moment - that is to say that I am myself quite different now from what I was a year or so ago, and quite different from what I shall be a year hence. Therefore what I need now is quite different from what I needed then and what I will need in a year's time.

And because of that if any method of working from without is really to result in a penetration inwards to the centre and deeper parts of man within the time that we have at our disposal - that is, in the one life that we know of - there has to be constant adjustment so that the methods that are used should be appropriate to each of the different people and to their needs at a given moment. And it is for that reason that schools are needed, and teachers are needed, because a teacher should be a person who, having passed through the experience himself, is able to recognize what is happening in other people and to see when it is necessary to adjust the methods for them, so as to compensate to some extent (and it can never be more than to some extent) for the limitation that the method is always standardized.

That is really the chief weakness of all working from without. It is the imposition of a standardized procedure on a non-standardized material, that is, the human essence. That is why if any one wishes to follow a way that will lead them to become real men, and to the awakening and completion of their essence, they need to find a really experienced teacher - and such teachers are very rare and hard to find in the world just now.

So I would say the difference between working from without and working from within is this: that working from without is very difficult and hazardous, but is the only way we know. Working from within is incomparably better if one can find out how to achieve it. Because working from within is completely individual: what happens to each person happens because something passes through all the layers of himself, so that by the time it reaches the outer shell and begins to act on it, it has already been adjusted

to his own needs. Therefore, each person does what is necessary for him at the given moment. Therefore, clearly, if there could be such a thing as working from within it would be much safer, much more direct and much more economical and efficient than even the best kind of working from without.

So the real question is: Can working from within be found?

Q. Why do you make a distinction between the Soul and the essence? I would have thought the essence was the soul. It seems to me that you are suggesting these things to us, and why should we take these suggestions from you?

J.G.B. The Soul is only a tiny little point there in the middle that you must not say much about, because if you look for it you might find it was a very tiny point indeed, like a still unfertilized germ-cell.

But⁵⁸ really I hope that I have not been suggesting anything to you, but merely explaining the language that I shall be using when I speak to you. I am not asking you to believe that there is anything else but the personality of man, nor that his essence is made up of four levels in the way I have shown, nor that there is in him a sub-conscious or supra-conscious as they are sometimes called, nor that he has a Soul. I only want to show you what I mean and what I shall mean when I use these words

I said the difference between the Soul and the essence is this: that the essence is made up of all sorts of material that comes from this world and other worlds like it. The Soul is different because it does not come from this world at all. I said it comes from God. I also said at another time that whereas the essence is something temporal, the Soul is eternal.

But I only said all that so that you will know what I am talking about - not to say this is how it is, or this is so - because there is not the slightest reason why you should accept what I say: but really not. If I were to start saying 'This is how man is and you cannot come to any more lectures unless you sign a paper saying that you really believe all that I say' - that would be different. I have not said anything at all that I ask you to believe. I have only tried to make sure that when I do speak next week, you will understand what I am talking about. Next week I shall tell you things again that I shall not ask you to believe, but they are things that I will speak about that I believe. But what I believe should not carry any weight with you at all. Why should it? One should never believe anything that one has not oneself experienced. The most that can happen is that you may say, 'What you are saying is interesting to me and I would like to verify

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it for myself - is there some way in which I can do so? That kind of practical question can be answered: that is, it is possible to show someone else the way in which they can come to see something, but not possible to make them see it.

Q. Is it possible at this stage to attach a meaning to the title of your talks?

J.G.B. Next week I will speak about Subud and what it means, and how it is related to these forms of working that I have been speaking about today, and simply use all that we have been talking of so that I will not have to give any more explanations and can begin to speak to you about the things which are no doubt what you really want to hear about: what is this Subud, how does it work, what does it give? and so on. Only if I had tried to do it this evening I would have had to stop the whole time to explain what things mean. And even with this whole evening spent in trying to get a language so that we can talk together, it still is inevitable that I shall only convey a very little about this, because really we do not know anything about man that is inside his essence. That is the real truth of our situation. And even though we may have had some experiences which tell us that there is really something there which is deeper than our ordinary automatic thoughts and feelings and bodily movements, we do not know what it is or how it works until something in us has awakened in us and shown it to us for ourselves.

But if it worries you that I have used the word Subud and said nothing about it, I must apologize. The word Subud is simply taken from three Sanskrit words: Susila Budhi Dharma. The word Susila means right living; Budhi really refers to all these inner powers of the essence of man; and Dharma means the way of life that leads man back to God. Subud really means therefore to live in such a way as to use all the powers of our essence in order to do the Will of God on earth. That is the meaning of Subud.

Again, I can only apologize if what I have said has been very dull for you.

SUBUD - P.O. Box 453, Cooper Station, New York 3, N.Y.

The Potentialities of Subud (Second Talk)

J.G. BENNETT'S SECOND TALK AT CONWAY HALL, 10/2/1958

Tonight I am going to try and give you some idea of what Subud is; but you must understand that as soon as I begin to speak about what is inside this outermost circle there are no means of proving or testing what is said except by one's own experience.



The limit of what we can see and touch is the outside of that circle, and everything that is inside is out of reach of our senses; and not only of our senses, but even out of reach of our minds. That means we cannot really think about the content of the inner circles because we have no images to think with. All our thinking is done with the help of images that we have passed through our senses - that is through what we have seen and heard and touched and so on. Therefore we cannot even think about what is out of reach of the senses. Sometimes people try to speak about supra-sensible experiences, but they can only talk in terms of images which more or less seem to fit what they have inwardly experienced. But if what they have experienced is really different from the ordinary, it really belongs to the inside circles; they know for themselves that what they are saying does not really correspond to what happened inside them.

I want you to take account of this difficulty as you listen to what I shall be saying this evening. Because I have to talk about what is inside this circle - that means I have to talk about what cannot be talked about. The only safe way is that I should confine myself as far as I can to what has happened to me - that is, that I should speak not about what I have heard from others at second hand or third hand. I am going to start therefore by telling you why it is that for nearly forty years I have been convinced that there really is something inside man that corresponds to that point in the centre.

On the 21st of March, 1918, when there was the big German offensive, I was severely wounded, particularly in the head, and it was not thought I would live; I was in a state of coma for about five days. During that time I certainly neither saw nor heard, nor could feel anything that was going on around me, and yet I was quite clearly aware of my own existence, and not only that - I really know what was going on inside other people who were near by. In two cases later I was able to verify this - afterwards, when I came round - because I was so curious about it. Particularly, there was one man that I realized was not hurt but very frightened, and that he was frightened of dying, and I know it would not matter at all to me if I were to die at that time. This really quite clear detachment from my own body - the realization that at any moment it could be destroyed (because we were being shelled at that time) and I would not be hurt - was quite different from the kind of feeling of indifference that one had through getting used to shell fire, when one just stopped minding it unless it came very close, and then one did mind. But this was something quite different from the ordinary feeling: 'It is not likely to hit me' that one developed gradually in that war. When I came round after four or five days, I could not get this feeling of complete freedom back; even I was sorry I had returned to a state where - although I could again really see and hear what was going on around me - I had lost that inner certainty of being free from death. I have not

the time to tell⁵⁹ you about other incidents that really convinced me. I had not just been dreaming but really had been conscious of being separated from my body.

Now this interested me very much, because such a possibility had never occurred to me before. I had been trained as a scientist and as a mathematician and had not concerned myself with any questions, 'Is there something in man which can be free from his senses and his mind' But, after this experience, I saw that really one had to find out for oneself about such questions. And very soon my life began to change, and instead of going back to Oxford as I expected to do, I found myself out in Turkey and meeting a number of extraordinary people. My job then - because I happened to know various Turkish dialects - was to see men coming from various parts of Central Asia and the Caucasus and so on, and find out why they were going through Turkey, what they were doing and particularly why they were going on the pilgrimage to Mecca. And so I met a number of very devout and extraordinary men, and I saw that there was something in certain of these men which was inwardly free, in the way that I understood already something about freedom. But I had already lost that freedom myself and could not return to it.

Then, about the same time, I had the opportunity of meeting with a teaching and a method which, from the start, made a very deep impression on me because first of all it gave me a clear and rational explanation not only of what I myself experienced but many new subjects that I had been studying, particularly hypnotism. And from that time on, that was 1920, for many long years I seriously studied and followed that method and gained a great deal from it. The method can be represented by the diagram of four circles. I saw that it was possible, if one learns how to make the necessary efforts and is prepared to make them and has the necessary persistence to continue with them for many years, to begin to enter this inner part of oneself, that is, to begin to enter one's own essence. This means also to learn to distinguish what is real in oneself from what is artificial or borrowed. I also realized that what I said last week - that however well devised such methods may be, this is a very difficult undertaking and that not many people, even if they have the necessary teaching, can hope to penetrate very far into these circles. And I can say I have seen many thousands of people - no, not many thousands, perhaps four or five thousand, which is a considerable number - over the last forty years, who in one way or another have seriously tries to go by this way of penetrating from one's outer part or personality into one's essence, and by bringing this to life, gaining inner and outer freedom and many other benefits that go with it. Out of those several thousand, only a very small number were able to go very far in this way.

When I had seen this over a period of something like thirty-five years, I came to

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the conclusion that although the methods that I had been following - and various others independent of these that I had not seen at quite such close quarters - could bring man into his own centre and enable him to find the real man in himself, this is not something that many people can achieve, and they cannot achieve it because it is very difficult. People come to a stop not for lack of wish to achieve it, not for lack of the necessary knowledge of what has to be done, and not for the lack of the necessary advice that I spoke of last week - to adjust methods and exercises with changing needs of people - but simply that it is very difficult to find the real man in oneself by working inwards from the outside in this way. That is for me a fact that has been established by long experience! I do not know how many of you have studied and examined this question, but I doubt whether anyone who has really seriously investigated it failed to see how rare it is that anyone should achieve to penetrate into the real essential part of man by efforts that are made from the outside.

In⁶⁰ fact, this is so much the case that most people will even deny that it is possible and fall back on the materialistic theory, that the whole of our life really consists in what happens on the outside. If they admit that there must be something in man that is subconscious, and even that there is something higher or superconscious in him, these hidden parts have to be left alone and allowed to play what part they do in our lives without hope of changing them. Many people would go so far as to say that to attempt to find out about the deeper inner part of man is a very dangerous thing and can lead to pathological conditions, to some kind of break-down, and therefore, they say that it is much better and safer to continue to live on the outside of oneself. But this is really a terrible conclusion, for if we ask ourselves 'What is this me that I am to accept as the only part of me that matters?' and test it by asking ourselves 'What can this stand up to?' we are bound to admit that it cannot be permanent, and that it could not be of such a nature that it would continue to exist as it is, for example, after we die. I must say that I, for a very long time, have had no doubt that the personality of man must disappear when he dies because by many tests and experiments it is possible to verify for oneself that the personality is not only made here on this earth by the same forces. It cannot exist and cannot support itself without these forces, so that a man who has nothing else but this must either disappear when he dies or return again and again to this earth and live in exactly the same way as before, or perhaps even worse. So that to take the line that it is very hard to penetrate to the inside and it also can be very dangerous and therefore not worth trying, does mean admitting defeat in what is really the most important question for us, that is, finding who we really are. And if we are going to admit defeat in this, then really the outlook for mankind is bad, because we can see that this outside part of us is responsible for the increasing dependence and passivity of people. If we are to become masters of our own destiny here on this earth,

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it cannot be through our personality, it can only be through something deeper and stronger in us. So whether we look at it from the standpoint of the future of mankind here on this earth or of our own individual existence and our prospects of finding something real for ourselves after we die from this earth in either case it is necessary to be able to find our way to this centre.

As I was saying at the beginning, I have from before I was twenty-one years old had no doubts that something is there, and that it must be possible to find it again, so certainly I could not be content to give up the struggle however difficult it might be. And yet as the years went by, I saw more and more that it is really difficult, and that people who take it lightly and think that they can really find themselves by some easy means are really deceiving themselves terribly and making their situation worse than if they never tried anything at all.

Now what I am going to speak about next week is the possibility of help coming to us all in such an extraordinary and difficult situation, and coming moreover not just to a few particularly brave and strong people - and even more than brave and strong, specially gifted, I would say, specially gifted in the spiritual sense - but of coming to many and even to all who ask for it. And therefore I am going to pass over a long period of time in my own life, from 1920 till about two or three years ago.

I must, if you do not mind, tell you something else about myself that may seem rather absurd and perhaps incredible to you, but I have found, and maybe many of you have found the same thing and wondered what to make of it, that there are times when something inside me tells me very clearly what I ought to do and when I was a young man I used to ignore this and do what I thought was best! and always, when I followed my own thoughts, my own logical plans, I came to some trouble, but when I followed this something which told me what I should do - without any kind of explanation or logic,⁶¹ just as simply as if I was seeing something ahead of me - things always went well with me. So that little by little I learnt that it would be better to trust that kind of thing that was said to me inside. This is one example of the kind of thing that you cannot prove, and you must just try to believe that I am telling you what I really experienced, but you don't have to believe that I am not deceiving myself.

It happened that in 1953 - nearly five years ago - I had that kind of inner indication that I should leave England and go and travel in South West Asia, which I did. And while I was on this journey, I met people rather like those that I met in 1919 and 1920, but this time they spoke to me very much more definitely and clearly. Before, when I was a very young man, they were chiefly concerned with convincing me that it

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was really possible to find a way to awaken this inner consciousness. But this time what was said to me was not of that sort. It was all about a great Event that was about to take place on the earth, which apparently was known to many people in those parts of the world – that is, in countries like Arabia, Syria, Turkey, Persia, and Iraq in which I travelled. It was known particularly to the communities of what are called ‘dervishes’ who are followers of the Sufi way of which there are a number of communities. There used to be many, but now most of them have fallen, lost their own qualities. One or two have remained. And one of the most influential and widespread of these are the Nakshibendis, whose brotherhoods stretch all the way from Morocco right away to China and the Malayan Archipelago. And I met a number of these, and I saw that everywhere they were convinced that a new Power was about to come into the world. One man in particular with whom I spent about three weeks talking every day about these questions and who was the head of one of these brotherhoods, said to me that now was the time when God had sent into the world a new Power that was going to overcome the power of materialism which had taken possession of a great part of the world; that men who were conscious of this Power were already present in the world, and also that I would meet one of them. He added that it was to learn about this that I had been led to make my journey. I must tell you that this did not convince me at all, because my own thoughts were going in quite different directions. I was then mainly interested in seeing whether the methods of ‘working from without’ that I had learnt over many years past could be supplemented and improved by the methods which I knew were used in these various Sufi communities of South West Asia. And indeed I did learn much that was of value in that direction, and that seemed to be the most important fruit of my journey, and not these strange predictions and talks about the coming of a certain great Being. About two years later than that I once again went – this time to Northern Persia – and while on that journey I met two men – one of them under very extraordinary circumstances. He was Sheikh Abdullah Dagestini. I cannot suppose that in any ordinary way he could have known where I was to be at a certain time, but while in another city I got a message asking me to visit him, and when I did go to see him he gave me three messages, all of which he said had been sent to him in a dream; he had been told to give them to a man who was to come. Two of them were really like kinds of tests or evidence that I could trust what he had to say. One applied exactly to a situation I was in England at that time, and the other one concerned a very private question that I had spoken about literally to no one at all. And when he told me these things, I realized that in some way he had different knowledge from the ordinary. This did not surprise me very much, because I had met people with these powers before, and this man was clearly what one can call a saint. One could feel in his presence a sense of really deep peace and immediate confidence in him, and complete absence of any pretension to be anything different from the ordinary.

The third message he gave was that someone was to come to the West who would bring a new possibility to the world, and that I was to be instrumental in his

coming, and⁶² that he would even come and live in my own house. And I must say that this was a very astonishing kind of message to have. I really have not told you the whole of it because I don't think you could believe all the things that were told me then. For some reason I had to have confidence in this man in a way that I had not had in the people I met previously, and only a week or two later, in a village in Northern Persia - in a place where Europeans don't usually go, up in the valley behind this village where one only meets Kurdish herdsmen - I met another man, an old Dervish who did not belong to any community. He also told me very remarkable things and particularly about this process of working from within of which I spoke last week, and while I must say until then I had never thought to be possible except in the case of very rare saints to whom this has been given as a Grace from God.

I am telling you these stories to show you that I was a bit disturbed in my feelings by this time about the line which I myself should follow. Until then it had seemed to me quite clear that there was nothing else to be done except continue to struggle with the work of penetrating into the inside, which certainly was not fruitless. Indeed, I was by no means despairing about it - on the contrary, I could see that it was giving results, not only to me but to several hundred other people who had turned to me to learn about this and whom I had round me at the Institute which we had started at Coombe Springs in Kingston. And of course I had a responsibility to these people who were wanting to learn from me about the various methods and teachings. And if it had not been for these kind of disturbing ideas impinging, I should have gone on with this, although I realized how very hard it was.

I will tell you why I would have gone on and why I was prepared to go on taking people, although I could not expect to see very great results. It was that I was quite sure that the time must come when there would be a big change in the world. In a book that I wrote about ten years ago called 'The Crisis in Human Affairs' I said that with the new world Epoch that is now beginning there was bound to be some action in the inner life of man that would balance the forces in the outer life, because without that action mankind would inevitably be lost. So that I was expecting such a possibility, but not in my own lifetime. And I thought that I could prepare people younger than I and they would prepare their children in turn. Not only I, but the other people who had learnt the same kind of things and were following the same sort of methods thought that when the great Event occurred - maybe two, three generations after our own death - there would be some people who could understand better what it meant, and would be able to serve and to help those who came to being this Event about. But I really did not connect it with myself personally, nor did it seem to me that I would myself see anything of this kind. That is one reason why these various conversations that I had in

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Syria and Persia and Turkey and so on were disturbing to me, because it made me ask myself, 'Was I wrong in thinking that this would be in the far distant future? Might it not after all be now, and is there after all any reason why, if it is going to happen, it should not happen now rather than a hundred years hence?'

And then looking at the situation in the world, it seemed to me that there was not really so much time as I had thought before. It seemed to me that events were moving more rapidly, not necessarily towards a world war or economic disaster, but in the direction of the progress of the outer world forces that I spoke of shortly last week - that really it probably was not possible that three or four more generations could continue to live as people are living in the world today, and continue to stand up to it without a general collapse of our humanness. And if that was so, and if I believed, as I did believe, that God in His merciful providence would, at the right moment, send what is necessary to save mankind from disaster, maybe it would not be so far away as I had thought. And I realized also that there was a certain laziness in my old way of looking at it - that I had nothing more to do than to try and see that something was not lost, and that the real difficulties and the real burdens would be⁶³ borne later on when I was safely out of the way.

Then about two years ago, I began to have news of something very strange happening in the Far East. I think I heard it first of all from Hong Kong and afterwards from Japan. I had letters from friends telling me that they had heard of a new movement that had started in Java, and that it was quite unlike any kind of teaching that they had ever heard of, because it simply consisted in giving to people who asked for it a contact which afterwards began to change their lives and bring about an inner development or an inner awakening. The actual process of this awakening seemed to correspond to the things that had been written about in the kind of books that I was interested in and there seemed to be a link and a connection between the teaching that I had been following for so many years and this new possibility. Once again, I cannot say that at first this made any very strong impression on me, although again I had quite definite reasons for supposing and expecting that something new was to come into the world from the Far East and particularly from the Malay Archipelago, because I had been told this ten years ago by a man whose very deep knowledge I greatly respected.

I am telling you all this in this way to show you that I was very reluctant to find myself drawn towards something which would really turn upside down everything I had been doing and following for something like thirty or thirty-five years, all of which was based on the supposition that there is nothing else for man to do except to try to find his way from the outside of himself to the inside, whereas here it was being said

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that someone had appeared who could give people a contact that would awaken them from the centre and bring about a movement from inside outwards, that would produce all the same results as working from outside. And this would happen - if one can put it that way - much more economically and efficiently, because it would happen to each person according to his own nature, without all the waste that is involved in using, as I said, standardized methods for non-standardized people. And really that waste is very big.

The prospect that there might be something of this sort did not appeal to me at all because I saw in advance that if something like this happened all my life would be turned upside down, and I suppose I am a naturally cautious and conservative person who does not like his life turned upside down, and I did not do anything more about this. But then about September of 1956 someone came from the Far East by a strange circuitous journey from Java to Japan, from Japan to Hong Kong, and then to Cyprus, and from Cyprus to England. This was an Englishman who had actually been there from 1950 and had himself not only received this contact but have remained for two or three years in the household of the man from whom this had started. I met him in September of 1956 and for the first time learned in detail about Subud. And again it made on me a very mixed impression because a great deal of what I heard was connected with healing, with extraordinary cures of diseases that had occurred in Java, about the way in which people had their lives helped, where difficult conditions had been made easy, and so on. And I must say that none of these things interested me at all, especially not the idea of the curing of illnesses, which seemed to me to be entirely beside the point in regard to the spiritual or inner search. So that all I was told about 'healing' had the effect of antagonizing me and, even more so, the suggestion that this was something very easy, that you only had to ask for it and you received it, and the whole process would then go by itself. This seemed to me to be completely contrary to everything that I had learnt and tested and proved for myself all my life.

And yet, in spite of all these misgivings and 'againstments' I could see that there was something in this man himself, and it was particularly interesting to me that⁶⁴ he was no extraordinary man who had himself been the originator of such an idea but a quite ordinary man who had just happened to meet it, and who had been in contact with it a relatively short time before setting out on these travels. And yet I could not help recognizing that there was something in him which I knew from my long experience of these things and having met many, many people, could only be the result of some inward transformation, and therefore I decided to ask for that contact to be given to me. In the end, six or seven men, and three or four women, eleven people in all, decided that we would test this for ourselves. That was sometime towards the end

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of 1956.

When we did so, every one of us was bound to recognize that something had happened that corresponded to what we knew really should happen in a man when there is an inner awakening. The clearest indications connected with attention, and with the awareness of one's own physical existence. We were also conscious of a sense of inward freedom that usually can be achieved as a result of special exercises and inner efforts, but not usually without them. By the beginning of 1957, there was a small group of people here in London who had tested this to the point at which it seemed that this contact was authentic and trustworthy and that it did initiate a process which began from the centre and worked outwards. Moreover, the results were clearly being produced on the outside of man. As an example of one of the evidences of this working, I would remind you of what I said about the outside layer or crust of the personality and the outermost part of the essence, which is really our own physical organism. This does not mean only our body with its limbs and organs, but also our apparatus for thinking and feeling, our instincts and so on. All of these are part of the working of this body of ours, but we cannot usually distinguish this 'real' part from the 'artificial' part which is grafted on to it. People who study such things and use special methods learn, after a time, how to 'separate' as is said, the personality from the essence, and to know which of the two is active at a given moment. This is not easy, and it requires for most people - I should think for all people - a great deal of work and the cultivation of a special quality of attention to know for certain what in oneself is genuine and what in oneself is artificial. But as a result of Subud, this separation came quite spontaneously and unmistakably, so that we were able to see who we were, which part of us was which, and to remain inwardly free, so as not to be affected by all the forces that act on the personality and to which it commonly reacts. All this had the effect of convincing us that we had found something extraordinary, a very powerful means for arriving much more quickly at what we had been trying - in the case of each one of that little group - to find for between ten, twenty and even thirty years. At about the same time, and really quite unexpectedly, several of us found that we had an unmistakable improvement in our health. In two cases at least there were chronic troubles of long standing which the people concerned had learnt to bear, and which they did not expect to be free from, and which within two or three months of Subud disappeared by themselves. I myself can say that, although I was pretty healthy before, I still had latent traces in me of serious diseases I had when I was in the East - like dysentery, and also a tuberculous infection that I had contracted much later. I saw in myself that these also cleared up and I became free from them. I knew my weak spots and knew what I had to be careful of in myself if I wanted to keep good health, and I saw that I no longer had to be careful in that way. What I am now telling you is not evidence for anyone else; but these experiences had this effect as far as I was concerned - to make me realize I had not been right in discarding as quite unimportant the benefit to the health that comes from this kind of working. I saw that ill-health is really an obstacle, and that for a man to be able to fulfill his duties on the earth he should have

normal health; but it is very difficult to get health by any kind of effort. Sometimes the very efforts that are required in working from without can make people ill, as has occurred, but with Subud - which is a natural flow from within - not only do⁶⁵ people not come to harm, but conditions of ill-health or weaknesses in the body are actually eliminated.

Later I came to understand that this is part of a general process of what I shall call 'purification.' I think you remember that I said last week that we cannot really get through these circles and find the innermost or fourth circle where the real man is because all kinds of poisons and defects have accumulated everywhere, some as the result of the action of other people on us, some as the result of our own actions, some from our heredity. And these can be very deep in us. Some even come from the general weakness of all human nature, of mankind such as it is today. So that all these inner parts of man are by no means spotless and pure - on the contrary, as one begins to see them, there are even some quite ugly things in one's own subconscious. Even in the deeper and higher parts of oneself, there are defects and obstacles, and if one is to become a complete man and really free from the influences of this earth, then all these defects and impurities have to be driven out of us. Purification, if it is a process in which the inner force drives out the poisons that block the various channels, that force will start its action on the outermost circle and will have to clear this before it will begin to act on the inside. Therefore one would naturally expect the first results to be in the physical body, and that the physical body should be brought to a state of normal health before the inner purification can penetrate deeper.

So we began, between January and April or so of 1957 to verify for ourselves a number of principles connected with this kind of working which starts from inside, and we could see first of all that there really was such a working. Someone asked me the question last week 'Which did I think was preferable?' I said 'Working from outside is very hard, but at least one can find out how to do it, but working from within depends upon whether a start can be given, and who knows how that start is to be given? About that I want to say a little more this evening. If we look back over the history of the world, we can see that certainly there have been times when there has been this working from within, that certain individuals have received it from time to time, and have been purified by going through that kind of process, but never, as far as we can say, has it been available to any and everyone who asked for it. And therefore, if this has really happened now, we are in front of something which is quite new, and because it is quite new it is very hard to accept that it can exist at all.

Now let me go on shortly with the story of what happened. About April of last

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year we learned that the man through whom this had started, whose name was Muhommad Subuh, was prepared to come to the West if he were invited. So we sent an invitation, and he arrived here on the 22nd of May.

Now, about Pak Subuh himself. I went to London Airport to meet him, and I was allowed to go through and see him in the immigration section to help him with his passport, and my first impression was 'How strange, how ordinary he looks.' Then I thought 'But why do I find it strange?' At the same time as finding him very ordinary, I also felt myself to be different when I met him. Afterwards many people have come in contact with him and with some of the other people he brought with him from Indonesia; they are all ordinary people, except that they are perhaps much happier and gayer than most people are at this time, and much more prepared to trust and not worry about anything that is going to happen.

I think those of you who have read the newspapers know what happened at that time. A film actress, Miss Bartok, was involved in a dangerous situation for her health and telephoned to me about this from Hollywood, asking for advice. She came to England⁶⁶ and was one of the very first people to receive this contact and to pass through this process of purification when Pak Subuh came. We watched and saw and learned a great deal from her case about the way in which the action on the body is accomplished. We saw that it is not a miraculous suspension of natural laws - any - thing but that. When the inner force has begun to act upon the inner circles so that there is a spiritual awakening, then there begins to be a resultant action also on the physical body which can restore a state of normal health even where quite dangerous and awkward complications have arisen. Regenerative powers which are already in the body are mobilized through the action of a force which is still more powerful and still deeper inside us.

Good medical practice is nothing else but allowing the natural powers of the body to restore the normal equilibrium between all the many different factors that are required for health. It is obvious to everyone that there is a restorative power in the body and it is simply a question of how that power can be mobilised. Sometimes strange and unaccountable improvements in health take place in people and sometimes strangely and unaccountably they die from apparently equally quite insufficient causes. If one meets with one or two or three cases of remarkable improvement in physical health this is not evidence of something quite new; such things certainly do happen, and nobody can quite understand why; so I shall pass over a number of other cases of improvements in health that took place. I would say that at least a hundred or a hundred and fifty who came to this Subud in the last year received greater or lesser

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benefits for their health. In every case this happened through there being something strong inside them that was able to mobilise their own natural forces.

We felt that the working of this process was stronger when Pak Subuh was present, but when he went away, as he did to Holland after two or three months and spent some time away from London, then we were able to verify first of all that it was not at all dependent on his being personally there, and secondly, that even transmitting the contact did not depend upon him and the few people that he had brought with him, but that some of us in England - I was one of them - were authorized to give the contact. We found that, when we did so, it was exactly the same as when Pak Subuh or anyone else who had had it before gave this. And by contact, I mean an awakening that comes right in the very centre, so deep that one is not conscious of it. Most people soon become aware of an action upon their body. They realize that their body is beginning to receive a new life.

The way the contact is given is as simple as possible. There is no ceremony, no exercises that have to be taught; in effect it is no more than asking and receiving.

I feel that we have prepared the way to talk next week about the possible significance of Subud in the world today. If it were something that had been verified only by about ten or eleven people, as the situation was about ten or twelve months ago, really it would not have been right for me to have spoken to a large number of people as I am doing now. But, in the meantime, considerably more than a thousand people have received this contact in England, Holland, Germany, Switzerland, Cyprus, Ceylon and so on. I have seen that it is really possible for anyone who asks for it to receive that contact and providing they will be patient enough to allow this working to begin to establish itself in them, they will verify for themselves that it really does work. The start of the process is astonishingly fast compared with anything else I know. Where one usually expects to wait years for a really deep inner psychic process to begin in man, here weeks or at most months are usually sufficient to produce changes which are quite unmistakeable. Those who already have some experience and know what to look for, can verify for themselves that they are going really in the direction of greater inner freedom, greater inner consciousness. This means also to be inwardly cleane⁶⁷; that is, free from many of these unpleasant qualities that we all know that we have in us, and that we do not know how to throw out.

When I say that it is very easy, I only mean that it is very easy to ask for, and be given the first contact. It does not follow that the process itself is immediate and quick, or that it is always easy or pleasant. To be sat free, to be rid of one's defects, either

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physical or emotional or moral, requires at least that one should become really conscious of them, and face them, and see that one really is like that, and then when one does face it, it is able to go out. It is something like that. That process must take time, because it is governed by natural laws, whether the working is from within or from without.

I have never seen anything anywhere which leads me to believe that the laws of nature are ever violated. But the laws of nature are such that they leave a wide scope for freedom in almost every kind of action, from the disruption of the atoms up to our birth, generation, action, decisions and so on. And within that variability that there is, in the working of all natural laws, it is possible to achieve consciously and intentionally something which can raise us to a different level of existence. But just because this does not break or violate any natural laws, it cannot happen intentionally. A process in time must take time. Things can happen to us that are not in time at all but in eternity. The inner contact is one of them; and the moment it is made it is made it is complete - as is said, 'in the twinkling of an eye. But what follows after the contact, that is the whole gradual liberation of man from his own defects, the entry into him of new powers and a new life, all that take time.

What is marvelous, and I would even say miraculous, is that it is possible for people to have the first contact without any special and extraordinary preparation, without having changed the outward conditions of their life, while remaining fathers and mothers and householders, and professional or business man, fulfilling all the ordinary duties of life. Moreover, after receiving the contact they can have that process in them which in the past has been thought to be possible only for those few people who entirely renounce the world and give up material possessions, wives and families and so on, and devote all their lives to this and nothing else.

It is strange and really extraordinary, and I would not have dared to speak to you about it if there were not a certain amount of solid evidence that really something like that is happening among quite a large number of people and has been happening rather quickly, that is within the last twelve months.

That is all I want to say about this evening, and if it has been rather sketchy and not well exposed you must forgive me, because I have simply talked about my own experiences. Next time I want to talk to you about how this affects different phases of our life - the relations of husband and wife and family and communities and so on. And also what I see to be possible if this really proves to be what it looks as if it may be.

Q. One thing struck me rather about this, that where a part is manifest, it is obviously coming from a very much higher level than that on which we are accustomed or even hope to exist. If that be the case, and anybody is fortunate enough to be in a state and condition where they can receive this Grace, then it is not for them alone. They must

hand it on. Nothing of this sort can ever come unless it is handed on. It is not for us, it seems to me, to gather to ourselves a Grace which is going to improve our health, make us happier or anything of that sort, unless we can hand it on to others

J.G.B.⁶⁸ Yes, indeed, that is true. I should perhaps have said something about that, but I am really glad that you spoke in that way, because the strange part about it is that we should in fact be able to hand it on. Pak Subuh himself has said that he first received this contact when he was quite a young man, in about 1924. The process went on in him for a number of years, and then it was not until he was about thirty-two years old that it really became completed. He then said to himself, 'If this is for me only. I really do not wish to have it, but if it is for others then I wish to. 'I will not speak about all that he has said about his life, but he really did resist this gift for a long time. Then it was shown to him that it was to be shared with others. It is inconceivable that one should receive such a gift and know that one can transmit it to others, and not feel the obligation to do so. It is really in fulfillment of that obligation that I am speaking here tonight - in spite of being a very bad lecturer!

Q. I was reading "What Are We Living For". I turned to the last chapter, and there you give an account of the life of Gurdjieff. Is your teaching still proceeding from the teaching of Gurdjieff, or have you gone on from it?

J.G.B. You understand I did not want to complicate matters by speaking about something else at the same time, so I just left out all reference to my own studies from 1920 to 1956.

Q. Does not this power really concern every human being? (My own investigations extend over at least twelve years, and the results have appeared in many of my books, so I really speak from knowledge.) May I say just this, that you find this power referred to - indirectly - in Bucke's book on "Cosmic Consciousness." It really is that. I have been two or three times very slightly touched - not in the generic sense at all, I hope - by this cosmic consciousness. In those enchanted moments one seems to know everything and really to understand something of ... (inaudible).

The second thing I want to ask is: are you aware, as I am sure you must be, that there are working on this very question, and partly along your lines, many groups in different parts of the world. I have contacted them in Africa and Asia, and I certainly have contacted them in other parts of the world. That includes also Islam and the Islamic peoples with whom I have a great deal to do. So I will say this, if I may: that these things are being done every day. We have seen ourselves the most remarkable things; I have seen them with scientific men, your own colleagues, and we have been

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present and seen the most remarkable things. Is it not possible for us to translate them in terms of natural laws? I quite agree with you that there is no abrogation of the natural laws but simply an extension. I believe that perhaps this Power came to men like the Buddha, perhaps to Jesus and perhaps to hundreds of others. In other words, I think this Power is already afloat and launched and I think you have done a great thing for the people to bring it to their notice.

J.G.B. I do not wish to go beyond my own personal experience. I have not had as many contacts nor have I travelled as widely as you have. But I have had rather close contact with certain brotherhoods or communities. I have lived myself, through the good fortune of knowing their language, in communities where the members did have unusual powers - one particularly in a village near the upper Euphrates. But what I can say is that I myself have never seen anyone that has had the power of communicating this contact to someone else. I have seen certainly quite a number of people with unusual powers - not only in Islam, but also following other ways as well, and I have met many people belonging to all the chief religions and ways known in the world - I have been in places where they have tried to communicate something to me and I have sincerely tried to receive it from them. I would say myself that in all the cases that I know of, what has been attained is not something much deeper than the second circle here.⁶⁹ When there is a real force coming from that circle, it is quite sufficient to produce very extraordinary phenomena. It is already not ordinary.



Action of Second Circle Powers

The contact that we have received in Subud does not produce anything like the cosmic consciousness or the extraordinary expansion of consciousness Bucke described in his book, and that he ascribes to the various heroes that he puts into that book - Subud is not like that. I personally am quite satisfied that what is something called 'cosmic consciousness' is really nothing more than the experience of being lifted to the second level. The experience of a prodigious expansion of consciousness is not nearly such a high thing as people suppose. It is true that it gives one the impression of knowing all about all the laws of the universe and really seeing Truth and Reality face to face. I have had that kind of experience myself, and it is possible to produce similar states in

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various artificial ways. In fact, all those things do nothing else than break through these barriers and allow a men for a certain time to be in that third circle, but what I speak of now is something deeper than that. It is oven to deep for us to be conscious of it. It does not produce that kind of result.

I am sure you know and understand these things, and will realize that what is deeper than any state of consciousness that we can now know is really more significant and more powerful and deeper than our ordinary consciousness. We can have some idea what it is like to be in the second or third circle, but we cannot have any idea what it is like to be in the centre until we are completely transformed.

