JOURNEY THROUGH THIS WORLD

The Second Journal of a Pupil

Including an account of meetings with G. I. Gurdjieff, A. R. Orage and P. D. Ouspensky

by

C. S. NOTT

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CONTENTS

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He who would valliant he
'gainst all disaster
Let him in constancy
Follow the Master.
There's no discouragement
Shall make him once relent
His first avowed intent
To he a pilgrim.

John Bunyan

LIST OF PLATES

TO THE READER

IN THIS, my second journal, are related some events of my life from 1926 to 1949, in Europe and America—the old world and the new—my outer and my inner life, particularly those cormected with GurdjiefF, Orage and Ouspensky. It is a relation of some of my actions, feelings and thoughts.

As John Bunyan says, our life is a pilgrimage through the wilderness of this world. It is as if we were sent, each on his own path, to be given an opportunity to extract certain experiences which, given a real Teaching, we can use for our own self-perfecting.

Pilgrim's Progress is a wonderful analogy of what is sometimes called the 'Work'. I myself, after years of seeking, foimd what I wanted and needed in Gurdjieff's teaching; and, having found it, I realized that the pilgrimage had begim. There are a thousand obstacles—our own inertia, education, upbringing and so on. Always there is the Slough of Despond and the sometimes long periods of depression; the crossing of arid emotional deserts; the climbing of the Hill Difficulty with its slidings down and slow crawls up again; periods of sleep and forgetting; periods of remorse of conscience and self-reproach; attacks by the devils of resentment, jealousy and anger—the offspring of vanity and self-love; l^eriods of rest and relaxation. And there is the compensation: those tare moments of the beatific vision, of understanding, of higher consciousness and power, which are worth everything; the presence of God to cheer us in our state. And always in the distance the Celestial Gity—^fmal self-perfection.

Yet I can say that, with all the strivings and struggles and set-backs, the runs of good luck and bad luck, the disillusionments, the experiencing of almost all that ordinary life can offer, never for one moment have I doubted that for me the Teaching, in whatever form it is given, is the only Way out of the labyrinth that we call life; and that for me, Gurdjieff's interpretation of the Teaching is the Way.

C. S. Nott
Sydney, N.S.W. 1962
Chesham, Bucks 1967

PROLOGUE

SOON AFTER OUSPENSKY'S DEATH GurdjiefF's health began to fail and in eighteen months he had gone, yet right up to the end he made great efforts, talking to people, holding classes for new movements and dances, and interviewing pupils from England and America. He knew that his work was finished and gave instructions to his oldest pupil.

In early October, 1949, my wife went to Paris to see Gurdjieff. When she returned she said that he was very ill and had been advised to go into hospital, or at least rest from his strenuous activities. He had refused. He knew, better than the doctors, that his organism, his planetary body, could not last much longer, and that he must soon die, and that he must work as long as possible; and he continued to see people and direct the sacred dances.

I went to Dorset to try to get my house-building fmished, and lived as usual in my lonely hut on the downs. On the 29th of October 1949, (m die morning, there was a knocking on my door. A neighbour had 'come from half a mile away with a message from my wife that Mr. Gurdjieff had died.

The man to whom I owed almost everything of value I possessed, who had been my, so to say, centre of gravity for more than twenty years, had gone, and would never come again. I wept. Yet not as I had *when Orage died; his death was premature and a great shock. GurdjiefF's was foreseen, his work was done. I wept from tenderness and gratitude, from a realization of the transient nature of our bodily life on this planet, our mortality.

I packed up and took the train to London and the same evening went to France by the night boat and was in Paris the next morning, and Went straight to the chapel in the American hospital where his body iwas lying. The little chapel was filled with people standing round,

everyone perfectly still. As some quietly went out others came in. Watchers had been there day and night since his death and each stood for one, two hours, three hours. Strong vibrations filled the place, arising from the quiet collected state of those who stood there. And there seemed also to be emanations or radiations from the corpse itself.

There was an atmosphere of conscious love and reverence, of worship, and although some could not prevent tears flowing there was no agonizing grief, or weeping and wailing. It was utterly peaceful, as if everyone realized that Gurdjieff had finished his work and completed his essential existence on this planet.

After three days, at a certain time, those who were still in the chapel went quietly out, each kissing the cold forehead of the dead man. Only the bearers, some men pupils, were left. And now occurred an incident which no doubt would have made Gurdjieff smile, since he used to say that even in his most serious moments he would joke. The body would not go into the coffin—it was too big.

So, while everyone waited in the Russian Cathedral in the Rue Daru, another coffin was sent for. Then we got into the hearse and were driven to the Cathedral. It was crowded with pupils—French, English and American. Gurdjieff once said that a funeral ceremony is not important; what is necessary is to put the planetary body away decently and in order—it is no more the being who formerly existed; and the soul, if the being had a soul, is already gone.

Gurdjieff's funeral, though impressive on account of the number of pupils who filled the church, was really simple, yet accompanied by the beautiful ritual and singing of the Russian church.

The following is taken 6om the liturgy:

'O Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy upon us.

'Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

'In peace let us pray unto the Lord.

'Lord have mercy.

'For the peace that is from above and for the salvation of our souls let us pray to the Lord.

'For the remission of sins of him who hath departed this life in blessed memory, let us pray to the Lord.

'For the ever memorable servant of God, George Gurdjieff, for his repose and tranquillity and blessed memory, let us pray to the Lord,

'That he will pardon him every transgression whether voluntary or involuntary.

'O God of Spirits and of all flesh, who hast trampled do-wn death and overthrown the devil and given life to the world, do thou, O Lord, give rest to the soul of thy departed servant George Gurdjieff in a place of brightness, a place of verdure, a place of repose, whence all sickness sorrow and sighing have fled away. Pardon every transgression which he has committed, whether by thought, word or deed. For thou art a good God and lovest mankind; because there is no man who liveth and does not sin, thou only art without sin, and thy righteousness is to all eternity and thy word is true.

'Of a truth all things are vanity and life is but a shadow and a dream. For in vain doth everyone who is bom of earth disquiet himself As saith the Scriptures, when we have acquired the world then do we take up oiu: abode in the grave where kings and beggars lie down together, ^^erefore, O Christ our God, give rest to thy servant departed this life, forasmuch as thou lovest mankind.

'Give rest eternal in blessed falling asleep, O Lord, to the soul of thy servant George Gurdjieff, departed this life, and make his memory eternal.

'Memory Eternal!

'Memory Eternal!'

After a pause, the priest began:

'Among the people who are assembled here today to do homage to the memory of George Gurdjieff are not only the people of our own Russian Orthodox Church but French men and women also, and many English and Americans, who undeterred by long distances flew over %iind and sea to look on the beloved features for the last time and to pay their fmal tribute.

'This shows how large and widespread is the circle of those who venerated this quite exceptional man and how great was his significance for all who knew him.

'George Ivanitch Gurdjieff was bom in Alexandropol near the borders of Persia and came of a very religious family. His father, a man of unusual perception and intellect, attracted around him persons of a similar kind. Among them was the priest of the local church, a highly educated man revered by all the people of the coxmtryside. This man aroused in the son of his friend his first interest in the ancient sayings of the East, sayings which were not only written but handed down by word of mouth. He also implanted in him certain truths which G. L Gurdjieff retained for the whole of his life, a life of imending search.

For Religion is the spiritual mother of a man and a man must be faithful to her unto death. At the same time there are scattered in the world pearls of wisdom and it is necessary to know how to find them. In his youth Mr. GurdjiefF went to Persia where he came in contact with some ancient men who were venerated by the local inhabitants as sages or wise men. Later he met with an elderly man, Prince K. and with him was able to penetrate the very remote parts of Asia. During their common searching, Mr. GurdjiefF discovered certain ancient esoteric teachings, heard ancient rehgious music and saw sacred dances which were exercises for the all-round development of man. Having found what he sought he went to Europe and dedicated the remainder of his life to the transmission of his knowledge, first to a few chosen individuals and later to larger and larger groups of people.

'Books concerning Mr. GurdjiefF and his work have already appeared in America and England. The books coming from his own hand and which contain the essence of his teachings number many volumes and are his last gift to humanity.

'Let us conclude with his ovm words: "O God Creator, and all you who are his helpers, may we always and in everything 'remember ourselves', because only by this can we be prevented from taking unconscious steps, which alone lead to evil." '

There followed a long silence, then, one by one, people went past the bier, making a brief pause, some crossing themselves, some genuflecting, passing out of the church to the waiting cars and coaches. The cortege slowly moved off, passing by the apartment in the Rue des Colonels Renard and so on to the main road to Fontainebleau-Avon. Here the hearse put on speed and on the rough stretches the wreaths and bunches of flowers round the coffin began dancing up and down.

I was sitting next to Foma de Hartmann. He asked about the delay in getting to the Cathedral, and when I explained about the coffin he smiled, and pointed to the dancing wreaths. 'I think,' he said, 'that if Georgivanitch could know about this, he would laugh.'

Gurdjieff was buried near his mother and his wife and brother. As we left the cemetery I thought of what he had said after the funeral of his brother Dimitri: 'Ceremony not important. Now let's have a picnic.'

I did not return at once to Paris, but went with some friends to the Prieure. On the stone gate-post was a notice that Katherine Mansfield had hved there; nothing about Gurdjieff. I rang the bell and said that I had stayed there many times and might we look round. We were asked

in. It was sixteen years since I had been there, and everything was the same, but changed. It was now a *maison de sante.* Where die Study House had been were now rooms for patients, and Paradou had been re-built. The forest and the gardens were still the same, and on the road were the heaps of stones that we had put there nearly twenty years before, and the place where I had dug for the spring of, for me, hving water, had not changed.

We drove back to Gurdjieff's apartment in Paris, where a big feast of dehcious food had been prepared, with armagnac and wine. And soon all were dispersed: English, French, Americans, each to his own town or country. Gurdjieff was dead, his planetary body buried. Yet what was real of Gurdjieff (that which was so much more real than his planetary body) still existed somewhere in the universe.

By his conscious labours and voluntary suffering he had perfected himself Compared with all the men I have known he was, as Orage said, a walking god—a superman in the real sense.

But his teaching remains—^his writings, his dances and his music, and these can be a source of real good for human beings now and in the future.

Nothing is here for tears, nothing to wail
Or knock the brest, no weakness, no contempt,
Dispraise or blame, nothing but well and fair.
And what may quiet us in a death so noble.

BOOK I

ENGLAND

THE COMMERCIAL TRAVELLER

AS I SAID in my first *Journal of a Pupil,* one of the results of completing my task in the forest at the Chateau du Prieure (or The Institute for &e Harmonious Development of Man) at Fontainebleau was that my relations with GurdjieFF and others from that time began to be on another level. But no one who is trying to work on himself can stay long in the same place. As GurdjieFF said, strength and xmderstandmg come 'Httle by Httle', 'by patience and perseverance': 'Each day a drop, a drop. It vnll take you years, centuries, lives perhaps'.

We had spent the winter of nineteen twenty-seven and -eight in Montmorency and had seen a great deal of GurdjieFF, but it had been a winter of stresses and strains.

In spring we drove with a friend to Sanary, a quiet little fishing vSiage near Toulon. In May I left my family in Sanary and returned to the Prieure, where I -vC'as severely censured by GurdjieFF for some stupid things I had imconsciously done, and for which I suffered remorse of conscience.

In the early summer of 1928 I returned to London and took a flat in Belsize Sqtiare. Though still burning from the effects of GurdjieFF's reproof, I thought over the events of the past year and saw how useful tibe time had been, how much I had learnt, and how, becoming 'a young man' as G. said, I had attained a measure of responsibility.

In London I found myself in a strange economic situation. When, in 1923,1 sold my interest in die agency for the firm of Austrian felt manuiicturers I said to myself, 'Thank God I've left the hat business for ^r.' However, God, it seems, had other plans. During my life three Vocations had drawn me—the hat business, farming and books. Now,

I was drawn to books, to publishing or printing, but, try as I might, not a door would open. Both my father and brother had large hat factories, and eventually, through them, I was offered the job of starting an agency for another Austrian manufacturer. Part of me fought against it but the pay and prospects were very good and I reluctantly accepted. The Austrian was one of these clever, sharp, scheming men, with a smooth 'kind' exterior, of whom the Russians say: 'He will make you a soft bed but you wiU fmd it hard to Ue upon,' and I had been warned by those in the trade that he had a reputation for 'not dehvering up to sample'—when the order was deHvered it was not of the quality of the samples he had shown—and his business had suffered. Also, they said, he had had agents before, and as soon as they got business going he would fmd a pretext for getting rid of them to save paying them commission. This man had two large factories in Austria where the famous velours hoods, or cones, were made from the fmest fur of the hare and sold to the English manufacturers, who made hats for men and women from them.

So, for the third time, I became both an agent and a commercial traveller, repeating in my life something that my essence loathed, but that had been forced on me by circumstances and family associations. Yet there are types who love this job of going 'cap in hand' to the buyers and wheedling orders out of them. When I had 'travelled' before the 1914 war in my father's business it had literally made me ill. Now I was again faced with it and all the added associations. An agent is a low, though necessary, form of commercial life; he neither produces like the manufacturer nor risks capital in stock as the merchant does. He has only to rent an office and, like Charles Dickens's Boots and Brewer, 'go about'. Like the professional match-maker he has to appear smart and adopt a smirking personality; he must be polite and ingratiating, ready to receive snubs and insults without wincing. Better, I thought, to be a stall-holder in the Portobello Road market, who is at least himself and had not to put on airs.

Though the job was foreign to *me,* yet perhaps it was according to my fate, or destiny; anyway, it was in my path and I reahzed that I could do it either in a state of resentment and frustration or try to do it consciously as a task. I asked myself: 'What is the good of the work I've done with Gurdjieff if I don't make use of it in life? Here is a wonderful opportunity to work out in practice what I have been taught. I must not perform the task as an amateur, but do it as well as the professionals and even better; I must play the role of a commercial traveller; in so

•doing I may work out this design in the pattern of my life which has always been so distasteful to me.' So I plunged into business and managed to play the role not too badly.

; I slipped once, when the Austrian and I called on a rich manufacturer in the West End, who began to expound to us the mysteries of the millinery trade, with himself as a very clever fellow in the matter of women's hats, who had built up a wonderful business. "Watching him, I was thinking, "What an empty man; with all his money and power over his employees, inside of him there is nothing but wind.' Suddenly, he caught my eye and stopped. 'Look at old Nott there,' he said. 'He's a philosopher. He looks right through you and knows all about you.' ' As a matter of fact,' I hed, 'I was so interested in what you were saying that I could not take my eyes off you. I was wishing that I were as good a business man as you.' Mollified, he talked of something else, and gave us a large order.

"The important thing for a traveller to remember,' said my brother, 'is "never take no for an answer". Keep calling on customers. In the end they'll get so sick of seeing you they wiU give you an order to get rid of you.' It worked. I called on one manufacturer every week for a year, and at last he gave me a small order which caused me a lot of trouble. However, in six months the orders for this one hood amounted to twenty thousand pounds. At the end of three years my agency, from nothing, with the help of one assistant, was doing over sixty thousand pounds a year. Yet I seldom could go to a manufacturer and wait on die back stairs, sometimes in a queue, without, as my grandmother used to say, my stomach turning clean over.

i i; Mv oflace was a tiny place, in Barbican, where Milton had lived, in a th-century house, a few steps from St. Giles Cripplegate where my grandfather and grandmother were married, and not far from St. Lukes ClerkenweU where my father and mother were wedded. There were two compensations for the detested job: money and frequent trips to Vienna, a city that I loved; and I was always able to stop off at Paris and see GurdjieffF. In the years of the economic depression the agency brought in enough money to live comfortably; and I was my own master. And ui periods of personal depression I was fortified by recalling Gurdjieff's struggles to get money for his aim, and the various jobs he did, as described in *Remarkable Men.*

A man from America once came to see me, a traveller for a big business. After we had gone through the usual -'vacuous amiabilities' he said, 'But Mr. Nott, I thought you were a business man, a big

business man. Why! You look more like a professor!' I had left my disguise at home apparently.