And therefore I am simply saying that in my opinion, or better, as far as I know from my experience, there are indeed all over the world certainly people looking for this, and perhaps more so now than at any time, and there are communities in various parts of the world – and I know of some in south America, certainly in Africa, certainly in Asia, from end to end of Asia, and even in Europe, who know that a Great Event is to come, and are preparing themselves for it. And most people are unaware how much of this is actually proceeding. You happen to know because you have travelled and met many people. But, as far as I can see, Subud in the first occasion, certainly the first occasion that I know of, where the complete contact is available for all people. However, I must not say too much about this, otherwise I will have to go on and talk all about the significance of this, and really we have a full night's work next week to get that done, so I hope you will forgive me if we stop now.

Q. If later on the teachings were embodied in a book they would reach a much wider public and contact more people.

J.G.B. What can be written about in a book – at least, what I can write about in a book – I have written, and by a coincidence it went to the printers this morning and will be on sale in about a couple of months' time. It will be called Concerning Subud. The publishers are Hodder & Stoughton.

Q. Can you give us some idea of how people who receive this contact view the rest of the world? Do they regard it as just a human comedy, and the present economic and⁷⁰ political set-up as something which will inevitably collapse and give place to something altogether different, or as something which will have greater meaning and significance when more people who are taking part in it have received this contact?

J.G.B. I think I should answer this before we go, although it belongs to next week's

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subject.

What we need is not to throw away our material achievements, but to be able to use them rightly. There cannot be any real sense in talking of putting back the clock, of going back to a different way of living without the technology that we have today. Not only, in fact, can it not be done, but it is contrary to the human spirit, to the nature of man that he should go back. Little by little, our human race is growing up. We are still very very young in relation to the whole time - scale of life on the earth, but, little by little, we are growing up and we must learn to use the new instruments that are put in our hands, and for that we need to have something inside us which will be able to use these instruments, but certainly not throw them away.

The Potentialities of Subud (Third Talk)

J.G. Bennett's third talk at Conway Hall, February 17, 1958⁷¹

SUBUD
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New York 3, N.Y.

I want to begin tonight by speaking about one aspect of Subud that is easily misunderstood by people, especially at the present time. Pak Subuh has said that the real content of Subud is worship of God. When people have heard this, they have sometimes objected that the very idea of worship of God is something quite unmeaning in our time - it seems to them to belong to some old superstitions when people had a picture of God as some kind of great being - like a king, or pharaoh, demanding respect and adoration from his people, and that we had gone far beyond the idea of a God of that kind, if we had not gone far beyond the idea of God altogether. Certainly that picture of God as the autocratic ruler of a tribe or a nation or even of the whole of mankind, does not correspond at all to the reality, and the word worship has to be understood more deeply than meaning respect or adoration. Therefore I have to say a little about this.

When people have spoken about God, there have usually been one of two ways in which they have tried to understand Deity. One way is to picture God outside the world; having made the world and ruling it, outside and beyond everything, infinite and remote, and incomprehensible: and yet acting in the world through His mercy, and goodness, though still remaining outside and beyond it. This can be called, on the whole, the Western conception of God, that goes back to the Old Testament. There is also what is more or less the Eastern idea of deity, and that is of God as inside, of more

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inward than anything else, the innermost Self of all beings, And with such an idea of God one understands that the task of man is to find inside himself, by quietening everything that is outside, what is really Divine - that is his own innermost nature. The belief that there is something in man, that the real, the innermost self of man, is God, seems somehow blasphemous to these who think of God as altogether outside, beyond, infinitely greater than any creature; while the belief that God is a great ruler, a great Being beyond everything seems somehow too human a picture for those who have approached the idea feeling of God through the inward or innermost understanding. Certainly people who have thought about it more deeply have also said that both views must be true - that in some way God is outside and beyond everything, and in some way also God is inside, the very inmost of everything. But in either case the idea of worship doesn't seem to fit. If God is infinite and far beyond anything that we can know, then more than ever now in our present time when we realise the immensity of the Universe and try to picture to ourselves God as beyond the whole Universe, any idea that our worship or our prayer means anything to God really seems quite absurd. But, if God is really inside us and God is really the same as ourselves, then worship of God comes very near to being worship of oneself. These difficulties arise only because we try to understand 'worship' by thinking about it.

A third understanding of God is possible. But this is an understanding that cannot be spoken about in the way that the other two can - one can always think of outside and beyond and great, or one can think of inside and more and more fine and deeper and deeper - such ideas correspond to the sort of pictures that we get from our ordinary sense experience and our ordinary thinking; therefore they are not particularly difficult for us to form. About the third understanding of God it is really much better not to speak nor try to give any image or description. In some sense there is God that is here present with us now. There is also God far away and far beyond everything that exists. There is also the inner God, so much within and so deep that none of us in any ordinary state could reach Him. You know how it is taught in Eastern religions that man must be completely annihilated before he can reach that innermost⁷² self that is the same as God.

But all these attempts at explanation are quite misleading and create wrong pictures and wrong images. In some sense that we cannot possibly understand, God is here present with us - neither very far nor very deep, but simply here; and to be conscious that God is indeed here and present is the real meaning of worship. So that when people say 'I can't understand how one can worship a God as a Being Who is outside and beyond and Who created us' and so on, and when people say also - 'I can't understand how one can worship this God , Who is supposed to be the same as our

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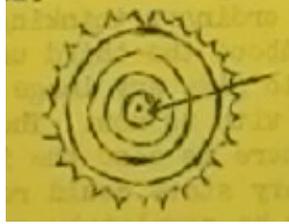
inmost selves,' they are not altogether wrong. Because what we should understand by worship of God is to be aware that God is present here and now in everything that we do, and yet that He is in some way utterly different from it all; and it is just because of that "in some way utterly different" that it is impossible to speak about God in His third aspect – that is of God as present and participating in everything. As soon as we try to describe the third aspect of Deity, we make it into something much too ordinary, and it seems as if we can understand what really is the most difficult and incomprehensible of all. And yet we must realize that there is and must be a truth in that way of looking at it – that God is present here, and that to be aware of that, to be conscious of the presence of God, really is worship.

And when it is said that Subud is a way or a means by which man can come to true worship of God, it does not mean in the sense that man must annihilate himself in order to find that his nothingness is the same as the Infinite One, as some mystical teachings say, or that one must picture to oneself a Being outside of us demanding worship; but in this third sense is the one that is easiest for people to come to in a very simple way, but much the hardest for people who think about it and try to make theologies – that is, theories about God. Because the fact of God escapes altogether from logic. It is illogical to say that God is presents here and now.

To be able to be aware of the presence of God is to be free of the action of all other forces, except the force that comes directly from the power of God. For this reason a whole process of purification is needed before a man can become aware of the Presence of God as something that is direct and sure for him. And that is why Subud is a process of purification whereby we become free from the action of all kinds of lower forces.

When that happens those lower forces only touch those parts of us which have to be touched. Fro example, there are forces in food. It is necessary for our bodies that we should eat, and we depend upon the forces that come to us, not only through vegetables, but also through animal food. Our relationship to the vegetable and animal worlds is established and maintained through eating and being eaten. But if our relationship goes beyond our needs and begins to touch our desires and our interests, and affect our human part, then that part is no longer free.

In that same way, we are subject to all kinds of actions of material objects and material possessions of every kind; if the actions that come from all of these is able to touch the man in us, or better really more truthfully to out the man in us away from being conscious of himself – then that man cannot know worship of God, he cannot have awareness of the presence of God.



The Fourth Circle Where man can worship God.

If⁷³ we return to the diagram, we can say that worship of God really belongs to that control point and it is only when man is able to live in the fourth innermost circle that he really can become aware of all the three aspects of Deity, that is, of that which outside of everything and that which is inside of everything, and that which is simply present and here. But, in order to reach awareness, he has to come to that inner circle and for that prevent him from living in this real home, that is, in this innermost circle.

This does not mean that the other lower forces cease to have any action at all, but their action is kept in its own right place. Whereas, with ordinary people, such as we are, all these forces act in such a way as to make the personality and the outer shall of man so completely a slave that he is unable to enter into himself.

I am telling you all this so that you will understand a little of what is meant when you hear the phrase that Subud is a way or a means for man to arrive al and never cease the true worship of God. Such a man is already a perfect and complete man, because when he is aware of that, everything that he does, everything that he is, comes from his consciousness of his relationship to God - that is all three aspects of God. There is of course a very long path to that.

Now having explained this to you, I really want to come to the question we have to examine this evening - that is "Can we have any solid grounds at this stage for believing or supposing that a really extraordinary help for mankind in general has come to us through this Subud?" This question raises several other questions that must be answered. The first is: "Can we be sure that there really is some action here which is not ordinary?" That you cannot possibly tell, but if I speak now from my own experience of the last year or two and what I have seen with well over a thousand people, there can no longer be any doubt for us that there is a real force here that is not ordinary, and that under the action of this force, people certainly do change, and a process does begin in them that has quite rapid and unmistakable results. And that any of you can verify for yourselves if you choose to make the experiment as we have made it, and to see what happens to you and to other people whom you know.

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The second and really most remarkable questions about Subud concerns the possibility of transmission that I spoke about before and I am going to come back to later. But before I come to that I have to speak about one other things – that is, people may say and do say, I myself also said this at first ‘Yes, there is undoubtedly a force here, but how are we to know whether it is a good force or a bad force? How do we know that it comes from God or from the devil? Or, whether it is simply some kind of manipulation of the psychic weakness of man in order to produce a state of hypnosis or suggestion or something of that kind?’ That is a real question that we have to look at and try to answer. First of all, I think that we all should agree that extraordinary phenomena are no proof whatever that a particular action is a good one. For example, in the last hundred years mankind has made all sorts of extraordinary scientific discoveries. From the fact that they are extraordinary it does not follow that they are either good or bad. Because they are the result of the working of laws and they only seem to be extraordinary, because we are not yet used to them. Later, when we have become used to them they will cease to be extraordinary.

And the same applies also to extraordinary experiences in the inner world of man, and it applies certainly to anything that one can observe in the body of man such as remarkable cures of illnesses and so on. None of these of themselves are any evidence as to whether a force is a good force or a bad force. Christ Himself foretold that at the⁷⁴ End of the Age when something new was to come and change in the world, many false prophets would come, producing all kinds of wonders and extraordinary events. And He warned His followers not to trust anything simply because it was extraordinary. This applies in a very strange way to everything that is happening in the world now. Certainly extraordinary things are happening as a result of discoveries of natural science and the developments of technology. And some people are inclined to think that because they are so remarkable they are by themselves evidence or proof that we are making progress and that we are going to a better world as a result of them. But really it is not so at all. They are just “signs and wonders” that may proceed from a very bad source as well as from a very good source, or from a source that is neither one nor the other. Their value will depend solely on how people use them. And in very much the same way, in our present time we do hear a lot about various kinds of healings and miracles and sudden conversions of people to religious faith and so on. We hear also about various evidences from what is called psychical research that there are occult or strange powers in man, forms of perception and communication that were not previously suspected. And all this kind of variety of strange phenomena are talked of as being evidence of immortality or religion. They are only evidence that there are laws that we do not yet understand. But they are none of them evidence that they are

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connected with something better or truer or putting it quite simply, that they come from God and not from the devil. And indeed very many things, very many powers there are that people have, really belong to magic, and people do not even know how much magic there is. By magic I mean the manipulation of various forces and energies to produce results that affect human life. There is very much magic in the world today But all magic is something different from religion. Now why do I say that? It is because all magic without exception is the action of one man on another man or on a group of other people. It is the manipulation by a man or by a group of people of energies of some kind or another so that they can influence other people, either for their good or for their bad. If it is for their good it is sometimes called white magic, if it is for their bad it is called black magic.

And many things that go under all sorts of quite different names today really are one or another kind of magic. In true religion there is no magic, because religion is not an action of a man upon another man or a connection of men with men. It is only a relationship between men and God. That has no magic in it at all. Therefore one test of any action is to see whether or not there is magic in it. This is a test that I myself applied very carefully as soon as I came into contact with this Subud, because I had a fairly clear understanding of the different kinds of magic that are possible, which includes all such things as phynotism and suggestion, and such things as are sometimes called spiritualism and the use of different kinds of occult powers. I very soon became convinced that none of these play any part in this Subud. The simplest way in which that could be tested was through its transmission. When my turn came to transmit the contact I could certainly tell whether I was intentionally influencing the people to whom I was transmitting or using any of these kinds of suggestion of hypnotism and so on, because they cannot be used involuntarily. And I soon verified that it was nothing like that at all; that neither I myself nor any part of me was acting or concerned in it. In that way, and in various other ways, I myself became convicted that there was no element of magic in Subud. And I must say to you that a very great deal that passes for spiritual teaching and spiritual help really belongs to magic. This occurs whenever a man by his influence, even his very good influence, helps other people in some direction. Even if it is for their betterment, even for their own good, he is still a magician, even if he is the whitest of white magicians. It is only when human intervention disappears altogether from the scene, that magic disappears with it.

There is another way of speaking about all this that I learnt long long ago, and that I have come to accept as a very sound, and perhaps the most reliable rule for distinguishing⁷⁵ between a true way and a false way, or as it is sometimes called, a true teaching and a false teaching. And that is this: what is true never infringes man's

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freedom. Anything that interferes with the freedom of man and expects him to surrender his freedom or his judgment or his responsibility to any other man is false. I do not wish to suggest that there does not have to be, under certain circumstances, a temporary acceptance of discipline. For example, an athlete who wishes to develop certain powers will put himself under the discipline of a trainer. But he does so because he knows what he wants, and he knows why it is necessary to put himself under discipline. And if, for a time, he gives up his freedom, it is not really a surrender of freedom, but it is making use of the help that the trainer is able to give him. But as soon as someone goes beyond this and begins to rely blindly or submit themselves blindly to the guidance or discipline of another person, they are doing something which is against what is most important in human nature, and that is that every man should be responsible for himself, and free in his inner life.

This is connected with our understanding of the real meaning of man's existence on the earth. For there can be no doubt that man is so created that he was intended to be free and responsible for himself - not dependent upon anything or anyone else. Because man is able to be free and responsible, he is able to fill a special place and to play a special role in the whole scheme of things. Therefore, if anything that a man does or that is done to him takes away or diminishes his freedom and his responsibility, he is going in the wrong direction. What he does must ultimately lead to harm, both for the person who allows his freedom to be taken from him and for the one who puts himself in the position of authority over another.

You may or may not agree with me about this - everyone must consider whether or not they feel such a rule to be right, but for a very long time it has been a guiding principle with me. Whenever I have come into contact with some method or form of training or teaching connected with the inner or spiritual life, I have always asked myself the question: "Are the people concerned being asked in any way to surrender their own judgment to that of another, to abandon their own responsibility, to shut their eyes to anything?" If so, it must be wrong.

When this test is applied to Subud the answer is quite clear. One is entirely free, to such an extent that nothing happens at all unless one freely consents to it at the time and all the time. That becomes quite apparent and unmistakable to people who follow this Subud - sometimes right from the first, but usually very soon after they start. They see that if nothing happens to them, it is because they do not consent to its happening. If it does happen, it is because it is by their own free will that they allow it to happen.

I must here digress a little and say that this is how I understand the working of the Holy Spirit: that it is never compulsive, it never forces man to anything. And if people do not wish to accept its action in themselves, there is no action and never can be.

And when I recognized that this is exactly how it is in Subud, that was for me an important step towards being convinced that I was in front of something that is right.

Then there comes finally the test which really must be applied to every action, which again is the test which Christ put in the hands of the disciples when He was teaching them about all this. I refer to what was probably a teaching that He gave to his disciples at the very, very end just before He left this earth, although it is sometimes called the 'Sermon on the Mount.' He said, "By their fruits ye shall know them. Do men gather grapes of thorns or figs or thistles?" And 'fruits' here do not mean⁷⁶ extraordinary phenomena, because He Himself had said just before that false prophets would come producing all kinds of extraordinary phenomena. "Do not let yourselves be deceived," He said, "by those. Look only to see one thing - what are their fruits?" That is, are the followers of these people brought nearer to what a man should be if he is to enter the Kingdom of Heaven?

That is a very severe test to apply, and it is not a test that can be applied very quickly, because obviously it does often happen to people that under some powerful outer stimulus, they are temporarily changed, and as is sometimes said, 'converted. They seem then to be quite different people, and it is necessary to wait quite a time and watch what happens when the effects of this big stimulus or big experience have worn off. The working of Subud is quite opposite to that sort of instantaneous and powerful conversion. For the most part, people experience nothing at all at first, or a slight inner stirring, which they experience mainly as a kind of new life coming into their bodies. Little by little, they experience this more deeply and they understand for themselves that their bodies are being set free from various restraints and tensions and defects and so on. Afterwards, they begin to see a similar action in their feelings. In this way, the work builds up towards something quite now; but it is gradual, whereas in cases of sudden and powerful conversion, it seems as if people are completely changed all at once. From my own observations and from what I have heard about these things, it almost always happens that what is suddenly acquired is slowly lost; such people, without wishing perhaps to acknowledge it, find themselves back again as they were before and the real work is still to be done. And I think it must be like that, because any permanent change of human nature must be a complete process. It must not be merely a rebirth, but a gradual renewal of the whole life. And I don't believe that there can be any completion or perfecting of man that is not a whole process requiring much time, requiring many, many experiences that penetrate into every part of him before he really becomes different.

If it is so, then one cannot expect at once to see fruits. What we can expect to see

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in a few months can be compared to the seed that has germinated and has just begun to show a little shoot above the ground. One cannot in a few months have any idea what kind of flower or what kind of fruit is going to come.

Therefore when we wish to apply the test: "By their fruits ye shall know them," we have to recognize that perhaps the time has not yet come when one can really expect to see what the harvest will be. Indeed, all that I can say is that we have some indications of the results of the very first states of the process, when it still affects only the outer part of man, and has hardly begun to penetrate into the inner. I have already spoken several times about the change in the physical condition of the body. I think it is possible to say that with between 150 and 200 people in the last nine months, there has been a quite clear - though usually quite small - definite improvement in some or other aspect of health. Some large or small chronic condition has cleared up, and the body has become on the whole more resistant to fatigue and to infection and so on.

This is only a tentative conclusion, but the evidence seems to be that way.

Another thing that we have observed, that I have verified in several scores of cases, is a real improvement in family relationships, and especially as between husband and wife. We have to face it, that in our modern world, marriage is not an easy thing, and there is a very small proportion of marriages in which there is not some difficulty, some lack felt by one or the other partner or both. Of course very often it is much more serious than that, almost to the point of impossibility of sharing life together. Sometimes there is an actual breakdown of marriage and husband and wife part from one another. That is a very serious feature of our modern life, because really⁷⁷ man and woman need one another, and the completion of man normally requires that it should be shared by husband and wife. And a marriage that is not a true marriage is a terrible obstacle for the spiritual progress of both the man and the woman. Because they really need one another.

Not only that, we are responsible for what we transmit to our children, and our children's children. There is a stream of influences that flows from the past through the present towards the future. And there is no ordinary way of stopping this transmission. It goes partly through our organic heredity, through our genetic constitution, which transmits not only good qualities but also weaknesses and tendencies to faults of character. This sometimes takes the form of inherited diseases; but, still more, the form of inherited psychic weaknesses. And quite apart from that, there is the action that we involuntarily have upon our children from the moment they are conceived, so that all the defects of our own nature begin to act upon our children and produce difficulties

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for their lives. They in their turn do the same for their children, so bringing the whole of our humanity into a state of carrying the burden of the past.

All that is connected with the relationship between the sexes - between father and mother, husband and wife, parents and children, and so on.

I have observed, beyond any doubt, that the relation between husband and wife is drawn closer when they share in this Subud, and after a certain time they begin to feel that they are much more complete in what they can give to one another - that is the sense of incompleteness that a man will feel in his wife or even more often a wife in her husband, begins to change and they begin to feel that they are receiving the full companionship they looked for when they joined in marriage.

We have observed even that a very strange and unaccountable effect has occurred. Even when husband and wife have parted company and wither have no contact with one another, or are wholly estranged even if they are living together, and one of the two has come to this Subud, there has been an action on the other partner that has resulted in the other partner - in the course of time and quite spontaneously without any external pressure or any suggestion - coming and asking to be given the same contact. The relationship has then been renewed, when it seemed quite impossible that there could be any fresh start in that marriage.

Again, like the ills of the body, the ailments of marriage are also very varied. They range from fatal illnesses to all kinds of small but chronic troubles that exist in almost all marriages. I can say this, that I have seen enough evidence to convince me that people who follow this Subud do find that their marriages become happier, and that unexpected new possibilities of companionship enter. That is the beginning of evidence that there is some positive fruit in this field also.

Another thing that I have observed that is different from either of these two, and that is that there begins to be a strange connection between people, literally all over the world. I was about to exclude some of the Communist countries, but even in some cases there have been even messages from there, which have been very touching. People beyond the iron curtain have heard about Subud. There has begun to be a new kind of relationship or contact between people and quite large numbers of people have spontaneously come, either to England in order to find this contact, or to some other centre in some other part of the world, where there was the possibility of receiving the contact. And they have felt that something, some inner urge that required them to do so, sometimes without knowing what they were coming to, so that people have travelled - the longest that I know of was over 11,000 miles - people have come in order to receive this contact. This has sometimes happened without knowing why they had

come.⁷⁸ People have begun to feel a connection with people in other countries, and with what is happening in other countries. This is rather a difficult thing to describe without giving you specific examples; but it really has happened sufficiently often to convince me that there is evidence of a new force in the world now that is acting on people and in some way awakening in them the feeling of need for some kind of contact. In many cases this feeling of need has even been directed towards Subud, and has resulted in quite new links and connections being made between people in different parts of the world.

I have given you just three examples of what I would call evidence that some beneficent force is working in Subud, and I want once again to say that it is certainly too soon to attempt to draw any conclusions from such slender evidence. It seems, nevertheless, to be quite clear that there is enough to justify this Subud being looked into in a serious way by people who feel the need for help in the inner or spiritual life of man. One should look upon it as an experiment in the scientific field. And one should recognize that only by a gradual accumulation of evidence and a great deal more experience, that we can hope to establish facts that can convince others. What one is sure of for oneself is quite different - it does not depend at all upon the kind of things that I have been saying. For me personally, for example, it is really not of interest whether external benefits are received or not, because it is very clear to me that I have received something in my inner life which is much more important than all that. But that is only important to me - it cannot be important to anyone else, and those who have received it in the same way also can only speak for themselves. They have no right even to try to convince anyone about something that can only be certain inside themselves.

This could be a very interesting experiment, and I have given these lectures, simply to draw attention to these possibilities.

To sum up, first of all, I really am convinced that this Subud is something new. I can say that I have studied these questions, not only by having read many books, but by having met people and having been in touch with many streams. Not only those that are generally known to people, but one at least that is far bigger than any of the movements that are commonly known in the West that comprises scores of thousands of members and yet is not known at all in the world; so far as I know has never even been written about. I say I have been in touch with such known and unknown movements, and I have never seen or heard of anything like this Subud. But I have seen that in one way or another, in all these different groups, something was expected. Each one of these different streams, or teachings, had one little fragment of knowledge

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which was enough to show something but not enough to show the whole. It is only when one puts them all together, that one is able to say: 'Yes, this is what so-and-so has been saying for many years, and the other man has been teaching something apparently quite different, even opposed to it, and a third and a fourth; and yet when they are all put together, suddenly something appears that is a whole, and one sees that that whole is what we have here in Subud. It seems to me that in Subud we find the answer to the questions that many people have been asking in different ways.

I think all this will become clear as time goes on and Subud comes into contact with more of these already existing lines of search. Because one of its peculiar and extraordinary properties is that it does not interfere with anything, so that anyone can follow any way or keep to any beliefs, any practices, sacrificing and abandoning nothing whatsoever; and yet at the same time receive this help from Subud.

What is new - pre-eminently new - about Subud is the method of transmission - that is, by simple contact. I cannot prove that to you, because people may say 'Oh, I have known⁷⁹ this before; I have had it before. I have been in Africa or Asia or somewhere, and I have seen how it was possible for a man to transmit something to other people so that they went through a big spiritual experience. But the whole point is that here in Subud there is no big spiritual experience, but the beginning of a new life or new growth, and I have never seen new life transmitted in this kind of way. I have personally met teachers, men with great power in themselves, who could stimulate others to search, to enter into themselves, to break through some of these crusts, and so on. But I have never seen anything where quite ordinary people can transmit this possibility just as easily as the extraordinary and outstanding ones. Where a man who is quite simple with no theoretical knowledge of anything whatever - he even may have been looked upon by other people as half-witted or a natural kind of person - such a man, when he has received it, can transmit the contact just as well as a philosopher or a man who has really strong mystical powers.

That possibility of transmission of course opens up a very big question - if it can be given and received so simply, can it really be right, can something so valuable be given so cheaply? The answer is life can always be given easily. What is difficult is to live. A new life can be given for the asking, but the whole process of transformation has still to come. What is given in Subud is not only the starting of something but a continuous help in completing the process. I don't know any other way that people can receive that start so widely and so freely. What is more, it obviously has an unlimited possibility of expansion. If one man who has received it can afterwards give it to a hundred, and of those hundred perhaps five or even ten will emerge who will later

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become sufficiently clear in themselves to be able to give it to another hundred, the rate at which it can expand is self-accelerating like what is called in physics a 'chain reaction.' I must tell you that this struck me from the start. I am sure that many of you have wondered how a force could come into the world that could very rapidly produce a great change in the inner life of man. We could see, all of us could see, that no kind of mass-propaganda or mass-suggestion could do any good; on the other hand, the sort of individual help that is given through schools and teachers must be on too small a scale and must be too slow. How could something appear which would be neither a general mass action, which must be some form of magic, nor the person-to-person transmission, which is very limited in its scope and very slow in its action? If you examine the question, you will see that there could be no other way than that of Subud: that it should be possible for everyone who asks for it to receive something in themselves that will enable them so long as they consent and wish for it, to grow and develop; and in course of time, to be able to give it to others. If such a process could really work, it could spread just as fast as people asked for it, and there would be no other limitation.

In the past, when some extraordinary new force has come into the life of man, it has taken several hundred years before that force has penetrated into any great part of the civilized world, and converted and transformed it. As I said in the last lecture, there is not time now for such a gradual penetration, because it something - however perfect it might be - had to begin only in a small group of people and little by little spread outwards over the course of several centuries, before it had become a real force in the world, by the time it had spread mankind would have lost the possibility of using it. Because the outer events are going so fast, really running away from us, because the development of the powers of the outer world forces is really so extraordinary, there must be something equally extraordinary in the inner world. And if there is not something as extraordinary as that, there cannot be a balance. If the outside life of man is really moving onwards with explosive violence, then something has to happen in the inner life of man that is at least as rapid, even though it is not violent. And for something very rapid to happen without violence, it has to happen from inside more and more people, and that seems to be the possibility which has come now.

And⁸⁰ it is such an extraordinary possibility that one can hardly grasp it, one hardly dares to contemplate it. Certainly I myself was very reluctant to think of what were the potentialities and implications of this Subud, if it really was what it seemed to be. It is almost strange that we should be sitting here talking about something so extraordinary, and certainly many of you must be tempted to go away saying, 'It cannot be true; nothing like that can possibly happen. It never has happened; how can it ever happen?' But maybe it has happened. Only time will show.

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Before we start questions, I would like to say this: It will be quite obvious from everything I have been saying that if you wish to come in contact with this Subud, you can do so. It depends only upon your asking. The practical arrangements require that there should be a period during which people become more or less clear as to what it is they are asking for and should hear the kind of explanations {th??} I have been giving, and that they should have the opportunity of talking with people who have already received this contact, and finding out from them what it is they can say about it, better than I sitting on a platform can do. If any of you wish to find out about it in that way, then you should take probation forms when you go away from here. If you sign and send in one of these forms you will, for three months, be entitled to have any information you like about this Subud. Then at the end of three months if you wish to do so, you can ask for that contact. That is the practical arrangement that has been made, partly to regulate the entry of people, because on the one hand as I have told you it was always clear that no one who asked could be refused, and also so as to ensure that people do not ask without having to some extent entered into themselves and seen for themselves whether they really seriously wish to find out more about it.

Q. I would like to know what you feel is the force that is controlling the outer influences that act on man.

J.G.B. The forces that act in the external life of man at the present time are almost entirely material forces. They come from our dependence upon things of all sorts. To a lesser extent we depend upon vegetable and animal forces.

Q. But what is controlling those forces themselves? What is behind or at the root of them?

J.G.B. Material forces are really blind forces. We ourselves make things. They are the result of man's thought and man's wish to possess things and to use things, but when they are made they have a certain force of their own; they then begin to demand to be used. That does not mean that they are conscious or that they are demanding our attention like a child or an animal might demand our attention - no, they have a certain action on us, chiefly because they have come from man. This is an observable fact: that people live their lives to an extraordinary extent under the domination of the things that man himself has made. On what do people spend their efforts after they have provided for the actual necessities of food and so on? They spend nearly all the results of their labour in acquiring material objects of some kind or another. And these material objects have a certain kind of action on us. And they really are the strongest forces in human life at the present time.

You ask what is behind all this. There is nothing behind it all. It is all just simply the blind action of matter, but this does not mean that there is no action. If you simply look round and see what it is that is making people act most of the time, you see that it

is just the material objects which surround us. If people could do without them, they would be free from these forces. Then they might come under the action of other forces.

Q. God-givenforce⁸¹s, surely, fundamentally?

J.G.B. Yes, they may be God-given, but if they are used in the wrong way, if they are allowed to occupy a wrong place, then this is our responsibility. They should be our servants and not our masters.

Q. May it not be that already these forces are no longer 'without form and void; and darkness upon the face of the deep'? Because a great (..inaudible) come forward and some of us thing, certainly during the course of the last five or six years, that they are taking form and that these forms are in existence at the present moment whether in the shape of societies, parties or individuals, or, more likely, those strange formless things which lack everything which you would attach to consciousness and so on. Can we really feel today that a strange change has come over international diplomacy - and if it can change a diplomat, it can change hell itself. But my point really is this: that is it not possible that they do exist and that a strange change in the whole show can be noticed by any of us when we travel in various countries? I have been in six countries not so very long ago and I would say definitely wherever you go you find a strange new atmosphere and thought. If I may just add one thing - it is a personal thing, but I may add it because after all a personal experience is worth ten thousand impersonal experiences to the individual - I would say without question that every month from five continents - though I can claim no enormous correspondence - I receive letter many of which are exactly on these lines. In fact, I would go so far as to say that soon shall see the simmering of the pot that is boiling at the moment, which will not boil over, but this I think may possibly be the solution of the whole war impasse. And I believe also that we are present at one of those stages of evolution, which go back into the ages, which heralded for instance the coming of steam and various other things, and the coming of atomic power in our times; and this strange new formless thing may perhaps be the solution to a great many of our present problems of war and human nature and so on.

J.G.B. I think it is right to say that, although I spoke about material forces as not having a conscious direction behind them, there is a certain menacing shape over the world, in certain ways concentrated in some localities, as a result of these material developments in the life of man; and I think also there is evidence, real evidence, of something totally different, that has been stirring people in exactly the opposite direction. It has made them some how become aware of this threat to their existence, which they would not have noticed at all. It is particularly remarkable how in the nineteenth century, the real

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threat to mankind from the material forces was noticed only by very few people, and those who did protest against it had almost no influence at all.

Today it is not like that; it is felt by a much greater number of people that somehow it is not right that the life of man should be so much dominated by mere things, by material objects. This does not mean that the situation is changed, or even that the trend has begun to be reversed. Certainly, even now from year to year material objects are becoming more and more dominant in man's life, and the true necessities of life, food, clothing and shelter, occupy less and less of the labour of man to provide, and more and more it is material objects which would be tedious to name because we know them only too well. It is inevitable that in ten years' time people will have more material objects in their homes and carried about with them wherever they go, and they will be more and more dependent upon these. But with all that there is already an awakening in very many people to the feeling that somehow this is wrong; somehow these ought not to be the things that we are living for.

Q. May I ask whether there is anything in the transmission of subud by one initiated person to another which corresponds in any way to the sacraments of baptism and confirmation⁸² in the Christian religion and the words 'being born again by water and the Holy Ghost'?

J.G.B. Yes, To my mind, the nearest picture that one can form of the transmission of Subud is in the Christian baptism. What is the meaning of the baptism? Usually we have child baptism, but before, when there was adult baptism, someone who did not know that experience was something real - wished to be admitted, and asked for it, he had to find sponsors to vouch for it that he was really asking sincerely. They were not required to understand what his inner life was, because it is not known to man. It was then very well understood that God alone knows the hearts of people, and whether the asking is sincere or not. It was also known and understood that it was right that there should be people standing as sponsors, so that the one who asked without really understanding should ask in the presence of someone who already understood more.

Later there came to be infant baptism, when it was quite clear that the child did not understand or even know what was being asked for in his name. And yet the transmission was taken to be valid. Certainly the god-fathers or sponsors were not supposed in any way to give the contact, and as you know in baptism the presence of a priest is not even necessary. Because baptism really only concerns the human soul and God; not man at all. And therefore it is unlike all other sacraments in that really there is not the necessity for the presence of a priest - that is of anyone having special authority. And yet there is the necessity of the presence of someone who takes that responsibility of asking. It is really exactly like that in subud. If you have understood this then you

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have really understood the meaning of the contact.

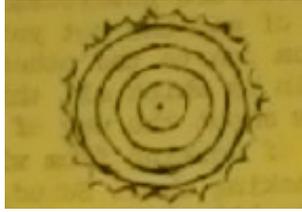
Q. May I ask you why you stress the need to go to somebody to receive this contact when it is already there in the world for the asking? Why do you have to go and ask somebody for it - why not just ask for it yourself?

J.G.B. I understand your question like this: if really such a gift is offered to mankind, why should not one be able to ask for it anywhere oneself? I have just spoken about Baptism. Baptism is really a very strange mystery because you might also say why should it be necessary that a child should be baptised; if it is the Will of God that a child should, as it is said, be received as a member of Christ's flock, why should it be necessary for someone to say or to do something about it? And of course people may say that to them it is illogical and absurd and they cannot accept such an idea. And they are entitled to think about it that way. Because it is mysterious, and cannot be explained logically.

For some reason or other, we human beings have to take responsibility for one another. I do not pretend to understand why this is, but I will tell you how it seems to me. It is connected with the unity of the human race. Although each of us stands alone in front of God, we also do not stand alone, because we are part of the human race. The need of people for one another is something real, even very deep, so that I have no doubt that the destiny of man is not just to achieve a kind of private salvation of his own, a kind of liberation from suffering that will end his own troubles without reference to what may happen to others, or to go to some heaven which he has reached by his own merits and other people may or may not have reached without it mattering very much to him. The reality is altogether different from that. We human beings are connected in a way that is much deeper than we can possibly understand. When you read such a phrase as "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" you think that you understand what it means - but really it is a completely mysterious saying which is connected with the fact that when you reach this innermost part of man people are not separate in the way that they outwardly seem to be. We are only separated in this outside part. In our ordinary selves, we are quite outside and distinct⁸³ one from other.

That part of man (indicating the very centre of the diagram) really is united with the same part in other men.

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Because there is that deep inner contact between men, this somehow has to take its part in this, so that a man is not really entitled to ask for this all alone, and he who has received it is not entitled to keep it only for himself. So that one can neither ask for it alone nor can one refuse if one is asked because of this inner contact. It seems to be that it is something like that. Do you understand what I am trying to say?

Q. I understand, yes.

J.G.B. But you don't like it?

Q. I do not say that I am asking for myself or to keep it for myself; but I do not understand why you can get it only from one particular source.

J.G.B. It is not from one particular source: I have been saying that it does not depend upon one person. Anyone who has this contact can give it to another. It does not depend upon one source.

There is a difference between the action of one person on another and the connection that there is always between people. This connection, this inner link, in the essence of people that really makes us not separate is not an action. Magic always is concerned with the action of one person on another, but this connectedness that there is here does not depend upon doing anything. It is simply because we are connected in that way that if I come into contact with you and there is something that I have received in the deepest part of myself, you can receive it also in the same part of you.

Let me give you a very rough analogy, of static electricity. If I am connected with a source that is electrically charged, my body becomes charged, and then if I have a certain kind of contact with you with the right kind of 'conductor' the charge will also pass to you. That is not an action I am having on you - it is simply because I have been connected with a source. In that analogy the conductor that enables the charge to pass from one to another is not something outside, like my talking to you or showing you something: it is something that happens right inside where there is already a conductor between us. If that analogy helps you to form some picture of it, good. But it is very imperfect.

Q. Assuming that one is only on the outermost of these concentric circles, what is the first step that one should take to get inside?

J.G.B. What is necessary is that the way should be clear. Really we are all of these

circles - this diagram is simply a special kind of portrait of a man and it is a picture of all of us. You might as well say, "How do I get from my skin to my heart?" I have got various concentric layers in my essences which are analogous to my skin, my flesh, my blood vessels and nerves and so on. It is not a question of "getting from one to another;" all of these have to be able to work as a whole if I am to be a complete, normal human being.

The⁸⁴ trouble with us is that we, talking the analogy of the body, are like people who have nothing alive, whose skin is an inert shell, whose flesh is a piece of meat, whose blood is water and whose nerves are powerless. That is the picture of the ordinary man; all this inner part of man has yet been brought to life. So that when you ask "How shall I get from one to the other?" it is not quite like that. It is: "How shall the process begin by which all this can be brought to life?" The answer is, if you are speaking now about the way of Subud - because there are a great many ways involving various kinds of working from without which I spoke about at the first lecture. But if you are speaking about Subud, I say this, that if you receive that contact in yourself, then this life force will flow from here (indicating dot in the middle) to the outside and then will begin to act upon this outside part of you and drive out of it various impurities and defects, release tensions, connect things which are at present unconnected, balance things which are unbalanced and bring this outside part of you to a normal state. When all that is completed, then the flow turns inward, and begins to affect the second part which is a change in the feelings, the desires, so that a man is, - as I have said before - no longer the slave of like and dislike. He no longer lives all the time under the action of what he wants and does not want, what he approves of and what he disapproves of, whom he likes and whom he cannot stand, what he can bear and what he cannot bear. All that is this dualism of like and dislike, which is the disease of this second part of man. When he is liberated from all that, then it can be said that his second body has become purified and brought to life. Such a man then is no longer the slave of likes and dislikes: he is free in relation to them. That is the second stage. And so it goes from stage to stage as a process of purification.

Q. Does this make us free from moral laws?

J.G.B. Why should it? Moral laws appear as something external to man until he reaches the third circle. When he reaches that part, then he sees the laws themselves, and his actions come from his own seeing. It does not mean that he is free from the laws but he no longer depends upon their reaching him in the form of external rules and regulations. He then has property of what is called 'conscience' in himself; that is, he sees what is right and wrong. But that belongs to the purification of the third part.

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Q. Consciously you may ask very sincerely to receive this contact of Subud, but subconsciously you may be afraid and suspicious. Would that make any difference to receiving this contact or not?

J.G.B. No. No one can ask for something completely unless they are themselves complete; and none of us is complete. There are bound to be reservations and doubts and so on. You cannot have more reservations and doubts than I had when I first heard about Subud, and suspicions and so on. And not subconsciously, either!

Q. Do you know anything of psychoanalysis?... As far as I can see it is a science and there is nothing magical or Grace of God or anything else in it. I do know from personal experience of great benefit received from psycho-analysis, and I wondered when you spoke of 'working from the outside' that you were referring also to psycho-analysis.

J.G.B. Certainly - how else? The analyst works from various indications that come into the ordinary consciousness of people, whether it is by association or by remembering their dreams or by some means like freely talking about things, he tries to find out something that belongs to the first circle. But that is trying to find the way from the outside to the inside. But I will say this, really without being in any⁸⁵ way critical of psychoanalysis, that it could not in any case do anything for man that is further in than this first circle. There is no possible means by which it could touch anything deeper than that in man. Therefore what help it can give to him is only in removing the conflicts and disturbances that come here. But it cannot awaken what is deeper in him. Therefore it must be limited in what it can give, even at the best.

Q. Well, the best is jolly good, I must admit!

Q. Can you tell me, please, about the physical exercises which are connected with Subud?

J.G.B. By physical exercises do you mean something which you are taught, and shown how to do? (Yes.) No, there is nothing like that.

Q. But there are certain movements, aren't there?

J.G.B. The movements come spontaneously, not by being taught. They are different for each person.

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Q. You spoke earlier in your talk about one of the tests of whether a religion was genuine or not.. One of the tests was the freedom of the individual to choose for himself and not to surrender his choice or his responsibility to someone else. I feel that must be true, but I also feel that it also must be necessary for the individual to make certain efforts all the time to co-operate with the help that is being given to him based upon his understanding of it. I cannot rid myself of a slight suspicion that what you have been speaking of is in some way allowing somebody else to do something for you-with your own consent, it is true-but not making the effort yourself.

J.G.B. Where do you get the picture that somebody else does it? Let me answer this at once. After a certain period when a person has discovered and is sure that he is free in relation to the force, he is authorized to continue by himself. This has happened to many people who have come for a short time to England, and afterwards returned to other countries and continued in a number of cases quite alone. They have continued and it has been exactly the same with them as with people who are working and still doing it with others. That in itself is sufficient to show that it does not depend upon someone else; there is no one else doing it for you. To that extent one can certainly say there is no one else doing it for them.

Q. The initial effort is simply a sincere desire and asking for it, then?

J.G.B. Ah! Now may I just say one thing? Do you know what is the hardest thing for man? It is to get out of his own light. It is really the hardest. Our own self-will is the most tenacious thing of all. To be able to surrender our own self-will is the biggest price that can possibly be paid. It sounds easy to say that one must consent to an action. In point of fact this is the hardest thing of all, because the hardest thing for a man to admit is that he cannot 'do' anything. Man has this feeling he can 'do' and he confuses this illusion that he can 'do' with the reality of his freedom. Therefore he does not exercise his freedom because all the time he is imagining he can 'do' something. That may be difficult to understand; but when one says "It is enough to ask," experience has shown that for nearly all people a certain time is required before this process actually begins. By observing a lot of people in that way, one can see that it always is delayed and stopped in them by their feeling that they ought to be 'doing' something, and they cannot find how to be quiet enough in themselves to stop themselves having this feeling of having to 'do' something. But that⁸⁶ is hard work! It is not possible to say that this is something that is easy, or that this fact of our consent dispenses with effort, because to make that consent deeper and deeper and more conscious is a continuing and even growing effort.

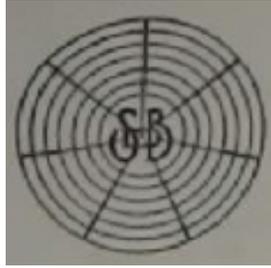
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There is a strange justice in this. Some people come to Subud with a lot of preparation, with a lot of experience not only of life but also experience of what can be called 'Work on themselves.' Such people often find this Subud much more difficult than those who come with nothing: extremely simple people with no idea except that they need help, of something like that. Sometimes they are very young, sometimes very old. And they receive more quickly. So far it does not seem very just. But later, if the people who have already been well-prepared can pass through the stage of learning how really to let go of their own preparation, then afterwards everything that they have got becomes very useful to them. One can say that they come to it with a heavy load on their shoulders which makes it more difficult for them but if they carry that load all the way, then when they get to their destination they have a wealth which other people have not got, and they can be of greater value to themselves and to others.

Q. I would like to ask, suppose that somebody asked for this with evil intentions. Suppose an evil person asked for this contact with the idea of gaining more power - would anything happen at all, or would something else happen?

J.G.B. If someone asks for this, the action will happen. Even if they ask for quite wrong motives. Before we stop I will tell you a story I heard from Java. Apparently in Java there was a man who was a professional murderer, and he of course became a general in the revolution in Java. He became a very successful general and began to kill many people because he thought it was nice to kill people. Now he also happened to be a very clever brigand, and was a great believer in magic and used to collect charms from various places and wear things inserted in his skin in the way that they do in Java. Then one day he heard about Subud - this was several years ago - and thought he would ask for it, with some sort of idea as far as I know that it was simply another kind of charm that would perhaps make him even more successful as a brigand because he had been to practically all the magicians in Java to collect charms from them. He did in fact ask for this and came to the Subud, but when he had been doing the exercise for some time, things began to go wrong with his brigandage. He found that he no longer had a taste for killing people, and then he did not know what to do for a living. So he decided to revert to an earlier talent of his which was picking pockets. He went out one evening to start on an evening's pocket-picking, and forgot what he wanted for! He went back home, you see, and suddenly realized: but I am supposed to be picking pockets, and he started out again. But every time he went out he found he simply forgot what he had gone for. And finally he shrugged his shoulders and said: "Well, this is no good at all, I have had to give up murder and brigandage - and now pocket-picking is no use." So instead he became something respectable - I won't say what!

Subud Newsletter - April 17, 1959



SUBUD⁸⁷
P.O. Box 453
Cooper Station
New York 3, N.Y.

SUBUD · New York

NEWSLETTER - April 17, 1959

PROBATIONERS - PLEASE arrange your appointment with one of the following Subud helpers if you have not done so. It is vitally important that all you who wish to be opened have this interview as soon as possible.

For Women - Mrs Rita Kerner, 435 East 79 St. NYC, Phone LE 5-8584.
Mrs Ann Bartholomew, Hotel Bossert, 98 Montague St., Brooklyn,
MA 4-8100 (No calls after 8 P.M.)
Miriam Schusterman, 67 Jane St. NYC, CH 3-2317.
Jean Ellyn, RH 4-3302 (11 A.M. to 1 P.M.)

For Men - Dan Cahill, Hotel Carteret, 208 W.23 St. NYC, WA 9-7060, ext. 1005.
Ted Osborn, WA 4-6840 from 1 P.M. to 7 P.M., or leave message at SU
7-5400.
Alick Bartholomew, Hotel Bossert, 98 Montague St., Brooklyn, MA 4-
8100 (No calls after 8 P.M.)

In Westchester-
Erling Week, phone Ossining, N.Y., Wilson 1-3440, from 3-5 P.M.

Probationers will be notified of meetings and dates for openings. If any questions arise, women may contact the Women's Secretary, Jean Ellyn (listed above) and men may contact the Men's Secretary, Ted Osborn (above).

All persons becoming interested in Subud may write to Subud, P.O. Box 453, Cooper Station, New York 3, N.Y. Addresses of other Subud groups in the U.S. are

available upon request.

Reminder - Mr Bennett's public lecture is on Thursday, April 23, 8:15 p.m., at Community Church, 40 E. 35th Street, New York City.

The following members have volunteered the use of their homes for occasional informal meetings of members and probationers. These gatherings can provide helpful discussions of Subud, encourage group participation and generally build a more rewarding community of spiritual interest. Tape recordings are also available from Dan Cahill (listed above). Contact the person most convenient for you.

Manhattan

Mr & Mrs Desmond Henry - 11 West 8th Street. OR 4-8475 10 persons
Albert Rudolph - 259 West 11th Street. WA 9-8054 10-12 persons
Mr & Mrs James McGee - 19 Washington Square N. AL 4-0181 6 persons
Mohamedali Sultan Abdul Cader - 250 East 39th Street. OX 7-1526 12 persons
Mr & Mrs Edward Kerner - 435 East 79th street. 10-12 persons
Miss Lex Tice - 55 Morton Street. WA 9-9120 6 persons
Miss Grace Morales - 541 West 113th street. MO 2-1820 10-12 persons
Mrs Patricia Olds - 144 East 22nd Street. SP 7-8314 10 persons
Mr & Mrs Jack Bagby - 521 East 87th Street. UN 1-5352 6 persons
Dr Luzette Sparin - Studio, 812 Carnegie Hall, 154 W. 57 St. JU 2-2354 20 persons.
Mr & Mrs Francois Farkas - 325 East 53rd Street. EL 5-1440 12 persons
Miss Paula Leslie - 234 West 52nd Street. CI 5-2943 9 persons
Mrs Natalie Stork - 450 East 63rd Street, Sutton Terrace East. TE 8-9161 12

Brooklyn⁸⁸

Mr & Mrs Alick Bartholomew - Room 929, Hotel Rossert, 98 Montague St. Phone MA 4-8100, Ext. 930. 8 persons

Westchester

Earl Brubaker - 52 Valley Road, Larchmont, N.Y. TE 4-2593 12 persons
Summer Kittelle - 7 Dundee Road, Larchmont, N.Y. TE 4-3354 12 persons
Mr & Mrs Erling Week - 50 Holbrook Lane, Briarcliff Manor, N.Y. WI 1-2056 12

Connecticut

Everett Williams - 22 Emerson St., Wetherfield 9, Conn.Hartford: JA 9-4032 12

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ORGANIZATION OF VOLUNTEERS FOR PRACTICAL SIDE OF N.Y. SUBUD

A provisional organization of the material side of the New York Subud group has been temporarily adopted, following the return of volunteer application forms for this work. It is hoped that the organization will remain flexible, so that changes in structure and personnel can be easily adjusted when advisable. All members who have not yet registered their wishes and capacities for this work are invited to contact the committees which are closest to their experience. Anyone who has time to spare is most welcome.

The outline below covers only the working committees as approved by the Provisional Helpers' Meeting of April 12th. The spiritual are of the group is led by Dan Cahill as Senior Helper for men, and Rita Kerner as Senior Helper for women.

CHAIRMEN

For Men: Erling Week For Women: Ann Soloway

SECRETARIES

For Men: Ted Osborn For Women: Jean Ellyn

COMMITTEES

Public Information

Chairman - Stuart Grayson

Assistants - Allen Martin

Edward Kerner

Francois Farkas

Lex Tice

Maria Nicolosi

Legal Affairs

Chairman - Sumner Kittelle

Frederic Corneel

Arrangements

Chairman - Natalie Stork

Assistant - Virginia Zittle

Publications - Books, tapes, etc.

Chairman - Dan Cahill

Assistants - Clifford Owens

Walter Anderson

Ray Ovington

Maurice Miller

Walter Duguet

Patricia Olds

Latihan Hall

Co-Chairmen - Natalie

Stork & Ted Osborn

Assistants - Joseph Filardo

Lucienne Farkas

Bapak Care Committee

Hostess - Ann Soloway

Chairman - Rita Kerner

Assistants - Miriam

Schusterman

Lia Kirachner

Lucienne Farkas

Newsletter

Co-chairmen - Jack & Jeanne Bagby

Finances

Treasurer & Chairman - Paul Anderson

Assistants - Joseph Bolton

Edward white

Jule Brennan

Amelia Ruby

Christina Scott

Stenographic Group

Ann Bonner

Paula Leslie

Stella Abbott

Lila Henry

Many other members are assisting on various of the committees as well. We look forward to Bapak's suggestions with respect to possible re-arrangements of the organization which will make it more effective after he leaves. We are also most hopeful⁸⁹ that we will find great help from amongst the incoming members of April, May and June.

Great credit and the appreciation of all of us must be extended to those who have contributed their time and belongings to prepare Ann Soloway's house for the coming of Bapak and his party. David Jelliffe and his work crew have done a wonderful job on the house, and we have Don Kirachner to thank for renovating the garden. We will hope to give a few more names of these volunteers in our next issue.

Help will be continuously needed in the housework and cooking for our guests, so please apply to the Bapak Care Committee if you have the time. At present, the Bennetts are staying at the house, which is at 121 East 26th street, and we expect the arrival of Bapak and party on Sunday, April 26th.

Our thanks are also due to Ina Lowthorp, who kindly donating the printing work on the Newsletter.

REPORT FROM MR BENNETT

Subud in Florida - During 1958 a shower of letters and tapes descended upon Florida from Vic Torrey in Oakland, Calif. George Larson of Tamps went to San Francisco and was opened. A friend in New York apprised Mahdal Love of St Petersburg. So invitation from Florida reached us, and with Bapak's permission we went to Tampa from Mexico on April 3rd.

In six days, we visited Tampa, St. Petersburg, Orlando and other points. 173 people were opened - two-thirds women - and Subud centers were started in Tampa,

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St. Petersburg, West Palm Beach, Melbourne, Sarasota and Orlando. A public lecture at the Tampa Terrace Hotel on April 5th was well-attended and led to many applications. A provisional committee has been appointed with Lee Rentlow of Orlando as Chairman and Mahdah Love as Secretary. Six members were chosen from each of the five main centers. George Larson was chosen as Elder for the Latihan and will act as Counselor to the Committee which intends to invite Bapak to visit Florida at the end of May.

In Washington - Bennett gave a public lecture at the Pierce Unitarian Church Hall at 3:30 on Saturday, April 11th. About 250 attended, and by their questions following the lecture demonstrated keen interest and good understanding. Many well-known leaders of various spiritual and religious organizations were in the audience.

The lecture was followed by two "Talks to Probationers". About 20 women and 15 men were opened, the opening being restricted to those who had signed probation forms before we arrived. The Washington group has rented an apartment in the city with three connecting rooms large enough for 15-20 people to practice together.

SUBUD CHRONICLE

An international Subud Chronicle, published monthly in England and devoted to news and articles of interest to Subud members all over the world, is available by subscription to those who have been opened, at \$4.00 yearly. Address remittances to Subud Chronicle Secretary, P.O. Box 453, Cooper Station, New York 3, N.Y.

SUBUD⁹⁰ FINANCES IN NEW YORK

Our financial requirements have grown paralleling the increase in membership. Special needs arise in connection with such opportunities as the visit of the Bennetts and the coming of Bapak, his family, and Dr and Mrs Zakir.

Small donations began to accumulate in August of 1958, when there were only four women members and one man in New York. In late September, with the visit of R.L. Brown from London, the membership expanded to about 20 men and 20 women. It became necessary to rent facilities for latihan.

In late October we learned of the possibility of inviting Bapak and his party to New York as part of his Second World Tour. Our share of the travel costs would be \$5,000. plus local living and other expenses for the party. In addition to being able to contribute to bringing Subud to New York in the most effective way (by the presence of

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Bapak himself), the plan encompassed great economies. To bring Bapak and his helpers here as a separate project, or for members of our group to travel to Indonesia, would have been much more costly.

With the extending of the invitations to Bapak and the Bennetts, our donations began to increase rapidly. Below is a condensed outline of our income and expenses divided into two periods roughly corresponding to the smaller group of forty-odd, and the present enlarged membership of close to 150 practicing latihan.

| <u>August 1, 1958 to January 12, 1959</u> | <u>Receipts</u> | <u>Disbursements</u> | <u>Balance</u> |
|---|-----------------|----------------------|----------------|
| Donations | \$4,497.70 | | |
| Chronicle Subscriptions (34) | 92.00 | | |
| Sales, lecture mimeos | 4.50 | | |
| Transfers to Subud Travel fund (England) | | \$3,010.10 | |
| Latihan Hall rentals | | 347.75 | |
| Purchase Tape Recorder; other expenses | | 234.87 | \$1,001.54 |

January 13, 1959 to April 8, 1959

| | | | |
|---|----------|----------|----------|
| Donations, sales of books, lectures | 3,985.89 | | |
| Transfers to Subud Travel Fund (England) | | 1,287.65 | |
| Latihan Hall rentals | | 570.00 | |
| Lecture halls, telephone, maintenance, and visit of the Bennetts | | 1,004.43 | |
| Purchase of books, printing, mimeos, etc. | | 347.54 | |
| Paint (Bapak preparation) | | 92.56 | 1,685.25 |

Our only outstanding financial obligations on April 8, 1959 were:

| | |
|--|----------|
| Balance due on pledge to Subud Travel Fund | \$720.00 |
| Invoice from the Subud Chronicle | 231.00 |
| Total | \$931.00 |

It is difficult to forecast expenditures for April, May and June. We will want to assure the needs and comfort of Bapak and his party (totalling 8) during their stay of some 35 days in New York. Also of prime importance is the provision of latihan facilities to handle perhaps as many as 1000 members by the end of June. And, of course, suitable auditoriums for talks by Bapak and John Bennett.

Your Committee has been working without atint to see that these needs are met to everyone's satisfaction, and within our means. Financial requirements during May and June may fluctuate between \$3,000. and \$4,000. per month. We will be grateful for your continued cooperation.

Full⁹¹ name..... Noni Gopal Dev Joardar

Born in India; 1898⁹² now is a naturalized U.S. Citizen.

EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS: Studied under the guidance of Dr Rabindranath Tagore⁹³

“Noni⁹⁴ Gopal Dev Joardar stood first in Bengal in the middle school examinations and won the Fidian medal. He⁹⁵ passed high school in the first division standing second among 21,000 competitors. Passed the junior college and⁹⁶ received his bachelor’s degree in 1917 from the University of Calcutta. His subjects were old and modern English, history, economics and political science. He passed with honors.

“Noni Gopal Dev Joardar they⁹⁷ spent four⁹⁸ years, 1917-21 in various centers of India studying Sanskrit, Pali and Prakrit languages and their modern offshoots—Bengali, Hindi, Oriya, Assamese, Marathi and Gujarati. Alongside the scriptural studies he carried on archaeological and philosophical work especially in Samkhya, Yoga and Vedanta.

“He next attended the Teacher Training College at Patna and in 1922 received his diploma in education. In 1923 he got his master’s degree from Calcutta.

“The next five years were spent in Europe. In London he studied law, economics, politics, sociology and anthropology. At Oxford he did the classics. He travelled wide in the continent and returned to India in 1928 when he was appointed professor in Lucknow Christian College, Lucknow.

“In 1934 Joardar left for the U.S. He was elected to a Carnegie Research fellowship at Yale University where he studied until 1937. On his way back home he spent a year visiting important centers of learning such as Cambridge (in England), Berlin, Sorbonne, Rome, Al Azahar in Egypt and Hebrew University on Mount Scopus in Palestine. His special interest was to get acquainted with the latest methods of cultural research.

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SUBUD · New York

NEWSLETTER - April 17, 1959

⁹² The original editor circled the word “1898” by hand for insert notation

⁹³ The original editor Deleted “from 1902 to 1908” by hand

⁹⁴ The original editor Deleted “In 1909” by hand

⁹⁵ The original editor Deleted “In 1913” by hand

⁹⁶ The original editor Deleted “In 1915” by hand

⁹⁷ The original editor inserted “they” by hand

⁹⁸ The original editor Deleted “the next” by hand

“He returned to Lucknow to teach but as the second World War broke out his services were partly requisitioned by the government. In different capacities he helped the Allied war efforts and taught at the same time as a professor of Lucknow University.

In 1948 he left for America on sabbatical leave. On his way he spent some time in Palestine and Spain. In the fall he arrived in New Haven. In 1949 he resigned his position as professor of Lucknow Christian College and Lucknow University.”

While Dr Joardar was here in Columbus he happened to tell me in detail of a very bad automobile accident he was in many years ago. He too was in and out of hospitals and the doctors told him he would be a cripple for the rest of his life. He had extensive surgery and even showed me the scare that he still carries. He told me of his bitterness and resentment that he felt at life and questioned his faith in God. Then one Christmas eve as he was looking at a picture of Christ he had an experience that healed him both spiritually and physically.

Testimonials⁹⁹

“Professor N.G.D. Joardar is a distinguished scholar. He is a sociologist, antropologist, linguist, philosopher and archaeologist. He has varied gifts as a speaker, thinker and writer. He is witty in his conversation, balanced in his judgement and charming in his expression.

“But we do not think of professor Joardar for these distinctions though they are important in their own lines; we think of him primarily as a gentleman of uncommon susceptibility, a man of strong commonsense and courage, of great straightforwardness and integrity.”

– The Hindustan Times, New Delhi

“Professor N.G.D. Joardar has many outstanding qualities for any of which the possessor can be justly proud. In his boyhood he had no less a man than Dr Rabindranath Tagore as his teacher and guide; in his seventeenth year he had the unique distinction of meeting Mahatma Gandhi when he returned from South Africa, who sent him in 1935 with letters to president Roosevelt. As a student he sat at the feet of great scholars like Westermarck, and Malinowsky, Laski and Edward Sapir. In India Sir Jadu Nath Sarkar taught him history and Dr K.P Jayaswal archaeology.

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“The academic distinctions of Professor Joardar are coupled with the fact that he belongs to a well-know and ancient family. He is 66th in decent from Lalitaditya Muktapida who founded the family. Some of his fore-fathers were independent rulers; a few were generals; many were scholars.

“But the intellectual greatness of Professor Joardar and social aristocracy of birth are completely over shadowed by the great modesty, easiness of behaviour and the engaging charm of his personality. There is but one word for him—that he is a REAL GENTLEMAN.

—The National Herald, Lucknow

“For the presentation of such a complex subject as Indian Civilization with all its facets and angularities, Prof. Joardar has many qualifications for our careful and favorable consideration. In the first place he is a well known scholar with distinctive achievements in the various social sciences. He has also the linguistic gift. He knows Sanskrit, Pali, Prakrit and most of the modern languages of northern India. A trained lawyer and economist he has many distinctions and special qualifications to do justice to the subject he has taken upon himself. “Travelled widely in many continents, Prof. Joardar has also the perspective to view Indian civilization from a comparative angle. He can see the national traits of India in their greatness as well as their defect and drawback.

—Acharaya Narendra Deva, Vice Chancellor
Lucknow University (Now V.C. at Banaras Un.

“Prof. J. is one of the outstanding scholars of India. Quiet, modest, hardworking with a fine analytical power. He has a very keen intellect and a capacious mind. I have not met many people who have his brilliance and breadth of outlook.

—Raja Maharaj Singh, Governor of Bombay

Vitamin News

Published by VITAMIN PRODUCTS COMPANY

MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN¹⁰⁰

VITAMINS F AND F2

Vitamin F is now officially recognized as a member of the Vitamin Family. (See page 422 of the 1949 volume of the Annual Review of Biochemistry.)

Vitamin F was first so named and described by your undersigned editor in these pages, issue of June 15, 1934, as follow:

“Vitamin E from different cereal sources has been found...to have quite different characteristics. This we consider to be due to the (presence of) varying proportions of two distinct vitamins. We have taken the liberty of designating the new one vitamin F... We consider this ‘F’ to be identical with Mirvish’s (blood) calcium depressor found in oatmeal. It is also present in considerable amounts in rye, but there appears to be little in wheat.”

It was suggested that the physiological effect of vitamin F was opposite to vitamin D on the serum calcium, and that it might be found a preventive of sunstroke, or an antidote for the toxic effects of over dosages of vitamin D, and a physiological synergist of D, present in natural vitamin D complexes.

In August 15, 1935, the comment was made that the main use so far developed for vitamin F was in the treatment of prostate enlargement. Later, Hart and Cooper reported more exact data on this use. (1) This has put prostate enlargement definitely into the category of a deficiency disease.

Studies in French Indo-China showed the natives to be completely free of prostate disease, whereas the white population showed the usual incidence, indicating the possible effect of other factors than age in the cause. (2) Vitamin A deficiency also has been suspected to be a factor in causing prostate trouble. (3)

Prostate hypertrophy with great frequency becomes carcinomatous (4), so it is with great interest we note that the current issue of the Annual Review of Biochemistry (1949) states that vitamin F destroys carcinogens, and that this may be one of its functions in living tissue (page 422).

The vitamin F complex (the fatty acid group known to carry vitamin F activity) was found to prevent increased susceptibility to malarial infection, and blood fractions rich in this F complex inhibited malaria multiplication. (4) (5) (6)

These effects of stimulating resistance to infective agents by vitamin F are in all probability the effect of the diffusible form of calcium that the F promotes.

The vitamin F effect is associated with certain fatty acids, arachidonic acid commonly being highest in activity, especially if from mammalian sources. Even then it varies from organ to organ, the liver, kidney and adrenal fat being highest.

Recently we have found that fatty acids in phospholipid combination (available

from liver) have greater potency and a different activity than the free unsaturated acids. We have provisionally termed this new form of this vitamin complex as F₂.

F₂ act as a protector of certain vital tissue components, possible as a part of the phospholipid complex in nerve structures, but more definitely as a protective monomolecular layer for the determinant factors that are essential to the repair and regeneration of all tissue. (We refer the reader to Protomorphology, by Lee and Hanson, for detailed information on the theories of cell physiology that are responsible for the discovery of F₂.)*

Vitamin F₂ promotes tissue repair, to judge from the clinical results. Skin, which is one tissue that must constantly be replaced, responds at once, where a deficiency has caused an induration and degenerative effect.

The most spectacular results however, are seen in some cases of atrophy of muscular tissue, commonly suspected to be of multiple sclerosis type, but apparently due to a deficiency of F₂. (We cannot state as yet whether all muscular dystrophies are specific results of F₂ deficiency; we assume not.)

It will be noted that here we are encroaching on territory of vitamin E. Let us recall, however, that vitamin F and F₂ are really members of the E complex. The tocopherols are simply anti-oxidizing agents and may be limited to this function. They may act mainly to prevent oxidation and destruction of the fatty acids and their linkages.

The F₂ effect may be mainly in preserving the tissue determinants without which new cells or cell repair cannot take place. These determinants seem to be the catalysts that promote the formation of the specific proteins of the cell, and include trace mineral patterns that are part of the enzyme systems essential to cell metabolism.

It begins to appear that osteoarthritis is a disease partly, at least, a result of determinant loss, because the bone changes seem particularly of the type attributable to a determinant paucity. F₂ in clinical tests seems to greatly enhance the action of other anti-arthritic vitamins such as the Wulzen factor, found in unpasteurized milk and sugar cane juice. The new adrenal gland hormone Cortisone (compound E) is already known to be a determinant conserver: it may be its only function; and has been stated to be the long-sought specific remedy for arthritis. (This theory of arthritis was elucidated in Protomorphology two years ago, pages 219, 298.)

The regeneration of red cells in the bone marrow seems to be dependent upon the presence of determinants, too, and pernicious anemia seems to be specifically a state

* Available from us at the price of \$8.50—shipped on approval.

of erythrocyte determinant paucity. The same adrenal factor helps in the treatment of pernicious anemia (Protomorphology, page 295), and a liver extract (apparently F₂) was effective also (page 295).

We have received some clinical reports suggesting that vitamin F₂ is the missing link in liver therapy for pernicious anemia.

The effect of vitamin A concentrates from both vegetable and animal oil sources has been found to be useful in the treatment of some types of hypertension. This effect was traced to the unsaturated fatty acids in the less refined concentrates, apparently the vitamin F fraction. (Grollman, Recent Progress in Hormone Research,¹⁰¹ Academic Press, Vol. 1, 1947, page 383.) The purified vitamin A had lost the effect. (As is usual with any food product—the more refined, the less useful.)

Zaicsek and Weiser Budapest discovered in 1934 that feeding rye to test animals caused muscular lines of development in distinction to the fatty type of growth in wheat, fed animals, and attributed the difference to an hitherto unknown vitamin present in rye. That vitamin was no doubt our old friend vitamin F. For vitamin F (as the physiological combined form of F₂) acts as a protector of the determinants which are the catalytic activators of cell mitosis, and which, if permitted to be enzymatically removed too freely, will result theoretically in a failure of development or of maintenance of any organ. (See Protomorphology for details.) Guanidine is a fatigue, poison, an end product of muscle activity, and vitamin F is known to activate the conversion of guanidine back into the muscle component known as phosphagen, with the help of thyroid hormone. (Morse, Applied Biochemistry, 2nd Edition, Saunders, 1927, page 585. Morse attributes the cooperative effect to the unsaturated fatty acid component of cod liver oil—vitamin F complex to us.)

Here we have the explanation of why some symptoms of F deficiency are also listed as those of thyroid inactivity—dry skin, loss of hair, constipation, muscular pains and eczematous tendencies. Maybe vitamin F is the missing link in getting the conversion of fat to muscle that we so long have expected thyroid to accomplish. No wonder we got toxic reactions instead of what we wanted.

Many users of vitamin F tell us that it eliminates the after-effect of stiff muscles often following unusual muscular activity. It should, if it aids in the reconversion of muscular waste products that are as toxic as guanidine.

Remember the Finns habitually eat rye bread, and they walk away with first place regularly in the Olympic games. In 1924 Finns took the ten first places in the

¹⁰¹ 160

distance races. "MEN OF IRON," said Alfred McCann in his book, The science of Keeping Young. (Published in 1926, now suppressed by the copyright owner, we believe by reasons of McCann's clear indictment of white flour.)

The new vitamin found in sugar cane and raw milk, known as the anti-arthritis factor or the Wulzen-Van Wagendonk factor, seems to have a parallel effect to the F₂. It promotes the availability of easily hydrolysable inorganic phosphorus to form phosphagen and adenosine triphosphate. (Journal Biol. Chem., 165:449, 1946; and United States Patent #2439914.) It should probably be considered as a special form of vitamin F as found in the milk complex with vaccenic acid, and in sugar bearing plant juices.

The clinical experiences with the anti-arthritis factor in treating arthritis are parallel with results of tests with our F complex—some are benefited and some report an aggravation of symptoms. At the moment we are inclined to believe those that find aggravation of the arthritic symptoms are low in phosphorus, and need to get their phosphorus-calcium balance adjusted before relief is possible. Low phosphorus states in test animals are uncommon, because they are not fed refined sugar products or white flour. That may be the reason the animal tests do not apply here to the human subject.

The clinical uses of vitamin F complex as CATAPLEX F, and the new vitamin F₂ may be tabulated as follows:

Uses of CATAPLEX F

(1)—As synergist of vitamin D, to insure delivery of calcium to bones, teeth, muscle, nerve or phagocytes in a form that is diffusible—probably as calcium bicarbonate.

Chalky teeth in children usually become hard and translucent if the F is supplied with calcium lactate (one tablet of F and three of five-grain Calcium Lactate, taken on arising in morning, 15 minutes before food), Vitamin C aids this effect. A 60 day treatment will demonstrate this reaction.

(2)—As a palliative (and often affording complete relief) in cases of prostate enlargement. Apparently this disorder is a deficiency state, for it very consistently clears up under treatment with vitamin F—three tablets per day. Vitamin C again is synergistic, probably by its promotion of capillary circulation.

(3)—All states requiring more diffusible calcium in the tissues.

Uses of VITAMIN F₂

(For experimental use—a new product)

(1)—Diseases where there is a definite failure of tissue regeneration. Muscular

dystrophies, creeping paralyses, anemic states, weakness and atrophy. To be used in connection with all known physiological remedies, such as vitamin E, amino acids, special diets, with definite restrictions on refined foods, processed cereals, soft drinks, all white sugar products, favoring raw foods, rare meats, vegetable juices.

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THE STATEMENTS HEREIN MAY NOT AGREE WITH CURRENTLY ACCEPTED
MEDICAL OPINION.
NEVERTHELESS THE PUBLISHER BELIEVES THEM SOUND.

Edited by Royal Lee

October, 1949
Printed in U.S.A.

A. J. Appasamy: Sundar Singh - A Biography

A.J. APPASAMY: SUNDAR SINGH – A BIOGRAPHY S.S.'s Sayings¹⁰²

- (1) I was sometimes tempted to give up the life of a sadhu with its hardships. I saw that it was no sin for others to live in home comfort, have money, get married. But God's call for me was different.
- (2) The Maharishi of Kailas said: 'Go and tell your friend the missionary that as long as he does not give up that sin I can never pray for him. Because if I do then his sin will prevent an answer
- (3) It is difficult for Europeans to lead the life of a fakir; you had therefore better not adopt it
- (4) In the early stages of my career I used to think that the wonderful peace I had was probably the result of my being God or part of God. I had some leanings toward Pantheism. But two argument have removed this: the first that while practising yoga I did not have that peace; the second, that occasionally I feel gloom & depression from the consciousness of God abandoning me.

(5) I don't believe in Apostolic Succession but if this belief is a help to people in their spiritual life then let them believe it. The true spiritual succession has been interrupted several times because not all Bishops and Popes were truly consecrated by the Holy Spirit; many were not saints at all.

(6) If everything happens according to the will of God, what is the object of prayer? Whether we pray or not, whatever is going to occur will occur. The answer to this question came to me from a nest of eggs, which I observed on a tree. In the eggs there was a liquid, the mother bird was sitting on them patiently and continuously and the liquid was being transformed into the mother's image. The Holy Spirit likewise changes our will until it becomes one with the will of God. God does not change through our prayer, but we change.

(7) It takes fifteen to 20 minutes for me to concentrate. Then I begin to pray but do not use any words. I feel my beloved Jesus so close to me that I place my hands in his

(8) I never try to go into ecstasy, nor do I advise others to try. It is a gift to be accepted but it should not be sought; if given, it is a pearl of great price.

(9) This lady, who cannot find peace although she has gone to see many a famous worker in God's kingdom and who now wishes to speak to me, has something to learn which she would not learn if I agreed to receive her. She ought to learn that Christ is so much nearer to her, and can mean much more to her, than any man.

(10) My ideal has never been renunciation for the sake of renunciation. There is no merit attached to it. Everything in the world has been created by God and whatever God has created is good. The harm comes, not when we cause God's gifts, but when we misuse them

(11) SS was faithful in answering his numerous correspondents from all over the world with diligence and care. Many wrote to him, laying before him their spiritual difficulties. Others wrote thanking him for help and inspiration. To all these, he sent prompt, though brief, replies.