My Austrian Mr. Chadband was an example of unconscious change of personality. In front of a possible customer he was oily, smirking, unctuous, ingratiating, wheedling, humble—Chadband and Uriah Heap in one. With his work-people and staff he was an arrogant Prussian. Even his office staff stood to attention when he spoke to them. A cold glint would come into his eye as he stalked about the factory. Yet, in a few moments, if a customer appeared, the Prussian personaHty gave place to Chadband.

The agency phase lasted just three years. As they had said, he compelled me to resign; but agreed to compensate me. Then he wrote from Austria saying that he 'had done all he could for me', meaning that he would not pay. Fortunately I had a good friend, who was one of the best company lawyers in the city of London. It is said that one should never go to law except in extreme cases and when the cause is good, since law and justice often do not mean the same. This was a good cause. The Austrian tried in every way to wriggle out with the help of his lawyers, but my friend was too clever for him, and though it took him six months the matter was jBnaUy settled out of court and I got my money. In the meantime, the Austrian got the banks to lend him three hundred thousand pounds to buy a large factory in England. In less than three years the firm went bankrupt. He returned to Austria with a hundred thousand pounds, which, on account of currency restrictions, could not be got at. The banks lost three quarters of their money, and he Hved in style in Vienna imtil he died. Such is business.

If you have to go to law, it is best to get a good lawyer who is a friend. The rest has to be left to providence; and, as my grandmother used to say, 'There's them above who'll see as providence don't go too far.'

while in the felt business I learnt in some measure to apply the teaching of the law of the octave. Before, when I reached the point when extra effort was needed to get over the interval, I would give up and start something else. Now, I was able to stop myself from giving up, and compel myself to make more effort to get over the interval. 'God's curses are our opportunities', and looking back I see how valuable the experience in the agency was, enabling me to gain inner strength by trying to overcome my weaknesses and compelling myself to endure some of the displeasing manifestations of others without resentment.

At the Prieure we had Gurdjieff, and in New York, as beginners, we

had Orage to remind us to remember our aim; alone, one constantly forgets; and I frequently found myself groaning and moaning at being imprisoned in the loathed hat business, forgetting how it could be used for my aim. It is a question of performing the daily round as well as one can, remembering that each day is a phase, a succession of events, and will never return. As I have said, Gurdjieff often spoke of the need for patience and perseverance, in small things and large. 'If you can do small things well, you will do big things well,' he said to a pupil. The pupil asked, 'Well, Mr. Gurdjieff, what do you suggest for me? What can I do?' Gurdjieff said, 'You, you know, want to be big man, have large car, large house, be president of company.' 'Well,' said the pupil, 'I'm asking you, what small task can I begin on?' 'You really wish to know? I tell you. When you go lavatory, always remember pull plug.'

ORAGE

WHEN, AFTER THE YEAR with GurdjiefF I returned to England, leaving my wife and small son in France, and busied myself getting established, I realized that it was over seven years since I had left London and, although I renewed associations with many old friends, I felt the need to be in touch with at least two or three who were interested in Gurdjieff's ideas, but all of these were with Ouspensky and of them I knew only one, a woman. We met but, after a short talk, she said, 'You know, I'm afraid I can't see you again. Really, I ought not to be seeing you now. The rule is that none of us in Ouspensky's groups are to speak to any of Gurdjieff's or Orage's pupils. If we should meet them socially we are not to speak of anything or anyone connected with the system; if the rule is broken we shall have to leave.'

It was the same when my vnfe returned. Even Dr. NicoU, whom she knew well during the four months he was at the Prieure, could not see her. Eventually I wrote to Ouspensky that we would like to meet him and Madame Ouspensky again. A letter came from one of his older pupils, Dr. H., inviting me to meet him. Apparently my replies to his questions as to why I wanted to see Ouspensky were unsatisfactory, for I heard no more.

In January, 1930,1 heard that GurdjiefF was about to go to America in February (the first time since January 1924) and that Orage who was still in New York, was planning to come to England after G's visit. I wrote to Orage asking if I could be of use to him. In February, I was in Paris and went to see G. at the Cafe de la Paix. But he was so busy interviewing people prior to his departure a few days hence that I had httle opportunity of speaking with him. One thing I remember—his reply to something I said. It was, 'If you acknowledge your sin and feel remorse of conscience for having done wrong your sin is already forgiven. If you continue to do wrong, knowing it to be so, you commit a sin that is difficult to forgive.'

I was among those who saw him and his party off from the Gare

St. Lazare in Paris, and something made a strong impression on me. "When the first whistle blew Gurdjieffgot into the carriage with three or four of the older pupils who were going with him. When he came to the window, he radiated such quiet power and being and light that we who stood there seemed like pygmies; his strong calm was a contrast to the nervous excitement of the other passengers and their friends who were seeing them off. As the train moved out his gaze was fixed on Mr. de Salzmaim on the platform. He smiled at him, made a strange gesture with his hands, and withdrew.

A week or two later I heard from Orage.

'Many thanks for your letter!' he wrote. 'I need not write at length because my plan still holds to come to England in the Spring and stay there for at least six months. But we don't propose to live in London or to live a London life. I shall not hold any groups whatever, though, of course, I shall love to meet our old friends of the Institute from time to time. My idea is to live in the country, within reach, by car or train, of both London and the sea, and chiefly to write. That's the only means I shall have of making any money, I'm afraid. We need a house that is cheap and furnished, and leasable for six to eight months. If you hear of such will you make enquiries? We've booked our passage on the *de Grasse,* sailing May 22.

'GurdjiefFarrived in New York yesterday! He needs money again for the Institute I gather, though I doubt whether this time he will get much. He still talks of fmishing the book in a month. His coming, has, of course, bust up my group meetings and leaves me desperately placed ^ income, but I must be "clever", I suppose, and find a substitute. Anyhow it's no use talking.

'Our love to you both. I look forward to seeing you and other old &iends again.

Yours ever
A. R. Orage.'

I began to look for a house for Orage and in between times got together a few who had returned to England from the Institute. There were ten of us—the only 'Gurdjieff' group in England. We met once a week and my wife played the music of the dances, which we practised from time to time. It was something.

In the early spring of 1930 my wife was put in touch with the Bertrand Russells who had recently started a 'modem' school at Harting

in Sussex. Eventually they offered her the post of music teacher, so we packed up everything in the car and drove down for the spring term. At once we liked the atmosphere of the place—the feeling of freedom and goodwill. *We* liked the RusseUs and the staff, especially Bertrand Russell, one of the kindest men I have met. During a talk with 'Bertie', as he was generally called, we felt that his ideas on modem education were so reasonable diat the school could not fail to be a success. It was run on similar hnes to Dartington, though Dartington had a million pounds behind it and this was run on a shoe-string. Quite simply, the RusseUs' idea was that children should have a good physical life, a good grounding in necessary subjects and an emotional life through music and painting and so on.

Russell himself told us how he had always felt himself handicapped through never being allowed to use his hands as a child—^he could do no physical tasks at all, such as gardening and minor repairs to the house. Endowed with a magnificent mental centre, his two other centres were imderdeveloped. Partly because of this the RusseUs, like so many inteUectuals, were lacking in common sense, not only in world affairs but in the practical things of everyday life. For example, we were lodged at Battine House in East Marden, a mile or so from the school, with some of the staff. *We* arrived a few days before the children. The house was dirty, the floor and waUs of the dining room covered with filth and grease.When we spoke about it he said, *'We* had an attack of chicken pox last term, but we've had the house thoroughly fumigated including the dining room and it should be aU right now.'

'Can't the dining room be cleaned and washed?'

'I'm afraid our kitchen staff is already overworked.'

'Do you mind if we do it?'

'Not reaUy. But is it necessary?'

We and the teaching staff decided that it was and set to work and washed the whole house except the kitchen. But the kitchen staff of four, which included a neurotic young man cook and two not very bright viUage girls, threatened to resign; they considered that we had insulted them by doing their work. However, by using flattery we managed to mollify them and they even became friendly.

The school should have been- a successful modem school, and if the RusseUs had been able to be more practical in the running of it, it could have been a model for future education. Compared with the two schools I went to—the Board Council School in Harpenden and the smaU private Dotheboy's HaU School in Yorbhire, it was a paradise,

the open downs and the sea not far away. Real efforts had been jj^jade to arrange life so that the children's potentiahties should develop ^turally. There was a sense of growing life and freedom in the {ionosphere. The children were happy, and learnt far more than I did at idiool. They had plenty of liberty. One morning, Battine House, where 'some of the children Hved, was unnaturally quiet. Not a single child was about, and though we searched we found not a trace. At the height of oar consternation a message came from the vicar that they were in his hoBse. They had got up very quietly before dawn and gone to the litde churchyard and sat there to see the sun rise over the downs, but getting cold and hungry had woken up the vicar, who had taken them in and given them cocoa and biscuits.

We had brought a young Russian girl with us from London, who had come from France to Uve with us and learn English. Her father, of old Russian family, was a friend of Tolstoy. When Stahn, the Czar time, began to reign, her father advised his sons and daughter to go to France and after many adventures they arrived in Paris. Here at Ae school, after the first meal in the long dining room with the staff ^d the Russells, she asked me in French, 'Is that Lord Russell? But he's Jewish.' I said, 'No, it isn't possible.' 'I'm sure,' she said. 'You see, almost every family in the Russian aristocracy has Jewish blood. So many had to marry rich Jewesses to keep their estates going. We know.' A little later I noticed a large painting of a beautiful woman, obviously Jewish, fesmging above the stairway at Telegraph House. I asked who it was and was told, 'That is Mr. Russell's mother.'

'• As with the Russians so the EngHsh. Few of the aristocratic EngUsh SuniHes are vrithout Jewish blood; the impoverished owners of estates Mmetimes married into rich Jewish families. It is said that there is Jewish blood in the Royal Family, from Albert the Consort. Orage, s|>eaking of the Jews, said that they were a small tribe of the great **Semitic** race, a conscious experiment on the part of Moses. Moses chose ^tem, not God. He received the 'Teaching' from the Egyptian priests taught it to the Jews so that they should be an influence for good m the world of their time which was breaking up. But, according to tfefiir prophets, they were a stiff-necked, stubborn, aggressive people, 4ways diverging from the real teaching. And the Sufis say that they **eveatually** forsook the teaching and became a danger to the cosmic gtei, and had to be dispersed. Yet such was the force of Moses' teaching the effects remained, and for two thousand years the Jews have ^fiid **a** great influence, good and bad, on succeeding civilizations. It is

said that Oliver Cromwell, whose family name was Williams, was more than half "Welsh Jew, hence his tolerance of them. The inner teaching of the Jewish religion has been preserved unspoilt by the Essenes; and much of it can still be found in the Zohar of which the kabbalah is the kernel. Professor Denis Saurat has pointed out that the influence of the kabbalah (and the teaching of the Sufis) can be found in the occult tradition which runs through English literature from Spenser to Milton and Blake. There is even a partial description of the enneagram in The Faery Queen.

It is a mistake to speak of anti-Semitism—^it should be anti-Jewism, for the Jews were a very small part of the great Semitic race which included the Assyrians, the Phoenicians and the Arabs.

I began to search for a house for Orage. After some weeks and many miles of driving about Surrey and Sussex I found the very place, in Rogate, not far from the Russell's School; an old stone farm-house comfortably furnished.

Orage wrote: 'You seem to have defmed exactly what we wanted. We had our farewell group meeting last evening and it would have done your heart good to wimess the scene. I love the group; and I couldn't bear the thought of being long out of touch with them. But my news must wait until we meet. Meanwhile I should be very grateful if Rosemary would purchase a crib for a yoxmg man of two years and get the house ready for us. As someone was saying, you and Rosemary are both so resourceful that Jessie and I are babes in comparison. I would apologize for all the trouble we are giving, if I felt you expected it; but thank Gurdjieff, we don't feel you do. And now I'm straining at the collar to be in England with you all.

Ever yours.'

I drove to Plymouth to welcome them. It was two years since we had met and when I went on board the *de Grasse* from the tender, Orage put his arms round me and hugged me.

Two days later we drove over from Battine House to see them. The rest of us were getting lunch ready, while Orage and my wife talked in the Hving room. She began to play some of Gurdjieff's music and, happening to pass the open door, I glanced in. Orage was wiping the tears from his cheeks. "V^at was the matter? Was it because for a long time he had been working under pressure in New York—especially during Gurdjieff's visit—and now, in this quiet spot of England, the

tension was released? And the music had loosed the springs of his heart and caused the tears to flow? I thought of Professor SkridlofF's weeping on the mountain with GurdjiefF.

Why are the English so afraid of showing emotion? Up to the end of the eighteenth century the English were not ashamed to weep when deeply moved. The idea that it was bad form to show that one felt deeply began in the dark ages of the nineteenth century, and only in England. Karl Marx wrote ponderously on the tragedy of capitalism; but no one has written about the English tragedy of suppressed emotions and sex energy in England in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The idea that sex was the great sin, and that it was bad form to show feeling, maimed the English emotionally. The terrible sacrifices of the EngHsh to their great god 'respectability' was another factor in this maiming. The nineteenth century with its brutality, seatimentality and hypocrisy was a part of the Kali Yuga, the iron age, ia which we are living and in which the life of man, his social life and inner life, degenerates at increasing speed, with wars and old civilizations breaking up over all the earth.

Yet Orage was not sad but very cheerful. We all were. My weekdays were spent in the city selling felts, and the long week-ends at Battine House, going about with my wife and the Orages. We drove along the Sussex lanes, stopping for bread and cheese and pickled onions and !)eer at country pubs. Our talks, in which hearts and minds were joined, •were always stimulating and sometimes even intoxicating. When he went to London he stayed with me in the flat in Hampstead, and we ^ ^ d lunch in Soho with some of his old 'New Age' friends.

-"Orage and Bertrand Russell had met only on paper, and I very much (vanted them to meet in the flesh, but Russell was reluctant and Orage liesitant. Russell had been annoyed by Orage's saying in the *New Age:* 'the trouble with Mr. Russell is he doesn't believe a word he writes'; it was largely true. However, they fmally agreed, and I arranged for us afl to meet on the beach at West Wittering where we usually bathed, and which at that time, even in the height of summer, was more or less deserted. The Russells and ourselves arrived and had a swim, and waited for Orage and his family. Time passed with no sign of them. At last Russell became impatient and said that he must go; and, just as his car disappeared Orage and his family came along the beach. A pimctured tyre had delayed them. So by a few minutes we inissed one of the most brilliant conversations that never took place.

My relationship with Orage was now on another level. Instead of the

father-mentor-teacher I had left in New York, he was now an elder brother and a beloved friend.

This was one of the happiest summers we have ever spent.

Orage and his family returned to New York in the autumn, landing there a few days after Gurdjieff himself had arrived on another visit. It proved to be a difficult winter for Orage.

On March ist, 1931, he wrote: 'I've led the Hfe of Jack-in-the-box since my return here; and until G. leaves, I expect it to continue. In other respects things have gone fairly well, also the family. But, in the absence of a penny of income from the old groups I've had to conduct four literary classes a week! And even then the wolf is always baying at the door. G.'s going may or may not change things for the better, his effect here having been to kill the interest of at least three out of four of the old members. I don't know whether they will ever return, *even* if I should be disposed to try to reassemble them. G. talks as if he expects me to carry on as before; but in spite of my constant association with him, I'm not feeling even warm about group work. He has a miracle to perform in ten days. He has the intention, it really appears, of publishing part of *Beelzebub's Tales* here in New York. That will be something tangible if it comes off. But he is making such impossible conditions that no pubhsher will accept them; and, in fact, G. cannot really expect it. All the same, I do think we are near publishing something!

'Yes, we did have a good summer in Sussex, didn't we? I couldn't ask for a more congenial group in Paradise!

'There are a thousand things I'd like to gossip to you, but I haven't the time to write 'em. They will have to keep for the summer. I'm still of a mind to return to England for six months, though I've had no news of the *New Age*. Now buck up—all of you—^but you in particular. Heaven knows you haven't G. on your back as I have, and you truly have no excuse.

Affectionately,
A.R.O.'

On March 14th, he wrote:

'Gurdjieff sailed last mid-night, leaving behind him an almost hopelessly scattered and hostile group. He has given the impression, as never before, that he cares for money only and thinks of the N.Y. people in that light alone. Of course it is not so; but I despair of pointing to any evidence in support, *except* the evidence that he has alienated the rich members as well as the poor. I can't say at the moment what will happen

to the group here. G. expects them to send money each month, but, Urstly, I am not willing to tax for him, and secondly, the group will not ^ v e much voluntarily. It will take weeks to get their confidence back—ieVen in me. But time is a healer.