(12) Could a Christian take part in politics? Within limits, he saw no harm. What were the limits? Some people became so engrossed with politics that religion was dead to them. Lajpat Rai once told him that India could not afford to be busy with religion; she should first win her freedom. That attitude would not do.

(13) Many nowadays have no time, are too tired, to pray. Personally I feel tired and weary if I have not prayed and meditated in the presence of God.

(1) In International affairs it will not be by prolonging inter-state anarchy that the world will be brought back to a tolerable condition, but by the rule of international law, which will never prevail unless backed by international force.

(2) I remain convinced, whatever dark times may lie before us that the reign of brutal violence will not last for ever. Evil passions make men incapable of seeing the truth and false beliefs afford excuses for evil passions. If the world is to emerge it will require both clear thinking and kindly feeling. It may be that neither will be learnt except through utmost disaster.

(3) In such a world as we now have to live in, it grows increasingly difficult to concentrate on abstract matters. The everyday world presses in upon the philosopher and his ivory tower begins to crumble. The future more and more absorbs my thoughts.

We¹⁰³ have to learn to think in a new way.

(4) We have to learn to ask ourselves not what steps can be taken to give military victory to whatever group we prefer, for there are no longer such steps. The question we have to ask is: what steps can be taken to prevent a military contest of which the issue must be disastrous to all sides?

(5) No one knows how widely lethal radioactive particles might be diffused in a war with hydrogen bombs but the best authorities say it is quite likely to put an end to the human race—if many bombs are used. This universal death will be sudden play for a fortunate minority, but for the majority a slow torture of disease and disintegration. No authority will say that this worst result is certain but that it is possible, that no one can be sure it will not be realized.

(9) In 1914 I did not think all war wrong. It was that war, not all war, that I condemned. The WW II I thought necessary, not because I had changed my opinions on war, but because the circumstances were different. Nazi Germany had to be fought if human life was to remain tolerable. If the Russians now seek world dominion it is to be feared that war with them will be supposed equally necessary. Yet all this dreadful sequence is an outcome of the mistake of 1914 and would not have occurred if that mistake had been avoided.

¹⁰³ 2

(10) War has become so terrible and Communism so powerful that no one can tell what would be left after a WW, and whatever might be left would probably be at least as bad as Communism. This forecast depends upon the inevitable effects of mass destruction by cobalt and hydrogen bombs

(11) People who say that H-bombs would not actually be employed point to the fact that gas was not in WWII. This is a complete delusion Gas was not used because it was found to be indecisive and masks offered protection. The H-bomb, on the contrary, is decisive weapon against which so far no defence has been discovered. With all military authorities,¹⁰⁴ I do not think that there is the slightest chance that it will not be used in a war. It follows that we must prevent large-scale wars or perish.

(12) While governments are engaged in acrimonious disputes it seems almost hopeless they will be settled except by force.

(13) To any person with historical culture the view that his sect embodies ultimate and eternal wisdom and the opposite sect ultimate and absolute folly, is absurd. No portion of mankind in the past was as good as it thought itself, or as bad as it was thought by its enemies

(14) If an agreement making war improbable is to be reached, it will have to be by the friendly offices of neutrals, who can speak of the disastrousness of war without being accused of appeasement. They have every right, even from the narrowest consideration of self-interest, to do whatever lies in their power to prevent the outbreak of war, for if a WW does break out, it is highly probable that all the inhabitants of neutral countries, along with the rest of mankind, will perish. One or more neutral powers should appoint a commission of experts, who should all be neutrals, to draw up a report on the destructive effects to be expected in a war with hydrogen bombs. This should be presented to the governments of the Great Powers with an invitation to express their agreement or disagreement with its findings. In this way they could be led to agree that a WW can no longer serve the purposes of any of them

(15) I should comment on a point of view advanced, I think mistakenly, by genuine friends of peace (KingHall-PB?) who say that we need an agreement between the Powers never to use nuclear weapons The attempt to secure such agreement is a blind alley. Such weapons can now be made with a degree of secrecy that defies inspection. Each side would think that the other was secretly making them and mutual suspicion would make relations even more strained than now. Secondly, if each side refrained from making them while nominal peace lasted, neither side would feel bound by the agreement if war had actually broken out; each side could make many Hbombs after fighting had begun.

¹⁰⁴ The original editor circled the word "With all military authorities" by hand for insert notation

(16) The first step to end war should be a statement by a small number of men of highest scientific eminence as to the effect to be Communists or by their opponents or by neutrals. Among neutrals, India is in an¹⁰⁵ especially favorable position because of friendly relations with both groups as well as experience of successful meditation in Korea and IndoChina. The scientific report should be presented by the Indian Govt; all might then be brought to acknowledge they have nothing to gain from a nuclear war.

(17) After the Report, the next step is to prepare the ground for a world conference and to enable it to be more than a ruthless contest for power. When a friendly atmosphere has been generated the Conference should meet. To create ways other than war by which disagreements should be settled is a stupendous task. It cannot succeed unless delegates meet with the firm conviction that war means total disaster and that settlement by agreement is more advantageous than continuation of dispute, even if the settlement is not wholly satisfactory to either party. If imbued with this spirit, it can proceed with some hope of success. These tasks achieved the conference would have to advance to creation of a World Authority. Unless this problem is solved, no other measures will have permanent value.

(18) More and more it has come to seem as if frivolity offers the only escape from despair. The escape that can be secured by sober constructive statesmanship has come to seem unobtainable. But apathetic hopelessness is not the only state of mind that is rational in the world in which we find ourselves. There is always the realization that time is short, and always the temptation to hysteria which come from contemplating the possible abyss. But Communist and anti-Communist alike prefer life to death; if the issue is clearly presented to them, they will choose the measures which are necessary for preserving life.

(19) Step by step the world has been marching towards the realization of Orwell's "1984" nightmares; but because the march has been gradual, people have not realized how far it has taken them on this fatal road of general deterioration as regards liberty. This deterioration is due to the increased power of organizations and the increasing degree to which men's actions are controlled by this or that large body. In every organisation there are two purposes: the ostensible one for which it exists and the other, increase in the power of its officials. This second purpose is very likely to make its stronger appeal to the officials concerned than the other. The advantages that spring from organisation are so great and so obvious that it would be absurd to wish to return to an earlier condition, but those who are conscious only of the advantages are apt to overlook the dangers, which are very real and menacing¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁵ 3

Lord BERTRAND RUSSELL: PORTRAITS FROM MEMORY

¹⁰⁶ The original editor circled the sentence "The advantages that spring from organization are so great and so obvious that it would be absurd to wish to return to an earlier condition, but those who are conscious

(20) Our duty in this difficult time is not only to know the dangers but to view them calmly and rationally in spite of their magnitude.

(21) In 1914 I had observed with dismay the increasing¹⁰⁷ danger of war. I foresaw that a great war would mark the end of an epoch and drastically lower the general level of civilization. I felt as if I heard the voice of God. I knew it was my business to protest, however futile protest might be. My whole nature was involved. I saw that a peaceful world cannot be built on a basis of populations that enjoy fighting and killing. It is an enormous error, concerned with feeling, which supposes that a good state of affairs can be brought about by a movement of which the motive force is hate. Those who have been inspired by it acquire the habit of hating, and after achieving victory are impelled to look for new objects of detestation.

(22) All thinking and feeling is overshadowed by the dread of a new war worse than either of its predecessors. No limit can be seen to the possibilities of scientific destruction. But in spite of these reasons for apprehension there are reasons for cautious hope.

ON GENERAL SUBJECTS: (23) At our very first meeting with Joseph Conrad, we seemed to sink thru layer after layer of what was superficial, till gradually both reached the central fire. It was an experience unlike any other that I have known We looked into each other's eyes, half-appalled and half-intoxicated to find ourselves together in such a region. The emotion was as intense as passionate love, and at the same time all-embracing. I came away bewildered, and hardly able to find myself among ordinary affairs... Conrad wrote me in a letter: "I have never been able to find in any man's book or talk anything convincing enough to stand up for a moment against my deep-seated sense of fatality governing this man-inhabited world....I take a gloomy view of the future of China.. A deep and admiring affection which, if you were never to¹⁰⁸ see me again and forgot my existence tomorrow, would be unalterably yours usque ad finem." The quotation expresses exactly what I also felt about him¹⁰⁹ Joseph Conrad's intense and passionate nobility shines in my memory like a star seen from the bottom of a well. I wish I could make his light shine for others as it shone for me. He and I were in most of our opinions by no means in agreement but in something very fundamental we were extraordinarily at one. My relation to him was unlike any other that I have ever had. He was very conscious of the various forms of passionate madness to which men are

only of the advantages are apt to overlook the dangers, which are very real and menacing" by hand for insert notation

¹⁰⁷ The original editor circled the word "increasing" by hand for insert notation

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Lord BERTRAND RUSSELL: PORTRAITS FROM MEMORY

¹⁰⁹ The original editor circled the word "The quotation expresses exactly what I also felt about him" by hand for insert notation

prone, and it was this that gave him such a profound belief in the importance of discipline. I felt, though I do not know, that he thought of civilized human life as a dangerous walk on a coin crust of barely cooled lava which at any moment might break and let the unwary sink into fiery depths¹¹⁰...Except for his hatred of Russia, politics did not much concern him. What interested him was the individual human soul faced with the indifference of nature, and often with the hostility of man, and subject to inner struggles with passions both good and bad that led towards destruction.

(24) Liberty is essential. It has its profound source in one of our most elementary instincts; new-born infants fall into a rage if their limbs are constricted. The kinds of freedom that are desired change with growth in years and knowledge, but it remains an essential source of simple happiness.

(25) It is scarcely possible to be always happy in a world such as that in which we find ourselves, but I do think a true philosopher is less likely than others are to suffer from baffled despair and fascinated terror in the contemplation of possible disaster.

(26) on mentalism: Q: May I Infer that there are two senses of 'see'? In the first, when I 'see' a table I see something conjectural. In the second, I see colored surfaces which cease to exist when I shut my eyes. A: That is correct if you want to think clearly, but our philosophy makes clear thinking unnecessary. By oscillating between the two meanings, we avoid paradox and shock.

(27) The denial of inter-action between mind and brain contradicts common sense, and never had any but metaphysical arguments in its favor. We know that a physical stimulus, such as being hit on the nose, may cause a mental reaction--in this case of pain.

(28) Descartes says, 'I think, therefore I am,' and goes on, as if he had said nothing new, to assert, 'I am a thing that thinks'. It would be difficult to pack so large a number of errors into so few words. To begin with 'I think', the word 'I' is thrust in to conform with grammar, and grammar embodies the metaphysic of our original Indo-European ancestors. We must therefore cut out the word 'I'. Two kinds of supposed entities are dissolved if we adopt the view of Heraclitus, persons and material objects. Grammar suggests that you and I are more or less permanent entities with changing states, but the permanent, are unnecessary and the change. St. suffice for saying all that we know on the matter. We will leave the word 'think' but without a subject, since the subject embodies a belief in substance which we must shut out of our thoughts. The words 'therefore I am' not only repeat the metaphysical sin embodied in the word 'I' but commit the further sin, pilloried in Carnap's works, of confounding a word in inverted

¹¹⁰ The original editor circled the word "I felt, though I do not know, that he thought of civilized human life as a dangerous walk on a coin crust of barely cooled lava which at any moment might break and let the unwary sink into fiery depths" by hand for insert notation

commas with a word without them. In 'I am a thing that thinks' the substance-philosophy is assumed, that world consists of perm. Objects with changing states. This view was evolved by the metaphysicians who invented language.

(29) Common sense would say that perception always had an object, and that in general the object of perception is not mental. It supposes that the chair which I perceive would still be there if I did not perceive it, for example, if I shut my eyes.. Physics and physiology¹¹¹ assure me that what is there independently of my seeing is a mad dance of billions of electrons undergoing billions of quantum transitions. My relation to this object is indirect and known only by inference. The whole of what occurs when I have the experience 'seeing a chair' belongs to my mental world. If I believe there is a chair which is outside my mental world, this is arrived at by a process of inference. Unlike the physical world of physics, the physical world of my everyday experience is part of my mental life and no more substantial than the world that I see in dreams.. On the other hand it is indubitable, in a way that the world of physics is not.

(30)¹¹² It would be just to say that the most essential characteristic of mind is memory, using this word in its broadest sense to include every influence of past experience on present reactions.

(31) All that we know about the atom, now that it has suffered disintegration, is that it is a distribution of energy which undergoes various sudden transitions. Formerly we supposed that electrons were going round and round the nucleus. Now we have to confess absolute ignorance as to what the atom does in quiet times.

(32) Common sense supposes that the physiologist who is examining someone else's brain is seeing matter. Since what he sees is obviously quite different from what is being thought by the patient, people conclude that mind and matter are different things. Matter is what he sees, mind is what patient is thinking. But this is a mass of confusions. What the physiologist sees, if we mean by this something that he experiences, is an event in his own mind

(33) Since we know nothing about the intrinsic quality of physical events except when they are mental events that we directly experience, we cannot say either that the physical world outside our heads is different from the mental world or not.

(34) The essence of wisdom is emancipation, as far as possible, from the tyranny of the here and now. We cannot help the egoism of our senses. Sight, sound and touch are bound up with our own bodies and cannot be made impersonal. No one can view

¹¹¹ The original editor circled the word "and physiology" by hand for insert notation

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the world with complete impartiality

(35) It might be objected that it is right to hate those who do harm.. I do not think so. You will then become equally harmful; and it is very unlikely you will induce them to abandon their evil ways. The way out is thru understanding, not hate. I am not advocating non-resistance. But I am saying that resistance, if it is to prevent spreading of evil, should be combined with the greatest degree of understanding and the smallest degree of force that is compatible with the survival of the good things we wish to preserve.

(36) Philosophy has a certain perennial value. But some ages depart from wisdom more widely than others do, and have, therefore, more need of philos combined with less willingness to accept it. Our age has little wisdom and would profit greatly by what philos. has to teach.

ARTHUR OSBORNE: BUDDHISM & CHRISTIANITY IN THE LIGHT OF HINDUISM

(1) The ultimate and most direct viewpoint is the doctrine of Adwaita, or non-duality. This is the doctrine, roughly, that Being is One: even this is too mimited a definition. The word 'Being' is objected to as too definite, suggesting a comparison with or exclusion of non-being, while the word' non-dual' is preferred to 'One', since the latter may suggest limitation by the existence of some 'other' outside the 'One.' The Bhag. Gita says: "It is neither Being nor Non-bring."

(2) How then, according to this doctrine of Adwaita account for the universe? They are manifestations of Being, having no separate individual reality, mere reflections like one man reflected in many mirrors.

(3) Adwaita is not pantheism. The universe does not make up God but is a mere manifestation of God, while the Unmanifested Godhead remains as it was.

(4) It is necessary to safeguard against one misconception to which man is drawn by its logic: that is the conception that I am real, my ego is real, but all other egos are an illusion. It would be as though a man's dream-self in his dream were stated to be real and to be dreaming all the other persons in the dream. That is absurd. All are equally dream-stuff. It is only the man who can conceive of himself, his own ego, as well as all else, as being a manifestation devoid of separate selfhood who can comprehend Adwaita. It is not a question of mental acuity; it is the ability for conscious ego-effacement that is required. This points the deeper meaning of Christ's insistence on humility. He has to surrender his life in order to find it.

(5) Whereas the figures in a man's dream have no consciousness and cannot realize that their true self is the mind of the dreamer, man can do this in the Cosmic Dream,

and this is the goal aspired to. At this point the doctrine becomes a lifeline to Beatitude. Realizing his separate limited individuality to be an illusion, a man simultaneously realizes the Absolute to be the true self of him, the Atma.

(6) In the “Bhagavata” when Krishna has abandoned the Gopies and they are searching despondently for him, he says: “How can I, the embodiment of Mercy, be cruel, and¹¹³ to my devotees? No, never! My disappearance is only a veil that I draw in order to increase their yearning and love for me inseparation. Just as a poor man who stumbles by chance on a treasure and loses it again, broods constantly on it, so I wish my devotees never for a moment to forget Me.” It is the experience of the spiritual traveler: the secret bestowal of grace, the attempt of the mind to grasp it, followed by its apparent withdrawal and the long quest in ‘the dark night of the soul.’

(7) To ‘Who am I?’ there is no answer, for the answer ‘I am Atma’ would set up the appearance of an equation, of complementarism: ego equals atma; whereas there is no equation since there is no duality; there is atma alone. The result of the quest, ‘Who am I?’ is dissolution of the ego in pure Consciousness. The question ceases to be asked because there is no one left to ask it. The theorist demanding a definite answer is deifying the reason, crediting it with power to grasp spiritual truth

(8) The Buddha answered a disciple who was considering leaving him, “Did I ask you to follow me in your spiritual quest?”

(9) It is mainly temperament and aptitude but may be destiny also on which spiritual path a man finds guidance, for the events of life do not happen by accident but are the medium of the development.

(10) Buddhism & Christianity provide different but complementary solutions for East and West. This implies divine guidance of human affairs, in fact of history .All religion does. If not, then all is a monstrous congress of accidents, signifying nothing. There is no middle possibility. Either the life of a man, a nation, mankind, the universe, follows a pattern to a prescribed end or it is without meaning, sense or purpose.

(11) This is not to say that all suffering is good. Life is infinitely complex. It is not to be taken for granted that whatever conduces to ease and comfort is good and whatever disturbs it is bad,. One has not got the data to assess the value or necessity of suffering in any individual case; not only would it be necessary to know the person’s inmost thoughts and tendencies but to locate the suffering within the framework of his whole life, and, even more, this life within the frame of his entire existence.

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(12) The first and last Avatars must be common to all mankind, their functions being to open and close the manvantara. The Tenth has not yet come. The time for his advent is when materialism and confusion have dominated the world and the remnants of this cycle are swept into cataclysmic disaster, only the few who still follow a spiritual path being gathered together to form the nucleus of the next manvantara.

(13) The Seventh Avatar was Rama, the 8th was Krishna, the 9th was predicted briefly as the 'foreign' one. Some Hindus identify him with Buddha, others with Christ, but I contend that the twofold movement of Buddhism in the East and Xtianity in the West together constitutes the 9th Avatar.

(14) Those who seek to establish contact with some religion of the past, Egyptian, Atalantean, or other, instead of with a living spiritual current of today, are unlikely to find more than psychic residues, bereft of spiritual potency tho' not necessarily harmless. If real potency had remained, the religion would not have succumbed.

(15) The pre-Xtian West's religion had lost its power; it was largely the picture of a materialistic secular civilisation in ancient Greece and Rome which appealed to Renaissance Europe and the modern West. It has been taken as a norm but in fact it was an exception and could not endure being contrary to man's nature and a denial of his higher possibilities.

(16) Ancient traditions concur as representing primitive man as totally lacking in material civilisation; they picture him as too wise to-desire it whereas modern theory pictures him as too stupid to create it.

(17) Maharshi taught that absorption in the Self can be temporary or complete. Nirvikalapa samadhi he likened to a bucket lowered into a well; the rope and bucket (ego & its attachments) still exist to draw it out again. Sahaja samadhi he likened to a river flowing into the ocean whose waters become insperable from it. The former is a blissful trance which cannot be permanent, the latter is immutable, coexisting with outer human awareness, not requiring trance. It is extremely rare. As long as there are cravings tendencies and inclinations, the soul cannot attain sahaja. They pull it back¹¹⁴ to individual consciousness, and after death to a new incarnation. Whatever blissful experiences it may have, it is not liberated.

(18) The Bodhisattva conception involves ego and others, it is openly dualistic. It is a sentimentalized doctrine which has fallen below the high serene level of Advaitic truth. Actually it is only making provision for those who require an emotional approach

(19) The Buddhist 'mindfulness' foccuses attention on breathing to bring serenity and help self-control. Then, the familiar actions of the body should be performed consciously, with the mind upon them; walking, sitting, eating, dressing. The actions themselves benefit, as a men acquires a new grace and control, but the state of mind benefits more

(20) In his "The Mystical Theology" Dionysius writes: "Neither does anything know Him as he is; nor does He know existing things according to existing knowledge."

(21) When Maharshi was dying he would occasionally admit 'there is pain' but he would never say 'I have pain' He had ceased to identify himself with the body which endured the pain or with the mind to which the nerves reported it. When devotees lamented he said "What a pity they confuse Bhagavan with this body and attribute suffering to him"

(22) Even what has been said here about the suitability of world conditions for the advent of the Tenth Avatar could be harmful if it led to too great preoccupation with outer events. For each man the spiritual quest is an inner event and what happens outwardly concerns him only as the circumstance or medium of his quest.

JOHN VAN DRUTEN: THE WIDENING CIRCLE

(1) This evidence, judged and shaped by human consciousness, can betray and misinterpret, but the spirit – that lies behind the thing – may yet be the only quality that truly and forever exists. Perhaps all that we can recognise is a human interpretation, seen thru the narrow slit of our perceptions, limited by our eyes, our ears, our diminished awareness. The ultimate truth may be far beyond that...This is an attempt to carry the argument into the realms of the Absolute, where records, words and thoughts have no power at all, and where, too, my present words are just as useless and false in their attempts at description

(2) I must look forward to the extinction of the present thing I am calling me, thinking that is myself. In the Absolute, I do not exist, the present writing I. But if one's thoughts can flash to a glimpse of Absolutism for one swift second, trying to find comfort in what one thinks one sees there, one cannot stay in it, and most certainly one cannot write from it, or from that aspect. And I want to go on with this book!

(3) It was defeating, but it seemed to me to be final, and it did not occur to me that it might be circumvented. It was a part of the pattern. At its best, there is nothing spiritual in it, this point of view seems to indicate a need to know, obey and accept the rules as the framework of life and operate within them. At its worst, it produces a meek and flaccid acceptance, a dependent submission, a false and ignoble willingness without questioning

(4) The fear of possessions, perhaps of commitments, has dwindled now only because there is someone else who undertakes the responsibility for them off my shoulders.

(5) There was someone, some other self, that was standing behind. And that lives in no place, is identified with none of the things that are a part of my outside life. It stands without associations I am still moving forwards in an attempt to meet it.

(6) The book ends with what appears almost a denial of life. This is perhaps inevitable in any work that closes in a total absorption in a religious way of thinking. It has not yet happened to me, and I am aware of a fear that it might happen. It is a state of mind that cannot ever come from the will; it absorbs one.

(7) If joy (spiritual) has any significance, it is as a pointer to something else, one of the less important signposts to the true Jerusalem. It is a way of gazing at the final quality, awe-struck, something that it suggests yet can never be named, that can only be called 'is-ness', the ultimate that has no further possibility of description beyond the fact that it exists. The signpost tells us that there is something larger, finer, more remote and undefined than anything we have so far been able to achieve. We must be ready to dispense even with joy, save as a pointer to something that is wholly different.

(8) Xtian Science has become dogma-ridden obscured by prejudice, resentment and jealousy, strangling itself in a serpent that is itself.

(9)¹¹⁵ Christian Science was not that when it started. The first edition of "Science and Health" though its prose is almost illiterate and nearly unreadable today, is free of many things that have crept into later editions, and the approach is a wholly different one. I am grateful for the day when I first turned to it. It was a beginning of something which has never stopped advancing ahead of me.

(10) G.B. Stern gave to the mind of an American lady in one of her novels a comparison with a tangled workbasket, in which all silk, hooks, eyes, tape, elastic had become knotted together in wild confusion. Buddhism, Xtian Science, New Thought, Spiritualism and many others had interwoven themselves into that mind

(11) The books on my top shelf move from religion to religion and I have dipped into all of them. There are the Vedanta, Vivekananda Lao-tze, some books on Zen, books by Paul Brunton, books by M. Nicholl.

(12) If religion is an experience of god, then every man and every woman who claims to have encountered God in any way is worth listening to. And it is surprising how close their experiences are to each other.

(13) If I really and truly believed in God as an inseparable part of myself—or rather, as all of myself, would I ever again have a bad time in my life, or be troubled by it? Do I not mean rather that I desperately want to believe in God and times when all of that belief, save the words of it, falls away from me so that I am left struggling? I know that this happens to everyone, saint and sinner alike, that the dark night of the soul is something that no one escapes. Can anyone who goes thru that say truly that he believes in God and not mean only that he longs so to believe?

(14) Any conception of God that I could venture at would be a wrong one.

(15) It was in a drug store in Beverly Hills. I had just sat down to breakfast at the counter. The whole scene looked as though it had been painted by a great and loving painter, who had given it timeless values. The Presence or Spirit seemed to infuse such/things simple as coffee cups and spoons, and the physical presences of people breakfasting at the counter. I saw the restaurant, the food and the people as they truly were, part of a great work of art that was charged with an essential, yet never an explicit, meaning, and that meaning seemed to be wholly and completely satisfactory. The experience lasted about 15 minutes; it seemed an enlargement of hints that I had had before, moments of a half-awareness of an invisible presence.

(16) Isherwood said the basic teaching of Vedanta could be summed up for children by the words 'wishing's naughty'. Do I want that (mystical) experience to happen to me again? That is the one question that cannot religiously be asked. Even to want the awareness of God is to indicate that one has a sense of separation from Him. The truth is that there is no separation. If awe and wonder and love is the approach to God, it removes wishing, it denies the possibility of doing anything about it to achieve it, and also denies that one can sit back and do nothing; Here is dilemma, which demands alert passivity, constant attention, and a totally relaxed attention at the same time.

(17) 'Prey without ceasing' is the demand We have to keep reminding ourselves, jolting our minds and our attention back to the oneness of God and the world. Of all the things I have learned this seems to me the most important one. It came to me from teacher named Joel Goldsmith, whose message has superseded all of the searching that had preceded it in me. His "Infinite Way" has traveled everywhere with me. I have read it every day for years. Here, in the denial of a duality that makes the material and spiritual world separate entities, I saw the only line to salvation. Some years ago I was asked to rite an introduction to it, and I embarked on it with no conception of where I was going, or what I was going to say, turning my thoughts to another mystery, the question of where all the words I have ever written about anything had come from.

And from that questioning the preface arose. From a similar questioning, and from a need to be delivered from attention to worldly effect. I have been delivered of many thing that have troubled me. I know now where the secret lies. It is only to be found in the permanent and conscious realisation of the presence of God in every, oment of life; from Joel G. I learned that.

(18) The teachings of “The Infinite Way” form a religion which can easily be misinterpreted, made to resemble Xtian Science as it is normally visualised, with a Kinship to some species of white magic. It is in no way that, the healing is an essential part of it. It is an attempt totally¹¹⁶ to relinquish¹¹⁷ the temptations to achieve any change in matter as such, or to visualise material things as realities to be changed, and instead to live a life that is ruled only by Grace. It is a total turning to the Infinite Invisible, from which everything springs, wrongly as we may view its manifestations. There is nothing too great or too small to spring from God, and it is realisation of His presence that demonstrates itself in what are called healings. It is here that the split may occur between religious points of view, since some of them regard the details of daily living as too transit-or, too trivial or too sordid for God to be bothered about. These other religions would turn our attention to the higher and spiritual plane only, denying the material as though it were an impertinence to recognise it. I am happy that the brief realisation that I had included such things as plates and coffee spoons. They made me aware of the instant ness of God in everything that we encounter, and of the immediacy of His omnipresence. And if I can remember that always, especially when things seem to be going well because of something that I believe I myself have done, that seems at least the beginning of understanding.

(19) As an artist I know that form is important, that it shapes and porrays its inner content, and that one must work towards a perfection of it. And I know too that it must never be made of supreme significance, and that the artists who have paid it too deep a worship have destroyed themselves. I know that one can get strangled in it, and that is why the older generations stop suddenly in their appreciation of new art.

(20) It is an observer who stands aside and watches, or who passes judgment. It is the figure who can say ‘my leg’ or ‘my body’ even, suggesting that it knows that the ‘me’ is not the body, but that the body belongs to it. It can say “I am contented” and know that it means only that it is contented for the moment. Inside all these statements, making them, is the speaker. And none of us knows who the speaker is...The last answer is that what is speaking, what is passing judgment is the Eternal “I AM” and that I Am is every single one of us, who are only the forms it takes to manifest itself for human recognition.

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JOHN VAN DRUTEN: THE WIDENING CIRCLE

¹¹⁷ The original editor replaced “reliquish” to “relinquish” by hand

(21) None of these parts of 'me' is me at all, and there is another and eternal me outside of them. I can reach only towards an awareness of it. I cannot push myself into eternity. But I can know that as I sit writing this, dealing with aspects of what seems to be and is not myself, I am dealing with a character, or a series, as I deal with characters in my plays. And none of them could exist if there were not an author to create them. They too are a part of me. I am them, and I am beyond them.

(22) It is said of certain saints they were asked in what language God spoke to them. The answer was that they understood God in their own language, and never that He spoke to them in that tongue. And that is as far as I can go—a consciousness that wherever and whatever my physical body may have been, the true self has remained from the start 'where it has always been.'

ROLF ALEXANDER, M.D. THE MIND IN HEALING

(1) How do miraculous cures happen? Such diseases as paralysis do not disappear suddenly and by chance. Dr Hans Selye, at the University of Montreal's Institute of Experimental Medicine demonstrated that, built into the human organism, there is a natural defence system of tremendous power, and that this can be triggered by a certain state of mind into suddenly speeding or accelerating the normal processes of repair.

(2) All injuries of whatever kind are first felt as mental states. The same sort of tension is felt by fear as is felt from an aching back or influenza. These tension states are subconscious.

(3) It is thru the pituitary gland that mental states become translated into chemistry. It cannot tell the difference between the subconscious stress states caused by worry, erotic daydreams, or fantasies, and the stresses caused by purely physical disturbances. It does not respond to the kind of stress, but to the degree of it. The same defence system is mobilised to meet it.

(4) When the general defence system is kept mobilised by purely imaginary dangers to no useful purpose; if the worry persists, we are destroyed by our own defences. The adrenal glands attempt to adapt to the situation by increasing their output of hormones, but this plays havoc with other processes. The individual may develop arthritis or diabetes, or any other psychosomatic disease. If the stress is still continued the adrenals become exhausted, resistance collapses,¹¹⁸ and he probably succumbs to heart, kidney or circulatory diseases. Dr Selye's world demonstrated that the defence system can effectively fight only one thing at a time. If another stress is introduced, we either

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quickly succumb to the first injury, or to shock resulting from the second stress, or a broken limb does not mend, or healing of other diseases is suspended and they become chronic. Thus mental tensions of a non-physical origin proportionally decrease resistance to the stresses imposed by colds, flu and pneumonia.

(5) Does any system exist by which malignant stress called worry can be replaced by faith? Faith is the most essential element in recovery and this only the patient can contribute, Each is primarily responsible for maintaining immunity to disease or for throwing the full power of our defence system behind the doctor.

(6) The intellect is not the highest phase of the human mind. It performs computations below the level of consciousness. The part of the mind to which the imagination and will belong, and which the intellect obeys, is the real 'I', the essential Self, the Conscious Mind.

(7) People trying to find answers to problems which cannot be found by the intellect become frustrated helpless neurotic. We must first build faith, understand that intellect is an adding machine, and we must gain control over its subconscious operation.

(8) Religion has remained rooted in primitive concepts and has so lost much of its validity for the educated person.

(9) The information which is fed into the subconscious is translated into the tension which causes the pituitary to release its hormones to trigger the other glands, particularly the adrenals, into preparing the body to meet the situation.

(10) We can detach ourselves from the subconscious machinery and self-induced tensions by learning to be our real selves, the part of the mind which says 'I', which is housed in the pre-frontal area of the brain overhanging the eyes, and not the intellect

(11) The tone of health is maintained by the balance of hormones secreted by endocrine glands.

(12) The brain with its marvelous control system was designed to release the 'I' from the onerous task of physical housekeeping. When we are able to control the controller we shall not only make far greater progress but actually enjoy the process

(13) The will to believe and disbelieve, together with the imagination are properties of the conscious mind. But they should be the result of clear vision, based upon what actually exists, upon reality. While the 'I' is esconced within the subconscious, it sees only a hazy and distorted picture. The birth into clear-consciousness, though sometimes cataclysmic, like sudden salvation, is usually a slow process of development.

(14) The healing of a few lepers in the earlier stages of Xtianity demonstrated 2000 years ago what Dr Selye recently demonstrated at Montreal; the existence of a defence system within the body which can overcome any disease when set into motion by faith Likewise the calming of a storm did not alter the world's weather pattern but it demonstrated the existence of a field of force in nature which can be triggered by a human mind.

(15) Lao Tzu, Gautama and others of clear vision had become aware of the same principles but Jesus did not only talk and teach them, he deomonstrated them.

(16) There are vast gaps in our knowledge of the relationships which exist between the mind of man and his creative Source. When the 'I' becomes free from the yammering of the subconscious and enters into this experience at will, the faith which heals bodies is assured. Even the reaching of the zone of higher consciousness for a few moments has an invigorating and stimulating effect on the entire mind and body, and relaxes out of the tension states such as fear, sorrow, hate, pessimism and anxiety.

(17) We do not do the things which are no longer valid, things which meant survival in the jungles and caves, which are dictated Brom below

(18) The lower feelings trigger the pituitary and the chemical balance of the body is altered.

(19) EXERCISE I: Imagine consciousness to be concentrated directly behind your forehead. Keep it in a state of vivid alertness. Every time a thought intrudes chop it down in a flash and return to the wordless alert meditation. Words belong to the subconscious whereas consciousness is wordless. At first you will not be able to remain free from your subconscious for as much as a minute but with practice you will be able to extend this period of thought-inhibiting¹¹⁹ to 15 minutes.

(20)¹²⁰ EXERCISE II: Close your eyes and in your minss eye try to create a vivid visual image or picture of a thing. The forming of clear images and then associating them into patterns brings the intell to and its subconscious mechanism under control to some extent

(21) All feelings of a negative type, anger jealousy, etc belong to the subconscious; they are ancient relics, and have no place in civilized life. They are useless to settle the problems of modern times

¹¹⁹ The original editor circled the word "of thought-inhibiting" by hand for insert notation

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(22) Awareness in itself is wordless, a state of higher feelings, delicately-blended feeling-tones; artists and mus composers have been more successful in expressing this than writers

(23) All help from another must be of a temporary nature Each must learn to operate his own mental equipment

(24) Selye demonstrated that one single stress can produce any one of a large number of diseases, entirely unrelated to one another

(25) Faith cannot be turned on and off at will. It can come only as a result of subconscious acceptance of a concept which transcends its own vagrant fantasies

(26) Postscript by Perth Govt Meteorologist: Dr Rolf Alexander claims to have made many clouds vanish from the sky merely by looking at them! (and thinking—PB). Leymen think this is miraculous. But the type of cloud—technically called ‘cumulous’-?—he affects never last longer than 20 to 30 minutes anyway. It would vanish even if he did not put his mind on it and look.

SHEILA KAYE-SMITH: ALL THE BOOKS OF MY LIFE

(1) Looking back on my life I repeatedly meet myself as a stranger. It was just such a backward glance that convinced Geo. Meredith on his deathbed that there could be no personal survival. He had been so many people. He could not possibly be them all. Therefore there was no ‘I’ to survive death But curiously this is one of the arguments used by theology to prove the opposite. As white holds all the colors, so the transcendent ‘I’ holds all these different personalities. My life is the unity which binds them both consciously and unconsciously into a pattern which, when it is complete, will be my whole, real self.

(2) My experience has been that when these strange faiths emerge from their literature and put on flesh and blood, they break their spell. I found an elderly minister with an ear-trumpet conducting a scatter of elderly people. There was nothing inspiring or even distinctive about either the service or the sermon. The thing seemed dead. I came out disappointed. No doubt I had expected too much, for I had expected wisdom and worship& neither was there. It was a long time before I found a religion (R.C.) that could offer them both.

(3) In the C of E we hardly ever heard a sermon on the subject of God. Neat little discourses on points of doctrine, moral principles, even topics of the day were what we had to listen to. But in the Catholic Church the preacher talked only of God. Philosophies, moralities, sanctities are by the way; there is always that peak ahead, God is the summit.

(4) Von Hugel is one the of the few writers whose letters can be compared with their finest work. Unlike Jane Austen whose letters have been a shock to those of her admirers who did not expect to find her.. (or the letters of most authors who, weary of writing, merely scribble to a friend), he put the best of himself into an envelope.

Letter to Kenneth Hurst (PB's Son)

Edna Kaehele¹²¹
42 W. 3rd. Ave.
Columbus. 1, Ohio

July 5, 1960¹²²

Kenneth Hurst
Hawthorne Books Inc.
70 Fifth Ave.
New York, 11, N.Y.

Dear Mr Hurst;

After weeks of resounding silence, Robert Cousins of McGraw-Hill today returned my mss. SECOND WIND. In his very nice letter he says that the market for such books is not good, but generously adds a few kind remarks about this one. So off it goes tomorrow to Harpers, as per your suggestion.

I hope this is the right thing to do. It is hard for me to feel the confidential glow that being in N.Y. gives, once I am back here in the midst of routine and ruts. It is just as "Pooh" says, in THE HOUSE AT POOH CORNERS, "When you are a bear of very little brain and you think things, you find sometimes that a thing which seemed very thingish inside you is quite different when it gets out into the open and has other people looking at it."

Since I was in N.Y. I have been conducting a very interesting experiment for the Batelle Research Inst. I think you might be interested in it.

On June 2nd. I took a group of 9 mice that had been implanted with carcinoma. On taking the mice I was told that they would start to die from the 10th. day on - that any living until the 14th. day would certainly have ulcerations - that all of the mice would be dead by the 20th. day.

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¹²² The original editor circled "PB" by hand in the right corner

At the end of three weeks (exactly 21 days) five of the mice were still living. They had developed tumors, some of them as large as the mouse itself, and all had been dreadfully ill, but by the 21st. day the tumors in these five mice had completely reabsorbed and they showed no signs of having been ill. Not one of the mice, including the ones that died ever ulcerated as predicted. This seemed to me, highly significant under the circumstances.

Of the four mice who died, one died so early in the experiment that Batelle agreed with me that it obviously died of something other than cancer so should not be counted at all. One died after the tumor had considerably reduced in size and she seemed to be recovering. This was on the 17th. day. The other two I put to sleep because they seemed to be in great pain and I was simply not scientific enough in my approach to let them suffer longer merely adding proof to an already proven fact. It seemed to me (and still does) that even one mouse living through an experience of cancer is just as conclusive as¹²³ nine mice doing so.

The mice were separated into two groups. One was fed exactly as they feed them in the laboratory, with prepared pellets and water nothing else. These I treated only metaphysically, working to create a "force field" about them in which healing could take place naturally.

The second group was permitted to run freely in a large bathtub with a rug placed on it for fire footing. They had a covered sleeping box, an exercise wheel, and a dish-pan "garden" in which they could dig and eat growing green things. This group was fed a high protein diet with vitamin rich vegetables and fruits. They were kept interested and stimulated mildly by having food offered to them at frequent intervals, and having boxes and cardboard cylinders etc. Put in their tub for play equipment.

The survivors includes two from the first group and three from the second, which seems to illustrate my point that with the right approach any or no treatment is effective and that without it, no treatment is likely to be.

In my files I came across a paragraph that I had copied once from one of Dr Brunton's books (without knowing at the time how applicable it would be) in which he said, "Grace is a mystical energy, an active principle pertaining to the overself which can produce results in the field of human thought, feeling and flesh alike It is the cosmic will, not merely a pious wish or kindly thought, and it can perform authentic miracles under its own unknown laws. Such is its dynamic potency that it can confer insight into ultimate reality as easily as it can lift a dying person back to life again or instantly restore the use of limbs to a crippled one. It is a visitation of power as unexpected and unpredictable as it is welcome and gratifying. It

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is an unseen hand stretched forth from the world darkness amid which we grope with unsteady feet. It is the voice of the Overself speaking suddenly out of the cosmic silence with which we are environed.”

It was this. “Grace” that helped my mice to survive. I know, however, that their survival will not “prove” anything to those who do not wish to see, but it demonstrates the thing that I have long tried to teach - that cancer is best cured by ignoring the cancer to concentrate on the body and the mind that houses it.

Doctor’s¹²⁴ give all of their attention to the disease itself, forgetting that it is the muscles we give attention to that develops.

In this experiment I ignored the cancer, but recognized and made use of, the regenerative powers of the life force in the bodies of the animals that had it. In the first group, the extra food, the exercise and Fun provided, gave the bodies the necessary strength and interest to keep going while they fought off the ravages of the cancerous condition. In the second group by grace and scientific prayer I created an environment in which they simply could not remain ill. Healing occurred because no one was fearful, and no one was “treating” cancer, thereby giving it life and reality and the power to kill.

To some it won’t make sense – but it happened. All that remains is to translate this into human experience, but that is the rub. Humans are more resistant to help than mice. We all KNOW too much to see the simple, basic truths.

I want to add to all of this that I am still unalterably opposed to all animal experimentation. I think it does not prove what researchers claim for it, and if it did I still think the ends do not justify the means. My only excuse for participating in the program is that it goes on anyway and at any rate the mice I took certainly suffered less than if they had remained in the lab. I’ll assure you that I’m not going into it more deeply. Unlike scientists, I see no sense in repeating an experiment already successful. In my case, it did not take the mouse project to show me anything, but they provide a way to demonstrate it for others who are interested.

What I really wish is that I could get backing from something like the Lasker Foundation to enable me to show what could be done with humans in a non-medical program. Perhaps some day that too will be worked out. It’s really a good thing that we get to live many lives for this body certainly isn’t going to last long enough to do nearly all of the things I would like to do in it.

Until we meet again please keep yourself in health and happiness,¹²⁵

RELIGION¹²⁶

'Dr Peale' of Australia

Every¹²⁷ Wednesday is "Dr Wednesday" day in Sydney Australia.

Dr Wednesday is the affectionate nickname of the slight, graying Presbyterian minister of St. Stephen's Church in downtown Sydney who has become one of Australia's most popular clergymen with his half hour lunchtime inspirational services "Relax ... Relax and let the strain go out of you," the Rev. Gordon Powell will urge some 1,350 Australians of many denominations who crowd into St. Stephen's each Wednesday. "Let the strain out of every muscle in your body. Give yourself over to your God ..."

Such pulpit-to-pulse advice, the minister believes, attracts the largest regular midweek congregation in the Christian world. It is this service which is filmed and televised for a Sunday audience estimated at 150,000 Powell also has distributed more than 1 million "took prayer cards" (each with a "great positive thought" designed to drive out tension-causing negative thoughts). And his five books have sold well over 100,000 copies in Australia.

In New York City last week on a rest leave, the 49-year-old minister was busy with his U.S. publisher, happily talking spiritual shop with other clergymen, and doing some sight seeing – "I took a snapshot of a policeman from the rear because ours at home don't carry around truncheons and bullets." He was also preparing six sermons to give at Marble Collegiate Church, the place made famous by the inspirational writings and sermons of Norman Vincent Peale.

Happy Habits Powell, in fact, has been called the "Australian Peale". A longtime admirer of the well-known American clergyman, Powell often recommends Peale's books to Down Under friends and acquaintances. And for his own book titles (e.g., "Happiness Is a Habit") the Australia seeks that Peale-like feel, although his writings seem to put more emphasis on spiritual and physical well-being than on material success.

Son of a successful Melbourne dentist, Powell was called to St. Stephen's in 1952. It is a large, modified-Gothic church located on Sydney's street of doctors. Twenty-eight of these physicians belong to Powell's congregation (1,300 communicants) and the

¹²⁵ Incomplete para

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minister says most subscribe to the view that the troubled or guilty sick need the care of both medicine and religion.

In the past twelve years, Powell and his congregations have prayed for 6,000 ill people. At St. Stephen's the prayer session is held on Sunday afternoons, when a small group gathers to pray for no more than a dozen persons. Patients are told when the prayer for them is to be used said and are asked to pray at the same for time—preferably for someone else.

He is partisan to spiritual healing, having seen not they the effects at prayers on others, but or himself as well. A back pray, suffered shorting a window hitch as an Air Force chaplains, "caught up with me in 1955," he says, "I couldn't sit to the same politesse for more than ten minutes at a time," when his prayer group discovered that doctors were advising a difficult operations, the members put him on the prayer list. At the appointed time be knelt down to pray and some felt a "grating" sensation in his back which produced great relied. He kept on with a brace his doctor presented, but the operation was never needed, and now the brace has been cast aside.

In New York, Powell is not emphasizing healing but is talking with a strong Aussie accent about everyday problems and the Christian answer to them. As in Sydney, he likes to open his sermons with a joke, and at the Marble Church be has had them rolling in the asides with this one: "Americans and Australians are really very much the same. They have the same tensions, the same problems. And they speak the same language-except that Americans speak it with an accent."



Newsweek – Vytas Valaitis

Gordon Powell: 'Let the strain out of every muscle ...'

'Lawless' Birth Control

What do Roman Catholics gain by fighting to uphold birth-control laws?

Little but the antagonism of non-Catholics. Or go concludes a surprising 83-page report. "Birth Control and public Policy," sponsored by the Fund for the Republic and issued last week under the by-line of a young British Catholic lawyer who has been studying U.S. anti-contraceptive laws – on the books in 30 of the 50 states.

Norman St. John Steven, now a political writer for Britain's Economist magazine, suggests that Catholics campaigning for laws outlawing both control *pet se* ("which are not in fact enforceable"), and concentrate instead on "measures commanding general support, such as the hamming of sales of contraceptives from slot machines or the restriction of sales to adults."

The proposals of the 30-year-old Englishman were fresh evidence of an intellectual ferment that is now stirring among some Roman Catholics over the sensitive issues of artificial birth control. Only last month, for instance. Ave Maria, weekly magazine of the Holy Cross Fathers in the U.S., indicated that the church doesn't necessarily favor legislation forbidding the use of contraceptives (NEWSWEEK, June 27).

However, the Very Rev Francis J. Lally, editor of The Pilot, the powerful official newspaper of the Boston archdiocese, warned last week in an editorial that St. John-Stevas' study should not be taken to signal "a 'change' in Catholic teaching ... What is happening is an acknowledgment that, even while Catholic principles remain, unchanging, the social, political, economic, legal, and cultural context in which these principles are applied is itself in flux and they must be applied differently."

Newsweek, July 25, 1960

"There¹²⁸¹²⁹ is No Hopeless Disease in a Hopeful Body."

By Edna Kaehels

These¹³⁰ who are ill must remember always that the good life in the body is infinitely stronger than the bad life in the disease because LIFE has its roots in an inexhaustible source of supply, and the disease does not. IT IS TO THIS GOOD LIFE WITHIN US THAT WE MUST LOOK IF WE WOULD BE WELL AGAIN.

Most of us worry inordinately about our physical health, losing our sense of proportion, when we set about it with such frantic intensity. The truth is that the human body is such a complex mechanism, that almost never do we find a perfectly healthy body although millions of people live to ripe and useful old ages in the imperfect ones they have. So the first fear we must lose is the fear that illness can destroy us without our consent. We must BELIEVE that we can live even with disease. Then we must be willing to learn how.

Being willing to learn how, means more than just wishful thinking. It means being willing to completely change our way of living, our way of thinking, our very way of BEING. For, obviously, if the person we are is capable of developing illness, that illness can be eradicated only by, in some manner, changing the body that harbors it. Emmet Fox, minister and great metaphysical teacher, wrote in one of his books "We can change any situation or condition which confronts us simply by taking our eyes off of

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¹²⁹ Page Range 2 to 8, are poor quality, hence we have keyed the texts, our level best

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the condition and looking at God.”

ALL¹³¹ OF US NEED TO DO MORE “LOOKING AT GOD”

Many ¹³² years ago, Hippocrates father of modern medicine, made the unequivocal statement that, “Natural forces within men are the true healers of diseases”. Present day doctors are becoming increasingly aware of this truth and the fact that most illness is the result of wrong and emotional activity.

Dr Richard C. Cabot of Harvard said in an address before a group of doctors, “The body has a super wisdom and force which are biased in favor of life rather than death. This force is God, which is the healing power in ninety percent of recoveries”. And Dr Draper of Columbia University once said, “Man’s most destructive forces are within his own soul.”

Are medicine and religion then so far apart? And if one fails, why are we so reluctant to try the other? If it is true that, “Man’s extremity is God’s opportunity”, why not give God a chance?

Fear is the absolute opposite of faith, and just as faith is man’s most shining promise, so is fear his most deadly enemy. When we are fearful over what is happening in our physical bodies, we are in essence denying the power of God within us. Faith ... the faith that will heal ... is the ability to go the on unquestioningly in the complete sureness that somewhere, within this house of corrupt flesh, is always the healthy the untouchable core of self, the essence which is God.

IT IS THIS DIVINE SELF, THUS IN DESTRUCTIBLE SPIRIT THAT MUST BE ATTENDED¹³³ TO RATHER THAN THE DISEASED BODY.

In¹³⁴ serious illness one cannot afford to disperse his energies, letting them flow every which way, but must direct them of desperate decision that we must discover sources of inner strength and security. Somewhere within each of us is a secret place where we stand forever alone, and in this inner sanctum we resolve our relationship with God. The more quickly we recognize this, the sooner we will find ourselves on the right path. It is entirely up to you.

A very wise man once said. “You can not break the law of God; you can only

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“There is No Hopeless Disease in a Hopeful Body.”

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¹³³ 4

“There is No Hopeless Disease in a Hopeful Body.”

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break yourself against it". We must go His way or we travel with trouble.

If we were to bind one arm close to our side, never using it, the flow of blood would slow down. Gradually the nerves and the muscles would fall to function until eventually the entire arm would become atrophied and useless. So with our selves. If we consistently shut ourselves off from the stream of life, refusing to fulfill our potentialities, just so much do we empty ourselves of the vital life force, and to such extent do, our spirits become withered and cease to perform any useful function.

NO DISEASE CAN HARM US EXCEPT AS IT DESTROYS OUR WILL TO LIVE.

It is a fundamental law of nature that only the used survives for long. The unreasoning circulatory system of the body automatically quits pumping blood into an immobilized member. In a similar, but larger sense, will and¹³⁵ walk". This is saying in effect, "Make an effort ... do something".

It¹³⁶ is not by supinely begging for favors that we are blessed with health, but by being up and about the Father's urgent business. What we do not use—we lose. Pick up thy bed and walk, or lie there and destroy the very instinct for life.

The physical, the mental, the spiritual should be so intermingled that no line of demarcation shows. This only is health, and no disease nor any form of illness can destroy the one who really understands it.

It is the WHOLENESS of life that is important. Physical health is but an expression of the soul's content. It is not obtained by {Illegible}¹³⁷ cures and isolating one's self from the world but is soonest achieved by facing up to and coping with life as it comes.

You will remember that when those who were following Jesus reached out in trust to touch the hem of His garment, they were instantly blest and healed, but He Himself reminded them over and over that the power that did it was of the Father that dwelt in each of THEM. He took no credit for anything knowing Himself to be only the channel through which life flowed.

We are all just such channels. If we do the best we can, God sends His power to earth to work through each of us. The amount of power we are able to demonstrate (work with) is regulated only by our individual willingness to learn and to serve. We must turn over our fears and our half faiths reaching to God in utter confidence, asking

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"There is No Hopeless Disease in a Hopeful Body."

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¹³⁷ Indecipherable in the original, its looks like "{Illegible}"

him to take control and light the way.

Begin¹³⁸¹³⁹ today to change your life. You can help yourself to health. As you can help countless others by your determined example. Learn to live anticipation. The future will be more wonderful than you can now believe. We do not have to KNOW: we have only to ACCEPT.

“Go out into the dark
And put thy hand into the hand of God;
That shall be to thee better than light,
And safer than a known way”.

You do not expect the electricity in the atmosphere to light your house until a lamp or other fixture is provided do you? Nor do you expect this lamp to operate until it is plugged into the previously wired channel. Well neither can you expect the Life Force of the universe to work, until you provide a channel through which it can flow. YOU are the fixture, but like the lamp you will remain forever dark and useless unless you plug into the source of the power.

There is a simple breathing exercise which can help you to “plug in” to this power. Persons in severe pain have regained comfort within minutes by employing this simple exercise which will not only help to ease the body, but will expand the spiritual consciousness as well.

THIS IS THE EXERCISE: Lie fiat on the back or sit in a chair with spine perfectly straight. Relax For the moment, put out of your mind everything but the thing you are doing. Take several breaths quickly Inhaling through the nostrils ... exhaling through the mouth. Then ... close the eyes easily¹⁴⁰¹⁴¹ with no feeling of tension and say silently trying to realize the truth of what you are saying:

“God, I know that Your presence is around and over me, and in every breath that I breath. Help me in feet the renewing stream of life in every cell in my body. Release me from all fear and pain ... fill me with Your warmth ... and light ... and love ... as ... I ... breath”.

Now take a deep, deep breath mentally directing it to the painful part of your body WATCH IT ... CONCENTRATE ON IT ... sending that God-filled life renewing

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“There is No Hopeless Disease in a Hopeful Body.”

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¹⁴⁰ 8

“There is No Hopeless Disease in a Hopeful Body.”

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air directly to the part or condition you wish to control Then ... breathe out ... and repeat ... again ... again ... and again.

After the first few breaths you will feel a gentle relaxation in the area then a wonderful, glowing sensation of warmth, and gradually a diminishing awareness of pain. You will become comfortable ... and happy ... there will be a feeling of weightlessness about your body.

Frequently you will drop off to sleep at this point to waken later relaxed and at ease. Do not fight sleep but neither should you worry if it does not follow. The whole secret is non-resistance, and complete yielding to the life-force flowing over and about and into the secret places of your being. Nothing can hinder if except your own lack of receptiveness, for this power is always and instantly available.

— Reprinted by permission of Edna Kaehele, "Fear Fighters", Columbus, Ohio.

Edna Kaehele
42 West 3rd. Ave.
Columbus, 1, Ohio

June 5, 1960

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Kenneth Hurst
Hawthorne Books Inc.
70 Fifth Avenue
New York, 11, N.Y.

Dear Mr Hurst:

You will think that I've forgotten about the address I was to have found for you. Unhappily I have thought each day that it would turn up, so have waited to write until I had it. Every lead has been tried, with no success. The best I've managed is to learn that as of six months ago, Dr Koch was still in Rio de Janeiro. So if your friend would find it convenient to visit that city, it is probable that he could locate him through telephone or city directory. His full name is William Frederick Koch, and he is an M.D.

In some notes I made several years ago while talking with Dr Koch's brother, I find this description of the Koch theory as he gave it to me. "The normal human body is free of disease, but our way of living, food, foul air and other conditions afflict the body adversely intoxicating and poisoning the system. The body's own oxidation mechanism tends to burn up these toxins, preventing them from doing too much

¹⁴² The original editor marked the word "copy" by hand in the right margin

damage, but when the accumulation is too great it impedes the oxidation process (or something happens to upset this process) and the poisons that remain in the system cause the reaction we call disease. The form it takes varies in different people, depending on inherent or acquired weakness. One man develops t.b., another polio, another cancer, etc. although the cause is the same and the cure (if it is cured) will be the same, namely restoration of the functioning of the oxidation mechanism, so the accumulated toxins can be destroyed. The Koch treatment consists of a cleansing regime to eliminate poisons rapidly, to stimulate the function of the liver, and a diet to assist in this work. At the same time the patient is given an injection of the Koch serum (Elyoxylide) which acts as a catalyst, to step up the work of the oxidation mechanism, so that natural immunity is restored. As this takes place, the disease leaves the body since it cannot exist in a body that is functioning as it should."

I am sure that the same thing can be done by means of certain breathing exercises, rightly understood prayer therapy, and perhaps other means I am not yet familiar with, but I KNOW it can be done by the Koch treatment when properly used.

I sincerely hope that your friend will make every effort to find Dr Koch. My thoughts go with him.

By now perhaps you have seen Mrs Hutzler, so know that we met at last. She is much prettier and certainly less fearsome than I had anticipated. I found her interesting.

Thank you once more for a delightful evening while I was in your city. But how could you be so modest about your relationship to Dr Brunton? Frances told me about it. I admire your reticence. If I were fortunate enough to even meet the man I'd probably stop strangers on the street to tell them about it.

Anyway I'm glad that we met and I'm glad that I was glad before I discussed it with Frances. Bless you for being.

McGraw-Hill has been very silent on the subject of SECOND WIND. I'm not sure if that is good or bad. More likely, neither one, it probably merely indicates that it is lying somewhere in a stack of unread mss. Waiting its turn. I contain myself in patience, however; feeling sure that if there are readers for it, there will; somewhere, be a publisher for it.

If I can find a leaflet I have, I'll enclose it in this letter. Some of the material in it was also used in the SECOND WIND mss., but you might want to send it on to the friend in South America. If he is in pain, the exercise in it will relieve it. That much I have seen proven on more than one occasion. I remember especially a woman with cancer of the liver and another with migraine headache both conditions having refused to yield to medication, but in both cases, fifteen minutes of relaxation and breathing rid them of all

pain.

My very best wishes and kindest thoughts are with you,

Sincerely,

Edna Kaehele

CENTRE¹⁴³ VEDANTIQUE RAMAKRICHNA

BOULEVARD VICTOR HUGO, GRETZ (S. & M.), FRANCE * TELEPHONE: 311 A TOURNAN (S. & M)

Bulletin des activités culturelles

no9 - Mai 1956

Dr Hubert Benoit

BOUDDHA ET L'INTUITION DE L'UNIVERSEL

On sait comment débuta, chez Bouddha, la recherche de la Réalisation. Bouddha était aussi heureux qu'un homme peut l'être dans son état habituel d'évolution et la fragilité de son bonheur ne lui était pas encore apparue lorsque, sortant un jour de son palais, et de son rêve, il rencontra la misère, la maladie et la mort. Cette révélation de l'impermanence des joies humaines brisa son "bonheur", c'est-à-dire l'illusion d'immuabilité, de stabilité, qui avait jusqu'alors coloré ses joies. Il résolut de conquérir le bonheur véritable et sa pensée s'attacha uniquement à la solution de ce problème.

Il est intéressant de comprendre que toute la recherche de Bouddha s'est développée non pas dans la perspective objective d'un devoir à remplir, mais dans celle subjective du bonheur individuel à trouver. Bouddha était un homme intelligent au sens le plus profond du terme, c'est-à-dire doué d'une pénétrante intuition de l'universel. Il était évident pour lui que toutes les choses manifestaient également la perfection cosmique et qu'elles étaient donc absolument, c'est-à-dire d'un point de vue cosmique, parfaites. Tout est parfait dans le monde parfait; la stabilité immuable de l'équilibre cosmique manifeste l'Infini, et tous ces tourbillons d'énergie que sont "les dix mille choses" sont d'égale valeur en tant qu'ils manifestent le jeu éternel de cette énergie. Aussi tout ce qui arrive est-il rigoureusement équivalent; le simple fait qu'un événement se produise, que le cosmos se manifeste par lui, est sa parfaite légitimation.

Cette égalité de toutes choses dans la perfection était, pour Bouddha, une évidence intellectuelle si claire, un axiome si certain que son enseignement pouvait en

découler sans avoir même à le dire. Tout l'Orient est profondément conscient de la perfection universelle objective. Un enseignement destiné à des Hindous n'a pas à énoncer ce point; il peut le tenir pour acquis et se fonder solidement sur lui de façon implicite.

Mais¹⁴⁴ il n'en va pas de même pour nous Occidentaux. Ce que Bouddha n'a pas eu à dire, cette foi sous - jacente qui donne à son message sa véritable tonalité, nous devons la formuler nettement si nous voulons comprendre l'attitude efficace dans la recherche de la Réalisation.

L'Univers, en soi, est parfait et tout ce qui s'y trouve participe de cette perfection. Il n'y a donc aucune importance objective à ce que j'obtienne la Réalisation ou non. Il est objectivement indifférent que je vive d'une façon ou d'une autre, que ma vie tende vers ceci ou cela, qu'elle aboutisse ici ou là. Certains Occidentaux ont dit: "Le Bouddhisme n'est pas une religion mais une morale". En réalité, le Bouddhisme n'est ni une religion ni une morale. Bouddha savait que rien ne peut se produire qui ne soit absolument en règle avec les lois de la perfection universelle. Un acte objectivement "mauvais", c'est-à-dire contraire au Cosmos, est inconcevable puisque rien n'existe en dehors du Cosmos et de sa volonté.

L'enseignement de Bouddha s'exprime dans une prospective uniquement subjective. Il nous montre que la façon dont nous nous y prenons pour chercher le bonheur est erronée. Il ne nous fait pas un devoir de nous y prendre autrement car il ne nous fait pas un devoir de trouver le bonheur. Les obligations dont il nous parle ne sont pas absolues mais relatives, conditionnelles; il nous dit ce que nous devons faire et ne pas faire si nous voulons an finir avec la souffrance. Quand il constate que "tout est souffrance", il ne dit pas que cet état de choses soit "mal" absolument, qu'il doive être modifié. Il nous dit seulement que cela peut être modifié et il s'offre à nous y aider.

Bouddha a montré les fondements illusoires de la souffrance. Ce mal apparemment réel n'est pas réel. Il n'est donc pas nécessaire de remédier à cette irréalité. Mais puisque, dans notre état de développement imparfait, nous avons la douloureuse impression de la réalité de notre souffrance, puisque nous ne pouvons pas nous empêcher d'y chercher un remède, autant vaut le chercher d'une manière efficace. C'est tout. La nécessité d'une telle recherche est purement subjective. Chacun de nous a intérêt à travailler à la Réalisation. Intérêt pour soi - même. Et cela suffit.

Si j'ai l'intuition métaphysique claire de l'égalité de ce bien et de ce mal que mon affectivité oppose à tort, tout ce que je viens de dire est évident et je dois faire un effort pour comprendre l'erreur occidentale sur la Réalisation. L'Occidental est en général

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peu doué pour l'intuition de l'universel. Il a bien l'intuition de l'Un dans le Multiple mais cette distinction aboutit chez lui à une scission où s'opposent "Dieu" et "la Création". Il ne voit pas que le Principe du Cosmos et le Cosmos manifesté sont seulement deux aspects d'une unique Réalité dans le prisme de notre mental. Il dit bien que "Dieu" est immanent en même temps que transcendant mais, en fait, il ne conçoit "Dieu" que transcendant, distinct de sa création qui tourbillonne au-dessous de lui. Il taxe précisément les conceptions orientales de "panthéisme" parce qu'elles ne relèguent pas le Principe Absolu à part de sa Manifestation.

Lorsqu'il¹⁴⁵ considère le monde des phénomènes, il répudie la métaphysique. Le "point de vue de Sirius", selon son expression, le rend méfiant et ironique. "Tout cela est très joli, se dit-il, mais nous vivons sur la Terre". Sa vision subjective est, pour lui, "réelle"; il centre sa représentation du monde sur son appréciation des choses, c'est-à-dire sur son affectivité. Faute d'intuition de l'universel, il édifie des constructions intellectuelles où il "universalise" sa vision ego-centrée. Sentant les choses comme bonnes ou mauvaises pour lui (c'est-à-dire constructives ou destructives envers son individu ou telles choses auxquelles il s'identifie), il saute aux notions de Bien et de Mal universalisées; il voit de l'ordre et du désordre dans le Monde; il voit des choses qui participent à l'harmonie universelle et d'autres qui perturbent cette harmonie. L'Univers devient ainsi un gigantesque champ de bataille où se rencontrent des forces favorables et défavorables à la durée universelle. Duel angoissant où se mesurent la Lumière et les Ténèbres. Dans cette déchirante cosmologie, le besoin individuel de persévérer dans l'existence se traduit par l'idée qu'il faut que les forces de l'ordre cosmique triomphent et empêchent la catastrophe. On sait par exemple l'angoisse de beaucoup d'esprits à l'idée qu'une éventuelle maladresse des savants atomistes pourrait déclencher l'explosion de la Terre. "Ce sersit la fin du Monde!" s'écrient-ils épouvantés. L'emploi du mot "Monde" pour le mot "Terre" est significatif: l'homme se confond avec la planète sur laquelle il vit et il confond ensuite cette planète avec le Cosmos. (En réalité l'explosion de la Terre serait un tout petit incident dans le Cosmos, incident qui d'ailleurs ferait partie de l'équilibre éternel de l'Univers et constituerait un chaînon dans la chaîne infinie de l'Ordre Cosmique.)

Selon cette perspective, mes actions revêtent soudain une importance absolue puisqu'elles peuvent aider les forces d'ordre ou celles de désordre et influencer ainsi sur le destin cosmique. Je me vois appelé par "Dieu" l'Ordonnateur Cosmique, à collaborer avec lui contre les Ténèbres. D'où une Morale absolue: mes actes sont bons ou mauvais en eux-mêmes selon qu'ils servent la volonté de "Dieu" ou qu'ils la contrecarrent. Cette vision est évidemment très flatteuse puisqu'elle me hausse, en tant qu'individu, au niveau de "Dieu" lui-même, mais elle me charge d'une terrible responsabilité.

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D'autre part, en vertu de l'analogie existant entre le macrocosme et le microcosme, la conception d'un Bien et d'un Mal objectifs engendre en moi l'idée que ma propre évolution peut aller dans un bon sens ou dans un mauvais, objectivement parlant, et que par conséquent je dois travailler à évoluer bien. Quand nous regardons un jeune animal, nous pensons qu'il est fait pour se développer, pour s'épanouir le plus complètement possible, pour accomplir les actions correspondant à sa nature, pour procréer des créatures semblables à lui, etc... En réalité cet animal, comme toute chose, n'a pas d'autre but que la manifestation cosmique et il pourra réaliser ce but aussi bien dans une mort prématurée que dans l'épanouissement que j'ai rêvé pour lui. Du point de vue cosmique qui est le point de vue réel, l'avortement vaut l'épanouissement; comme le dit la sagesse populaire, "il faut de tout pour faire un monde". De même si je pense à l'homme et en particulier à moi-même, j'ai l'impression que cette créature est faite pour le bonheur parfait, pour la Réalisation, puisqu'elle n'aura de cesse qu'elle n'y soit parvenue. C'est vrai subjectivement mais ce ne l'est pas du tout¹⁴⁶ objectivement; le fait qu'un homme meure sans avoir obtenu la Réalisation s'inscrit, comme tout autre, dans l'ordre infini du Cosmos. J'ai intérêt à en finir avec la souffrance, mais peu importe en soi que j'y parvienne ou non.

En somme, la Réalisation peut être conçue dans une perspective superstitieuse impliquant une "Divinité" quelconque qui veut que j'obtienne cette Réalisation, ou dans une perspective libre où je n'ai aucun devoir. Cette dernière perspective est celle où se sont développées la recherche et la doctrine de Bouddha. L'attitude de Bouddha n'a jamais été soumise; en cherchant la Réalisation, il n'a suivi que sa propre volonté. Dès qu'il vit la fragilité du bonheur qu'il avait connu jusque-là, il voulut le bonheur parfait. Pour y parvenir, il utilisa tout d'abord la philosophie; voyant que la philosophie échouait, il la rejeta et s'adressa à l'ascèse; après échec, il rejeta aussi l'ascèse. Il comprit qu'aucune des disciplines proposées ne le mènerait à son but et c'est alors qu'il s'assit sous l'arbre de la boddhi, bien décidé à y demeurer jusqu'à la Réalisation. Une telle décision traduit une volonté personnelle farouche, audacieuse, révoltée contre l'asservissement. Il est évident que Bouddha ne s'est nullement installé sous l'arbre de la boddhi avec l'idée d'accomplir un devoir mais avec celle de réaliser une volonté.

Cette compréhension de l'attitude intérieure de Bouddha nous est nécessaire si nous voulons, nous aussi, échapper un jour à notre souffrance. En effet les croyances faussement objectives qui nous présentent la dualité de l'existence comme un dualisme inconciliable sont précisément à la racine même de notre illusoire problème. Tant que nous croirons que nous devons nous libérer, que la Cosmos attend cela de nous, notre recherche nous enfermera dans une impasse. Le courage réel, seul efficace, ne consiste pas à subir la pression du devoir mais à rejeter cette béquille rassurante et à assumer notre liberté.

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DISCIPLINE TOTALE

(Réponse à une question posée - "qu'entendez-vous par discipline totale?" - à propos du commentaire sur le verset XIII, 2 de la Gita. Voir Bulletin no6, page 4.)

L'ignorance ne se dissipe pas progressivement, et il n'existe pas entre l'erreur et la vérité quelque situation intermédiaire. Quant au moyen de parvenir à la vérité, la Gita l'enseigne dans le verset XIII, II: "S'efforcer constamment de connaître le Soi, garder présent en son esprit l'ultime objet de la recherche, cela même est connaissance, tout ce qui s'y oppose est ignorance". Çamkara ajoute que cette consécration à la recherche "est appelée connaissance parce qu'elle conduit à la connaissance".

La discipline totale réside donc en ceci: qu'un esprit hostile à tout compromis s'applique sans cesse à concevoir le but de ses efforts. Cette¹⁴⁷ démarche ne procède pas d'une attitude mentale, mais d'une intuition intérieure, à laquelle on devra très fermement adhérer. Il ne saurait y avoir ici de demi-mesure.

Sri Krichna toutefois propose une discipline du mental (Gita, VI, 34-35): "En vérité, le mental est turbulent, impétueux, rebelle; l'assujettir exige un effort aussi grand que si l'on tentait d'arrêter le vent ... Mais par le moyen d'une constante pratique, par l'indifférence pour les objets désirables, il est possible de le maîtriser". On peut observer que ce contrôle est progressif, étant une opération du mental. Une partie de la force psychique domine et régit les autres parties, qui se portaient naturellement vers l'extérieur, vers les objets des sens. Voilà donc une lutte; le chercheur va s'efforcer de vaincre ses tendances en les soumettant à une discipline. Il n'y a pas de tels conflits dans la discipline totale; la question est ici sur un tout autre plan. Sans doute il peut sembler que l'intuition métaphysique dont nous parlons prend sa source dans le mental, mais ce n'est qu'une apparence. Une investigation sérieuse nous assure que cette intuition est intemporelle, qu'elle ne peut dépendre du mental.

Il est vrai que le mot "discipline" implique un contrôle du mental, en même temps qu'une idée de progression. Mais nous y ajoutons le mot "totale": non pas pour proposer une totalisation des différentes formes de disciplines, mais la compréhension immédiate de la totalité même. Il n'est plus ici question de considérer la Réalité selon différents points de vue; elle n'est pas l'addition d'unités plus ou moins indépendantes. Il arrive assez souvent que nous utilisions des expressions de ce genre, où deux termes

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qui s'opposent peuvent suggérer la Réalité. Rien de plus contradictoire que les notions de "totalité" et de "discipline"; et de même parlons-nous d' "asparça-yoga", bien que le sens d' "asparça" (le non-contact) soit incompatible avec celui de "yoga" (l'union). Cependant les deux termes ensemble éveillent en nous une intuition - et cette intuition ne procède pas du mental, elle est immédiate et non pas progressive. Notre erreur disparaît et la vérité vient. Ce passage de l'erreur à la vérité, cette succession dans le temps n'est d'ailleurs qu'une apparence. Puisque la vision des choses se trouve entièrement modifiée, puisque la réalité acquiert une nouvelle dimension, notre langage ne peut pénétrer dans ce domaine pour le décrire. Nous n'avons plus d'autre ressource, pour tenter d'indiquer le Réel, que d'associer certains mots qui d'ordinaire ne peuvent l'être.

Il ne s'agit plus, dans la "discipline totale", de progression, car nous abordons le problème d'une manière fondamentalement différente. Mais on voit, dans la tradition indienne, que la "gymnastique mentale" de la discipline n'est pas pour autant négligée, Et cependant que les textes affirment que l'achèvement de la discipline est l'abandon de tous les efforts, ils confirment que l'on ne peut quitter ces efforts sans tout d'abord les avoir faits. Qu'il s'agisse du plan biologique ou psychologique, il est dans la nature humaine de lutter et de s'affirmer; celui qui renoncerait à tout effort cesserait de vivre. Sur le plan dualiste, l'homme est un être organisé pour la lutte, mais cette tension est finalement dépassée lorsqu'il atteint la plus haute compréhension, la connaissance infuse.

Le commentaire du Swâmi Siddheswarânanda sur la Gita (verset II, 16), dont l'introduction avait paru dans le Bulletin no7, sera publié le mois prochain, avec la traduction du commentaire de Çamkara sur ce verset.

D.T. Suzuki¹⁴⁸

LA "NATURE-DE-BOUDDHA"

(Tandis que le monde bouddhiste fête solennellement le 25ème Centenaire de la Réalisation de Gautama Bouddha, il nous a paru intéressant de traduire un exposé que le Professeur D.T. Suzuki, un des Maîtres les plus qualifiés du Bouddhisme, prononça lors de son passage au Centre Védântique en août 1953).

Swâmi Siddheswarânanda: Quelle différence faites-vous entre le satori-état et le satori-événement? Nous sommes toujours en Brahman - ce que vous exprimez en disant que nous avons toujours la nature-de-Bouddha. Comment se fait-il, selon vous, que le disciple obtienne l'illumination un jour donné?