', I'm sorry but not surprised that you caimot find a publisher for the P^chological Exercises; and the same fate, I presume, will lay in wait fer *On Love* and other essays. I still think the latter would sell; and are at hberty to risk pubUshing it. Only remember I don't advise it, fflcy stars in pubUshing are very imfavourable. Gurdjieff could not have jt^wn this or he would not have left me to publish the selection of dhapters firom *Beelzebub,* which he has. There are four chapters—^The Warning, Chapter i, *Beelzebub* in America and *Epilogue*—in all about 70,000 words. I'm to fmd a pubUsher—if possible—and get the book out as soon as possible! What luck will be necessary!

u^Today is the first day I've breathed freely since I landed. Ouspensky Jfite bad as Gurdjieff about writing and printing—worse, he has less to say.'

April loth:

, The paralysis left by G. has not been cured yet. So far, I haven't had a group meeting at all. Something new is needed and I can't imagine it, St^ less invent it.'

Jb April I let our flat for the summer and took a furnished villa at Bbvingdon in Hertfordshire. Then business took me to New York ^g^e I arrived a few days after Gurdjieff had sailed for France. I went ^Kaoe to Ac Orage's flat in Gramercy Park. Several people were there, ^lioiig them Orage's old friend Will Dyson the AustraHan cartoonist, aaat evening, and by degrees later, I heard the story of Gurdjieff's visit, fewas during this visit to New York that he wrote the first chapters ^A e Third Series of his writings, in which he describes what took l&e at that time and why. He dso gives some difficult exercises for ^e r work, some only for pupils who have worked for a long time **aad** seriously on themselves. As Orage said, 'My psychological exer-oses are the merest kindergarten compared with these, yet Gurdjieff sags tibat the ones he gives are exercises for beginners.'

Gurdjieff had seen that Orage's group had got stuck—as all groups ^ at times. He said that every group has a tendency to concentrate o&jone or other aspect **of** the work, so that the work becomes lopsided. **AjJid he** gave the pupils some big shocks. He told them, among other

things, that they had become 'candidates for a lunatic asylum'. At the end of his first week with them they did not know whether they stood on head or heels. He had called a meeting just before Orage arrived and said that they must sign a declaration that they would have nothing more to do with Mr. Orage, which of course caused a good deal of heart-searching about what they ought to do. Some days later, when the excitement was at its height, at a meeting with Gurdjieflf and the pupils, Orage unexpectedly walked in, read the declaration, and there and then signed it. He began to speak, and told them that Mr. Gurdjieff was right and that he himself was resolved to have no more to do with the Mr. Orage that was; work must begin again, on new lines.

Orage had died to an old self A new, lighter yet weightier Orage was to emerge. (It was this incident that caused T. S. Matthews and J. G. Bennett many years later, to state that G. had 'fired' or driven Orage away. Not knowing G. as Orage did, they could not be expected to understand.)

Something of the sort had happened in 1923, with Ouspensky's group in London. But, while Orage had profited by the shock, Ouspensky had not been able to, and had gone his own way.

It was soon after GurdjiefFhad returned to France after this visit in 1931 that Orage went to see his old friend J. C. Powys who lived in Patchin Place, New York, and whose sister had been in his group. Powys wrote to him:

'Dear Orage,

Neither my friend P. nor I can get you out of our heads. We have agreed that your visit to us was the greatest event of oxir winter in Patchin Place. We came to the conclusion that whatever ambiguousness there may be in the nature of your mythology there must be something profouniy right in your own attitude towards it. There's something so "fixed-up", so unctuous and conceited about these Indian Swamis and esoteric teachers, just as there is about Christian Scientists, something that is unilluminating and does not vibrate to the shocks of real life, something that seems to face life through wads of cotton-wool. We go on puzzling ourselves as to exactly what it is that makes your philosophy so different from this; what it is that makes your philosophy so fresh and natural and faltering and troubled as all genuine attitudes to life ought to be, tenuous and almost brittle and with a peculiar sort of humility in it—no! not exactly brittle; but shaky and troubled and insecure—like Nietzsche and Unamuno and Pascal and Heraclitus. The

impression you left was what Spengler calls Magian—^like something Early Christian or like those early heretics. We got so strongly the fedling that however vuisatisfactory and even to be condenmed your gods might be, your attitude towards them was curiously right and full of incidental illumination like that of Jesus to Jehovah. "Whatever cult of consciousness yours may be, its effect on your hearers is startling to people as clairvoyant in *certain directions* as my friend P. and I are. You are undoubtedly right in making so much of humility. That organon of research, that plummet into salt seas, that wise serpent-belly, that Taoistic water seeking its level, has not only been neglected by Greeks and Romans but completely neglected, or indeed not known or heard of, by the stupid thick-skinned bastard-ideahsts of our time. "We got the impression of actually and really—don't be angry now!—^having entertained a real Saint that day. It was a very queer feeling. As if you had been a person in armour but who was secretly bleeding from wounds invisible. You didn't convert us one inch or one-hundredth part of an inch to your particular gods or ritual or doctrines or master- But you compelled us and still compel us to accept yourself in your present mood as possessed of some extraordinary psychic secret (one great portion of which is this transcendental humihty or whatever it maybe).

'I think we both snatched at some drop of this virtue or aura or emanation and have used it ever since as a test of spiritual values. It is extraordinary. You alone of all men of genius I have ever met seem totally to have conquered pride. And when one thinks how silly such pride has made people; and how it has spoilt their art—^like "Victor Hugo, like D'Annunzio, hke Tolstoy, it seems to me a triumph of ttae Machiavellianism of the spirit to have burrowed below this great block of Portland cement into wonderful interstices of moon-agate and moonstone below.

'But I do think the whole thing is in the Daimonic saintliness which you have somehow, by some extraordinary trick, appropriated to yourself. Those "secrets" you speak of that you would be willing to follow the Devil Himself in order to learn—we must confess—my ftiend P and I—to regard as of slight importance compared with this magical effect which "the humility of the hunt" after them has produced in you and which is, in itself, so we allow ourselves to feel, *a kind of Absolute* and something infinitely superior to any force that started you on such a path or to any tangible "secrets" that such a path can lead to. It's no good your telling me that Jesus thought Jehovah was as good" as He was Himself "We know what Jehovah was better than

Jesus! But of course if for Jehovah you put Life, it *is* true that any man of exceptional genius like yourself comes much closer to Life by keeping his skin naked so to say (naked in humility) than by twining it round with those flannel swaddling bands Augustus, according to Suetonius, used; or even by wearing the proud armour of Lucifer. This is a woman's letter, my good lord, as well as a man's, so this particular tone (of handing out bouquets); almost "maternal"; which would be intolerably impertinent from a lecturer to so formidable a literary and philosophical critic—is natural and harmless (and not impertinent at all or cool or cheeky) *in two of us* uniting our wits. Indeed I guess it will always take the double wit, of a man and a woman combined, to deal with so subtle a Demonic Saint as yourself! What we secretly feel ourselves is that you will eventually reach a point when you have attained the extreme of humiHty such as no longer to be in the least danger of Luciferan pride—and at that point we hold the view... "Well—^let that go . . . We know nothing reaUy about it. But sometimes out of the mouths of clumsy onlookers—^you know!—even a sage can get something——At any rate you certainly made us both think a lot, and as for anything "fantastic" about it all—we are completely with you there. In the "fantastic" lies the essence of things.

'Well—I must stop. If in the future you not only defy but separate yourself from all outward authority but that of the Daimon in your own being it will only be, I fancy, when this planetary humility of yours that has proved so illuminating has gone the full length of its serpent's tail! And this may not be far off.—Life is more than any authority. They are *all* stepping-stones and jumping-off places.

'Well—good luck go with Orage, you certainly won not only our hero-worship but our most anxious love on your behalf, but *that* must be a common experience to you in your strange passage through the world.

Good luck to you,
John Cowper Povtrys.'

This letter gives an authentic picture of the inner world of Orage; the results of the miracle that transformed the old Orage into the new could not be expressed better. Orage's chief feature could have been 'he never can say "I don't know"'; in his mental arrogance he had had to give an answer to every question. Gurdjieff told him that he was a 'super idiot', in the negative sense; he was now being transformed into a 'super idiot' in the positive sense, and this visit of Gurdjieff's had completed the change. Instead of the old attitude 'I may not be always

right, but I'm never wrong', Orage now would often qualify a statement with 'I may be wrong, I often am'. Yet people still write about Orage breaking with GurdjieFF, about his disillusionment with him; perhaps they seek reHef from their own iimer suffering and emptiness by slandering someone or something higher than themselves.

During my brief visit to New York, Orage told me that he had enough money in the bank in a special fund subscribed by the pupils to pay for the pubhcation of *Beelzebub.* Knopf, the pubHsher, hearing of diis had approached Gurdjieff, and rather unctuously announced that as the publisher of Ouspensky's books and others of similar character he would be glad to publish *Beelzebub's Tales.* GurdjieFF listened and said, 'Yes, perhaps. But certain things are necessary.'

'And what are your conditions, Mr. GurdjieFF? I'm sure we can meet your requirements. What would you wish us to do?'

'Not conditions. One condition. One small tihing.'

'And that is?'

'First clean house, your house, then perhaps can have my book!'

However, Gurdjieff left without giving the book to a publisher; the time for publication was not yet come. Orage then made arrangements for a himdred copies of the book to be Roneoed from his copy of the typescript (the only one, apart from Gurdjieff's own) which were to be sold for ten dollars a copy, only to people in groups and the money ^ven to Gurdjieff. Fifty copies were soon sold, but it took nearly ten years to dispose of the rest, the last bemg sold in 1940 for one hundred dollars. I was very glad to have my copy and as soon as I returned to Bagland I started a group for readings.

During my stay in New York I went to group meetings and was present at the last one, in Muriel Draper's apartment. Orage said: 'By a strange coincidence this is the last meeting of the session, and the last occasion in nearly seven years on which we shall meet in this almost siacred room. It will be difficult to reproduce the atmosphere that has been created here. When I think of New York I shall think of this room.

'As you know, Gurdjieff has said that he might return. If he does, I trust that another opportunity of first-hand contact with the author of *Beelzebub's Tales* vdll not be neglected; the behaviour of the group this time has been so passive as to be almost useless in increasing imderstanding of the book.'

One of the group then said that he had never been satisfied with the

validating authority behind some of GurdjiefF's statements. Orage's reply was that if we listened from essence, from our understanding, we would know when GurdjiefF was making exaggerated statements to shock us, and when he was speaking the actual truth. Another pupil said that he had had his money's worth many times over in the entertainment Gtirdjieff had provided. Another, that he had continually expected some new thing to happen during the meetings, hoping that clear explanations would be given, only to be disappointed in the end. Orage said that GurdjiefF rarely gave direct answers, except to certain people at certain times. Another pupil said that a few things GurdjiefF had said to him and the way he had said them, had given him a new understanding about himself and about the work, and this alone had been worth ten times what he had put them through. Another, somewhat to our amusement, said that GurdjiefF's behaviour was incomprehensible, and that, for him, GurdjiefF himself was a great stumbling block to the understanding of his system. Another, a woman, thought the questions put to GurdjiefFhad not been sensible and that she herself had not been able to formulate any question that had brought a reasonable answer.

Orage said that all questions, if they were essence questions, were sensible and important, since they would show GurdjiefF where the person had got stuck. Like the birds in Mantiq Ut-Tair, each would speak according to his type. A certain psychological efFort was necessary to get anything out of GurdjiefF. If, when he had treated questions seemingly brutally or had seemed to fail in his promise to answer questions, the group had got up and left, GurdjiefF would have seen that there was a real intensity of wishing to know. As it was, pupils sat in front of him passively. Someone said that it was extremely difficult with one's small will to make an impact on Gurdjieff's terriJFic being. Orage said that for himself one result of the visit was that his understanding had been deepened. He added, 'And you will eventually reaUze that this has also happened to most of you.'

Orage continued, 'I now invite questions, perhaps those you might have asked Gurdjieff. I may not give the answers he would have given, but I shall do my best to answer. I shall also be glad to hear formulations of ideas and impressions received during this interval. GurdjiefF makes statements for effect, intended for shock and not necessarily and always for their factual content. He startled you by saying that you were all on the way to becoming candidates for a lunatic asylum; then later he said that on the whole the group was all right and that he was not at all

(Jispleased with it. He liquidated the group, but he also wished it to continue until I leave in May, and it was said that Dr. Stjoemeval might come over if GurdjiefF or I were not able to return. GurdjiefF's "Equidation" is only of a phase.

'Our discussions of the book and our intellectual exercises have not been wasted; they make the work harder for us only because we have been "educated" in the theory of the system beyond our station in lature. "We must learn to "do" practically. You have had the movements and dances, and many of you have been able to spend at least one summer at the Prieure. GurdjiefF himself has said that it may be necessary for some to study the theory for years, and that it is all right if in the end you will *prove* the theories to yourself Hassein was as "will-less" as any of you; he was, so to speak, "reading the book and trying to grasp it". For you, this is a process of trying to understand. When we "come of age" there will be an impulse to "do"; then, regulated by an Tinderstandingof the theory, we *shall* be able to "do". Our time on the book has not been in vain—though we might have spent more time on it. You will remember that GurdjiefF gave you the fable of the fly and the elephant, and for an explanation he said, "ask Orage". The idea was that many people set themselves difficult tasks and then, in despair of doing them, do nothing at all. Before starting to make an elephant efifort we must learn to make that of a fly. Some of you seem to think that because you have worked on yourselves you ought to be able to solve all the problems that come up in your relations with other people. -GurdjiefF says, "If you can learn to bear one manifestation of one person, which irritates you, you will have learnt to make the effort of a fly", ^d this is a great deal. As an example of a relatively elephantine task, GurdjiefF says, "Six years ago I came to America with forty pupils, knowing only four people here: Jessmin Howarth, Rosemary Lillard Rosemary Nott), you, Orage, and Stjoemeval. I had only a hundred dollars when I landed. How did I know that you would not be stranded aad starving here? This time I come and everyone wants to see me. I am tjouched that so many want to see me. But confess, Orage, that your heart sinks when you hear that I am coming!" On the surface GurdjiefF seems to care very much, more than most, but inside he is indifFerent to how diese chances of his will turn out. These exercises in *will* are relatively elephantine. But you must not undertake exercises in wiU, real will, that involve hazards to yourself, when you cannot yet exercise the will of a fly.

'In regard to the question of doing, it is not that this group is especially

will-less, but that it is conscious of this will-lessness. The more conscious it is of this state the more promising it is. The Behaviourists believe, as we do, that organisms only react, and that Nature has not endowed human beings vwth will. The psychological difference between the understanding of the Behaviourists and that of us working in these ideas is that, for us, will becomes an emotional fact. Only from a reaMzation, —^not a theoretical knowledge—of will-lessness is it possible to acquire real will. It is acquired by a succession of efforts and exercises, it is a phase gone through consciously, to make "men" in quotation marks become men.'

Orage then told the fable of the potter's apprentice, who, because he knew a thing or two thought he knew it all—and spoilt the pots. 'What do you think it means?' he asked.

'Don't do, until you understand,' said a pupil.

'Yes. Gurdjieff says that it takes "years" to imderstand, "years" meaning a period necessary for reaching a correct crystallization, a crystallized conclusion. All around him he saw people trying to do, when they did not mderstand.'

One of us said, 'Such as writing about the ideas and explaining them to others before they imderstand.' Orage said, 'Yes. The time will come when people who did not know Gurdjieff or met him occasionally vwll be talking about him, "explaining" him, and so presenting a false and distorted picture.

'Real wiU is developed by initiative and must be started on a small scale. For example, if you are occupied vidth hard work all day, everything is a reaction to stimulus. But when you have a free hour what do you personally initiate? The utilization of free moments is the making of fly efforts. Gurdjieff said that in writing the book he came to hate pencil and paper and the very idea of writing; he had to force himself every day to begin.'

pupil said, 'I should have thought that Gurdjieff would have become so detached that he could work like a machine.'

'Oh no, the status of *being* is constant self-initiated effort. WiU is never acquired in what just happens; it is always effort—effort against inclination, inertia, routine.'

Someone asked, 'Why did Gurdjieff refuse to answer questions about self-remembering and self-observation?'

Orage said, 'He leaves that for the pupil-teachers. He is at work on a text-book for the school, which is much more important for the school than his discussion of the work. He says contemptuously, "Ask Orage!"

He is not repudiating or belittling the Method. A sentence in the Study House at the Institute says, "Remember yourselves everywhere and always". The chapter on Belcultassi is about it; the book concludes on this theme.'

Another asked, 'Why did Gurdjieff say that he doesn't know what the book is about and that he is astonished at the ideas people get from it?"

'To shock you, of course. To make you ponder. The book has gone through three stages. You know the original title of the epilogue: ^'Ecstasy of Revelation". After a long period of work on himself GurdjiefF's "I" became fuUy developed; as he said: "When I say 'I' it is as if I hear something rattle inside." In such a state he had a revelation of the book from beginning to end. In two or three hours he dktated a sort of synopsis and sent it to me. I said that it was utterly ^telHgible and could not be shown to anyone. It was, in fact, in such _tic shorthand that he, Mr. Gurdjieff, found it hard to formulate ' Gurdjieff what "I" had ecstatically understood. He wrote it again, and now, in the third writing, he is putting it into a form in which *anyone,* "even donkey" as he says, can understand it—^not literally, nor SO that it is subject to proof or disproof From one aspect it can be compared to Blake's prophetic works, though it is much more comprehen•Sive and plausible; and the keys for understanding it are in the book.

'We are still far from that order of being that can do without meetsdigs and directors or leaders. Very few of us have a sense of the three jD^onsibilities even after six years. Some have a sense of one. The first ^aase of individual responsibility is that imless I spend my day advanta^^l^ly from the point of view of consciousness and development, I ^sm lapsing or disloyal. The second is responsibility towards our neighi»ur—^the "members of our tribe" striving to work on themselves and jDvercome their faults and weaknesses—the striving for consciousness. "When you can say that no wave of circumstance is so high that you ^e submerged and lose sight of the Method, you have attained a laeasure of consciousness. We must learn, through the Method, to strive to make use of everything that comes our way; and yet I still hear people who are going through a difficult phase complain that "to **talk** of the Method at such a time is trifling".

'Hie third responsibihty necessary for a real group, what Gurdjieff cdls the beginnings of a mesoteric group, has to do with the work in genoal. In this respect, I think, we are weakest.

'The personality of Jesus was not very different from ours. He was

not an occultist, not a Califomian. He spoke of a living Jerusalem, the City of God, a group of people working in living ideas. Theosophical literature speaks of the masters, the real teachers, as "the elder brothers of the race"—an ideal of a being who could not act but as an elder brother. If you dissociate patriarch and matriarch from their social associations and consider the quality of the words, you will have a conception of that which distinguishes some in a group as "elders". This is noticeable among children, though, too often, those with the quality eventually become corrupted. When it is really present it indicates a state of "being".

"When a pupil has reached the stage of being able to accept these three kinds of responsibihty and has acquired the states of consciousness which accompany them, he can be either a circumference or the centre of a circle. Some members of a circle have a communion which is not perceptible nor is it occult—it arises from their common imderstanding, their ability to put themselves in the other's place. It even becomes unnecessary for them to meet often. Think over this and you will realize how far we have to go before we reach this state.

'I may be back in January for a few months. But the conditions of attendance at the group will be completely different from the past and present.'

So much for my inner world of those three weeks in New York. As regards my outer world, the world of business, it was a failure. I was astonished at the change since my departure less than four years before. Shops were empty of customers, streets unswept, shabbiness everywhere; soup queues, bread lines. Twenty million people without money to buy food lined up each day to receive a dole to keep their families from starving. It was as if a terrible war or famine or plague had passed over the country.

jOn this lunatic planet men periodically go mad. In this state they begin to destroy each other, or persecute each other, or deprive each other of the right, in some countries, even to drink what they like. In various ways they make life intolerable for themselves, usually from sheer stupidity—the results of the consequences of the organ Kundabuffer.

The present state was a blinding example of how life is organized by the power-possessing beings on this planet. In America alone twenty million people were going hungry while food was being destroyed. Wheat was being used as fuel, fruit dumped into the sea by thousands

of tons a week. Farmers were being paid not to produce wheat and pigs, and all because there were not enough dollar bills, priated pieces of paper, being distributed with which to buy them. The big banks were bursting with money, while the small banks failed right and left.

The monetary system furst broke down in America^, from America it spread to Canada, then to Europe, to Australasia and to every country where the gold standard operated. It was an extraordinary example of how the minds of power-possessing beings become fixed along a certain line, and rather than depart from this line they will let millions suffer. Only the big banks and big business did not suffer. For myself, I lost a valuable property in Connecticut to the mortgage company, who, by a trick, foreclosed.

Only the Communists were jubilant. The downfall of the capitahst system as foretold by their prophet Marx was at hand. Yet the situation ia Russia was still worse. In Communist Russia Stalin deliberately carved the peasants; much has been written about this, but no one has written an epic of Europe and America starving in the midst of plenty through sheer stupidity^ of the rulers. Communism and Capitalism—two sides of the same coin.

When I returned to England, to Bovingdon, in May, I foimd my femily uneasy. They were not happy in the house. A friend who lived near said, 'This house is haunted; haunted by a peevish, ill-natured, depressing ghost.' I said, 'You may be right.' There was something queer about it, though it was a new house. The proportions were wrong for one thing; and it seemed to have been just set down on the earth ^ a contractor—^not built with loving care.

Our friend, who was partly Welsh, was sensitive to atmosphere. She happened once to come to our flat in London about half an hour after an emotional turmoil in the true Russian manner, raised by our young Russian friend who lived with us. We had as usual made it up, and afiwas well; but our Celtic friend said at once, 'Whatever's been going on here?' 'What do you mean?' I asked. 'Nothing's been going on. Olga's been staging one of her Tchekhovian scenes again. It's nothing. We all love each other.' 'I knew something had happened,' she said.

She and her husband, some years before, had taken a derelict farm •widi a seventeenth-century house and transformed it into a small estate. Itey began by planting rowan trees: 'to keep the ghost away.' In any case, their house had such an air of peace, beauty and well-being that •we always felt better for being there. Their type of Enghsh aristocracy,

and the yeomen from which my people came, are the salt of the English earth.

Anyway, whether it was my mother-in-law who had been visiting us from America, or a friend who was staying with us, whose emanations often produced a depressive atmosphere, or a combination of influences, our general state was so oppressive I felt that we must get away, and arranged to drive to St. Jean de Luz where Bertrand and Dora Russell were staying. I wrote to Orage and told him of our plans. He replied: 'Oh dear! Oh dear! I'd have gladly shared the expense of your house in Bovingdon for a month. You say you are leaving on July 8th. "Well, I wonder apprehensively what you are going to do. where are you going and what you propose for us? We shall arrive as arranged and hope in you and God to meet us with some plan. At the worst, I suppose we can stay in London a few days, but worst it would be. No. I can't think that you—^who have got yourself and us out of so many difficulties, won't get us all out of this.'

I cancelled our trip to France, met Orage and his family at the docks in London, and brought them to stay with us. With the coming of the Orages we forgot the whimpering ghost.

I once took Orage to Luton, where most of my business was done. I had to see two or three manufacturers and took Orage with me. Afterwards I asked him, 'How would you like to have to earn your hving like this?' 'It would be complete hell,' he said.

At the end of July the Orages started on a motor tour in England. I, with my wife and small son drove to France, visiting Gurdjieff and friends in Paris, then to Chartres, Bordeaux and so to St. Jean de Luz. During oxir stay there, Dora Russell and a friend suggested driving into Spain; so we set off in, my car, the three of us, not knowing one word of Spanish; but signs and money will always supply basic needs. After we had crossed the Pyrenees and left the mountains and forests behind, the rolling open country recalled scenes from my beloved Don Quixote. We stayed a night on the way, and then on to Pamplona. About thirty kilometres from there a woman hailed us, making signs for a lift. Her face and head were bound up in a silk scarf She muttered, 'Pamplona, Pamplona,' pointing in that direction and to the car and herself, and going through the motions of having a tooth out; so I motioned her to get in. She kept her face covered all the way, but as soon as we got into Pamplona she jumped out and disappeared.

Pamplona was still very much in the eighteenth century. There were very few cars about, for at that time only three main motoring roads

existed in the whole of Spain. On the ramparts was a rope-walk where a, man and boy walked backwards and forwards making rope. It was a fjarming town with its own life and character.

On the third day, early in the evening, we were sitting at a cafe in the «ionnous Plaza, Hstening to the band and watching the dancing. More aad more people came to the already crowded cafes. Probably a fiesta, we thought. As it grew dark and the lights came on, we became aware of a growing tension. Arguments and rows seemed to be starting; then, at a cafe in the far comer of the square, a man got up from the table and tttt another with a bottle. Arms waved, bodies rose and fell. A single poHceman, in a colourful and decorative uniform, went about trying to calm excited groups. The tension increased, as though they were •waiting for a signal. The iron shutters of the cafes began to be drawn down, and a man came to us and said in English, 'Excuse. Please go Jkome. Trouble will come.' I looked up as he disappeared and noticed ^t the four entrances to the great square were blocked by cavalry. 'Perhaps we had better be going,' I said, so we strolled over to the tand-stand, where soldiers had quietly taken the place of the band. The Plaza was choked vnth excited people, and suddenly, as we walked in the direction of our hotel, the soldiers on the bandstand began firing. As if possessed, everyone ran screaming and shouting, my companions too, and I understood the meaning of panic fear, and myself felt a wild m^ to join the crowd and run. Then I said, 'No. I must try not to give way to this mass psychosis.' And I walked slowly across the rapidly emptying square. In a minute everyone except the soldiers had dis-^peared—^people were crouching beside the cafes and shops, and all was ^iet.

Later, my companions said, 'You were pretty cool.' 'No,' I said, •JDeally I was hot with terror. That crowd was like a herd of mad cattle, Iwas trying to keep myself from being carried away by the panic.' It was partly pride too, trying not to do as aU the others were doing; and teal pride can sometimes be a help in keeping oneself. What was so terrifying was not so much the shooting but die blind force of the crowd in panic.

Next morning it was bright and sunny, everyone going about their business as if nothing had happened; yet this was the first rumblings of the storm of war, civil and world war—^the beginning of the effect of Solioonensius, whose tensions were then affecting chiefly Spain and Germany. I will speak about Solioonensius later.

We remembered the woman with 'toothache', who was probably a

delegate from the village we came through. Bertrand Russell, in one of his sweeping statements in which there is sometimes some truth, said that the more beautiful the place the worse the character of the people. For example, the people of Bradford in Yorkshire, one of the ughest, most brash, modem cities in England without a single building of real beauty, have a basic kindly, essential quaHty almost untouched by their surroundings. And in the beautiful cities of Madrid, Paris and Hanover people have killed and mutilated each other as no herd of wild beasts ever do.

I returned to London, staying at the Prieure on the way, and leaving my family with friends in Brittany. There was a letter from Orage telling me that he had taken a house in Bramber, Sussex, for the summer and asking me to stay with them. During my few days there Orage and I walked over the Dovnis, exchanging subjective views. He said that he felt that his work with groups in America had come to an end, and another phase was beginning; that to every pupil the time comes when he must leave his teacher and go into life and work out, digest, what he has acquired. Then he can return to his teacher, if necessary, on another level. It was not that he had left GurdjiefF or the Teaching, but because of both he had reached a certain stage, and it was necessary for him to stand on his own feet. In ordinary life no one stands on his own feet, but on those of another. Part of Gurdjieff's teaching lay just in this: to show a man, indirectly, how to stand on his ovm feet.

Orage was still imcertain whether to live in the country and write, or to live in London and start a paper on the lines of the old *New Age,* now owned by Arthur Brenton, who wrote most of the eight or so pages. Orage had tried to tjjiy the paper, but Brenton was not selling. A publisher had offered Orage an advance of what today would be ;^i,500 for a book of iatimate memoirs; he had turned down the offer, though the book would have been a best-seller. 'I am not a gossip writer,' he said, 'and I don't intend to make money by exposing the weaknesses and futilities of my friends and acquaintances among the intellectuals.' Bernard Shaw once said, 'Orage is incorruptible.'

In the winter Orage and his family moved to a furnished house in old Hampstead not far from us. We met constantly. He began to pick up the threads of his Ufe of seven years ago. 'But I find it difficult to see people,' he said. 'I don't see enough people.' So I arranged a party for him with the help of my old friends Francis Brugiere and RosaUnde Fuller in their flat in the Adelphi. The party was a success. A hundred

and fifty came, people well-known in literature, art and music and economics, fnends and acquaintances of Orage, to whom he spoke about his idea of starting another paper. There was that about Orage which kept the atmosphere of the party on a relatively high level, so that people actually listened to what others had to say. From this time dungs began to move for him. A little later I arranged a lunch party at Antoine's in Charlotte Street, Soho, with Professor Denis Saurat, Janko Lavrin, professor of Slavonic languages, and Hugh McDiarmid, the Scottish poet. The idea was to meet and discuss with Orage the possibility of starting a journal to formulate the causes of the breakdown of the fuiancial system and to outline a possible cure. After the limch as Orage and I were walking down Charing Cross Road he said, 'I've been given a thousand pounds by American friends to bring out a magazine. I'll start a monthly. *The English Monthly.'*

I got out a prospectus, but a week later Orage had decided to make it a weekly. 'The need is urgent,' he said, 'and a month's lapse too long.' 'All right,' I said, 'but how about calling it *The New English WeeklyV* He agreed and I produced another prospectus.

. Orage had taken an office in the same building off Chancery Lane and on the same floor, with the same printers that he had left seven years before. And his office was the room next to his old one. 'This Seems to be a case of recurrence,' I said. 'Yes,' he agreed, 'but with modifications. My office is twice the size of the other and the magazine has a new name.' I added, 'And you are twice the man, and the seven years is an octave.'

The journal saw the light of day on April 21st 1932. From the first it was a success, not in circulation but in that it accomplished the task Orage had set himself: to expound the ideas of Major C. H. Douglas, who had discovered the cause of the financial breakdown and had formidated it in language so turgid that few could understand it. Everyone agreed that only Orage could make the muddy waters clear.

I Saw Orage every day, either at his office or at our homes in Hampstead. A few weeks later, at lunch, I asked, 'What's the matter? Something's on your mind.'

'As a matter of fact, there is,' he said.

'The paper's going all right, isn't it?'

'Oh yes, I get people in every day, every kind of person—and letters by the hundred. The paper is the focal point for what is in everyone's mind.'

"Well then?'

'It's these bloody notes of the week. I'm trapped. Every week I have to make tremendous efforts to get down to them. They have to be with the printer by Monday mid-day and it's often Sunday night before I can begin. Week after week, month after month, I shall have to sweat blood over them. No respite. Talking, for me, is easy but to write needs constant effort.'

'Yet the notes read as if they were put down vwthout any effort at all,' I said. 'Everyone loob forward to them. T. S. Eliot and Herbert Read, to say nothing of the rest, tell me that they read your notes first of anything on Thursday morning.'

'I have no alternative but to keep on but they'll never become easier to do.'

One day I said to him, 'You know, I think the ideas of Social Credit and monetary reform are not your real interest.'

'No,' he said, 'they are a pseudo-interest.'

'Not quite that. A secondary interest. Your real interest is in Gurdjieff's ideas. It may be that we both have to work out something in the pattern of our Ufe that seems no longer to serve a useful purpose for ourselves—the results of former actions perhaps; I in the hat business, you in journalism. You at least are serving a useful purpose; you are the only man who could do this particular and necessary job at this time. You are back, apparently, where you were seven years ago in the same office, with the same printer, going to the same A.B.C. and asking for the same "large black coffee and a dish of prunes". I too, also after seven years in the book trade, am in the hat business again, in the same kind of office, calling on the same people. But with both of us there are small changes. If this is recurrence, let us hope that it's on a spiral and not a round.'

'There is a difference,' he said. 'Thanks to Gurdjieff and his teaching something in us has changed. We are no longer going roimd in a circle but are relatively conscious of what is happening. Perhaps when we come into life again we shall have different organisms; others may have to take over our jobs. It may be that conditions will be, if not easier, at least more favourable for inner development.'