Professeur Suzuki: Si vous me demandez d'expliquer ce que vous appelez 'satori-événement' et que vous faites une distinction entre satori-état et satori-événement,⁽¹⁾ je dirai ceci: chacun de nous sans exception, tout être humain et même tout être conscient, tout être sensible est dans le satori. Nous sommes tous en lui, mais il nous manque de le savoir. Nous n'avons pas conscience de l'air qui recouvre la terre; mais quand le vent souffle, le mouvement de l'air nous rend sensible sa présence dont nous n'étions pas conscients auparavant parce qu'il était immobile et en repos. Ce courant, cette secousse, c'est le satori-événement, si je peux ainsi m'exprimer. Lorsque toute chose est en repos, nous sommes dans l'état de satori. Mais un mouvement mental particulier produit le satori-événement. Ce n'est pas un événement ordinaire. Il peut arriver à quelqu'un en certaine occasion, mais une préparation est nécessaire.

Prenons un exemple dans la vie de Bouddha. Il laissa ses désirs terrestres, s'en alla dans la forêt et y étudia la philosophie sous les plus éminents professeurs de l'époque. Mais ses études étaient intellectuelles, entreprises avec la raison, et ce travail ne lui donna pas une intime conviction de la présence de la Réalité. Aussi ne fut-il pas satisfait entièrement des discussions philosophiques. Il se retira à nouveau dans la forêt pour y pratiquer des mortifications ascétiques. Il pensait en effet: quand nous sommes attachés aux exigences du corps, notre mental est distrait de son but et la confusion dans laquelle il se trouve le rend incapable de réaliser son propos. Aussi tenta-t-il de réduire à l'extrême ses besoins physiques; il s'accorda peu de sommeil, peu de nourriture et resta assis immobile pendant d'interminables méditations. Mais il ne fut pas davantage satisfait parce que, si ses besoins physiques diminuaient progressivement, sa force s'en allait à proportion; il ne pouvait plus se lever de son siège tant il était épuisé. C'est en vie que l'homme atteindra la Réalisation et la pleine satisfaction; c'est pourquoi la vie doit être conservée forte, et cela n'est pas possible si l'on réduit les besoins vitaux.¹⁴⁹ Il reprit donc de la nourriture. Mais son aspiration à atteindre quelque chose demeurait. Il ne savait pas ce que c'était, sinon une soif intérieure. La recherche intellectuelle s'avérait insuffisante, les pratiques ascétiques également. Mais la soif était là. Il sentait une inquiétude très profonde que la démarche intellectuelle ni la discipline ascétique ne réussiraient à apaiser. Il ne savait que faire. Il ne lui restait plus rien à tenter. Il abandonna la recherche intellectuelle où s'exerce le jeu du sujet et de l'objet, cette division qui ne peut aucunement engendrer un état de paix mentale. Si nous nous efforçons d'être moralement parfaits, nous mettons d'un côté quelqu'un qui désire une perfection morale, et de l'autre la perfection elle-même. Or, elle ne peut être atteinte car lorsque nous atteignons un certain degré de perfection morale, ce degré implique un degré supérieur vers une plus haute perfection. Nous ne

⁽¹⁾ Le Bouddhisme Zen appelle "satori" la Réalisation; le terme "satori-état" exprime que nous sommes toujours dans la Réalité, quoi que nous fassions, et que rien ne nous fait défaut - mais nous n'en prenons conscience que par le "satori-événement". (Cf Dr Hubert Benoit, "La Doctrine Suprême", tome II, chap. 7)

serons jamais parfaits. L'idéal ne peut être réalisé aussi longtemps qu'un chercheur de perfection et une perfection demeurent séparés. La division de la Réalité en deux termes opposés, sujet et objet, celui qui pense à une chose et la chose elle-même, celui qui pose une question et la question, cette division, tant qu'elle dure, empêche toute possibilité de Réalisation.

Mais, bien entendu, tout ceci est un raisonnement. Or Bouddha ne raisonnait pas; il ressentait simplement une exigence intérieure dont il ignorait la nature. Il n'avait plus d'espoir. "Où il n'y a plus d'espoir, c'est l'occasion de Dieu" disent les Chrétiens. Les Chrétiens séparent Dieu et l'homme; ils parlent donc de l'absence d'espoir et de l'occasion de Dieu, mais dans la manière orientale d'envisager les choses nous ne considérons pas le monde des phénomènes. Bouddha n'avait d'ailleurs pas de temps à perdre dans de telles spéculations. Il était simplement assoiffé et cette soif ne trouvait aucun apaisement. Quand cet état arrive, on sort de la conscience ordinaire et de la relativité. Bouddha fut si occupé de cette soif impérative qu'il se perdit lui-même dans sa recherche et qu'il devint recherche. Elle n'était plus séparée de lui en aucune façon. Il ne ressentait plus une soif intérieure; il n'avait plus le désir d'apaiser la soif; c'est pourquoi il devint UN avec la soif. Ce qu'il pensait était lui-même et non pas sa pensée.

Naturellement, il ne formulait pas tout ce que je dis; c'est moi qui commente et interprète ainsi. Lorsque cet état de conscience arrive, la pensée parvient à une uniformité, à un équilibre, ou plus exactement à une identité de nature. Le mot équilibre suppose la pluralité des choses, et leur harmonie; mais dans le cas du Bouddha il ne faut pas comprendre équilibre dans ce sens. Equilibre est identité de nature. 'Identification' ne convient pas non plus, si nous voulons dire par là que les choses s'identifient à autre chose. Pour le Bouddha, aucune distinction n'existait entre ce qui cherche et l'objet de la recherche. Il était immergé dans un état d'identité absolue. (En utilisant les termes 'uniformité de pensée', 'parfaite tranquillisation mentale', ou 'état de sambhodī', nous donnons une explication psychologique.) Mais il doit y avoir un certain événement, le satori, pour que soit réalisé cet état. Ainsi, bien que l'état d'identification soit en chacun de nous, un éveil doit se produire -un mouvement particulier qui est le satori-événement ou satori-expérience. Et lorsqu'il a lieu, nous savons par nous-même que nous sommes dans l'état de satori. C'est pourquoi l'on raconte que lorsque Bouddha fit cette expérience, il exprima son émerveillement que toutes choses soient en possession de la nature-de-Bouddha - toutes choses, non seulement les êtres sensibles mais aussi les¹⁵⁰ pierres et tous les objets du monde sans rien excepter. Ils sont donc tous le Bouddha, mais ils n'en sont pas conscients. Ils ont besoin du satori-événement pour devenir conscients de ce fait.

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Un moine demanda à un Maître: "Suis-je en possession de la nature-de-Bouddha?" Le Maître répondit: "Non, vous ne l'êtes pas". Le moine questionna: "J'ai entendu dire que toutes choses sont en possession de la nature-de-Bouddha ... Pourquoi pas moi?" Le Maître répéta: "Les insectes, les animaux, les plantes, les pierres, tous ont la nature-de-Bouddha - et vous non". Alors le moine-disciple s'inquiéta: "Pourquoi pas moi?" Et le Maître répondit: "Parce que vous posez la question". La question montrait que le moine ne savait pas consciemment qu'il était en pleine possession de la nature-de-Bouddha. Cette conscience, cet éveil est l'événement le plus important qui puisse arriver, et il n'arrive qu'à l'homme. Aussi disons-nous que toutes choses, y compris la matière, sont en possession de nature-de-Bouddha, mais qu'il faut devenir un homme pour le réaliser.

Swâmi Nityabodhânanda

BOUDDHA - LE TATHAGATA

Alors qu'il recherchait la Réalisation et l'extinction de la souffrance, Bouddha découvrit la loi selon laquelle les choses de ce monde se produisent par elles-mêmes. Par une nécessité qui leur est inhérente, les objets-et par objets il faut entendre également le mental, la pensée de l'homme-passent successivement d'un état à un autre, de A à B, de B à C, et ainsi à l'infini sans l'intervention de personne.

L'ego de l'homme, au même titre que toute autre chose, est assujéti à ce mouvement et participe de la nature de tout le reste. Mais au lieu de considérer son ego en toute objectivité, comme il le devrait, l'homme le saisit et le revendique comme sa propriété personnelle. De plus, il associe à cet ego un certain nombre d'objets et il pense que ces objets et cet ego constituent sa "personnalité". Bien que le monde continue de changer selon la loi qui lui est propre, l'homme pense qu'au sein de ces changements il est un instrument permanent et indispensable; il tisse l'écheveau de sa personnalité en la mêlant d'une façon inextricable à celle de changements. C'est ainsi, enseigne Bouddha, que commence le drame de la vie.

Quand l'homme a "confectionné" sa personnalité à l'aide de sa volonté, il accorde une valeur particulière aux objets qui se présentent sous tel ou tel état, il établit des différences entre un état et un autre selon ses prédilections et ses besoins. Par exemple, il appelle "cause" cette condition-ci et "effet" celle-là, bien que la condition de l'objet ne soit qu'un moment dans une succession indéfinie de changements. Pour l'homme, tel changement est "la naissance", tel autre est "la mort", il se réjouit de l'un et s'afflige de l'autre. Cette réaction ne se justifie absolument pas du point de ce qui change. L'homme ajoute ainsi des éléments nouveaux- ses émotions, ses chagrins, ses joies et ses souffrances-parce qu'il s'identifie avec "les choses de ce monde" et leur

attribue des valeurs. Joies et souffrances ne sont en définitive rien¹⁵¹ d'autre que des biens de consommation propres à l'homme, des produits d'importation. Mais ils n'ont en fait aucune réalité en dehors de celle qu'il leur donne.

La doctrine de Bouddha sur le Non-ego (anatma) ne signifie pas que l'ego n'existe pas. Bouddha attend seulement de l'homme qu'il traite cet ego comme n'importe quelle autre chose de ce monde, afin de ne pas s'identifier à leur présentation passagère. Cette fausse identification est due à l'ignorance. Non pas que l'ignorance et l'identification soient deux choses séparées, deux événements dans le temps. Ils sont une seule et même chose. Ignorance et identification s'évanouissent ensemble; quand cesse l'ignorance, valeurs et concepts disparaissent, et en même temps disparaît la souffrance. Car si le processus mental prend fin, les choses sont vues telles qu'elles sont - dans leur tathata.

Lorsqu'on demanda au Bouddha ce que signifiait l'expression "les choses telles qu'elles sont", il répondit: "sunyata"- la Vacuité. Par Vacuité il voulait indiquer l'aspect plus profond des choses. Car indépendamment du flux perpétuel des objets et des valeurs qui leur sont attribuées, il existe une réalité plus profonde. Mais cette réalité, considérée selon nos jugements de valeurs, apparaît comme un vide, une absence. En fait, cette Vacuité est la Réalité même des choses. Par exemple, si l'on nous demande ce qu'est une vache, nous répondrons que c'est un animal domestique, un animal qui nous donne du lait, etc. Mais si l'on demandait au Bouddha ce qu'est une vache, il répondrait "la vache EST". Cette affirmation, "la vache EST", s'efforce d'exprimer la Vacuité de l'être, de la vache telle qu'elle est. Toutefois, la nature propre de la vache est bien plus que cela; elle ne peut être ni exprimée ni inférée par des mots. Aussi Bouddha parle de Vacuité. Tout ce que l'on peut dire de la Réalité en soi, c'est qu'elle se situe au delà des concepts, au delà des valeurs, au delà même de la pensée. Ajoutons que parce qu'elle est essentiellement la Vacuité, cette Réalité insaisissable, la vache peut être considérée sous divers aspects et elle est pour les uns un animal domestique, et pour d'autres du bétail destiné à la boucherie. Comme l'a dit un éminent Bouddhiste: c'est parce que toutes les choses sont de la nature de la Vacuité que tout est possible. Sans la Vacuité, rien au monde ne serait possible.

Il ne faut pas en conclure que la nature propre diffère d'une chose à l'autre, qu'il y a par exemple la nature propre de la vache, la nature propre de l'homme, etc. La Réalité est une et indivisible. Les dix mille choses, de la pierre au Bouddha, participent de cette même Réalité - tathata. Aussi appelle-t-on Bouddha le Tathagata: celui qui a réalisé la nature des choses telles qu'elles sont. Lors qu'il abandonna tout effort vers une Réalisation, lorsque tous ses concepts eurent disparu, lorsque Bouddha oublia qu'il

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était un homme à la recherche de la Lumière et que rien ne demeura plus qu'une recherche, Bouddha devint cette Vacuité. La Réalité telle qu'elle est, c'est l'absence de tout effort, une détente absolue.

Il s'agit là d'une Réalisation intemporelle. Bouddha a souvent dit que son enseignement était La Voie. En disant La Voie, et non pas une voie, il voulait nous faire comprendre que c'est une voie sans but, sans finalité. Le Bouddhisme est la Voie sans But. Seuls les faibles et les hésitants recherchent un aboutissement ou une finalité. Les audacieux vont sans se préoccuper d'un accomplissement.

CONFERENCES¹⁵² ET RENCONTRES D'AVRIL:

Nul ne pouvait, mieux que le professeur Félicien Challaye, composer un portrait véridique d'Henri Bergson, en représenter les travaux avec plus d'autorité et de clarté. Appartenant au cercle intime des disciples auxquels l'illustre philosophe avait confié le soin de défendre l'intégrité de sa pensée, Mr Challaye a exposé quelques vues et rapporté quelques souvenirs de manière fort vivante. (dimanche 1er Avril)

Le vendredi 6, Mr Kameshwar Sahai, représentant de l'Inde à Commission Atomique, a expliqué les dernières hypothèses de la physique nucléaire.

Mr J. Palmé, de retour de l'Inde, a donné ses impressions de voyage le dimanche 15 avril-avant-propos à la prochaine séance cinématographique consacrée aux films qu'il a rapportés.

Le même jour, Mr Vilayat Khan parla de la mystique soufie, et son exposé témoigna d'une compréhension qui est tout autre chose qu'une simple connaissance des textes et du sujet. Il mit en évidence l'efficacité de la méditation et des méthodes selon lesquelles les soufis s'y appliquent.

Le Swâmi Madhavânanda, Secrétaire Général de l'Ordre de Râmakrichna, et le Swâmi Nirvanânanda, qui revenaient des Etats-Unis sont demeurés quelques jours à Gretz avant de retourner en Inde. Ayant connu très intimement des disciples directs de Sri Râmakrichna, ils ont évoqué des traits de leur caractère et des anecdotes de leur vie, après que Swâmi Madhavânanda eut rappelé les points les plus remarquables du Védânta. (dimanche 22)

Le dimanche 29, Mr J.L. Jazarin traita de la Mythologie et du contraste classique qui oppose la rationnel à l'irrationnel - ce dernier étant le plus souvent tenu à l'écart par les esprits sérieux. Mr Jazarin réfuta cette antithèse que nous trouvons établie en nous, avant toute réflexion, comme si elle représentait une relation réelle entre deux notions

bien définies. Il montra la valeur trop négligée des Mythes, et comment le rationnel et l'irrationnel doivent se pénétrer l'un l'autre pour conduire à une vue plus juste.

CONFERENCES DE JUIN:

| | | |
|-------------|---|--|
| dimanche 3 | La Prière du Coeur, | par le <u>Père Kovalewsky</u> , Archiprêtre de l'Eglise Orthodoxe |
| dimanche 10 | Pratiques spirituelles | par le <u>Swâmi Nityabodhânanda</u> |
| dimanche 17 | Méditations sur la Gita | par <u>Mr J.L. Jazarin</u> |
| dimanche 24 | Représentation du "Cerf Dore", d' <u>Yvonne Vineuil</u> , pièce inspirée d'un épisode du Râmâyana (ce spectacle commencera vers 17h.) | |

Le Swâmi Nityabodhânanda parle également chaque dimanche, à 20 heures, sur la Bhagavad-Gita et la Pança Daçi de Vidyâranya.

Naren - J. Londe - fera une conférence à la Sté Théosophique (4, Square Rapp, Paris, VII) le jeudi 7 juin à 20h. 30, sur le Viveka Çuda Mani.

Le "Bulletin des Activités Culturelles" du Centre Védantique Râmakrichna paraît mensuellement. (Abonnement annuel, envoi compris: 1000 FR-le numéro: 100 FR. CCP: "Association CVR, Paris 8885-31)

CENTRE¹⁵³ VEDANTIQUE RAMAKRICHNA

BOULEVARD VICTOR HUGO GRETZ (5., & M.), FRANCE* TELEPHONE 311 A TOURNAN (5., & M.)

Bulletin des activités culturelles

no8-Avril 1956

120 ème anniversaire de SRI RAMAKRICHNA

"Voici le message de Sri Râmakrichna au monde moderne: 'Ne vous préoccupez pas des doctrines, ne vous préoccupez pas des dogmes, des sectes, des églises et des temples; ils ne sont que peu de chose, comparés à l'essence de chaque homme, qui est la spiritualité; plus celle-ci est développée dans l'homme, plus il a de puissance pour le bien. Gagnez d'abord cette spiritualité et ne critiquez personne, car toutes les doctrines et toutes les croyances renferment quelque vérité. Montrez par votre vie que la religion ne signifie pas des mots, des sectes et des noms, mais qu'elle signifie réalisation

spirituelle’.

“Sri Râmakrichna voudrait vous voir renoncer pour l’amour de vos frères. Il voudrait vous voir ne plus parler de l’amour du prochain, mais vous mettre à l’œuvre pour justifier vos paroles ... Alors vous verrez l’harmonie des religions du monde. Mon Maître n’apporta de trouble dans aucune religion, parce qu’il avait compris qu’elles font toutes indissolublement partie de l’Unique religion éternelle.”

(Swâmi Vivekânanda)

Le dernier dimanche de mars, le Centre Védântique célébrait SRI RAMAKRICHNA

Le Swâmi Siddheswarânanda rendit d’abord hommage à la mémoire du Professeur Masson-Oursel, décédé récemment. L’intérêt et la sympathie que l’éminent Professeur ne cessait de témoigner pour les activités du Centre Védântique ses propres travaux à l’Institut de Civilisation indienne, l’initiative enfin qu’il prit de faire célébrer en Sorbonne le Centenaire de Sri Râmakrichna, tout le rendait cher au Swâmi, qui a exprimé sa gratitude et son respect pour ce grand ami de l’Inde.

Comment ne pas voir à présent que la venue de Sri Râmakrichna dans le monde moderne répondait à un profond besoin? Swâmi Vivekânanda en avait pris conscience lorsqu’il apporta à l’Occident l’enseignement de son Maître, et c’est la signification particulière de cet événement spirituel que les Swâmis Siddheswarânanda et Nityabodhânanda ont voulu mettre en évidence dans leurs exposés.

Swâmi¹⁵⁴ Siddheswarânanda

PRESENCE DE SRI RAMAKRICHNA EN OCCIDENT (Exposé du 25 mars 1956)

C’est mon frère vénéré, le Swâmi Yatiswarânanda, qui, invité à l’Institut de Civilisation indienne, célébrait en 1936 le Centenaire de Sri Râmakrichna. Alors est venue l’idée, qui peu de temps après devait se réaliser, de fonder le Centre Védântique Râmakrichna. Il est une réponse au désir de quelques Français de mieux connaître l’Inde et l’Orient.

... Neus pouvons transposer ici la question classique du Zen. S’adressant à Bodhidharma, le patriarche indien qui introduisit le Bouddhisme en chine, un disciple demanda: “Quelle est la signification de votre venue?” (La légende rapporte que, sans dire un mot, Bodhidharma posa une de ses sandales sur la tête et, traversant le Thibet et les Himalayas, il rentra en Inde). Si l’on nous pose la même question, nous dirons: “Nous sommes venus parce que nous avons été invités”.

Nous sommes à une époque, disait Swâmi Vivekânanda, où les hommes doivent se rencontrer, où nous ne devons plus vivre dans des compartiments étanches; il y a dans notre monde beaucoup de mouvements et d'échanges, mais le coeur de l'homme n'est pas encore unifié. Unifier le coeur de l'homme, avoir un point de vue universel sur les problèmes humains, tel est le sens profond de la venue de Sri Râmakrichna en Europe. Il n'est pas une volonté de convertir; non, il est là pour nous montrer que les hommes doivent avoir entre eux un contact sur un plan universel, et ne plus se contenter de leurs rapports partiels sur des plans de conscience particuliers.

Après la venue de Jésus, si l'Occident ne s'était pas attaché seulement au problème du Salut et aux formes extérieures de la religion, s'il avait porté toute son attention sur le Sermon sur la Montagne ou l'Épître de Saint Jacques - qui exposent la manière de vivre enseignée par Jésus-Christ - les guerres n'auraient pas pu exister.

... Sri Râmakrichna n'a voulu que la réunion des coeurs par le dépassement des petites distinctions non essentielles qui les séparent (rituels et cérémonies différentes). Ses disciples auraient commis une grande erreur en cherchant à introduire en Occident les moeurs et les coutumes indiennes. Les Croisades et les guerres de religion ne sont plus à craindre si l'union se fait sur une base universelle, qui est le coeur de l'homme. Sri Râmakrichna et Swâmi Vivekânanda n'ont pas du tout pensé à indianiser les moeurs des autres pays: restez européen; et puisque vous avez perdu tout contact avec votre ancienne mythologie, celtique ou gauloise, vous pourrez demeurer associés avec la Râmakrichna nous donne une grande catholicité de point de vue. Il nous permet de comprendre la manière de voir d'autrui, et c'est extrêmement important.

La base de cette attitude est mystique. Quand je parle de "vie mystique", je veux dire "vie intérieure", telle que l'ont décrite Sainte¹⁵⁵ Thérèse d'Avila dans le "Chemin de la Perfection" et Saint-Jean-de-la-Croix dans la "Montée du Carmel" et la "Nuit obscure". C'est la vraie spiritualité, et si nous avons la force de vivre ainsi spirituellement, nous voyons l'identité parfaite entre l'aspect mystique qu'apporte Sri Râmakrichna et celui de l'Occident chrétien. La mystique n'est pas une question de visions ou d'états d'âme, mais une philosophie vécue, 'a way of life'. Ceci dépasse la doctrine du Salut; il s'agit d'une complète transformation du caractère.

Sri Râmakrichna a montré que par de nombreuses portes on peut entrer dans la maison de Dieu, et que chaque chambre contient un autel au goût de celui qui y vit. Il n'y a pas d'aspect stéréotypé; la religion de l'avenir ne sera pas organisée par une société, elle ne sera pas liée à un ordre particulier; elle sera aussi diverse qu'il y a

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d'individus. La religion est une affaire tout à fait privée. Demande-t-on à quelqu'un combien il a en banque? A plus forte raison on ne doit pas demander à une personne quelles sont ses vues spirituelles; cela doit demeurer rigoureusement confidentiel.

Lorsque l'attitude d'un homme parfait nous convertit, nous avons le désir de faire de la propagande, de faire partager à autrui l'espoir qui est en nous. De même que les Chrétiens vivent dans l'espoir de la Parousie, beaucoup de fidèles de Sri Râmakrichna vivent dans l'espoir de la nouvelle venue de leur Maître; c'est du moins la croyance indienne, selon laquelle différentes Incarnations doivent se succéder, venir nous aider de temps à autre quand c'est nécessaire. Et Sri Râmakrichna aurait dit à ce propos: "quand je renaîtrai, personne ne me connaîtra". Cette fois-ci, le monde extérieur l'a connu; il était un spectacle mystique que bien des personnes de Calcutta venaient voir, parce qu'il avait la faculté d'entrer en samâdhi aussi souvent qu'il le voulait. Mais lorsqu'il reviendra, selon la Mythologie qui naît en ce moment autour de Sri Râmakrichna, il sera tout à fait inconnu; et en même temps il rayonnera de puissance spirituelle.

Son universalité mystique lui montrait l'égalité du coeur de l'homme. Pour lui, toutes les voies sont bonnes. La voie des primitifs, que nous considérons comme idolâtre, est aussi bonne et aussi forte que la voie qui fait que le prêtre s'agenouille devant le Saint Autel de sa religion. Le coeur de l'homme est aussi éclairé dans un cas que dans l'autre, et il n'y a pas de degrés dans cette manifestation de rites et de rituels. Tous possèdent la même valeur; mais c'est extrêmement difficile à accepter lorsqu'on vit sous l'influence d'une théologie particulière.

Nous donnerons également une autre interprétation de la venue de Sri Râmakrichna en Occident: nous n'atteindrons l'harmonie et l'unité entre nous que par une attitude extra-religieuse. La guerre d'idéologies est une continuation des guerres de religion. Nous ne comprenons pas le point de vue du voisin parce que nous ne pouvons pas faire abstraction de notre propre point de vue. Un jour, un employé du temple de Dakshineswar demanda à Sri Râmakrichna quel charme, ouel mantra il utilisait pour séduire toutes les grandes personnalités qui venaient se prosterner à ses pieds. Il répondit: "Ce n'est par le pouvoir d'aucun charme ni d'aucun mantra, mais par celui de la Mère Divine." L'employé, qui ne le croyait pas, le frappa très fort, et Sri Râmakrichna tomba sans connaissance. Lorsque, bien des années après, on rapporta l'histoire à Mathur Babu, celui-ci devint rouge de colère: "Pourquoi ne m'avez-vous pas dit?"¹⁵⁶ Ecoutez la réponse de Sri Râmakrichna: "Ce n'est pas sa faute; il était sûr que j'avais un secret et que j'envoûtais tous ces gens, et je n'ai pas eu la puissance de lui faire comprendre son erreur".

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Une autre fois, alors qu'une femme qui avait perdu son fils pleurait devant lui, il se mit à pleurer aussi. Et ce n'était pas une imitation, il ressentait une douleur telle que la femme pensa: "jamais je n'ai eu une douleur aussi grande que celle-ci"; et lorsque Sri Râmakrichna redescendit de sa souffrance, il se mit à chanter le nom de Dieu. La femme devint une de ses disciples.

La philosophie de non-dualité, la réalisation du non-temporel, nous donne cette sensibilité permettant de devenir l'autre; mais l'attitude religieuse nous conduit à la même compréhension; Jésus l'exprime ainsi: "chaque fois que vous avez fait (des oeuvres de miséricorde) à l'un de ces plus petits de mes frères, c'est à Moi que vous l'avez fait" (St Matthieu, XXV, 40). Sans la conviction que nous pouvons parvenir à cette compréhension, nous vivrions comme des bêtes sauvages, il n'y aurait pas de paix possible sur la terre. Insistons donc sur la pratique spirituelle, sans chercher à évangéliser nos voisins; dans une famille, chacun peut demeurer ferme dans ses croyances religieuses en laissant ses parents tranquilles. Il faut en même temps développer une compréhension de ce que Professeur Masson-Oursel appelait "le fait métaphysique": écartant la dialectique et la discussion des dogmes, occupons-nous seulement d'une réalisation vivante.

Swâmi Nityabodhânanda

LES INCARNATIONS ET L'EVOLUTION SPIRITUELLE DE L'HOMME.

Les Incarnations, les Avatars, foyers de puissance divine, peuvent transformer la vie des hommes et destinée en donnant une nouvelle impulsion à leur recherche de la Réalité; elles peuvent même leur accorder la réalisation du Soi. On ne peut donc ignorer leur rôle essentiel si l'on considère le progrès spirituel de l'homme et que l'on admet la continuité de ce progrès au cours de vies successives.

Cependant, les Incarnations ne contrarient pas les lois normales de l'évolution humaine. Chacun doit suivre sa nature particulière et progresser selon ses propres lois. Dieu est l'invisible Principe qui, toujours présent dans l'homme, l'incite et l'aide à poursuivre ses efforts. Mais si l'on reçoit la grâce d'une Incarnation, il se produit un événement extraordinaire: l'Incarnation prend sur soi tous les défauts, tous les péchés de l'individu et l'élève à un plus haut niveau de compréhension. De ce point de vue, le Christ est l'Incarnation par excellence, le rédempteur de l'humanité, et il en est de même de Bouddha et de Râmakrichna. Bouddha acceptait d'assumer le karma collectif du monde, et cette responsabilité morale universelle est un des aspects de son enseignement sur l'élimination de l'ego. Et de même, Râmakrichna dut endurer des souffrances physiques lorsqu'il prit sur lui les péchés de ceux qu'il sauvait.

Sri Râmakrichna¹⁵⁷ exprimait par une analogie la toute puissance de l'Avatar: lorsque le Roi est extrêmement satisfait de son serviteur, il l'installe sur son trône en lui disant: "je suis très content de vous". L'Incarnation agit envers l'homme comme le Roi avec son serviteur; elle lui donne un tel élan que la différence entre Dieu et l'homme disparaît et que l'homme devient Dieu.

Selon la théologie chrétienne, le Christ est venu pour racheter le monde de ses péchés, qui sont les conséquences du péché originel, de la désobéissance de l'homme aux ordres de Dieu. L'idée chrétienne de l'Incarnation est inséparable des notions théologiques. Mais dans la pensée indienne, la venue de l'Avatar est envisagée en dehors de tout concept théologique: le péché est l'ignorance - l'ignorance de notre vraie nature. Nous commettons le péché, dit Swâmi Vivekânanda, parce que nous ne connaissons pas notre véritable nature, qu'aucune souillure ne peut affecter et qui demeure pure à tout jamais. Les Incarnations, qui sont au-delà de cette ignorance, qui ont réalisé l'Etre dans toute sa gloire, peuvent également éveiller en nous la connaissance de ce que nous sommes réellement. Elles sont pur Esprit, qui à nos yeux se manifeste comme le plus haut degré de sattva; en adhérant à la compréhension qu'elles nous proposent, notre ignorance disparaît et nous nous haussons à une vision supérieure. Ainsi, sans être le moins du monde théologique, l'idée indienne de l'Incarnation a une signification psychologique et spirituelle.

On voit alors que le pouvoir rédempteur de l'Incarnation s'exprime dans trois différents domaines: elle peut avoir une influence sur la volonté, sur l'action et sur la connaissance. On sait que la dépravation morale est due au manque de volonté, que la dégradation de la connaissance est due à l'ignorance, et enfin que la dégradation de l'action est causée par les faiblesses et les limitations. Par un contact intime avec l'Incarnation, l'homme infuse en quelque sorte en lui une triple perfection; c'est pourquoi la première strophe des Hymnes à Vishnou commence ainsi: "Il suffit de se souvenir de Ton Nom pour que soit tranchée la chaîne des naissances et des morts".

Il est intéressant de remarquer comment l'Incarnation divine effectue la rédemption. De même que le Maître spirituel, le guru, lit profondément dans le subconscient du disciple, l'Incarnation peut voir dans le subconscient de l'humanité. C'est en effet dans le subconscient que les transformations s'opèrent, c'est là que l'on doit chercher la source des actions et des tendances d'un homme (le subconscient d'un enfant est actif et réceptif avant qu'il s'endorme, et davantage encore lorsque l'enfant se trouve encore dans le sein de sa mère). Les Incarnations connaissent parfaitement les besoins moraux et spirituels du peuple et du pays lequel elles prennent naissance, et dans le même temps qu'elles donnent un enseignement universel, elles accordent une

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importance particulière à l'éveil spirituel dont leur époque a besoin. Elles sont vraiment les gurus de l'humanité. Si l'homme doit se transformer, cela n'est possible que dans un ordre de valeurs plus élevé, et ces valeurs supérieures sont introduites par les Incarnations.

Elle font l'histoire, et, remarque Swâmi Vivekânanda, partout où elles sent apparues l'ensemble de l'humanité a progressé; tous les domaines de l'activité humaine (arts, littérature, et même le niveau de vie¹⁵⁸ matérielle) ont profité de cette impulsion. Et du point de vue religieux, chaque Incarnations divine fut suivie par un Ordre apostolique qui a permis que l'eau vive de la spiritualité continuât de couler, et que les générations suivantes fussent en contact plus intime avec Dieu. Il en a été ainsi après Bouddha, Jésus-Christ, Shankara et Râmakrichna. Le contact avec cette succession apostolique donne aux hommes le levain qui fait croître leur vie spirituelle, et leur progrès se fera sentir dans leur vie suivante. Mais le progrès peut être tel qu'il trouvera son achèvement dans cette vie même.

Swâmi Siddheswarânanda

VIVEKANANDA.
1956)

(Exposé du 5 février

Le caractère de Swâmi Vivekânanda s'exprime tout entier dans ces mots: "man-making is my religion" - construire l'humain dans l'homme, voilà ma religion -. Cette attitude était l'illustration vivante du verset II, 3 de la Gita, que Swamiji considérait comme la clef de voûte de tout l'enseignement: "ne te laisse pas aller au découragement, ô Partha, cela ne te sied pas; secoue cette honteuse faiblesse de ton coeur; relève-toi, Parantapa". La faiblesse du coeur est l'adversaire principal dans notre vie spirituelle, et Swâmi Vivekânanda s'est attaché à la vaincre, affirmant que lorsque cela était fait, tout était fait.

Mais comment peut-on "construire" l'homme? Nous ne sommes que des ébauches d'homme s; " nous ne sommes pas encore humains, disait Sir John Woodroffe, nous ne somme a que des candidats à l'humanité". L'homme est multiple et divisé intérieurement: il y a en lui l'aspect conscient, l'aspect subconscient, l'aspect inconscient. Voyons dans notre vie combien de visages nous montrons: selon que nous sommes avec nos parents, avec nos amis ou avec nos maitres, nous présentons autant de faces différentes. Notre premier devoir est de faire l'intégration de la personnalité, de devenir homme, c'est à dire de partir de la couche passionnelle, animale et peureuse, et d'établir hardiment un ordre de valeurs sur lequel nous puissions ajuster notre

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comportement. La con fusion des valeurs entraine conflits et divisions, mais lorsque les valeurs sont ordonnées, apparait l'homme véritable qui agit spontanément, avec justesse.

Que Swâmi Vivekânanda ait connu cette division intérieure, voilà qui nous touche profondément, car nous reconnaissons en lui notre nature humaine. Il n'est pas demeuré un inaccessible idéal de fermeté. Lui-même a beaucoup souffert d'un conflit dont nous voyons les marques tout au long de sa vie. Il était en effet, après la mort de son père, la seule personne de la famille qui pût gagner de quoi nourrir les siens; mais il avait entendu un plus grand appel. Râmakrichna lui avait dit: "je te donne la charge de tous tes frères", et chacun regardait vers Swamiji comme vers le guide. Il savait déjà que misère de l'Inde demandait de lui tout son énergie, et il sentait que cette misère et celle du monde entier étaient liées. Après son immense succès au parlement des Religions, revenu dans son hôtel, il s'est roulé sur le tapis, il a pleuré, il a refusé de se coucher dans le lit luxueux; il pensait à toute la pauvreté de l'Inde.

Pour¹⁵⁹ lui, devenir humain c'est devenir fraternel, c'est quitter le plan animal et s'ouvrir à notre véritable nature. "Les Christs et les Bouddhas ne sont que des prétextes à exercer nos propres puissances créatrices. C'est un blasphème de penser que si Jésus n'était pas né l'humanité n'aurait pas été sauvée; on ne doit pas publier la Divinité qui se trouve dans la nature humaine, une divinité qui viendra fatalement un jour à la lumière. Nous sommes le plus grand Dieu qui fût ou seras jamais; les Christs et les Bouddhas ne sont que des vagues sur l'océan sans limites que JE SUIS ... Nos actions passées ne sont réellement bonnes que si elles nous conduisent à ce que nous devons finalement devenir".

Il y a dans la vie de Sri Râmakrichna un trait qui a beaucoup frappé Swâmi Vivekânanda. Ayant un jour besoin d'eau, Sri Râmakrichna appelle Latu: "Latu, Latu, apporte-moi un peu d'eau". Latu était tout près, mais il était complètement absorbé dans sa méditation. Râmakrichna le secoua et lui dit: "Latu, Celui sur lequel tu médites attend près de toi, faute d'un peu d'eau".

Les hommes ont oublié qu'ils étaient divins, et c'est pourquoi Swâmi Vivekânanda répète sans cesse "Je suis Cela, je suis le Christ, je suis le Bouddha". Mais le "je" dont parle ici Swamiji n'est pas le pronom personnel, il est la Totalité, le "Je" implicite dans la déclaration biblique " JE SUIS CELUI QUI SUIS" (Ex, 3, 13); n'ayant pas comoris l'aspect métaphysique du Vedânta, les théologiens de diverses tendances religieuses ont vu dans cette affirmation du "Je", qui est une vérité spirituelle, un blasphème. Ils qualifient hâtivement d' "orgueilleuse" la position védântique, mais

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l'affirmation de la divinité de l'homme n'est pas de l'orgueil, c'est une Connaissance.
Le malentendu sur le "Je" n'est d'ailleurs qu'une querelle de mots; lorsque Vivekânanda, avec la vigueur de sa nature, dit "Je suis le Christ", il entend exprimer la même vérité que Saint-Paul ("ce n'est pas moi qui vis, mais le Christ qui vit en moi"). Nous avons précisé ces notions dans le Bulletin n°6, au sujet de Sri Ramana Maharshi.