I said, 'I wonder what it means: "You shall not come forth until you have paid the uttermost farthing". It may have to do with purging ounelves of "the undesirable elements mixed in us", which attract us into, or push us into, circumstances not personally favourable for us. Gurdjieff, speaking of recurrence, said that we must find examples in our own lives, in this life. Well, our present conditions are examples.'

Or^e was something of a mystery to Fleet Street, where hardly iHayoiie believes what they write. A journalist on one of the big daihes '^xeae to the ofEce. He saii 'Mr. Orage, I've been reading your articles ^ so and so in *The New English Weekly*. They are very interesting of coarse, but I would like to know what you really think, what your own honest opinion is.'

'But you've read what I really think.'

•Do you mean to say you always write what you really feel and

'Of course.'

"Ilien you must be one of the very few editors who do.'

Unfortunately, yes. Hence the small circulation of my paper.'

The friendship between myself and Orage had become very close. We went to meetings together, to music halls and cinemas. This, and friendship between our wives and children, made for me what was perhaps the happiest time of my inner Hfe. All sorts of men and women seemed to be drawn to us, especially to Orage. As our inner life deepened so our outer Hfe vndened. Both Orage and myself, too, were in **the** process of digesting what GurdjiefF had taught us. We spoke together of Gurdjieff and his teachings and many things became dear to us that had been obscure. Never once did Orage complain of GurdjiefF's ruthlessness, though often he spoke of the dilEculties that **be had** made for him and confessed himself often baffled by his be-&siviour. 'But,' he said one day in the A.B.C., 'we can never under-g n d the being of a man who is on a higher level than our ovm. B ^ j i ^ i s a land of walking god—a planetary or even solar god. He once, "I am the same as other men, but I know and understand **taore".** Another time he said, "I am small compared with those that **seat** me". There are always beings higher than anyone we can know. **I** suppose I have met everyone of importance in England at least, and ibany in America, and I have never met anyone with even a small portbn of Ginrdjieff's being and understanding.'

He added, 'You know, you're the only person I can talk to about the ideas in London. In any case I no longer discuss them vwth anyone who has not worked with Gurdjieff.'

Otoe's coming to London and my contact with the paper brought Oieinto a new and larger Hfe. I also took up the threads of dbe Hfe I had aved in London before 1923, and although often I could not inwardly

agree with my old friends among the intellectuals my contact with them was closer than before. I began to live more in every way. Besides my family and relations, my acquaintances in the hat trade and our small group studying GurdjieiF's ideas, I met men and women from the numerous social levels of Enghsh Ufe.

In talking widi men who were studying the new economics I began to notice that one topic constantly arose: war with Nazi Germany. It shocked me deeply; it was like a chill on the solar plexus. Even then, in 1932, the idea of war was in the air, and it was from this time that I began to feel the begiiming of SoUoonensius in Europe generally. Of Solioonensius Beelzebub, in his *Tales,* says to Hassein: 'The causes that produce the action of this cosmic law are different for each planet and always flow from and depend upon what is called the common-cosmic-Harmonious-Movement; also often for your planet Earth what is called the "centre-of-gravity-of-causes" is the periodic tension of the sun of its system, which tension is caused in its turn by the influence upon their sim of a neighbouring solar system called "Baleaooto".

'In this latter system, such a gravity-centre-of-causes arises because, among the number of its concentrations is a great comet Soini, which, according to certain known combinations of the common-cosmic-Harmonious-Movement, at times, on its falling, approaches very near to its sun Baleaooto, which is compelled to make a "strong tension" in order to maintain the path of its own falling. This tension provokes a tension of the sims of the neighbouring systems, among which is the system Ors; and when the sun Ors tenses itself not to change its path of falling, it provokes in turn the same tension in all the concentrations of its own system, among whi(:h is the planet Earth. The tension in all the planets acts on the common presences of all beings arising and breeding on them... engendering a desire and striving for speedier self-perfection in the sense of Objective-Reason.'

He goes on to say that on the planet Earth, in place of this desire and striving there arise in us because of our abnormahty, a desire for 'freedom', which manifests itself in the need for a change in the conditions of ordinary existence—Whence in our time the first world war and the revolutions in Russia and China which followed. Now, it seemed, we were at the beginning of another period of great tension, especially in Italy, Germany and Spain, and which was to spread everywhere on this unfortunate planet. It was one of those periods when the 'loud-voiced clamourers' obtain power. An explosion occurs and men begin to

destroy each other together with everything good that has been, built up by the patient work of centuries, and all with the 'best intentions', aU in the name of their gods—progress, liberty and freedom.

Beelzebub also says that wars and revolutions occur at certain times in certain parts of our planet becaxise nature needs certain intense vibrations from these parts. Because men have forgotten how, and have ceased to use, these periods of tension for the purpose of self-perfection, the force, not being used creatively, must be used destructively. As with nations so with individuals.

Little by Httle the tension increased; it was particularly noticeable in tie big focal points—London, Paris, Berlin, Rome. Each day we opened our newspapers in trepidation to see what Hitler and JVIussolini were saying or what they threatened to do. Life went on—it could do no ;0ther—^but it began to be rather Uke living on the slopes of Vesuvius -^en the rumbles of an eruption are heard, with the weak hope that it may not take place. Gradually the attention of everyone in Europe was drawn towards those two tremendous puppets. Hitler and Musso-Kni, who, for some reason or other, had been impelled by events into dbie centre of the world-stage. For a short period the tension became focused on the civil wars in Spain and China, where the inhabitants of these countries began to torture, murder and massacre each other in eaormous numbers. Even the crimes and horrors of Stalin were forgotten.

Gurdjieff never discussed the possibilities of war; though I remember to saying that horrors on an enormous scale were about to begin, and ifeat this had happened many times before on die planet. He also said Aat m must not allow ourselves to be carried away by the mass-psychosis that would come like a flood.

During the 1914—18 war (apart from a few who enjoyed killing) everyone who was in it or had near ones in it suffered, but the suffering was diiefly of the instincts, as animals suffer—dully; uncomplainingly. We accepted all that our masters—the poHticians, the journalists and the generals told us. Now, in the period preceding the Second World War, the suffering was much more in the feelings, in the solar plexus. At times it was as if one could sense the life of England running down the scale to the bottom 'doh' of the inherent stupidity and dullness of our strange race, inherent in those other puppets Neville Chamberlain, Stanley Baldvion, Ramsay MacDonald and Montague Norman.

Soffie^es, when walking from my office in Barbican to the City

Livery Club by St. Paul's to lunch with my father I would go through Staining Lane, a narrow quiet alley. I would stop and listen and in Ae silence it was as if I could hear these old buildings talking; it was as if they knew that they would not last much longer. The causes of the actions that led to the eventual destruction of the City were already in motion.

There are legends and myths among ancient races and reUgions in which can be discerned elements of teaching during times of approaching mass psychosis; legends of the anger of the gods and the need to propitiate them vsdth sacrifices. There are hints in the Bible. In very remote times, it is said, the priests, who were real priests, could tell when the SoHoonensius was approaching and they called the people together for special ceremonies and rituals by which they were able to make use of some of the tension for their own being. They were able to sacrifice the negative urge to destroy and turn it into a positive mrge for self-perfection. But the idea of sacrifice degenerated into the mass human sacrifices of the Aztecs, the mass sexual orgies of decaying Rome, the mass murders of 'heretics' by the Christian church, the mass sacrifice of Jews by the Germans, and the mass sacrifices of the Russians by Stalin for 'the good of the state'.

When I furst started gomg about with Orage to meetings where he spoke, and in my general contact with intellectuals, I discovered another of my weaknesses. In the presence of these people I became tongue-tied by a feeling of inferiority, because I could not speak their language. 'You've no need to feel inferior to any of these people', said Orage. 'Your need is to understand your feeling of inferiority to your own organic self, to what you know in essence you ought to be. When you've arrived at a certain stage you will be able to meet people on their own ground and feel inferior to none. Instead of this inferiority there comes a realization of one's inadequacy, of how far one is from what one knows one ought to be.'

Yet Orage himself remained blind to the fatilts of C. H. Douglas. Orage was the one man who could clearly formulate Douglas's comphcated system of ideas. Douglas was a successful business man, grasping in regard to money; and he never forgave Orage's selling the *New Age* and going to Gurdjieff. At a public dinner of two hundred people in white ties and tail coats with Orage sitting beside him, and with a tongue loosened by wine, Douglas made a speech, ending in a diatribe against certain people who had deserted 'the cause'. 'It ^^ be said of

^em,' he concluded, 'diat we fought at Arcques and you were not tbere,' and sat down to loud applause but, so identified was he with the surroundings that he also applauded.

Later I said to Orage, 'As inverted criminals make the best policemen so Douglas, an inverted financier, understands the fmancial system.'

. Douglas has a streak of Jewish blood,' he said. 'There are two clans of Douglas among the Scots, the White and the Black. A long time ago some rich Jews emigrated to Scotland and married into one of these 4ans. C. H. Douglas belongs to it. There's a good deal of Jewish blood in the Scots. This new Scottish NationaUst magazine is run and edited by a Jew.'

By association I was reminded of a talk with Gurdjieff and some pap^ about the Jewish mixture. Some of those present were mentioned. Gurdjieff said to Orage, 'You, Orage, just escaped.' One pointis^ to me said, 'He has Jewish blood.' Gurdjieff said, 'No, Arab.' How did he know? I had not told him that one of my grandmothers was at least half Arab. He went on to say that to be Jewish is to be brought up in the ancient Jewish tradition—the Jewish way of life, with its good and bad sides. Many people with Semitic features have not a single jiewish characteristic. The Arabs are part of the great Semitic race, of •which the Jews are one of the tribes. Gurdjieff also said that there are ao real Jews now, only German Jews, Russian Jews, French Jews, American Jews, EngUsh Jews and so on.

: He sometimes used the word 'dirty' in speaking of people of mixed blood and of races that were deteriorating. Scotch, Irish and Spanish 'dirty'. There was no real culture left among them. Mixed blood l^ves less opportunity for individuality, and people of mixed blood are subject to special inner weaknesses.

It said a great deal for the tolerance of the EngHsh, even among the iatdligentsia, that Orage was received by his old friends and acquaintances as if he had never spent seven years with the 'Greek charlatan', 'the Armenian Magic Master', 'the Caucasian "Wonder-worker', as G. Was variously described. Orage never spoke to anyone about the ideas esc^ those of us who had worked with him, not even to the man closest to him of the old *New Age* days. Will Dyson, die AustraUan. I adted Dyson, 'Do you think Orage has changed since he metGurdjieff ?' 'Yes,' he said, 'and for the worse.'

'Do you mean he's not the man he was?'

'Oh no. In a way he's much more so. But I think his seven years with Gurdjieffhas been a bad thing for him.'

'How?'

"Well, before, we understood each other. He was one of us so to speak. Now, there's something about him I can't get at.'

Dyson, who was devoted to Orage, could not forgive GurdjieFfor this.

Holbrook Jackson was another who could not understand the change in Orage. Jackson, whom I used to meet at The First Edition Club, was a man whose way of Hfe before I met GurdjieF was my ideal. Like myself, from a child he had been devoted to books and book knowledge; like myself, he had been an agent, a lace agent, in Leeds, and had left it and gone into publishing and writing about books, but had never gone back to lace as I had to hats. Even at school, it seems, we had had the same feeling about books: the smell of the paper, the binding; and even the names of the publishers on the title page were surrounded by an atmosphere of romance. Jackson asked me to lunch with him at the Eiffel Tower in Charlotte Street as he was curious to know about the life at Fontainebleau and why the ideas had had such a strong influence on Orage. 'He's changed,' he said. 'He's lost that old intellectual arrogance. He never could say, "I don't know". De Maetzu once said of him, he knows the shapes of everything and the weight of nothing. Now, I feel, he knows the weight as well.'

We talked for an hour about Gurdjieff and Fontainebleau, and at last he said, 'You know, I haven't the remotest idea what you have been talking about or the work that you and Orage did vnth Gurdjieff.'

'It is more difficult to explain,' I said, 'than to convey a description of the manners and customs of an unknown tribe which I might have hved with.'

We went on to talk about his *Anatomy of Bihliomania* which had just been published with great success and widely reviewed. 'What does Orage say about it?' he asked, expectantly. I could not bring myself to repeat Orage's words, so I said, 'He thinks you must have done an enormous amount of work on it.' When I had showed Orage the two large volumes, all he said was, as he flicked the pages, 'His ball of dung!' An allusion to Capek's *Insect Play* which was then the rage among the intellectuals. The lunch and talk with Holbrook Jackson coincided vwth the last gasp of my Hfe-disease of bibhophily, the love of books for themselves, which may have been inherited from my

Sacestor, William Nott, a bookseller in St. Paul's churchyard in the seventeenth century.

: I was saying to Orage that I wished it were possible tor nie to chuck "everything up and go and work with GurdjiefFagam. Orage's rejomder -was: 'Why do you want to return to your Father's womb?'

As regards the ideas of the New Economics, expounded in *The New '^glish Weekly,* the most hostile were the Old Conservatives who saw the ideas as a potential destroyer of faith in the out-moded financial wstem; the Socialists who feared that they would destroy the possibilities of die nationaUzation of the means of production and distribution; and the Coirununists who said they would destroy the faith of the people ai dbe coming revolution in England.

It was not long before Orage and Ouspensky made contact; not p e n a l l y but through Rosamund Sharpe, wife of CUfford Sharpe, -Irst editor of the *New Statesman,* friends of Orage, who had introduced them to Ouspensky when he came to London. Orage told me, 'I've had a message from Ouspensky that he would be willing to see flae again; but I don't see the possibility yet. He has another book coming out in a few weeks, *A New Model of the Universe.* He's sent me the typescript, which I've read. If you like to have it and give me your essence promise that you will not show it to anyone or speak about it, j o u may have it for a week. Here you are.' he added. *A New* Muddle *t>f the Universe.*

I found it intensely interesting and read it within the week.

O r ^ e had heard from GurdjiejBFwho had asked him to go to Paris and see him, and Orage had written, 'Time was when I would have gone to the ends of the earth at your wish. Now I must know exactly why you want to see me.' 'The fact is,' he said, 'I need a rest and I have to do this task I've set myself Later I may be able to work with him on aaodier level. When I am satisfied that I have expounded the ideas of monetary reform and the new economics to the best of my abiHty I shall start the paper on new hnes. You know that GurdjiefFhas said that the time will come when epics will be written by men who have understood something in *Beelzebub.* I don't propose to write an epic or anytiing like it, but my object would be to incorporate certain ideas of GurdjiefF's in Hterary criticism and of the arts generally. I am convinced that a right use of his ideas, together with a study of the whole of the Mahabharata, could bring about a revival of literature in Europe

comparable to that of the Renaissance. But the time has not come yet. He's still working on the book and making changes in it and on the Second Series. Perhaps he wants me to help. I've already done a lot of work on the Second Series and I can't do any more at present.'

We were in 'our' A.B.C. in Chancery Lane and continued our talk amid the rattle of cups and plates. We both felt that GurdjiefF might have explained more. And we both suffered very much inwardly at times and felt baffled and frustrated, as if we had been left, like Goma-hoor Harkharkh in the Arch Preposterous, in the air, or 'struggling like a puppy in a deep pond'.

Some weeks later I was in Paris at the Cafe de la Paix talking to GurdjiefF in a worked-up state and I began to speak rather heatedly of what Orage and I had said about his having brought us so far and then seemmgly left us in the air.

'You once spoke about people fmding themselves between two stools, sitting on neither. Perhaps that's where we are.'

He listened quietly until I had finished, and with a sardonic grin said, 'I needed rats for my experiments.'

'What?' I asked.

'I needed rats for my experiments.'

As always, on these occasions, I fell silent.

Then he took me to lunch at the apartment and talked about many things. With a look of compassion he said, 'You are a good man.'

'\^at is good?' I asked. 'It seems to me that goodness is often a name for weakness. Sometimes I see myself as what I really am—merde de la merde, shit of shit.'

A slow smile spread over his face.

A few days after the publication of *A New Model of the Universe,* I happened to go to Fontainebleau, taking with me a copy of the book, which I showed to Gurdjieff and Stjoemval. Gurdjieff merely made a scornful remark and turned away, and Stjoemval began to say that there were many things that Ouspensky did not understand. 'Mr. GurdjiefF has a very big plan, Ouspensky does not understand this. He does not know what Mr. GurdjiefF's aim is. We who are working with Mr. GurdjiefF have got beyond such books as *The New Model.* It only adds to the sum of ordinary knowledge, of which there is already too much. Ouspensky ought to have got beyond it.'

'Perhaps he had to get it out of his system,' I suggested.

'It may be. I hear that he is working on another book, an account of

•what Mr. Gurdjieff said in our groups in Russia. This should be in a different category.'

Orage said one day, 'A man named Rom Landau has telephoned me. He's writing a book about certain "philosophers" and wants information from me about GurdjiefF. I can't be boAered. He's a light-weight, i fluent writer but not a serious thinker. Go and see if you can do something for him.'

Landau was 'a representative of contemporary art', an artist with a •^icle range of knowledge but with no understanding of 'inner teaching', I gave him some superficial information about GurdjiefF, which Bfi used in *God is my Adventure,* but being only a writer about philosophy he never could understand GurdjiefF or his teaching.

• Later, he wrote to me asking me to tell him what I understood about ,4ite Law of the Octave from my work with Gurdjieff. I said that I had Weated for years to understand something of the law and had no intention of passing on what I had learnt, especially if the object was to publish it and make money out of it. In any case, unless and imtil a man has experienced the working of the law in himself, he cannot understand it—it remains just information for the curious.

MEOPHAM

WHEN THE FELT AGENCY gave me up I let OUT flat and rented a furnished farm house a few miles from Meopham in Kent. It had been a manor house, part of it dating from the thirteenth century. It was old, rambling and desolate, and was said to be haunted. It lay in a hollow, the bams and outbuildings had been burnt down some long time before and the ruins were covered with tall nettles. The land lay uncultivated and, because of the economic depression, much of the farm land around us was derelict. A good farm with buildings could have been bought for ten pounds an acre. The men h^ gone to the towns or were on the dole. In this beautiful countrysic^ as in the old buildings in Staining Lane, I could sense and feel the/^low erosion of economic hfe.

Ill fares the land to gathering woes a prey,
Where wealth/accumulates and men decay.

It was a lonely place, though not so bad at weekends when people came down and we sat/before a roaring log fire burning in the enormous open fireplace; aiid in the daytime a strange peace lay over the place—the peace of die vibrations of people who had Hved there for seven hundred years without a break, where nothing violent or horrible had happened; only the endtess process of birth, Hfe, work, death-birth, life, work, death____It was not the ghosts, the strange noises, the mysterious footsteps (a rat probably), doors that opened and shut by themselves, that troubled us, but the cold December wind that blew along the dark passages and through empty rooms, and the efforts we had to make in order to cope with daily living.

When I went to London I drove the three miles to the station and left the car in a garage. Returning late one night I found the garage locked and, as I did not know where the ovmer lived, I set out on foot, taking a short cut through a wood. I don't like woods at night—one is hemmed in, and I disliked this wood particularly, though I didn't know why. There was nothing for it, tired as I was, but to follow the

path. The moon shone bright, hidden now and then by a passing cloud. way through the wood, slowly going up the hill I saw what seemed lo be a dim figure in the distance. Though my heart beat fast I went on. The moon was suddenly obscured, then, just as the cloud passed, about gxty yards away a black figure stood right in my path, its arms up-Jified and outstretched. I could hardly breathe and my heart seemed ^ d y to burst. Instinctive panic fear of centuries, the fear of dark forests, s ^ e d up in me, and I was about to turn and run. But another part of jsas would not give way and impelled me to walk on—^into danger, iaGCording to my feelings. The figure stood stock still. Then, as I came to it, I saw with enormous relief that it was a small tree, the top of the ttunk cut off, with only two branches like arms stretched out. My heart stopped pumping, I went on and reached the farm in another half-hour, but the agitation caused by this incident lasted all night and left a Sjttpng impression, like a nightmare. It is difficult sometimes to dis-taguish between hysterical unreasoning fear, the ancestral fears of ghosts and goblins in a wood at midnight, and a real instinctive appre-hension of danger.

A week before Christmas, as a last straw, the well went dry, so we decided to leave. We packed necessaries in the car and went to my parents' home where twenty of us, children and grandchildren, fore-gathered for Christmas Day. At this time I was having an attack of the ^yriting itch so I said, "We will take everything including the dog and the radio and drive as far West as we can and escape from the fogs and cold of London; and I will write a book.' It was an open car and we ^^Sve with the top down all the way to Falmouth. Eventually we found rooms in St. Mawes—a bedroom and living room with a piano and foiir good meals a day for four pounds a week, for ourselves and the two children, fifty yards from the tiny harbour. The weather was mild aad balmy. It was perfect. Every week I sent a batch of manuscript to Otage who returned it with emendations and an encouraging letter.

By June the book was finished. We could have stayed and lived well on a small income. It was a satisfying Ufe in many ways. We were accepted by the Cornish people and local society, and the boys played •with the village children. There was always something to do in this beautiful country, and the ships coming and going in Falmouth Har-bour kept us in touch with the outside world. If it had not been for the unrest we could have slept there peacefully for the rest of our lives, as most of our acquaintances seemed to be doing. But we returned

to London. The book was never published. I showed it to my old friend Arthur Waugh of Chapman and Hall, who said that not enough people would buy it, but that I could write, and if I would produce something of more general interest he would consider it. At least, I had begun to learn the craft of writing, though die art was still beyond me.

At the end of the summer of 1932 we left the RusseU's Beacon HiU School, and went to France, where we Hved in a pension in St Cloud. In September I returned to London, leaving my family in France until I had found somewhere for us to live. I found a flat on Rosslyn Hill, ten minutes walk from the Orage's in Hampstead village, and the next thing was to fmd a way to get money to buy the necessities which would keep our carcases going.

NOTES ON SOME POETS

POE SOMB TIME the idea of starting a publishing business had been in my xaind; and very soon I started with a hundred pounds capital, though ,after the first book was published two other men joined the firm. It was idfte worst possible time to start, for the furst thing the public gives up buying in times of depression is books. Yet a small publishing business, in wHch the publisher has to do almost everything himself, is an mteresting way of making a living, since he must have at least a small amount of literary discrimination, and must know about lay-out, type faces, paper, binding, reproduction of illustrations and so on. He meets .ffany different types of people who want to see their thoughts printed in a book. He must also do some of the packing and posting himseE A bookseller on the other hand only sells the publisher's products. I foimd it very satisfying; and, as long as Orage was literary adviser we did fairly weU.

. In the hat business I was out of my element, in publishing I was at kome. An agent or commercial traveller in business is like a one or two centred being, but a small publisher has to use all three centres. Yet publishers and booksellers are rarely interested in serious ideas. My new life and contact with *The New English Weekly* brought me in touch •with old and new friends and acquaintances in the world of the arts: Ezra Pound, T. S. Eliot, Herbert Read, Will Dyson, Eric Gill, Edwin Muir, A. E., Hugh McDiarmid and Dylan Thomas.

I published Denis Saurat's *Three Conventions,* which brought about a dose friendship. He had met Gurdjieff at the Prieure at Orage's suggestion and had been profoundly impressed. Saurat, a son of peasants, had a deep understanding of the rich current of life that, flowing imder the glittering exterior; has almost nothing in common with this exterior—I Daean the Ufe of simple people, peasants and the middle classes who

themselves are almost unconscious of it. He wrote about it in *Gods of the People, The End of Fear, The Christ of Chartres;* also, he had traced the influence of the occult tradition in English Hterature from Spenser to Milton and Blake. Rebecca West said that he was the wisest man she knew.

He had written for *The New Age* and *Revue des Deux Mondes.* At the time I met him he was professor of French Literature in Kings College and was head of the French Institute in London. I spoke to him about Gurdjieff's book, *Beelzebub's Tales,* and later lent him my typescript copy. He wrote:

'Thank you for allowing me to see it. It is, in my opinion, a great book and it is a thousand pities that it cannot be published. There is a very great amount of vwsdom and knowledge in it and, as I became more familiar with it I reahzed that practically every page is full of sense and information. Beyond some excusable maimerisms and the peculiarities which give charm to every author, I see nothing in the book that could be objected to. But no doubt its allegorical or phUosophical meaning which is easy enough to someone who has studied the traditions, would be completely beyond the public. I am glad to say that I found no difficulties in the book. It is a work of art of the first magnitude in its own peculiar way.

'Please remember that if an opportunity should arise of meeting Gurdjieff again I would be dehghted to do so. If you can convey to him my appreciation of his book—and you will note I make no restrictions —^you will give me pleasure.

'If only it were possible, which I do not think it is, it would give me the greatest pleasure to give a regular course of lectures to explain the book according to my lights. Of course, you will realize that each commentator would-have his own way of explaining the book.

Sincerely,
D. Saurat.'

Years later, when *Beelzebub* was pubUshed, I sent him a copy. He wrote:

'Tha^you for sending *Beelzebub,* and in which I am immersed. I like It unmensely—but I wonder what the French translation will be Hke. I do not believe you can play with French in the way EngUsh has been played with there. I cannot give any answers as to a review, and cannot think of any journal that would accept, at present, an article

even. Also, I'm deep down with an attack of flu, and you seem to be ^e same.

' 'Later, I'll send you some comments on *The Tales.*

Affectionately,

D. Saurat.'

Hie commentary arrived in due course, in French, which I translate 'as follows: 1 have again read with the greatest interest naturally this astonishing book by G. Gurdjieff. I beheve that the most important objectively, is that in this book there are a number of observations which indicate a superterrestrial source.

'The point of view about devils.

'The aflSrmation that there are, at present, four centres of initiates on ^e earth, and the situation of these centres.

, 'The forbidding to impart true information directly to ordinary i^ds.

i' 'The difference between mental knowledge, which is an obstacle to understanding; and the knowledge of "being"—the only real .knowledge. This, perhaps, is the most important point.

'The fact that it is Buddhism (in its distorted forms) that has produced occultism, theosophy, psychoanalysis and so on.

'The fact that only revelation can teach us something.

- 'The suffering of God.

'We are thus in the presence of one who, in a certain measure, speaks with authority.

'In the second place, very many of the ideas, though common-•Steical, are based on intuitions well above the normal:

~ 'Every criticism of modem life and of human history is perfectly just, and this is perhaps one of the most important things in the book, since it is abolutely necessary to vmderstand that *all* our ideas have been falsified—before we have been able to correct at least some of them.

'The Greeks and the Romans have been responsible for putting in train fundamental errors—and then the Germans.

'God forgives all.

'The importance of the lawful inexactitudes in die transmission of teal teaching in Art.

'The criticisms of the doctrine of reincarnation.

'In the third place it is necessary to state that a great part of the book is not clear, and one has the right to suspect that G.G. has done this intentionally. Leaving his sense of himiour on one side one can follow

his idea that it is forbidden to teach directly, and that one can tell lies if these lies are useful to humanity; this shows that he has probably put errors or intentional inexactitudes in his book so as to compel his followers to exercise their own judgment and thus themselves develop and reach a higher level, to which—according to the theories of G.G., these followers wotild not arrive at if he, G.G., taught them the truth directly. In the latter case they would be in the category which is called "mental knowledge", whereas G.G. wishes them to reach the category of "knowledge of being", and the first hinders the second.

'It is on this that each reader must take his own stand.

'I am quite ready to tell you mine.

'I place among the myths which are to be rejected, completed or explained:

(a) The person of *Beelzebub,* who is evidently a transformation of G.G. himself—leaving on one side the question of who is G.G.
(b) All the story of the central sun, of the planets, of the earth and the moon; and of eternal retribution for a small number of beings, which contradicts the idea of a universal pardon.
(c) The idea of Christ as only one of the messengers; in this case it is necessary to identify the Logos, which is perfectly indicated in the chapter on purgatory.

'In conclusion, it seems to me that the teachings of G.G. should be able to play a very important role in our time if Aey are explained by minds first of all endowed with a certain preliminary knowledge and a developed critical sense.

'I think further that it is a compliment to G.G. to believe that this is exactly what he intended himself You know as well as I, and even better, that he had a critical sense and a'sense of humour extremely well developed; and further, a very poor opinion of the intellectual capacity of people to whom he spoke in general.

'I shall be very happy to know what you think of these points of view, and I shake you very cordially by the hand.'

Once, in our talks I said, 'But so few people know about *Beelzebub's Tales.* What's going to happen to it, supposing it does get published?' Saurat said, 'Nothing much may happen in our time. We are in too much of a hurry. We have no sense of real time in the West. Perhaps in fifty, or a hundred years a group of key men will read it. They will say, "This is what we've been looking for", and on an understanding

of it may start a movement which could raise the level of civilization.

'GurdjiefFis a Lohan. In China there is the cave of a hundred Lohans, presumably all that have appeared in China in over four thousand years. A Lohan is a man who has gone to schools and by incredible jscertions and study has perfected himself He then comes back into life, sits in cafes, drinks, has women, and Hves the Hfe of a man, jjut more intensely. It was accepted that the rules of ordinary man did aoe apply to him. He teaches, and people come to him to learn objective BB^is. In the East a Lohan was understood. The West does not underataad. A teacher in the West must appear to behave like an English gentleman.'

'As Ouspensky and his pupils do not understand GurdjiefF.' I added, me, why, in your view, did Ouspensky separate himself from .iGMrdjieff?'

"The explanation is simple. Ouspensky is a professional philosopher •wlio studied with Gurdjieff and has now set up a sort of rival school—a **very** good school for certain people, perhaps, but on a lower level than GitrdjiefF's school. Really, he is interested only in the theoretical side of the teaching. He hoped that the knowledge he got from Gurdjie£F would classify and index his ideas, which it has, of course. But—Oaspensky could not submit to the pressure Gurdjieff brought to bear Oa him to break down his particular kind of vanity.'

A i. (George Russell) and Orage used to meet once a week at the Kardomah in Chancery Lane. Usually there were ten or twelve of us writers and would-be vmters, who merely sat and listened to the s^li^ges, whose talk often became a monologue by A.E. Literature their chief topic; they had studied both Hindu and European foecature and both affirmed that European literature could only be VttdtKzed and vivified by going back to a source—the Mahabharata. Greek literature as a source has almost dried up; but the father and Sacidier of Greek literature was the *Mahabharata,* which contains every fbirm of literature known to us, and every experience that man has experienced. A.E. very interestingly linked up Irish myths with stories and legends in the *Mahabharata;* and Orage, time and again, threw in i<feas based on Gurdjieff's teaching, but none found an echo in A.E. He seemed to be Hving in a Celtic twilight, Orage in the Hght of the saa.

Yet A.E. like many real poets, like T. S. Eliot and Herbert Read, Was also a practical man of affairs. He had organized the Irish farmers'

co-operative. I first met him at his house in Dublin just after the 'rising' or rebellion of 1916. He was kind to me as a very young man. He spoke about his friends—George Moore, W. B. Yeats (Willie Yeets he called him), Bernard Shaw. I wanted to write, though at that time I could barely write a literate letter. He said that if I really wished to write I would write, but I would have to work at it, do some every day. He told me how George Moore worked, shaping and reshaping, polishing and polishing. Moore had come to see him one evening about ten o'clock to discuss a paragraph of a book he was writing. He said, "We walked up and down the road from ten till two in the morning, discussing back and forth how a certain idea should be expressed, but of course, we covered also a good deal of the craft and art of writing.' A.E. took me to see Erskine Childers and his wife who Hved a few minutes away, but Ghilders was just going out so we had not time to talk much. Not long after, he was arrested and shot by Ms own people in the civil war that followed the rebellion. A.E. showed me some paintings of his fairy folk coming down the Wicklow Hills in the dusk, their faces and forms faintly luminous. He claimed, in the most natural way, really to have seen diem. Later, I was staying in the Austrian Tyrol with Coimt Fritz Hochberg, who showed me some of his paintings, also of fairy folk coming down at night from the mountains round his home; he also claimed really to have seen them. A.E. was a Celt, black hair and beard and dark blue eyes, Hochberg a fair-haired, Ught blue-eyed Nordic, almost Prussian in manner. He had never heard of A.E., so I put them in touch and a correspondence began between them.