Pour parvenir à cette connaissance, la Charité a une valeur extrêmement importante. L'incident de Dhéogar a profondément marqué Vivekânanda lorsqu'il lui fut raconté. Râmakrichna était allé en pèlerinage à Bénarès. A un arrêt - Dhéogar - sur la ligne de chemin de fer, il vit une foule de pauvres gens, maigres et mal vêtus. Il demanda à Mathur Babu, son riche protecteur qui assurait toutes les dépenses du pèlerinage, de nourrir et d'habiller tout ce monde; Mathur Babu refusa. Alors Râmakrichna s'assit au milieu d'eux et dit à Mathur: "Je resterai ici jusqu'à ce que mon désir soit satisfait", et Mathur donna de l'argent pour les nourrir et les vêtir.

Sri Râmakrichna disait que la miséricorde nous faisait prendre une position supérieure: "moi, je possède; toi, tu n'as rien; je te donne sois rempli de gratitude". Ce n'est pas la miséricorde qui est nécessaire, c'est le service. Si une position devait être considérée comme supérieure, ce serait celle de la personne à qui l'on donne: grâce à elle, celui qui donne peut briser sa vie égocentrique, faire appel aux ressources qui sommeillaient en lui pour les offrir au Dieu vivant-Dieu sous la forme du malade et de l'affligé. La vraie charité est la reconnaissance fraternelle du Divin dans l'homme. "Vénérez toutes les créatures comme¹⁶⁰ si elles étaient Shiva Lui-même" disait Swâmi Vivekânanda; "ne faites aucune distinction entre l'image de Dieu qui a forme humaine et l'image de Dieu que vous allez adorer dans le temple ... Pourquoi chercher Dieu dans des sanctuaires quand les Dieux vivants restent sans manger et sont en train de mourir autour de vous?" Et ajoutant quel ques phrases à la Taittiriyanishad ("que la mère et le père soient considérés comme divinités") il disait: "Que les pauvres, que les misérables soient considérés comme Dieu; que les analphabètes, que les ignorants soient considérés comme Dieu". C'est pourquoi il a durement critiqué ceux qui, sous prétexte de caste, gardaient pour eux les textes des Upanishads. La connaissance que contiennent les Ecritures est la nourriture du peuple autant que le pain; il faut donner à l'homme non pas de l'or, mais la force et la puissance du travail; il faut lui donner des outils, c'est à dire l'instruction, et lui-même fera son oeuvre. Ayant mis les éléments ensemble, la cristallisation se produira. Vivekânanda, qui s'est toujours tenu à l'écart de toute politique, n'a pas travaillé directement pour l'indépendance de l'Inde, mais il a secoué la conscience de son pays, il lui a donné le goût de l'indépendance; en chaque homme de l'Inde il a éveillé la force et la liberté.

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La notion que Swâmi Vivekânanda avait de la liberté était celle que l'on trouve dans les textes traditionnels, tels que l'Ashtavakra Samhita. Ce n'est que plus tard que le mot 'swarajya' - indépendance, liberté-prit une signification politique. Swarajya est la compréhension que les Ecritures enseignent. Ces Ecritures étaient tombées dans l'oubli; Swâmi Vivekânanda voulut remettre leur étude à l'honneur. En prenant ainsi contact avec les ressources culturelles et spirituelles de l'Inde, l'esprit indien a été réveillé et conduit à secouer toutes les dépendances, qu'elles fussent économiques, sociales ou politiques. Vincent Sheean a remarqué, dans son livre "Le chemin vers la lumière", que Râmakrichna et Vivekânanda préparèrent les esprits pour l'oeuvre de Gandhi (ces chapitres n'ont malheureusement pas été traduits dans l'édition française).

Il s'agit en somme de vaincre la peur. La première des vertus mentionnées dans le XVI ème chapitre de la Gita est 'abhayam': demeurer sana peur. Dans la vie de Swamiji, même du côté physique, la peur avait disparu. Son attitude était toujours héroïque. La peur fondamentale est la peur de la mort; lorsque le Due de Richelieu, sur le bateau qui ramenait le Swâmi en Europe, lui demanda un enseignement, Vivekânanda lui répondit: "Suivez-moi, je vous apprendrai à mourir". Savoir mourir n'est pas seulement une attitude de courage devant la mort, c'est une compréhension qui entraîne la conquête de la peur. Vivre sans peur, éveiller l'humain en nous, c'est voir en face tout ce qui n'est pas affirmateur dans la vie, c'est accepter la disharmonie et n'être plus fasciné par nos goûts personnels et nos valeurs égocentriques. Il faut, pour cela, développer l'intelligence (non pas l'intellectualisme), et cette éducation manifesterà la perfection qui se trouve déjà dans l'homme. Alors on voit l'univers entier dans une vue suprême où le côté personnel est dépassé, ce qui est possible dès cette vie. La Gita est Buddhi-Yoga, yoga de l'intelligence. Cet éveil de la conscience est la conquête de la peur et la naissance de l'homme nouveau.

(La "Vie de Vivekânanda", écrite par le Swâmi Nikhilânanda, de l'Ordre de Râmakrichna, est parue dans la traduction française du Dr H. Benoit aux Editions La Colombe.)

CONFERENCES¹⁶¹ ET RENCONTRES DE MARS:

L'oeuvre du R.P. Teilhard de Chardin vaut à nos yeux par le nombre et l'importance des problèmes qu'elle crée ou ranime dans notre esprit. Mr A. Niel avait pris la peine de réduire à l'essentiel une immense matière pour l'exposé qu'il fit, le 4 mars, sur les thèses de ce penseur.

Mr M. Perrin, lors de son expédition au Pérou, avait jeûné pendant 29 jours. Le II mars, il décrivit, à l'aide de notes rédigées au jour le jour durant son jeûne, les phases de cette aventure intérieure.

Le dimanche 18, le Général Chassin fit l'éloge de la Poésie chinoise, sur laquelle il a écrit plusieurs études. Il réussit, par la diversité des poèmes qu'il avait choisis et que lut Mr Méjemont, à donner une idée de la richesse d'une littérature dont nous ne pouvons soupçonner la sensibilité et les harmonies qu'au travers du voile des traductions.

Le dimanche 25, Mr J.L. Jazarin parla de Sri Râmakrichna. Rien ne pouvait mieux suggérer la grandeur du Maître que de rappeler quelques-unes des paraboles, par le moyen desquelles il enseignait. "Quelle vie extraordinaire! Il y a là de quoi renouveler toute notre vie religieuse" disait un Père dominicain à qui Mr Jazarin avait raconté ces anecdotes pleines de fraîcheur.

Le grand pianiste Paul Loyonnet, de passage en France, rendit visite le jeudi 28 au Centre Védantique. Il accepta volontiers d'interpréter toutes les oeuvres qui lui furent demandées et de dire quelques mots sur l'important ouvrage qu'il prépare sur Beethoven.

CONFERENCES DE MAI:

- | | | |
|-------------|---|--------------------------------------|
| dimanche 6 | Méditations sur la Gita | par <u>Mr J.L. Jazarin</u> |
| dimanche 13 | Textes sacrés du Bouddhisme | par le <u>Bikku Rahula</u> |
| dimanche 20 | Discipline spirituelle et intégration de la personnalité, | par le <u>Swâmi Nityabodhânanda</u> |
| dimanche 27 | La vie et l'enseignement de Sri Râmakrichna | par le <u>Swâmi Siddheswarânanda</u> |

Chaque dimanche, à 20 heures, le Swâmi Nityabodhânanda commentera la Bhagavad-Gita et la Pança Daçi de Vidyâranya.

A la Société Théosophique (4, Square Rapp, Paris VII): le jeudi 10 mai à 20h. 30, Naren - J. Londe - parlera sur le Viveka Çuda Mani de Çamkara. Le jeudi 24 mai, en soirée, le Swâmi Nityabodhânanda présidera la fête du Bouddha et fera une conférence.

Centre Védantique Râmakrichna,

Boulevard Victor Hugo, Gretz, S. & M., France. Tel. 311 - Tournan.

Le "Bulletin des activités culturelles" paraît manuellement. (Abonnement annuel, envoi compris: 1000 FR. CCP: "Association CVR, Paris 8885-31).

Ma première rencontre avec Sri Râmakrichna eut lieu en 1883. J'avais environ seize ans; j'étais alors extrêmement orthodoxe et j'observais scrupuleusement toutes les coutumes brahmaniques prescrites par les Ecritures. Lorsque je m'adonnais à des pratiques de dévotion, j'y ajoutais toujours des exercices de respiration; je me passionnais pour ces exercices, et chaque jour j'en augmentais le nombre. Parfois je retenais mon soufflé pendant si longtemps que je transpirais, et mon corps était saisi de tremblements.

Lorsque je parlai de ces expériences à Sri Râmakrichna, il m'interdit formellement de les poursuivre et m'avertit que de telles pratiques pouvaient provoquer des troubles dangereux. Il m'apprit à répéter le mantra de Gayatri. "Prononce-le le plus souvent que tu pourras", me conseilla-t-il.

... Sri Râmakrichna me parla de Naren.⁽¹⁾ "Il a d'immenses yeux" me dit-il, "et son regard est toujours dirigé en dedans. Lorsqu'il marche dans les rues de la ville, les maisons, les voitures, les chevaux, tout devient pour lui le Seigneur Narayana. Vas le trouver, il habite Calcutta, dans le quartier de Simla".

Le lendemain, j'allai pour la première fois rendre visite à Naren. Il vivait dans la maison de son père. Lorsque je revis Sri Râmakrichna, il me demanda aussitôt: "Es-tu allé chez Naren?" - "Oui" répondis-je, et je lui parlai de notre rencontre: "j'ai été frappé par ses grands yeux et l'intensité de son regard. Il lisait un livre anglais aussi gros que le dictionnaire de Webster: une biographie de Bouddha. Sa chambre était remplie de poussière; cependant, il ne paraissait pas s'en apercevoir. Son esprit semble appartenir à un autre monde. Tout ce que vous m'avez dit de lui est exact". Sri Râmakrichna parut très heureux en écoutant ce récit. "Comment as-tu compris tant de choses pendant le peu de temps où vous êtes restés ensemble?" demanda-t-il. "Vas le voir souvent, profite de sa présence chaque fois que tu en auras l'occasion."

Après la mort de son père, Naren resta très longtemps sans venir à Dakshineswar. Sri Râmakrichna devint très anxieux, il demandait sans cesse des nouvelles et l'envoya chercher à plusieurs reprises. Naren avait alors de graves préoccupations d'ordre financier. Sans doute voulait-il éviter d'en parler à Sri Râmakrichna. Cependant, dès que sa situation fut améliorée, il revint à Dakshineswar, et par la suite, chaque fois que j'allai voir le Maître, Naren était là.

Un visiteur demanda un jour à Sri Râmakrichna: "Bhagavan, vos jeunes

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Swâmi Akhandânanda, qui a écrit ces souvenirs, fut le troisième Président de l'Ordre de Râmakrichna. Il succéda en 1934 à Swâmi Shivânanda.

(1) Naren; le nom de Swâmi Vivekânanda, avant qu'il se consacra à la vie monastique.

disciples se désintéressent totalement de la vie de famille. Tous veulent embrasser l'état monastique. Est-ce normal?" - "Cher Monsieur,¹⁶³ répondit Sri Râmakrichna, vous connaissez seulement leur vie actuelle, mais vous ignorez tout de leurs existences antérieures, au cours desquelles ils ont été chefs de famille.

"Voyez par exemple quatre frères dont l'un, devenu jeune homme, déclare à ses parents: "je n'emploierai plus d'huile pour me masser le corps, je ne mangerai plus de poisson, mais je prendrai une nourriture végétarienne que je cuirai moi - même". La famille du jeune homme essaie de le dissuader, elle le menace même d'une sévère correction, sans pour autant lui faire abandonner son attitude de renoncement. Cependant les trois autres fils mangent tout ce qui les tente et se précipitent vers les plaisirs du monde. Plus ils ont de richesses, plus leur désir de posséder augmente. Ils sont insatiables. Mais leur frère a choisi la vie monastique avant d'avoir atteint l'âge d'homme. Pourquoi? Parce que les mérites accumulés dans ses incarnations précédentes ont porté leurs fruits, et il possède maintenant une nature sattvique, calme et pure".

Sri Râmakrichna disait à tous ceux qu'il aimait: "Venez de préférence me voir le mercredi ou le samedi. En ce kali-yuga, cet âge de fer, il faut suivre le chemin de la dévotion enseigné par Narada". Il nous enjoignit de pratiquer davantage le japa et la méditation pendant ces deux jours de la semaine. Selon Sri Râmakrichna, le samedi est un jour béni et sacré.

Quelles que fussent les personnes se trouvant en sa présence, Sri Râmakrichna parlait toujours de Dieu et de choses spirituelles, à l'exclusion de tout autre sujet. C'était un des traits marquants de son caractère. Toutefois, la conversation ne devenait jamais monotone. Même lorsque de graves questions étaient soulevées, il agrémentait toujours son enseignement de plaisanteries qui égayaient l'assistance. Il dit un jour: "Il existe deux sortes de siddhas (âmes ayant atteint la perfection); connaissez-vous la signification du mot 'siddha'? Pris dans son sens littéral, il veut dire 'bouilli'. Une fois plongés dans l'eau bouillante, les pommes de terre ou tout autre légume deviennent tendres. Il en va de même pour ceux qui sont parvenus à la perfection".

Un mendiant était venu demander l'aumône. Désignant quatre pièces, Sri Râmakrichna me dit de les donner au malheureux. "Maintenant, lave-toi les mains avec l'eau du Gange" m'ordonna-t-il. Je me dirigeai vers un coin de la pièce et trempai mes mains dans une jarre contenant l'eau sacrée. "Viens près de moi" dit Sri Râmakrichna. Nous restâmes debout, côte à côte, devant l'image de Kâli. Frappant dans ses mains, il répéta 'Hari, Hari', et à sa demande je fis de même. "L'argent est méprisable, il est

¹⁶³ 11

souillé et impur” pensai-je. A la suite de cet incident, cette notion se grava d’une manière indélébile dans mon esprit. Plus tard, pendant quatorze années, je parcourus l’Inde en moine itinérant, ne possédant rien et n’acceptant jamais de recevoir de l’argent. L’indifférence qu’il m’a toujours inspiré est le résultat salutaire de cet heureux événement.

Un visiteur demanda: “Bhagavan, ce corps est à l’origine de tous nos maux. Si nous pouvions le détruire, serions-nous libérés de toute souffrance?” - “Lorsqu’on brise des jarres d’argile qui ne sont pas encore cuites, on peut rassembler les débris pour en faire de nouveaux récipients”¹⁶⁴ répondit le Maître; “cependant, une fois brisées, celles que le potier a passées au four ne peuvent jamais servir à nouveau. De même, si vous détruisez le corps avant d’être parvenu à la Réalisation, vous devrez renaître et souffrir en conséquence”.

“Pourquoi attache-t-on une telle importance à ce corps?” poursuivit le visiteur. Sri Râmakrichna répondit: “le sculpteur doit prendre grand soin du moule jusqu’à ce que la statue soit achevée. Ainsi, à l’aide de ce corps, nous devons réaliser le Soi suprême et atteindre la Connaissance. Ensuite, il peut demeurer en vie ou mourir, cela est sans importance. Mais avant la réalisation spirituelle, il faut en prendre soin”. Le visiteur demeura silencieux.

Après une longue conversation, Sri Râmakrichna se leva. Nous allâmes voir les différents temples et nous promener dans les jardins. Gadasankar, l’un des visiteurs, était membre du Brahmo-Samaj. Le Maître l’emmena sous la véranda Est de sa chambre. J’assistai à ce dialogue: “Observez-vous les pratiques rituelles des Brahmines?” demanda le Maître. - “Je n’aime pas tous ces rites” répondit Gadasankar. - “Comment pouvez-vous, dès le début, prétendre réaliser le Sans-Forme?” demanda le Maître. “Lorsqu’un archer apprend à tirer, il vise d’abord un gros arbre, ensuite un plus petit, puis un fruit, puis une feuille, et enfin un oiseau qui vole. Méditez d’abord sur l’aspect personnel du Divin. Cela vous permettra de réaliser à la longue son aspect impersonnel”.

Un matin, le maître m’emmena au temple de Kâli. Lorsque je m’y rendais seul, je demeurais toujours sur le seuil de la porte. Cette fois, Sri Râmakrichna me fit pénétrer dans le Saint des Saints et me montra le visage du Seigneur Shiva. Il gisait sur le dos, tandis que Kâli dansait sur son corps. De loin, on ne pouvait le voir, et d’ordinaire j’apercevais seulement le sommet de sa tête. “Regardez Shiva, la Conscience même, étendu inconscient et immobile” me dit Sri Râmakrichna. Jusqu’à ce jour, je pensais que cette image de Shiva était semblable à toutes celles que j’avais rencontrées ailleurs. Je

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fus stupéfait de voir combien le sens profond de cette phrase pénétrait en moi. Je réalisais alors la puissance extraordinaire contenue dans chaque parole qui tombait des lèvres de Sri Râmakrichna.

Le Maître toucha les vêtements de Kâli et fit tinter tous les ornements de ses poignets et de ses chevilles. En quittant le Temple, il titubait comme un homme ivre. Lorsqu'à grand peine il eut regagné sa chambre, il demeura longtemps immergé dans le samâdhi. Reprenant conscience du monde extérieur, Sri Râmakrichna chanta de nombreux chants religieux. Il m'est impossible de décrire cette journée en détails, je ne puis non plus parler de la joie dont le Maître inonda mon coeur, elle est indescriptible.

Je relate ces incidents au fur et à mesure qu'ils se présentent à ma mémoire. Ce sont des souvenirs d'années lointaines. Je n'étais alors qu'un enfant, comment pourrais-je tout me rappeler?

Il m'arriva à plusieurs reprises d'accompagner Sri Râmakrichna chez Balaram Bose. Je vais maintenant tenter d'évoquer le souvenir de ces visites. Un jour où les invités étaient particulièrement nombreux, nous vîmes arriver le pandit Sasadhar Tarkar Chudamani. Il s'assit et tint son visage penché, les yeux fixés sur le sol. "Eh bien, voilà¹⁶⁵ une nombreuse assemblée" lui dit le Maître, "pourquoi demeurez-vous silencieux?" - "D'ordinaire, je parle à des athées" répondit le pandit, "ici, tous sont croyants; que dirais-je à ces personnes? Vous seul êtes qualifié pour leur adresser la parole". Sri Râmakrichna reprit: "Voyez-vous, je pensais que vous n'étiez qu'un pseudo pandit; maintenant, je découvre que vous êtes un aspirant à la vie spirituelle". En entendant ces mots, des larmes de dévotion inondèrent le visage du pandit.

Au cours d'une autre visite chez Balaram Bose, Naren vint se joindre à nous, dans l'intention de voir le Maître. Il s'assit à ses pieds. Tous les invités se rassemblèrent autour d'eux. Sri Râmakrichna demanda à Naren: "Pourquoi n'es-tu pas allé à tel endroit?" De temps à autre, il lui posait quelques questions. A la demande du Maître, Swamiji chanta un hymne qui débutait ainsi: "O mon esprit, prends le nom de Râma, de tout ton coeur répète-le chaque jour". Charmé par la musique de ce chant, Sri Râmakrichna entra en samâdhi. Les invités venus en curieux, ou avec l'intention de tourner les choses en ridicule, dirent en rentrant chez eux: "Tout cela est véritablement merveilleux. Avez-vous remarqué comme la voix du Paramahansa se fait douce lorsqu'il chante les noms de la Mère? Elle va droit au coeur et elle inspire la dévotion et l'amour".

A une autre occasion, Sri Râmakrichna arriva chez Balaram Bose le matin. Je

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trouvai le Maître assis dans une petite pièce située à droite de l'escalier. Plusieurs personnes se trouvaient avec lui. Après m'être prosterné devant lui, je pris place à ses côtés. Son esprit était totalement inconscient du monde extérieur; il invoquait la Mère Divine, s'adressant à Elle en ces termes: "Mère bien-aimée, Tu es Toi-même devenue ma vie et mon esprit; comment pourrais-je dire: 'prends-les, je te les offre'?" Quelques instants plus tard, les yeux mi-clos, saisi d'une ivresse divine, il s'écria: "Je hais l'avarice et la sensualité. Ceux qui ne surmontent pas ces vices n'obtiendront jamais la vision du Seigneur". Il répéta plusieurs fois ces paroles.

Un autre jour, je vis Sri Râmakrichna entrer à plusieurs reprises en samâdhi. Lorsqu'il sortit de son extase, il parla de la vision de Dieu et de la Réalisation spirituelle. "L'aspect de Divin sur lequel nous avons choisi de méditer n'est autre que nous-même. Ishta et Atman sont identiques. En se concentrant sur son idéal, l'adorateur parvient à la Connaissance. Autrement dit, la Connaissance est l'aboutissement de la dévotion à l'Ishta. Voyez comme l'attitude de Prahlada était extraordinaire. Parfois il répétait 'pas moi, pas moi', ou, lorsqu'il se trouvait dans un autre état de conscience: 'je suis ton serviteur, ô Seigneur'. Mais lorsque son esprit s'élevait jusqu'aux régions indescriptibles de l'Absolu, il murmurait 'je suis Lui', puis demeurait immobile et muet."

D'ordinaire, les gurus conseillent aux disciples de suivre certaines disciplines afin de parvenir à la Réalisation. Sri Râmakrichna différait totalement des autres maîtres spirituels; sa manière d'enseigner était unique. Un contact, un regard, ou même le simple jeu de sa volonté, suffisait à éveiller à la vie de l'esprit ceux qui venaient à lui. Il voulait que tous connussent la félicité de l'union avec le Divin. Il était animé d'un intense désir de voir s'épanouir nos aspirations spirituelles, et nos âmes s'élever jusqu'à la Connaissance suprême. A chacun de ses disciples intimes, Sri Râmakrichna parla de sa réalisation, faisant ainsi naître en eux la volonté inébranlable d'atteindre le but.

Journal¹⁶⁶¹⁶⁷ d'un disciple de SRI RAMAKRICHNA

EXTRAITS DU JOURNAL DE "M" (MAHENDRANATH GUPTA).
PUBLIE EN BENGALI SOUS LE TITRE "SRI SRI RAMAKRISHNA KATHAMRITA"

Mars 1882 (suite).

M.: "Monsieur, j'aime à penser à Dieu sans forme."

Sri Râmakrichna: "C'est parfait, il suffit d'avoir la foi en l'un ou l'autre aspect. Vous croyez au Dieu sans forme; ne croyez pas cependant que seule cette croyance soit vraie

¹⁶⁶ 6

¹⁶⁷ In this page its not clearly legible

et que toutes les autres soient fausses. Souvenez-vous que Dieu avec forme est tout aussi vrai que Dieu sans forme. Mais demeurez fermement dans votre propre conviction.”

M. fut surpris que deux assertions contraires pussent être également vraies. Il n’avait jamais appris cela dans ses livres. Son ego reçut ainsi un troisième choc; mais il n’abandonnait pas encore et M. continua de discuter avec le Maître:

M.: ‘ “Si l’on croit, Monsieur, que Dieu a une forme, Il n’est certainement pas dans l’image d’argile.”

Sri Râmakrichna (l’interrompant): “Pourquoi parler d’argile? C’est une image de l’esprit.”

M. ne comprit pas ce que le Maître entendait par “image de l’esprit” et il insista: “Mais Monsieur, il faudrait expliquer à ceux qui adorent l’image d’argile qu’elle n’est pas Dieu et que, durant leur prière, ils doivent fixer leurs pensées sur Dieu et non pas sur l’argile. On ne doit pas adorer l’argile.”

Sri Râmakrichna: “Voilà bien l’esprit des gens de Calcutta: Vous donnez des conférences, vous apportez la lumière aux autres, et personne ne réfléchit aux moyens d’obtenir la lumière pour soi-même. Qui êtes-vous pour prétendre instruire les autres?”

“Celui qui est le Seigneur de l’univers donnera à chacun l’instruction nécessaire. C’est Lui seul qui nous enseigne, Lui qui a créé ce monde, qui a fait le soleil et la lune, les hommes et les bêtes; Il pourvoit aux besoins de toutes Ses créatures; Il donne aux parents l’amour nécessaire pour élever leurs enfants. Le Seigneur fait tant de choses! Ne peut-Il pas montrer aux hommes comment ils doivent L’adorer? S’ils ont besoin d’enseignement, Il sera leur Maître. Il est notre guide intérieur.

“Et quand bien même ce serait une erreur d’adorer l’image d’argile! Dieu ne sait-Il pas que c’est Lui que l’on invoque par ce moyen? Il sera satisfait de cette adoration. Pourquoi vous soucier? Vous feriez mieux d’obtenir vous-même la connaissance et la dévotion.”

Son amour-propre complètement brisé cette fois, M. pensait: “Oui, il dit la vérité. Quel besoin ai-je d’enseigner aux autres? Ai-je vu Dieu? Est-ce que je L’aime vraiment? Je n’ai pas assez de¹⁶⁸ place dans mon lit, et voilà que j’invite un ami à le partager avec moi. Je ne connais rien de Dieu et je m’efforce pourtant d’instruire les autres. N’est-ce pas stupide? Car il ne s’agit pas de mathématiques, d’histoire ou de

¹⁶⁸ 7

littérature, mais du profond mystère de Dieu. Cet homme a parfaitement raison.”

Telle fut la première discussion de M. avec le Maître. Heureusement ce fut aussi la dernière.

Sri Râmakrichna: “Vous parliez d’adorer l’image d’argile; cette adoration est nécessaire, comme toutes les autres formes de culte que Dieu nous a données. Celui qui est le seigneur de l’univers a introduit diverses manières de Le vénérer, afin qu’elles puissent convenir à différents tempéraments et à différents degrés de connaissance.

“Une mère prépare plusieurs plats selon les goûts de ses enfants. Si elle fait du poisson, elle l’accommodera de diverses manières: pilaff, poisson à la vinaigrette, friture, etc., afin de satisfaire chaque appétit et chaque estomac. Vous me comprenez?”

M. (humblement): “Oui Monsieur. Et comment pouvons-nous fixer notre esprit sur Dieu?”

Sri Râmakrichna: “Répétez le nom du Seigneur et chantez Ses louanges. Rendez visite à ceux qui L’aiment, recherchez la compagnie des saints. L’esprit ne peut pas se fixer sur Dieu s’il est plongé jour et nuit dans les devoirs et les responsabilités du monde. De temps à autre, il est nécessaire de se retirer dans la solitude et de penser à Dieu. Fixer en Lui son esprit est très difficile dans les commencements si l’on ne pratique pas une méditation solitaire. Quand un arbre est jeune, on doit l’entourer d’une palissade, sinon il sera détruit par le bétail.

“Pour méditer, retirez-vous en vous-même, ou bien trouvez une retraite dans un endroit écarté ou dans la forêt. Ne cessez jamais de discriminer entre le réel et l’irréel. Dieu seul est réel, Il est l’éternelle substance de toutes choses; le reste est l’irréel, c’est-à-dire impermanent. En discriminant ainsi, l’esprit s’écarte des objets transitoires.”

M.: “Comment devons-nous vivre dans le monde?”

Sri Râmakrichna: “Accomplissez tous vos devoirs, mais que votre esprit demeure en Dieu. Vivez avec tous, avec votre femme et vos enfants, votre père et votre mère, et servez-les. Traitez-les comme s’ils vous étaient très chers, mais sachez dans le fond de votre Coeur qu’ils ne vous appartiennent pas.

“Une servante chez un homme riche accomplit tous les travaux de la maison, mais ses pensées demeurent fixées sur son propre foyer, dans son village natal. Elle élève les enfants de son maître comme s’ils étaient les siens. En parlant d’eux, elle va même jusqu’à dire: ‘Mon Râma, mon Hari’, mais en elle-même, elle sait fort bien qu’ils ne lui appartiennent pas du tout.

“La tortue va dans l’eau chercher sa nourriture, mais savez-vous où sont ses pensées? Sur le rivage, à l’endroit où elle a placé ses¹⁶⁹ oeufs. Tout en accomplissant vos devoirs dans le monde, que votre esprit demeure fixé sur Dieu.

“Si vous entrez dans la vie du monde sans avoir d’abord affermi votre amour pour Dieu, vous serez bientôt accablé par les soucis et par les chagrins. Et plus vous penserez aux affaires du monde, plus vous vous y attacherez.

“Si vous ne frottez pas vos mains d’huile avant d’ouvrir le fruit du jacquier, elles seront tachées par son lait sirupeux. Obtenez l’huile de l’amour divin avant de vous occuper des devoirs de la vie.

“Mais il faut se retirer dans la solitude pour obtenir cet amour. Si vous voulez faire du beurre, vous devez laisser reposer le lait dans un endroit tranquille; quand le lait est trop remué, la crème ne se sépare pas. Vous laissez ensuite les autres occupations pour vous installer à l’écart et baratter la crème. Toutes ces conditions sont nécessaires pour obtenir le beurre.

“En méditant sur Dieu dans la solitude, l’esprit acquiert la connaissance, un jugement sain et la dévotion. Mais cet esprit s’abaisse de plus en plus s’il demeure dans le monde, où l’on ne pense qu’à deux choses: ‘la femme et l’or’.⁽¹⁾

“Supposons que le monde soit l’eau et que l’esprit soit le lait; si vous versez le lait dans l’eau, ils se mélangent et vous ne retrouvez plus le lait pur. Mais laissez reposer du lait pour obtenir du beurre; si vous placez ce beurre dans l’eau, il flottera. Pratiquez donc, dans la solitude, vos disciplines spirituelles, et vous obtiendrez le beurre de la connaissance et de l’amour. Ensuite, vous pourrez plonger ce beurre dans l’eau du monde, ils ne se mélangeront pas; le beurre flottera.

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⁽¹⁾ L’expression que Sri Râmakrichna employait fréquemment est “kaminikanchana” qui a été depuis traduite, dans toutes les éditions anglaises, par “woman and gold” (la femme et l’or). Cette traduction est devenue courante, bien qu’elle puisse créer un malentendu: il ne s’agit pas d’un mépris des femmes, puisque Sri Râmakrichna les regardait toutes comme la Mère Divine de l’univers. “Kamini” est l’objet qui éveille la convoitise. Ce mot sanskrit étant du genre féminin (comme le mot français “une personne”, que nous utilisons aussi bien pour désigner un homme qu’une femme) il a été traduit exclusivement par “la femme”. Mais telle n’était pas la pensée de Sri Râmakrichna; ce qu’il conseillait à ses disciples, c’était de se garder du sexe opposé, et lorsqu’il s’adressait à des femmes, il leur recommandait de ne pas s’attacher aux hommes.

Par “kanchana”, l’or, il indiquait l’avidité, le besoin de posséder des biens. Ces deux tendances - le désir sexuel et l’amour des richesses - lui semblaient les obstacles les plus graves dans une recherche spirituelle.

“Il faut pratiquer également la discrimination. ‘La femme et l’or’ sont fugitifs. Dieu seul est l’éternelle substance. Qu’obtient-on avec de l’argent? De la nourriture, des vêtements, un logement, mais rien de plus. Vous ne pouvez pas réaliser Dieu avec de l’argent; ne faites donc pas du gain le but de votre vie. Voilà ce qu’est la discrimination. Me comprenez-vous?

M.: “Oui,¹⁷⁰ Monsieur. Je viens de lire une pièce de théâtre dont le sujet est justement la discrimination.”

Sri Râmakrichna: “Qu’y a-t-il, après tout, dans l’argent ou dans un corps bien fait? Réfléchisses un peu, et vous verrez que même le corps d’une jolie femme consiste d’os, de chair, de graisse et d’autres éléments peu attirants. Comment l’homme peut-il se détourner de Dieu pour s’attacher à de pareilles choses? Comment peut-il oublier Dieu à cause d’elles?”

M.: “Est-il possible de voir Dieu?”

Sri Râmakrichna: “Oui, certainement. Il faut se retirer dans la solitude de temps à autre, répéter le nom du Seigneur, chanter Ses louanges et bien distinguer le réel de l’irréel - voilà les moyens efficaces de Le voir.”

M.: “Dans quelles conditions voit-on Dieu?”

Sri Râmakrichna: “Appelez le Seigneur de toute l’aspiration de votre cœur, et vous Le verrez certainement. On verse des flots de larmes à propos d’une épouse, ou pour des enfants, ou pour de l’argent. Mais qui donc pleure pour Dieu? Invoquez-Le avec ardeur.”

Sri Râmakrichna chanta:

“Appelle Syâma, ta Mère, de toutes tes forces, ô mon esprit.
Pourra-t-Elle vraiment se détourner de toi
Demeurer toujours loin de toi?
Se peut-il que Kâli refuse de t’entendre?”

“O mon esprit, si tu désires t’approcher d’Elle, apporte-Lui une offrande,
Quelques feuilles de bel et des fleurs d’hibiscus,
Et dépose-les à Ses pieds
Avec la pâte de santal de ton amour.”

Puis il dit: "La soif de voir Dieu est comme l'aurore. Elle est suivie par l'apparition du soleil, par la vision de Dieu.

"Pour que le Seigneur se révèle, il faut que le désir de Le voir soit aussi fort que la somme des trois plus fortes passions terrestres: le besoin de richesses qu'éprouve l'homme attaché à l'argent, l'attraction qu'éprouve la mère pour son enfant, et enfin l'affection d'un homme pour une épouse chaste. Supposons que vous ajoutiez l'une à l'autre les forces de ces trois désirs: tel doit être votre désir pour Dieu si vous voulez obtenir Sa vision.

"Il est nécessaire de Le prier avec un coeur ardent. Tout ce que le petit chat sait faire, c'est d'appeler sa mère en criant "miaou, miaou". Il ne bouge pas de l'endroit où sa mère le dépose. Tantôt elle le met dans la cuisine, tantôt sur le parquet, tantôt sur le lit. Quand il souffre, il dit "miaou, miaou"; il ne sait rien d'autre. Et pourtant, dès que la mère chatte entend ce cri, elle accourt vers le chaton."

La¹⁷¹ troisième visite de M. à Sri Râmakrichna eut lieu un dimanche après-midi. M. avait été profondément impressionné par ses rencontres avec cet homme étonnant. Il n'avait fait que penser à lui, à la manière si simple dont il expliquait les vérités de la vie spirituelle. Il n'avait jamais auparavant rencontré d'homme aussi remarquable.

Sri Râmakrichna était assis sur le petit lit. La pièce était remplie de visiteurs qui avaient profité de leur jour de congé pour venir le voir. M., qui ne connaissait encore aucun d'entre eux, prit place dans un coin. Le Maître souriait tout en parlant.

Il s'adressait le plus souvent à un jeune homme de dix-neuf ans, nommé Narendranath,⁽¹⁾ qui était étudiant au collège et appartenait au Brahmo-Samaj;⁽²⁾ les yeux de ce garçon étaient brillants, ses paroles pleines d'ardeur, il avait l'aspect d'un amant de Dieu.

M. devina que la conversation portait sur les personnes mondaines; il était question du dédain avec lequel elles regardent ceux qui aspirent à une connaissance spirituelle, et le Maître indiquait la manière de se comporter avec elles.

Sri Râmakrichna (à Nendra): "Qu'en pensez-vous? Les gens mondains disent toutes

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⁽¹⁾ Narendranath Dutta, connu plus tard sous le nom monastique de Swâmi Vivekânanda.

⁽²⁾ Brahmo Samaj: mouvement qui a joué un rôle important dans la renaissance de l'Inde. Fondé en 1828, son objet était "la vénération de l'Éternel, l'Être immuable qui a créé et maintient l'univers". Le Brahmo Samaj était ouvert à tous, sans distinction de caste ou de religion. Il était dirigé en 1882 par Keshab Chandra Sen, dont les rencontres avec Sri Râmakrichna sont rapportées dans le Journal de M.

sortes de choses sur ceux qui recherchent les biens spirituels. Doit-on faire comme l'éléphant? Lorsqu'il marche dans la rue, les chiens et les autres petits animaux peuvent bien orier après lui. Quel que soit leur nombre, l'éléphant ne se retourne même pas. Si des gens parlent mal de vous, quelle sera votre attitude?"