How was it that two such dissimilar men in such different countries had similar and unusual visions, and painted similar pictures of them?

Christopher Grieve, who wrote under the name of Hugh McDiarmid, was one of the younger and more vital poets of his time. When Orage reviewed his poems in *The New English Weekly* he said, 'Hark! I hear a man singing.'

I was then meeting McDiarmid several times a week. He had asked C. H. Douglas and T. S. Eliot to meet him at the old Holbom Restaurant for lunch and invited me to join them and listen to Douglas who was to talk about the new economics, the burning question of the day. It was fascinating to watch the play of these two minds, Douglas's like a batde-axe or a mace, Eliot's a finely tempered sword.

Neither McDiarmid nor I took part in the conversation, nor can I remember the talk.

McDiarmid was the only one among what Orage called 'the shell-

Rocked communists' who saw clearly the cause of the breakdown of the finandal-economic system. I had met him when I was in the hat business. With two Jews, he was trying to run a small pubHshing business in Holbom and I, often carrying my case of sample velour felts, would call on him and together we would go to Henneky's and drink gin and ginger ale and talk. His talk was always stimulating; ideas poured forth and both the ideas and the gin would go to our heads and everything would seem possible. He had been given some money to help take the Stone of Scone from Westminster Abbey to Scotland. The money wait in expenses and the Stone stayed.

He suffered from that strange chsease, communism; as a youth he was bitten by the bug and had never really got the poison out of his system. Like the Red Dean of Canterbury, he was blind to the effects of communism.

He became interested in the nationaHst magazine for Scotland, ^Earted by a Jew. He and this editor came to ask Orage for an article ^n the future of culture in Scotland. Orage refused. 'There is no fore-Sj^ble future,' he said, 'when your talented men, like Edwin Muir and Hugh here, have to come to London. What can you expect from dbe leavings of a nation?'

We were fond of Christopher and his wife. They often came to see **OS or** we would meet at Edwin and Willa Muir's, who lived around Ae comer in Downshire HUl. At times they were in dreadful poverty. Once his wife came to my pubHshing office looking tired and worn out. >'€3iris says can you help us? We're almost starving. I've walked all Ae way from Stoke Newington because I hadn't the money **for** the

I did what I could, but being a small publisher and not a hat manufecturer, I could hardly make ends meet. This happened more than once. At last he took his family to Whalsay in the Shetlands and though I heard from him often I never saw him again.

He was one of those rare beings in whom bums a kind of celestial fire—some solar matter has got into their make-up. They live very aiuch according to essence, and the world squints at them, while they suffer and struggle to put into words what they feel and think. Yet Kbgh McDiarmid, although he had to wait over thirty years, is now •idknowledged, and in his lifetime, as Scotland's greatest poet since Btttns. It was Orage who gave him a start, in *The New English Weekly.*

Arnold Haskell, who wrote books and articles about the ballet, was holding forth on his pet subject to Orage and myself in the office.

Orage listened and then said, 'Yes, *you* know the literature of the ballet—^we know the scripture,' referring to GurdjieffF's dances.

Of Ezra Pound, Orage said that he was a major poet; also, that he was the boy scout of hterature, who did a good deed every day to some struggling writer or artist. For years he had written for *The New Age* and for Margaret Anderson's and Jane Heap's *Little Review* in America. He became very interested in Social Credit and saw that these ideas contained a formulation of the causes of the breakdown of our then civilization and the means for achieving a new and prosperous Ufe for everyone in the West. I pubhshed his *Jefferson andjor Mussolini, Social Credit—an Impact;* also Alfred Venison's *Poems*—clever parodies of well-known verse. In our talks I sometimes found it difficult to follow him, his voice would sink to a faint whisper; and I was beginning to have sHght nerve deafness, a result of my experiences in the First War. A friendship grew and a long period of letter-writing began. Ezra was a warm-hearted, vital man, always stimulating. About literature he was briUantly sane; but he became identified with *Social Credit*—a crusader, and this eventually led him into difficulties.

Eric Gill had visited him in Rapallo. Gill told me, 'I wanted to discuss art and literature with him, but, do you know, the moment I put my foot in his house he started talking about monetary reform—no, not talking, lecturing me. I couldn't get a word in. After standing it for three quarters of an hour I got up and left. On Hterature and art he's soimd; but on monetary reform I beheve he's quite mad.'

It was true. He had got it into a crazy comer of his brain that Mussolini, who understood a good deal about the financial system, could save the world economically if he had the power to do it. Hence his running off the rails in the war and the disastrous consequences for him that followed.

I had, and still have, a warm feeling for him. He was a good man. His own countrymen martyred him; in time they will make him one of their saints.

THE PASSING OF ORAGE

ooii SMALL HRM WAS regarded as one of die most progressive of die younger publishers. All kinds of people came to the tiny office—^Dylan Thomas, Treece and Gascoigne with their poems, many young writen. But, said Orage, 'You cannot, at this early stage, afford to be a patron ^f literature.' Even well-known writers sent their work to us. Every-•jidag seemed to be going smoothly. Orage was our literary adviser and old friend, Oliver Simon of die Curwen Press, gave free advice on typography and lay-out.

; la fact, ever since the end of the first Great War in 1918 everything faad gone well with me. For sixteen years I had had a very full Hfe; ^d only ill-health, a result of the war, and my inherited and acquired iftreaknesses had prevented my extracting very much more from my Opportunities. Although outer Hfe was full and interesting there was dhvays the inner struggle accompanied by suffering. Yet, outwardly I iad not only had what I needed but what I wanted. And now the wheel o£ fortune began to turn its dark side. In October 1934 I had a strong that something serious was about to happai to Orage. What, Idid not know. Several times he complained of feeling U1 and of the ilfifficulty he had in working. I begged him to see a doctor. 1 have,' ibe sdd. 'He's diagnosed it as functional, not organic. I shall take more test.' Some strange things happened at this time. With Orage and two fitten I was sitting downstairs in the A.B.C. in Chancery Lane. Orage Was speaking to one of them about his writing, talking rather severely scttd he said, 'I speak to you as a man imder sentence of death....' At fest I thought ^s was meant in general—since we are all under sen-teace of death. But his tone of voice gave me to think.

'1 A few days later I was again in the A.B.C. with him—^the two of us Were talking over coffee when three men came in, nodded to Orage and Sat down. He said, 'I must have a word with those people. Keep my place,' and went and sat with them. In a minute or two I glanced at

them. A pale yellow light issued from Orage, a nimbus, not only roxmd his head but arovaid hds whole foim. A growing astonishment came over me. For ten or fifteen seconds I watched, then turned away. When I looked again it was gone, but the effect on me remained; and I thought of what Gurdjieff had said about a halo being a real thing that can be seen around certain people and in certain churches. When Orage came back to my table his face had a sort of radiance of youth. I did not see the light again. A week later we were saxmtering up Chancery Lane on our way home, as we often did, and were talking of our friends and life at the Prieure and work with Gurdjieff in general. Suddenly he stopped, turned to me and said in a tone of complete conviction, 'You know, I thank God every day of my life that I met Gurdjieff.' My reply was, 'I also.'

A week later, November 5th, Orage spoke over the radio on Social Credit. He had spent a lot of time preparing the speech and it went well. But now and again he paused, as if in pain. We were to have joined the Orages at WiU Dyson's apartment afterwards but events prevented us.

That night, or early morning, I had a dream and in the dream I saw his face, smiling in a mass of glovdng coals. I woke up and a feeling of profound sorrow and sadness pervaded me. Then I slept.

The following morning his wife telephoned. She said, 'Come up. It's Orage. He's dead!' I put down the receiver and, for the first and only time in my life, almost fainted.

One can picture the fact of a person's death but, while they are alive, one cannot realize it. And now, the reaHzation of the fact of Orage's sudden death almost paralysed us with grief. Not only those who lyid been in his groups but men and women who were not interested in Gurdjieff's ideas felt the tremendous shock caused by the sudden loss of Orage's presence, his being. A friend, a poet, who wrote to me, 'Never have I knovra such grief,' expressed my feelings. An unknown man wrote, 'I never knew Orage and I am not an educated man, but through his paper I felt that here was someone who understood me. And now that he is gone I am lonely.' Both simple people and men like G. K. Chesterton, A.E., Bernard Shaw and T. S. Eliot paid tributes to Orage in letters to *The New English Weekly.* Only Eric Gill touched on his life with Gurdjieff. He said, 'I do not know what gift of grace he received at Fontainebleau. It is certain that his deep appetite for religion was there, in some manner, satisfied.'

J. S. Collis wrote, 'The universality, depth, and clearness of the mind stood alone. Yet his outstanding quality was goodness. He was virapt

m silence because he did no evil. "When he died, those who knew him jfost.. . their living secret standard for being good men.'

; Will Dyson and I arranged everything for the funeral. The Dean of Canterbury, at his own suggestion, took the service in Old Hampstead Church, a simple service, and the church was crowded with friends and acquaintances. We buried his planetary body in the churchyard; a stone slab covers the grave, and on it is carved, by his friend Eric Gill, the enneagram and Krishna's words to Arjuna:

You grieve for those for whom you should not grieve.
The wise grieve neither for the living nor the dead.
Never at any time was I not, nor thou,
Nor these princes of men, nor shall we ever cease to be.
The unreal has no being,
The real never ceases to be.

I had sent a cable to Gurdjieff who was in New York and to friends diere, and one to Muriel Draper, who was in Moscow, she in whose house in New York the groups had met for seven years. She vreote: 'When I returned to the hotel and saw your cable in my room I fek I knew what was inside. I could not look at it. A quarter of an hour went by before I could bring myself to open it. . . . What a disaster for so many of us. . . What a strong ghost he has left!'

Orage, for many yoxmger people, was an ideal. One must have an ideal. For Orage, Gurdjieff was the ideal, and no doubt Gurdjieff had an ideal—and so on.

• Gurdjieff, in America, a few days after Orage's death began 'The Outer and the Inner World of Man' for the third series of his writings. ^ says that at die news of the death of Orage many people who had aever known Orage came to him with long faces, commiserating with him. This nauseated him. He writes about pseudo-grief and the harm it can do to people who give way to it mechanically because it is the "thing to do'. Real grief is another thing, although one must guard against the manifestations of this, as harm can be done by allowiag one-s^ to become identified with the grief occasioned by die loss.

Gurdjieff said, 'I loved Orage as a brother.' Orage was what G. calls a remarkable or extraordinary man: One who by his own efforts had got beyond the ordinary run of men: 'He is just and indulgent to the ^weaknesses of others: and he depends on the resources of his own mind, wiiich he has acquired by his own efforts.'

' In the weeks that followed I thought a great deal about death. The only man I could talk to seriously was Denis Saurat. He said, 'Dying is

much more complicated than we think. "What does it mean—after three days Jesus rose from the dead? It may be that three days after certain people die a kind of consciousness comes to them. They see their past, the things they ought to have done and the things they ought not to have done, and the things left half-done—a man becomes his own judge.'

'Then they drink the waters of Lethe and forget everything,' I said.

'Yes, with most people. But, if we are sufficiently developed, if, as GurdjieFF would say, we have worked on ourselves, then we may remember next time and have the possibihty of not making the same mistakes.' He added, 'Poor Orage, why did he have to spend so much time and energy on monetary reform?'

'Perhaps it was something he had left imdone,' I said. 'Something that he has now worked out of the pattern of his life. Next time he will be higher on the spiral of his evolution.'

'That is possible.'

He began to talk about the Mortalists, a sect that Milton took a great interest in, whose descendants are the Christadelphians. According to the Mortalists when a man dies he is dead indeed. He sleeps as it were until the imiverse comes to an end; then the universe is reborn and everything repeats. When a man's time comes he is reborn. 'But,' said Saurat, 'in the state of death our idea of time does not exist because time is the measure of motion (what GurdjieFF calls "the lawful fragmentation of some great whole") and in death there is no motion. Therefore the interval between death and resurrection, however long it may seem to the living, does not exist for the dead; or, at least, only as a night's sleep.'

This is similar to Ouspensky's idea of recurrence—a man is bom, lives and dies; the moment of death is the moment of birth. It is similar to the Hindu idea of nights and days of Brahm; at the end of the kalpa Brahm withdraws the whole of the universe into himself. He sleeps. When he wakes the universe is reborn and everything repeats.

There is something else. Mechanical Hfe must repeat, though vvdth slight variations. But a relatively conscious man, who becomes self-conscious through work on himself, need not repeat mechanically, he can be bom again at the point where he left off. That something which has been transmuted in him into higher substances, in which solar matter has been also crystaUized, is immortal in this solar system. The soul, or beginning of a soul has been formed; and this sacred something which is the real 'I' must become coated again and again with a plane-

tary body until it has become perfected, Then it passes perhaps to a planet, a state, nearer to the Sun Absolute, where conditions are more favourable.

According to GurdjiefF—and to Milton and his Mortalists—^not all men have souls, but there are those who, consciously, or unconsciously, have acquired the germ of a soul; and this must be perfected.

The Mortahsts said, 'That which is finite and mortal ceases from the time of the grave until the time of the resurrection.' And Milton, 'If it be true that there is no time without motion, which Aristotle illustrates by the example of those who were fabled to have slept in the t^nple of the heroes, and who, on awakening, imagined that the moment in which they awoke had succeeded without an interval the moment in which they fell asleep, how much more must intervening dme be annihilated to the departed, so that to them to die and be with J!!hrist vnll seem to take place at the same moment.... Were there no •iesurrection, the righteous would be of all men the most miserable; and iJje wicked, who have a better portion in this life, the most happy; which .would be altogether inconsistent with the justice of God——All things are of God. Matter proceeded incorruptible from God; and it remains incorruptible as far as concerns its essence. If all things are not only fiom God but of God, no created thing can finally be annihilated.'

. This is similar to some of the Sufi teaching and the Kabbalah. But created things can be changed into different substances.

" Connected with this is the idea of transmigration which is found in 'tocient religions, and which, like everything else, has been the subject *c£* all sorts of fantasies. GurdjiefF, in *Beelzebub,* speaks of being bom in the body of a one-brained or two-brained being, though this ^I d d apply to a person who is a mainly instinctive type and instinctive-ttaiotional type. And a man can recur and recur in diese circiunstances. la the Jewish religion the Pharisees believed in some sort of life after death. They had the idea of the 'soul' migrating firom one body to «aother in its efforts to purge itself of undesirable elements and so g^ffect itself. In the Kabbdah is to be found the idea of transmigration iato (as well as human bodies) animals, vegetables, metals and stones. 'Ifeere is the idea that sins in one hfe would have to be paid for in another life. Some said that a soul migrates through no more than three feadies; a very wicked soul, after three chances, or migrations, would i>ecome an evil spirit. la the Zohar are interpretations of passages relative to transmigration. 'Till thou return into the ground' (Genesis) aieans that the body returns to the ground; the spirit is reborn. 'Naked

shall I return thither' (Job) means 'to the womb'—^being re-bom. 'One generation goeth and another generation cometh' (Ecclesiasticus). The fact that the passing away of the generation is mentioned first is a proof that this must have existed before; otherwise it ought to read 'one generation cometh and another goeth'. Though much of this may be the wiseacreing of the Scribes and Pharisees, yet, all through the inner Hebrew teaching is the idea of metempsychosis as a reward for the good and punishment for the wicked, and the working out of one's own redemption.

In Scandinavian stories there are references to being bom again and the advantages of not being re-bom in this life.

The idea of transmigration exists among every kind of race from the most primitive to those whose civilization is still regarded as high—from the AustraUan aborigines to the Hindus.

It is to be found in Hindu Hterature in great detail, and in the Greek. "Where the idea came from originally is lost in the mists of antiquity. An idea of such vitaHty, one that has exercised the feelings and thoughts of endless generations, even with all the distortions and fantasies, must have some foimdation.

The Buddhists taught a theory of etemal recurrence. The Celtic Druids taught that the soul does not perish at death, and after a number of years passes into another body and lives again. Tuan Mac Cairill in the sixth century remembered how he had Hved **lOO** years as a man, 80 as a stag, 20 as a boar, 100 as a vulture and 20 as a fish. As a fish he was caught, and eaten by the wife of King Cairill, from whom he was bom as a child. Stories of this kind are also foimd among the Welsh.