Narendra: "Je penserai que des chiens sont en train d'aboyer."

Sri Râmakrichna (souriant): "Non, il ne faut pas aller si loin, mon enfant; Dieu demeure dans tous les êtres. Mais vous ne devez être intime qu'avec des personnes honnêtes. Il suffit de ne pas s'approcher des méchants; Dieu est même dans le tigre, mais ce n'est pas une raison pour courir l'embrasser. (Rires.) Vous pouvez dire: 'Pourquoi s'enfuir lorsqu'on voit un tigre? Il est une manifestation de Dieu'. Mais ceux qui vous conseillent de le fuir sont aussi des manifestations de Dieu; pourquoi ne pas les écouter?"

(A suivre)

Journal¹⁷² d'un disciple de SRI RAMAKRICHNA

EXTRAITS DU JOURNAL DE "M" (MAHENDRANATH GUPTA).
PUBLIE EN BENGALI SOUS LE TITRE "SRI SRI RAMAKRISHNA KATHAMRITA"

2 Avril 1882 (suite)

Désignant M. qui était assis, Sri Râmakrichna dit à Keshab: "Voulez-vous lui demander pourquoi il ne vient plus à Dakshineswar? Il m'a souvent dit que ce n'était pourtant pas son affection pour sa femme et ses enfants qui l'en empêchait." M. connaissait Sri Râmakrichna depuis un mois et lui avait rendu plusieurs visites à Dakshineswar; c'est parce qu'il n'était pas venu ces derniers temps que le Maître fit cette remarque. Ce dernier lui avait demandé d'écrire lorsqu'il ne pourrait pas venir.

Le pandit Samadhyayi se trouvait là également. Il fut présenté à Sri Râmakrichna comme un homme très érudit, ayant une profonde connaissance des Védas et des autres Ecritures. Sri Râmakrichna dit: "Oui c'est une chose que je peux voir en lui, dans ses yeux, comme on voit les objets à travers les panneaux de verre de la porte."

Trailokya se mit à chanter. Sri Râmakrichna se leva soudain et entra en samadhi, en répétant le nom de la Mère. Puis recouvrant l'usage de ses sens, il commença de danser et de chanter aussi:

"Je ne suis pas tenté par les vins de la terre,

Je ne veux boire que celui de l'éternelle extase,
Et chanter le nom de Kâli
Me transporte à tel point que chacun croit que je suis ivre.
C'est d'abord mon guru qui me donne les grappes
Aussitôt transformées par le ferment de mon ardeur;
Puis vient la connaissance, qui prépare
Le vin que mon esprit Boira;
On le verse toujours du flacon du mantra,
Et le nom de la Mère ainsi le purifie.
Buvez ce vin, dit Ramprasad,⁽¹⁾
Vous parviendrez sans peine au but suprême de la vie."

Sri Râmakrichna regarda Keshab tendrement, comme si ce dernier était son fils. Il semblait craindre que Keshab pût dépendre de quelqu'un d'autre, c'est-à-dire qu'il s'attachât au monde. Et tandis qu'il fixait son regard sur lui, il continua de chanter:

"Parler nous effraie et pourtant le silence nous pèse,
Nos âmes, ô Radha, tremblent tant de Vous perdre!
_____ Le¹⁷³ secret que nous connaissons
Nous a permis de surmonter bien des périls,
Et nous avons aidé bien des amis à les surmonter aussi,
Mais tout dépend, Radha, de Votre grâce."

Commentant la fin de ce chant, il dit à Keshab: "Cela signifie qu'il faut renoncer à tout et implorer Dieu. Lui seul est réel, et le reste est illusoire. Si l'on n'a pas réalisation de Dieu, tout ce que l'on peut faire est inutile et vain; voilà le grand secret."

Sri Râmakrichna s'assit et parla de nouveau avec les autres personnes. Il écouta pendant quelque temps un morceau de piano, se réjouissant comme un enfant, puis il entra dans les appartements intérieurs où on lui servit des boissons fraîches. Les femmes le saluèrent avant de le quitter. Lorsqu'il sortit de maison de Keshab, les membres du Brahmosamaj l'accompagnèrent respectueusement jusqu'à la voiture.

Dimanche 9 Avril 1882

Sri Râmakrichna était assis, entouré de disciples, dans le salon de la maison de Prankrishna Mukherji à Calcutta. Il était un peu plus d'une heure. Depuis que le colonel Visvanath habitait ce quartier, Sri Râmakrichna avait l'intention de lui rendre visite avant d'aller voir Keshab à Lily Cottage. Beaucoup de voisins et d'amis de

⁽¹⁾ C'est l'usage, en Inde, que l'auteur d'un chant mentionne son nom dans l'un des derniers vers.

Prankrishna avaient été invités pour rencontrer Sri Râmakrichna. Ils brûlaient tous du désir de l'entendre.

Sri Râmakrichna: "Dieu et Sa gloire! Cette maison est Sa gloire! Les gens ne voient que Sa gloire et ils oublient Dieu Lui-même. Au lieu de chercher Celui dont la splendeur brille sur le monde, ils s'attachent tous à "la femme et l'or". Pourtant, que de peines on y trouve! Le monde ressemble au tourbillon de Visalakshi;⁽¹⁾ lorsqu'un bateau s'y laisse entraîner, tout espoir de le sauver est perdu. Le monde peut être aussi comparé à un buisson d'épines; à peine êtes-vous débarrassé de celles qui vous ont piqué que d'autres s'enfoncent dans votre chair. Si vous entrez dans un labyrinthe, vous verrez comme il est difficile d'en sortir. On peut dire que l'homme se consume dans le monde."

Un disciple: "Que devons-nous faire, Monsieur?"

Sri Râmakrichna: "Prier et rechercher la compagnie des saints. Vous ne pouvez vaincre la maladie sans l'aide d'un médecin. Il vous suffit souvent de passer une seule journée auprès d'un saint homme. Si vous ne le faites pas, le mal deviendra chronique. Comment pouvez-vous interpréter le pouls correctement si vous ne vivez pas auprès d'un médecin qui vous enseigne? Vous apprendrez, grâce à lui à distinguer le pouls phlegmatique du pouls biliaire."

Un¹⁷⁴ disciple: "Quelle sorte de bien acquiert-on dans la compagnie des saints?"

Sri Râmakrichna: "Ils vous communiquent l'amour de Dieu et le désir intense de Le voir. On ne peut rien atteindre dans la vie spirituelle sans cet ardent désir. Dans la compagnie des saints, l'âme ne cesse de vouloir Dieu. Un tel désir est comparable à celui qu'éprouve un homme dont l'enfant est malade: il ne trouvera aucun repos avant la guérison. On peut aussi comparer ce désir à celui qu'éprouve un homme sans travail, qui va d'une maison à une autre pour se placer. On a beau lui répondre que le personnel est au complet, il revient le lendemain et demande: "Y a-t-il une place libre aujourd'hui?"

"Il existe une autre manière de trouver Dieu, c'est de Le prier ardemment. Dieu est notre propre bien. Nous devrions Lui demander: "O Dieu, quelle est Ta nature? Révèle-Toi à moi. Pour quelle autre chose m'aurais-Tu créé?"

"Des Sikhs me dirent un jour: "Dieu est plein de compassion". Je leur répondis: "Pourquoi appelez-vous Dieu compatissant? Il est notre créateur. Qu'y a-t-il de remarquable à ce qu'Il soit bon avec nous? Un père n'élève-t-il pas ses enfants? C'est

⁽¹⁾ Cours d'eau près du village natal de Sri Râmakrichna.

tout à fait naturel, et il ne peut agir autrement. Puisque Dieu est notre père et notre mère, nous devons insister dans nos prières. Quand un fils demande son héritage et refuse de prendre de la nourriture tant qu'il n'a pas obtenu ce qu'il veut, ses parents n'hésitent pas à lui donner sa part trois ans avant le jour légal. Quant un enfant désire un peu d'argent et qu'il ennuie sa mère à force de lui demander: "Maman, donne-moi deux sous, je t'en prie", la mère ne pourra pas résister longtemps devant une telle insistance. Elle finira par lui donner ce qu'il désire."

"Un des précieux avantages que nous apporte la compagnie d'un saint, c'est de nous aider à discriminer le réel de l'irréel. Dieu est réel, Il est l'éternelle substance, et le monde est irréel, c'est-à-dire transitoire. Aussitôt qu'un homme s'aperçoit que son esprit s'attache à l'irréel, il doit pratiquer la discrimination. Dès que l'éléphant dresse sa trompe pour manger des fruits dans un jardin, son cornac le frappe avec un aiguillon de fer."

Un visiteur: "Pourquoi l'homme a-t-il de mauvaises tendances?"

Sri Râmakrichna: "Il y a toutes sortes de choses dans la création de Dieu. Il a créé des bons et des méchants; Il donne les bonnes et les mauvaises tendances."

Le visiteur: "Dans ce cas, nous ne sommes pas responsables de nos péchés, n'est-ce pas?"

Sri Râmakrichna: "Le péché est suivi de pénibles conséquences, telle est la loi de Dieu. Ne vous brûlez-vous pas la langue ai vous mâchez du piment? Mathur Babu menait une vie facile dans sa jeunesse, et c'est pourquoi il a été souvent malade dans ses dernières années."

"On¹⁷⁵ ne comprend pas cela quand on est jeune. Il m'est arrivé de regarder le foyer de la cuisine dans le temple de Kâli; au début le bois humide flambe assez bien; on ne croirait pas qu'il contienne de l'eau, mais lorsque la bûche se trouve à moitié consumée, toute l'humidité se porte à l'une des extrémités; à la fin, l'eau jaillit du combustible et éteint le feu."

"Il faut être attentif aux moindres mouvements de colère, de passion et de désir. Rappelez-vous Hanuman: dans un mouvement de colère il incendia Ceylan, oubliant que Sita y demeurerait. Puis il trembla de peur dès qu'il s'aperçut que le feu pouvait atteindre le bosquet où elle se trouvait."

Le visiteur: "Pourquoi Dieu a-t-il créé les méchants?"

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Sri Râmakrichna: "Telle a été Sa volonté, Son jeu; avidya existe dans Sa maya tout autant que vidya. Sans obscurité, la gloire de la lumière ne paraîtrait pas. Il ne fait aucun doute que la colère, la convoitise et le désir soient mauvais. Mais en les créant, Dieu a rendu possible ainsi la sainteté; on ne devient un saint que par la conquête de ses sens. Une fois que les passions d'un homme sont vaincues, rien ne lui est impossible, il peut même réaliser Dieu avec l'aide de Sa Grâce. Dieu a créé la convoitise pour une autre raison: voyez comme elle permet que son jeu créateur se poursuive!"

"Les gens méchants sont nécessaires. Lorsque les fonctionnaires d'un état devinrent indisciplinés, le gouverneur dut envoyer Golak Choudhury, qui était un brigand mais un rude administrateur, pour rétablir l'ordre. Lorsqu'on prononçait son nom, tout le monde tremblait."

"Tout est nécessaire dans ce monde. Sita dit un jour à son époux: 'Râma, ce serait bien si toutes les maisons d'Ayodhya étaient des palais; il s'en trouve tellement de vieilles et délabrées.' - 'Ma bien-aimée, répondit Râma, si toutes les maisons étaient belles, que deviendraient les maçons?' Dieu a créé toutes sortes de choses, des bons arbres et des plantes vénéneuses, des animaux qui sont doux et d'autres qui sont cruels; il y a tant de créatures: des tigres, des lions, des serpents!..."

Un visiteur: "Monsieur, le chef de famille peut-il vraiment réaliser Dieu?"

Sri Râmakrichna: "Certainement, mais il faut, comme je viens de le dire, fréquenter des hommes saints et prier sans cesse. On devrait verser des larmes pour voir Dieu. On Le réalise quand les impuretés de l'esprit sont écartées. L'âme ressemble à une épingle couverte de boue; elle ne peut s'unir à l'aimant divin tant que la terre n'est pas enlevée. Ce sont les larmes qui lavent la boue de la convoitise, de la colère, du désir, de toutes les tendances qui nous portent vers les joies de ce monde. Dès que la boue est lavée, l'aimant attire l'aiguille, l'homme réalise Dieu. Seul un coeur pur peut voir Dieu. Un homme qui a la fièvre souffre d'un excès d'eau dans son organisme; la quinine ne lui sera d'aucune aide, tant que la fièvre ne sera pas tombée."

"Pourquoi¹⁷⁶ ne pourrait-on réaliser Dieu dans cette vie? Il faut aller de temps à autre dans la solitude et pleurer pour obtenir la grâce de Dieu. Les fleurs qui bordent un chemin doivent être protégées par des clôtures; sinon, le bétail les détruit".

Le visiteur: "Les chefs de famille jouiront donc aussi de la vision de Dieu?"

Sri Râmakrichna: "Tout le monde sera libéré, mais il faut bien suivre les instructions du

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guru. Si l'on s'égaré sur un mauvais sentier, ce n'est pas sans peine que l'on retrouve le chemin que l'on devait suivre. Il faut beaucoup de temps pour atteindre la libération; un homme peut ne pas l'obtenir dans cette vie et devra renaître de nombreuses fois. Certains sages comme Janaka accomplissaient leur devoir dans ce monde, tout en demeurant attentifs à la présence de Dieu dans leur coeur. Une danseuse peut tenir en équilibre sur sa tête un pot ou un plateau, et danser en même temps. N'avez-vous pas remarqué comme les femmes du nord-ouest de l'Inde parlent et rient, tout en maintenant sur leur tête des pots d'eau?"

Le visiteur: "Vous dites qu'il faut suivre les instructions du guru, mais comment peut-on le trouver?"

Sri Râmakrichna: "Tout le monde ne peut être guru. Un énorme radeau peut porter des animaux en grand nombre, mais une faible planche s'enfonce dans l'eau dès qu'un homme monte dessus, et il se noie".

"Lorsque Dieu S'incarne, Il devient guru pour transmettre l'enseignement à l'humanité. Sat-Chit-Ananda est en vérité le seul guru".

"Qu'est la connaissance? Quelle est la nature de l'ego? - Dieu seul agit et personne d'autre; voilà la connaissance. Je ne suis pas Celui qui agit, je suis un instrument dans Sa main. 'O Mère! Tu es l'habitant et je suis la maison; Tu es le conducteur et je suis le char; chacun de mes gestes, c'est Toi qui le fais; je parle selon la parole que Tu me fais dire. Pas moi, pas moi, mais Toi".

De la maison de Pankrishna, le Maître se rendit à celle du colonel Viswanath, et ensuite à Lily Cottage.

ROVING¹⁷⁷ SOUTH by

Willard Price

1) Whether the tube should be put into the nose or the mouth. "Either will do". "How do you know when to use it?" "When you feel as if someone were sitting on your chest". A bobby-soxer who had said she loved planes because the chewing gum was always so good complained, "Steward, I put it into my nose, but nothing happens". "You must press the button". Upon pressing the button, a strong tingling draft surged down the throat, and the crowded feeling of the lungs was immediately relieved.

A woman in the corner was gasping in the throes of soroche, mountain sickness, induced by the altitude. All of us panted a bit over our meal. We had been higher than this in planes. But, sitting still in a heated plane at 15,000 feet may not bother even a cardiac case who would be acutely uncomfortable moving about at 8,000. Our heads

felt as heavy as barrels, and there was a try-to-escape sensation in the chest. The none too palatable meal was made less so by slight nausea due to the failure of the heart to pump enough blood to the brain. We felt the truth of Dr Victor Heifer's finding that at a given altitude the load on the heart is greater in the tropics.

2) He must go away from the equator to get warm-south to the lowland city of Guayaquil. Even there, though the noon temperature may be in the eighties, one relishes a topcoat in the early morning any time of the year. Of course, all seasons are alike and the hours of daylight and dark vary little. Even at sea, the equator is a cold line. Passengers on ships coming south are surprised to have to add one layer after another of clothing as they approach Latitude Zero. At night there are calls for extra blankets. The icy Humboldt Current pouring up from the Antarctic is responsible for the tarnished reputation of the equator in these parts.

3) We get along, but tire easily, and have to watch out for the altitude diseases, verruga and uta. The most frequent trouble is with the digestion. You see, it takes two or three hours more for your meal to digest up here.

4) The largest foreign colony in Peru is the Japanese colony, numbering 25,000 pure Japanese and another 25,000 Peru-Japanese. The Japanese make their appeal to the Indians. They realize that however downtrodden the Indian may be today, they constitute the future ruling force in Peru and Bolivia, as they already are in Mexico.

OTHER SIDE OF THE MOUNTAIN by James Ullman

1) On the fourth morning out the sea had turned from green to blue; the officers appeared in white, and the sun in splendor – the warm wind of the Caribbean came rolling down the decks. At noon we raised San Salvador.

2) King Neptune, we learned to our disappointment, does not hold court on the Grace Line (1939) ships. A few years ago, it seems, a Peruvian passenger was forced into the roughhouse against his will, duly lathered, shaved and ducked, and subsequently sued the Line for the indignities he had suffered-and won the case. Since then the Grace people have played safe.

3) During the night we had rounded Cape Blanco, westernmost point of the South American continent, and by morning were well into the Humboldt Current. Although we were less than five degrees south of the equator it was cooler than at any time in the voyage since we had passed the latitude of Hatteras.

4) One thing, however, is apparent even to the casual observer the political and social future of Peru will be determined on the battleground of communism versus fascism. And whichever wins, there will be a dictator. There always has been, whether

he bear the name of Presidente, Libertador or Inca.

5) The old argument about the quality of the local drinking water rages violently and eternally in Lima, as it does in every tropical city in the world. There are gringos who drink the tapwater regularly and swear it is as pure as the fountains of Peneus, and there are others who would rather shake hands with a leper than even brush their teeth in it. The Peruvian bottled waters are Chuquitanta, which is stale and flat, and Aqua Jesus, which is Pluto-esque both in taste and effect. Having tried them both, I soon determined to throw in my lot with the bacteria au naturelle as the least of three evils.

6) The odds are only two to one against its being a holiday; an American with a statistical bent recently computed that of the year's 365 days, 103, including the 52 Sundays, are full fiestas and another 70, including the 52 Saturdays, are half fiestas. Added up, the result seems to be that the Peruvian business man and the visiting gringo, whatever their other perils from occupational diseases, are in no danger of collapse from overwork. Just what causes the holidays no one seems to know.

7) The¹⁷⁸ Peruvian breakfast is scant, after the continental pattern, and by the time lunch arrives the citizenry are ready to do it full justice. Tea comes along between five and six, terminating in time for the big event of Lima's social day: the six-thirty movie show, known locally as the vermouth. No amount of money, influence or graft can buy you a dinner in Lime earlier than nine o'clock.

8) First, as to Chosica. At the time of my visit it was quiet and almost deserted. The valley in which it is situated is perhaps half a mile wide. Below, to the west, it opens up rapidly into the coastal plain immediately to the east it narrows and climbs abruptly, as the Andes begin to grow and overpower it. Situated almost exactly at the point where the foothills may be said to become mountains. Chosica's enclosing ridges are perhaps two thousand feet and above its streets farther back are peaks which look to be about twice as high and at the head of the valley, seeming to close it tight as one comes up from below, is a still larger, pyramidal mountain that rears to some ten thousand feet above the sea. It looked like good climbing. Now, as to the Quinta Morris. Quinta means pension and Morris means the name of the lady who runs it.

9) "Is it true what they say about Dixie?" inquired Chosica's municipal loudspeaker every morning at nine, and thereupon settled down to a day of broadcasting old phonograph records. Phonograph and loudspeaker were located in the village plaza, and both were good and rusty, and good and loud. They seemed, however, to be Chosica's pride and joy.

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10) For loafing, for writing, for tramping the hills, for chewing the contemplative cud, Chosica was a pleasant place. Once I had learned to step over, instead of into, the ascquis (the stone irrigation ditches which line every street), walking was a delight, either through the three-shaded town itself, or up the valley to where the mountains begin to bristle, or down the valley to the neighboring village of-believe it or not-Moron. There were a hundred dogs to every human inhabitant, but even the oldest resident did not recall having ever seen one of a recognizable breed. They were all loose, all ferocious-looking, and all barked at you as you passed; but they didn't bite, apparently.

11) With few exceptions, the Peruvian cholo is fabulously poor. He dwells in a hut of mud and bamboo, eats rice, corn and black bread.

12) Communism has both problem of the Church to contend with, as it has in all Latin countries, and the far more serious and deep-rooted obstacle of Peruvian family solidarity. The Peruvian Indian is a man of many brothers, sisters, cousins, uncles, aunts. Socially and economically they comprise the permanent foundation of his life, far more than either Church or State, and any new social order which would embrace him must take this situation into consideration. This and his ignorance, and his long centuries in the tradition of slavery "Arise, ye prisoners of starvation"

13) All weak it had rained farther up in the mountains in the late afternoon, but never here. We sat in cloudless sunlight, watching the long sheets of rain in the east and hearing the distant thunder ricochet from peak to peak. In its tight little valley Chosica was a tight little world.

14) Among the quinta's habitues, was Bryan Fawcett, son of the well-known Colonel Fawcett who disappeared into Brazil's Matto Grosso some ten years ago and has never been heard of since. The younger Fawcett lives in Lima permanently, working as a commercial artist. Even today, he said, he is approached regularly by individuals or groups who want him to lead,-or better, finance-expeditions in search of his father. But he is convinced his father is dead and turns them all down.

15) In addition to these, stray transients occasionally came and went, and for days before each scheduled arrival the quinta was agog. Would he (invariably it was a "he") be handsome, charming, amusing? Or fat and feeble-minded? Which room should he have? With whom should he sit at table? How was his ping-pong game? Trivial, ridiculour excitement, yet natural and understandable in view of the smallness of the community, the interdependence of its members and the isolation of their lives.

16) I have spoken of ping-pong, but I have not mentioned swimming, tennis, contract bridge, cocktails, dice. There were all of them at Chosica-far too much of them, in fact; especially the last two. The games played vary greatly, but all of them have a

single purpose-to consume as much time as possible. That's the one thing the Peruvian, the resident gringo and the turista have plenty of-Time.

17) The¹⁷⁹ Andes round about Chosica, through which I tramped, were by no means formidable specimens-mere foothills compared to the snow-capped peaks of the high sierra to the east. The tallest of them was perhaps seven thousand feet above the village, or about ten thousand above sea level, and any of them, within range of sight could be reached by a day's steady climbing.

18) There had been happenings back at Chosica. There was an earthquake, through which I slept, a minor revolution which none of us knew about until we read the next day's newspapers, and a dirumbi on the railroad, which we denizens of the quinta attended en masse. A dirumbi is the onomatopoeic Spanish word for a landslide, and the Ferrocarril Central makes a specialty of them-especially at the beginning of the rainy season in the sierra when the Andean peaks develop a weakness for sliding off into their valleys. This particular slide had occurred just a few miles above Chosica and was discovered by the operator of the handcar which was proceeding the daily down-bound train from Oroya. (On the Central these handcars-or gravity-cars-are always sent along the track a mile or so in advance of the trains coming down for the express purpose of watching out for landslides or fallen boulders. The train itself, coasting down the steep grades, would be unable to stop in time to avoid disaster.)

19) Lima had, in our absence, adopted its summer schedule of business hours: 9 to 12 AM: 5 to 7 PM.

20) The identification cards we possessed were valid only for Lima and environs, and it was necessary to secure new ones for the montana, the Ucayali, Iquitos, unsoweiter.

21) The Peruvian provincial hotel is an institution hardly calculated to warm the heart of the traveler. It is not that the accommodations are primitive, the furniture rudimentary, the plumbing non-existent (one does not look for luxury in the backwoods), but that they are dirty, frowy and bug-ridden.

22) Beyond a doubt the most pernicious and least controlled disease with which tropical South America is cursed at the present time is hookworm. It is caused by tiny worms which penetrate the skin of the feet from the soil, and in regions of hot temperatures and rainfall its incidence is seldom less than sixty percent and sometimes as high as ninety-five percent of the entire population. Seldom directly fatal, its ravages are none the less terrible. A dozen times during our passage through Amazonia we

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were warned by our more experienced fellow-travelers not to walk barefoot on the earth-not even for a distance of a few yards.

23) The Peruvian Indians may love godliness well enough, they most certainly do not love its officially appointed neighbor at all. We were tired, but not quite tired enough to share our mattresses with the entire vermin population of Latin America.

24) The term "Chunchos" is loosely used in Peru to designate any or all of the Indians of the montana, as distinguished from the Andean Indians-the descendants of the Incas-who are called "Indios" or simply "cholos". Spread through the whole eastern half of the of the country, these Chunchos are divided into many tribes, differing one from the other in many of their characteristics and customs, but all of the same general stock and appearance. Whereas the Incaic Indian of the mountains is apt to be short and shriveled, these jungle aborigines are usually tall and heavily built, the women in particular often inclining to fatness. And whereas the former, through centuries of virtual slavery-first to the Incas, then to the whites-has become docile and almost cringing, the latter, whose contact with civilization has been negligible, are usually independent in spirit and manner. In the early days of colonization in the montana, they offered fierce resistance to the intruding whites.

25) Carnival, the great midsummer festival of Peru, is celebrated each year on the first Sunday, Monday and Tuesday in February. During this period virtually all work is suspended, and it is de rigueur to wear fancy dress, dance in the streets, and hurl water, flour or perform-filled balloons at anyone you choose, preferably a member of the opposite sex.

26) Hammock-sleeping is not an innate human accomplishment, like breathing or walking, but an art that must be acquired-sometimes painfully. It is very easy to tie the ropes so that one end-usually the head-crashes to the deck as one is just falling asleep. It is also easy to fall out, and if one is a particularly good faller, not only fall out but overboard. Sleeping lengthwise along the hammock is no good; it results in jack-knifing, with the head and feet high and the backside out of sight in the depths. The proper position is to lie crosswise at a 45⁰ angle, which, through some law of physics known only to hammock-manufacturer keeps the body in a more or less horizontal position.

The Life of a Yogi

By GILBERT HIGHET¹⁸⁰

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PROBABLY you have never met a yogi; perhaps you have never even seen one; conceivably you may not know what a yogi is and does. Of course there is Yogi Berra, the all-purpose baseball player; and if you have followed the rich development of his character and his career, you may recall that he used to practice certain complicated physical exercises, called yoga disciplines, which were claimed to have a tranquilizing effect on his deeper and more turbulent emotions. (Why standing on one's head should produce psychical harmony I cannot imagine, for I have high blood pressure, and feel furious even after tying my shoe laces; after standing inverted against the wall for five minutes I should certainly explode in an angry red splash; but no doubt different temperaments need different methods of control.)

There are others too, both in India, where yoga was invented, and in the Western world, who cultivate this curious form of psycho-physical training. Occasionally we see their pictures, upside down with their heads on the floor and their body centers pulsing. They look as strange to us as we must look to them, downside down with our feet on the floor and our intestines dragging. But they seem to have at least two qualities which are less widely distributed in the world than they ought to be: physical health, and moral self-control.

A yogi is a man who teaches and practices yoga successfully. According to one definition, yoga is a method of attaining union with God: not in the hereafter – when we shall presumably be set free from our miserable, mundane limitations of body and spirit – but now, in this world, in our present life. I must say by way of preface and warning that I know nothing, nothing whatever directly, about this peculiar mystical way of life. I have always been vaguely interested in it; but I should never have known anything of it, even at second-hand, if I had not read the *Autobiography of a Yogi*. This book is published¹⁸¹ by a society which was founded by a yogi, an immigrant from India to the United States. It is called the Self-Realization Fellowship. The author signed it not by his original given name, but by his religious title, Paramhansa Yogananda, which (in one of the Indian languages) is said to mean The Supreme Swan who attains Bliss through Union with God.

The book is quite often advertised in the book sections of the newspapers for the Self-Realization Fellowship appears to be well endowed, and to be passionately convinced of the importance of its founder, Paramhansa Yogananda. Put it down to my

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weakness, or to my overwork, or to my worldliness, that I should never have paid any attention to it if the publishers had not sent me several copies at intervals. I glanced at the first two or three copies, and then gave them away. Yet something about them stayed in my mind; and, when the next copy arrived, I read it and thought about it. Its contents were unlike anything I had read for a long time (and that is a strong recommendation to any literary critic); and its paper jacket was interesting, because it had a photograph of someone who looked like one of the best schoolmistresses in my old school: Miss Agnes Colquhoun, I still remember her, with her oval face, her large deep soft eyes, her long black wavy hair, and her full soft lips. It was not a picture of Miss Colquhoun. It was a picture of the Yogi; and yet even that fact was curious and interesting. So was the book.

Most yogis appear to have one single and continuous career. They mature, attain enlightenment, and live in a small hermitage or an isolated cave in the Hindu areas of the Indian peninsula, teaching any pupils who come to them and who appear to be worthy of their attention. But this particular yogi started his career in India and then moved far away to teach among foreigners; he died in self-chosen exile. Yogis, like all inward-looking, spiritual men and women, think that their emotional and moral development is far more important than their physical and social experience: so Paramhansa, the author of his autobiography, tells us a great deal about religious doctrines imparted to him by others, and miracles which happened to him and his friends, and interviews with extraordinary practitioners of mysticism; but he is quite casual about giving his own vital statistics, and totally omits (or at least minimizes) many facts which would be highly important for a normal extrovert's life. (Thus, he spends twelve pages on an interview with a Hindu woman who gave up eating at the age of 12 after being reproached by her mother-in-law for gluttony, and neither ate food nor drank water for fifty-six years: but he tells us scarcely anything about the four years he himself spent in poverty at the beginning for his mission.) This makes the book difficult, or at least confusing to read: it is like a mixture of William James's *Varieties of Religious Experience* with some chapters of St. Augustine's *Confessions*. Still, it is all flavored with the bland India butter and the sweet India honey.

The external facts of the yogi's life can be extracted from his book. They make an interesting pattern. He was born in 1893 in northern India. His father was an executive on one of the British-Indian railroads. The family name was Ghosh; the future yogi was Mukunda Lal Ghosh; Like many Indians during that period, he had a double education: his parents tried to make him a Britisher, and he gently made himself a Hindu without bitterness, and indeed with a touch of charming humor, he explains that he attended the Scottish Church College and (after that) a branch of Calcutta University; but that he graduated only by several real personal miracles. (No wonder: one of the questions he had to answer was to trace on the map the entire route of Byron's romantic traveler, Childe Harold.) In the meantime, he was spending the greater part of every day with an Indian teacher, Sri Yukteswar Giri, preferring his oral instruction to the English books

and lectures, sometimes passing the entire night in his house, and once sleeping in his bed.

After graduating, young Ghosh must have wondered what he was to do with his life. His father wanted him to become an official in the British administrative system; he rejected that idea, gently but firmly. Some of the Indian revolutionaries invited him to join their cause, and to use German guns and bullets to separate India from the British Empire; he rejected that also, thinking that violence was tactically useless and morally wrong. During the¹⁸² First World War, he suffered vicariously for the men who were engaged: he even records a dream in which he experienced the agony and death of a naval officer on a battleship sunk by heavy fire—an officer, German or British, Russian or Japanese or French, who knows? In the midst of all the destruction he determined to do something positive. He opened a school for boys. It must have been a strange place. Apparently he tried to adapt the principles of yoga (usually considered a difficult enough discipline for grown-up men) to children: he says that tiny boys would sit for hours in meditative positions, endeavoring to come closer to the essence of God. The Institution was largely supported by an Indian Maharajah. However, it did not give Ghosh sufficient scope for his talents. He determined to enlarge his career.

He left India on the first ship to sail after the First World War, and went to America with money supplied by his father. There, in Boston, he attended a Congress of Religions—apparently as a delegate representing himself. He stayed in the United States for the rest of his life. After lecturing and writing up and down the country, he established a group of his own, the Self-Realization Fellowship, in Los Angeles: this was in the year 1925, when he was at the crucial age of 32. In his autobiography he says little of how the place was organized, how it was financed, and what was taught there—doubtless because he thinks that finance is unimportant and that the teachings are (in the exact sense) esoteric. He does, however, spend much space on describing a world tour he made in 1935. He spent a day with the Scottish music-hall singer Harry Lauder, and went on in due course to visit the stigmatist Therese Neumann. He was accompanied by a male secretary and “an elderly lady from Cincinnati [called] Miss Ettie Bletch.” (I am not making this up.) After his return to California, Paramhansa lived and taught happily until 1952, when, after making a speech at a banquet honoring the Indian Ambassador to the United States, he left his earthly body. (According to a statement from a Los Angeles undertaker, his body remained without signs of corruption for many days.)

Now, externally, this is not unlike the biography of many other teachers and scholars who have come to the United States during the present century to lecture, to

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write books, and (if they were lucky) to find a permanent position and form a group of followers.

But, internally, the life of this yogi is peculiar because of its central motives. He was not out for money or comfort or even recognition. He seems quite sincerely, to have thought all these things totally unimportant. What he was trying to do was to assert two very strange theories. The first of these theories was personal, and involved his own qualifications. Suppose someone had questioned him at the end of a public lecture, and asked, "Why should we listen to you? Who are you? Are you anything more than a half-educated Bengali, who balked at government work, failed at teaching, and then came to America to prey on the gullible?" What would Paramhansa have answered? I think he would have said nothing, because he despised hostility and hated conflict with the unenlightened; but to the enlightened he would have explained (as he does in this autobiography) that he was the latest (though not the last) of a succession of exalted spiritual teachers who lived far above the ordinary plane of existence and were in regular communion with Almighty God. Before Paramhansa there was his teacher Sri Yukteswar Giri, who died in 1936; before him, Yukteswar's teacher, Lahiri Mahasaya, who "gave up his body" in 1895; and before him, a mysterious character known as Babaji, who is stated to be virtually immortal, having already existed for centuries, and to have been the modern founder, or revealer, of yoga. Babaji, says the author of this book, has performed many miracles, and has appeared in visionary form to several of his pupils. Therefore, the first theory of Paramhansa was that he was the chief representative and earthly leader of a sort of supernatural church, with a superhuman founder.

The second theory he implies, rather than states. Although he preached that all religions were more or less equivalent, although he spoke sympathetically of Christianity and Mohammedanism, although he stated that the mission imposed upon him by Babaji was "to point out the basic unity of the Christian and the Vedic scriptures," yet in fact most of his teaching (at least as it appears in print) was aimed at¹⁸³ proving that Indian religion, Indian theology, Indian mysticism, and Indian civilization generally were central, basic, and superior to all others: that they should not be questioned, while others ought to be interpreted through them. For instance, there is one obvious and important difference. Christians, Jews, and Moslems believe in one God and one only. Hindus believe in many; and there are pictures of several Hindu gods, different in aspect and personality, in the yogi's book. But Paramhansa never tried, it would seem, to explain the difference, or to suggest which of the two beliefs was right. Strange Hindu doctrines he professed to discover in the Jewish and Christian Bible. For instance, he asserted that Jesus and St. John the Baptist were reincarnations of Elisha and Elijah. His most important convert, an American insurance

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man named James Lynn, actually turned into a Hindu mystic, took the Indian name of Rajasi Janakananda, and was photographed sitting half-naked on a California beach, with his eyes closed and a beatific smile on his face, having attained mystical union with God through the long practice of yoga.

The church was Hindu. The teaching, although it made polite gestures to other religions, was basically Hindu. Paramhansa was therefore a significant phenomenon. Having been educated (unwillingly) at Christian and Western school, he resisted what he felt to be Western dominance. He became a Hindu missionary to convert Christians to a higher form of Hinduism. If you have read the autobiography of Gandhi, you will recall that, when he was a young man in Britain, he endeavored to remake himself completely, to transform himself from a Hindu to a Westerner: he tried to learn to waltz, and had himself photographed wearing a top hat and a tail coat. But at last he determined that his nature and his mission were completely different from that: he became the man we remember, wearing the plainest homespun Hindu clothing and sitting at a primitive spinning wheel. As Toynbee might put it, his response to the challenge of the West was not to try to beat the Westerners at their own game, but to play that game which, by birth and training, was his own.

The career of the Yogi Paramhansa seems to me to have been inspired by the same challenge, evoking a similar response. Gandhi and Yogananda were not the first to answer the Western challenge in this way. (In fact, I wonder if the "miraculous" revelation of yoga by Babaji, which took place in 1861, was not a spiritual response to the Indian Mutiny, which lasted from 1857 to 1859, and which, although using violence and Western weapons, failed.) Gandhi Yogananda were not the first; and most assuredly they will not be the last.

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