AppoEonius of Tyana says, 'There is no death of a thing except in appearance; as also there is no birth of a thing,' which brings us back to Gurdjieff's idea that everything exists and what seems to us as the passing of time is only 'the lawful fragmentation of some great whole that has its arising on the Sun Absolute'.

In the *Mahabharata* it is related that life on this planet is in the last and the worst of the four Yugas, the KaU Yuga—the Age of Iron. We are in the last part of it and conditions will get worse until it comes to an end. After terrible sufferings life once more will become tolerable and civilization will emerge into a Golden Age.

Sauti says in the *Mahabharata:* 'At the end of the Yugas all that exists in the Universe, all created things, will be confounded. And at the beginning of another Yuga all things will be renewed and will succeed each other like the fruits of the earth in their seasons. Thus continues

perpetually to revolve in. the universe the wheel vsrhich causes the destruction of all things.'

GurdjiefFsaid that the life of man is rapidly running down the scale, but implies that given certain efforts by certain people, or happenings on a cosmic scale, the final catastrophe may be averted.

The idea of not being completely annihilated and the wish to continue to exist in some way appeals to something very deep in many people. During the war die thought that really terrified me was not that I might die but that if I were killed I would cease to exist—would |i«ish like a dog. After the war I began to read a great deal about trans-Biigration and recurrence, the 'beyond'. I studied theosophy and went to spiritualist meetings—and even held the medium's hand, yet nothing satisfied me; least of all the orthodox religious ideas and the rationalistic--adieistic ideas. Only Gurdjieffin our time, so far as I am concerned, has •mything reasonable to say about what happens after death.

Although everyone from childhood to old age thinks or feels almost aQ the time consciously or unconsciously about death (children are fescinated yet not terrified by the idea), few seem to be concerned jd)0ut a future existence. Then there are those comparatively few in whom the germ of a soul has been conceived and who thereby suffer. This Teaching, like all real Teaching, is for them.

As I have said, the shock of Orage's sudden and untimely death affected me deeply and for a long time. 'No man' says Donne, 'is an 'Band entire of itself; every man is a peece of the Continent, a part of the Maine; if a clod be washed away by the Sea, Europe is the lesse, as well ® if a Promontorie were, as well as if a Mannor of thy friends were, or own were: any man's death diminishes me, because I am in-^Ived in Mankinde . . .'

No man is an island, yet, in a way, we or something in our essence, is always alone and must be alone, which is not the same as loneliness. Yet when someone near to us goes it is truly as if a part of oneself had g<aie. But time, with certain work, can heal and even increase that whidi was diminished.

Silesius understood that the death of the planetary body is not the ffliportant thing that we imagine; but that:

The death whence no new life
doth flower nor come to be
Of all deaths is the death
from which my soul doth flee.
I say, there is no death.

If every hour 1 die,
Each time a better life
has come to me thereby.

Orage poured out love, and at the end of his life he was full of light, yet his words were weightier and fuller of meaning. His knowledge and his being together had brought about xmderstanding.

As soon as Gurdjieff returned from America I went to see him at the Cafe de la Paix, and spoke a great deal about Orage. Gurdjieff listened and there appeared in his eyes a look of deep compassion that one saw at certain times. He said, and later repeated to others, 'Orage need not have died just now. Only an Englishman would have died. Orage was a sheep, an Englishman. Now I must work hard for three more years to do what only Orage could have done for me had he lived.'

This was to shock us, though it is possible that if Orage had gone to him and spoken about his state Gurdjieff would have been able to prolong his life.

HERALD OF COMING GOOD

ON ONE OF MY VISITS to GurdjieffF he gave me a copy of his booklet *Merald of Coming Good* to read, and asked me if I could fmd a publisher for it in England. I said that I doubted very much if any feookseller or publisher would take it as there would be little, if any •^K>fit m it, but that I could handle it for him in England. Those who Mt something would pay for it. 'Send it to anyone who is interested in tay ide.ts,' he said. I asked, 'To Ouspensky's pupils too?' He thought for a moment and then said, 'Yes, to them as well.'

In London, with EHzabeth Gordon, who spent most of her time at the Prieure and helped GurdjieffF, I sent out the copies. The silence of its reception was almost deafening. Later, we heard that Ouspensky had isdstructed all his pupils to hand in their copies, which were destroyed.

"Why did he write it? Some say to shock Ouspensky. But things at the ftieure were at a low ebb. Gurdjieff, like us, and perhaps like everything m the imiverse, had periods when the force expended on a phase of ^ork had come to an interval, a 'mi' or a 'si'. At these periods he would ias&e an effort to do something and in a comparatively big way. 'i'erliaps he had made the effort to write and have printed *Herald of Coming Good,* to get over an interval; and he had spent a good deal of 39KHiey on it. 'If take, then take'. 'When I do anything I always do a lot Of it'. Like Nature, he sometimes produced an enormous amount of i^eeds so that one might grow, saying that effort in pursuit of a real aim is never wasted.

I suspect that one of the reasons why Gurdjieff had wanted to see ^ g e the year before was to have him read over the EngUsh transla- of *Herald of Coming Good* before it was printed, as well as the manuscript of *Beelzebub's Tales* and *Tales of Remarkable Men* oa-which he was stiU working.

^*ald of Coming Good* is a booklet of ninety pages, small quarto, "^tk a supplementary title, 'First Appeal to Contemporary Humanity'.

At the end are seven registration blanks. It begins with an introduction of three sentences, the first sentence ruiming to some two hundred and seventy words. He announces the booklet as the first of his published writings, and leaves the purchaser to pay from 8 to io8 French francs. It is written in the form of an epistle, headed:

Tuesday 13th September 1932
Cafe de la Paix
Paris.

The long, almost interminable, sentences make it difficult to read, let alone understand. Orage's editing would have improved it enormously; but even in its rough, uncut form truth glows through. The foUovvdng is a summary.

He says that he proposes to begin on this day an exposition of the first of seven appeals to humanity. Among the reasons for doing so is that it is the last day of the period he assigned to himself twenty-one years before, during which, by a special oath, 'I bound myself in my conscience to lead in some ways an artificial life modelled upon a programme which had been previously planned in accordance with certain defmite principles.' He considers it his duty to set down the motives which compelled him to lead such an artificial life, planned according to definite principles for the non-natural or non-habitual manifestations of himself. By this means he would prevent to a certain degree the formation of that something called by King Solomon 'Tzvarhamo'. This Tzvarhamo is the something which forms itself by a natural process in the common Hfe of people as an outcome of the evil actions of this common life, and which leads to the destruction of him who tries to achieve something for general human welfare and of all that he has accompHshed.

He says that he wished to counteract in the manifestations of people an inherent trait embedded in their psyche which was an obstacle to the fulfillment of his aim and which arouses in them 'when confronted with more or less prominent people, the function of the feeling of enslavement', or, as we might say, a feeling of inferiority and fear of doing and saying the wrong thing—and this paralyses for ever their capacity for manifesting that personal initiative which he particularly needed in people.

He feels impelled to give a brief outline of the causes of this irresistible striving of his, which was 'to understd clearly the precise significance in general of the life processes on earth of all outward forms of breath-

ing creatures; and in particular the aim of human life in the light of this interpretation'.

'The majority of people,' he says, 'have never . . . in the period of their responsible hfe . . . laid themselves open to experience but have contented themselves with other people's fantasies, forming them from illusory conceptions, and, at the same time, limiting themselves to intercourse with those like them;' also they have automatized themselves to a point of engaging in authoritative discussions of all kinds of seemingly scientific, but for the most part abstract, themes.

Although he too was a product of an abnormal environment like others yet, thanks to his father and his first tutor he possessed data which ipermitted the development in him of 'certain original and inherent traits', and of this peculiar trait: 'of striving to understand the very cssence of any object out of the ordinary that attracted his attention', 'Wiich gradually formed a 'something' which engendered in him this irrepressible striving. Always he tried to meet those who would either '^lain, or help him to discover, the questions that left him no peace.

Eventually, in 1892, he came to the conclusion that it was impossible for him to fmd an answer among his contemporaries, so he decided to retire for a defmite period into complete isolation and to endeavour i)y means of active reflection to attain this himself, or to think out some new ways for his researches.

He became in his inner hfe, a slave of his aim, which had been JBBtilled in him by the wiU of fate. Stimulated by this and later by his iOwn consciousness he continued his search.

This self-stimulation was caused as a result of his experiencing in all IsK bemg a feeling of'self-satisfaction' and 'pride' every time he verified ioore and more new facts about the lives of people in general: of which j&cts never had he found a single hint either in ordinary life or in all the literature, past and present, that he had read.

Although he himself was endowed with imusual powers of com-|toAension, and was able to get people to teU him about their inmost sacred aims, and also was able to investigate aU kinds of religious, atystical, philosophical and occult societies, inaccessible to ordinary people, he did not succeed in elucidating the answers to his questions. Nevertheless he never lost hope that somewhere and at some time he '^nld meet people who would show him tie way, at least to the key door. All this time he supported himself by working at various and professions, often changing them in order to realize his iimer aim.

In Centxal Asia he became friendly with a street barber through whom he was able to enter a Mahommedan monastery. Following a talk with some of the brothers about 'the nature and quality of human faith, and the consequences of the action of its impulses on man' he became convinced that he must abide by his decision and profit by this opportunity in the monastery.

The same evening he put himself in the necessary state and began serenely to meditate on his situation and future conduct; after three days he became convinced that the answers could be found in 'man's subconscious mentation'. It followed from this, that he must perfect his knowledge of man's psyche in every way. He left the monastery and again took to wandering, and a plan formed in his mind. He began to collect all the written and oral information he could among certain Asiatic peoples about that 'branch of science, highly developed in ancient times, called MEHKBNESS—the "taking-away-of-responsibiHty", and of which contemporary dvihzation knows only an insignificant portion called "hypnotism".'

He then settled in a Dervish monastery in Central Asia, and for two years studied the theory. Then, for practical study he gave himself out to be a healer of all kinds of vices; this he continued for about five years *'in aaordance with the essential oath imposed by my task, which consisted in giving conscientious aid to sufferers, in never using my and practical powers in that domain of science except for the sake of vestigations, and never for personal and egoistical ends'-,* and he not arrived at unprecedented practical results vwthout equal in our day, but elucidated almost everything necessary for himself

He discovered, among other iJiings, that the complete elucidation of the study of man's psyche must be sought for not only in the sub-conscious but also in the manifestations of his waking state.

After a great deal of travelling in Asia, and in meetings with remarkable men (which he has recorded in the Second Series), and after numerous experiments, and working with various societies, he decided that, since in such societies there are usually only three or four types, and that for the observation of the manifestations of man's psyche in his waking state it was necessary for him to have representatives of all the twenty-eight types existing on earth as they were established in ancient times, he would form an organization of his own on quite new principles. Out of this, after an enormous amount of hard work in Moscow, Tiflis and Constantinople, there emerged the Institute for the Harmonious Development of Man in the Chateau du Prieure at

•pontainebleau. He quotes from the original programme of the Institute; and then goes on to describe how he was preparing four scenarios, <me of which was *The Three Brothers* based on the working of the three centres. Later he speaks about his decision to write *Beelzebub's Tales* .and his idea of publishing this. The Second Series, at first, was to be Iread only in groups, and the Third Series to be read only by those ijpupils who had worked on themselves and arrived at a certain degree of understanding and attained a certain definite degree of Being.

He says, very seriously, that *Beelzebub's Tales to his Grandson* must jbe read from the beginning through; otherwise people who are in the habit of running through a book, skipping and picking out bits here ^ad there, *will come to real psychological harm—like the 'brilliant' intellec-pmls who can run through a long book in an hour and even repeat parts of it W write 'informative' articles about it, but who, as far as UNDERS TAND-^Ggoes, are 'illiterate'.*

Hiere were two different categories of people who had worked with iam—those who had begun to work and then had left him and 'started up on their own', and those who had remained with him even when diey had been compelled to hve in other coimtries. From those near to iam he decided to choose a number who would be leaders of groups and to whom the second and third series would be given.

• Amongst other things they must satisfy him that they had in them site following five data:

I. If he, (Gurdjieff) had estabhshed after an all-round observation that they had in their individuaUty, since preparatory age, certain defmite starting points for a more or less meritorious life in responsible age.

a^ If in their being there were not completely atrophied a generally inherited predisposition for the developing in their individuahty of factors bringing forth the impulses of organic shame, reHgiousness, patriarchaUty, the awareness of one's mortality, and so on.

there was an hereditary predisposition which would bring about the conscious eradication of previously rooted weaknesses in their individuality; weaknesses such as are caused by abnormal surround-.iags.

'If they already gave evidence of having had suitable established •conditions of ordinary life and had acquired the possibility of attaiaing, according to certain principles, some defmite perspectives for the future.

if there were present in them a distinct degree of awareness of their

> own 'nothingness', and the possibility of attaining the necessary quality of a real wish to transform themselves from such 'nothingness' into the definite 'something' which they ought to be, even according to their own tranquilly-meditated understanding.

He speaks about his automatic influence over people, and his consciously created aim of always, without exception, manifesting himself benevolently towards everyone for their good, while at the same time waging an imceasing struggle against the weaknesses inherent in his own nature. But, while manifesting himself with this inner benevolence, he tried in every way to decryst^ze the akeady crystallized vanity and conceit in people; and this made enemies for him. People forgot what he had done for them and remembered only their hurt vanity. He says: The fundamental cause of almost all the misunderstandings arising in the inner world of man, as well as in the process of the communal life of people, is chiefly that psychic factor which is found in man's being during the period of preparatory age exclusively on account of a wrong education, and in the period of responsible age—each stimulation of which gives birth in him to the impulses of Vanity and Self-Conceit. 'I categorically affirm' he adds, 'that the happiness and self-consciousness which should be in a real man, as well as in a peaceful communal existence between people (aside from the numerous other causes which exist in our lives through no fault of our own) depends in most cases exclusively on the absence in us of the feeling of Vanity!'

He sincerely wishes that every one who strives to justify before Great Nature his destiny as a man and not merely as an animal, should see in his writings and in the groups formed by him, means of helping man to eradicate from his common presence that something undesirable in him which gives rise to every variety of the feelings of vanity and self-love.

His purpose, among other things, was to make his readers 'understand more clearly the real significance of the presence in man's iimer world of factors contributing to a conscious, or even automatic, cultivation of good impulses idealized and professed by all religious doctrines, which have existed and still exist on Earth, as well as by the real morality which the ages have formed in man's life.'

From the time he started on the book until he fmished it he put into practice (insistently, and with a constant 'self-derision') that religious philosopHcal principle known to men for centuries. According to

which principle our ancestors, and even some contemporary people blanks to their good life, attained a certain degree of sel£<onsciousness j^d dedicated a third of each year of their life to the aim of self-^rfection, or, as they say, for 'saving their souls'.

This religious philosophical principle could be formulated thus:' *To-'be-patierU-towards-every-being-and-^ot-to-attempt-by-the-possi^^^^ power-to-alter-the<onsequences-of-the-evil-^eeds-^f-our-neighbours'.*

At the same time, so far as his depleted energy would allow him, he remembered his task of manifesting inner benevolence to those who came in contact with him, and under a mask of irritation *'To-quarrel-mthlessly-with-all-manifestations-declared-in-peopk-by-the-evil-factors-^^ vanity-present-in-their-being'.*

I He refers to us as imfortunate creatures who because of our lack of will power and of objective reason have become, on account of our abnormal environment, almost simple and automatically vegetating animals; whereas we should be real God-like creatures capable of entering into and understan(Mng the position of others.

He made a discovery, astonishing in that it completely contradicts the usual idea—this discovery was' *That the force and degree of a mans inner benevolence evokes in others a proportionate degree of ill-wiU'.*

He speaks about the events that led to the establishing of the Institute at Fontainebleau and describes the three categories of pupils:

1. Those who siacerely wished to work on an all roimd development of themselves according to the Method, and also, to study the theory;
2. Those who wished to study the theory of the system and to be cured of some complaint or other, by the methods of the Institute, and
3. Those who came to attend the lectures and study a special subject.

He proposed to divide the pupils of the first category into three groups: Exoteric, Mesoteric, Esoteric. All would begin in the Exoteric group and according to their personal merit and degree of imderstanding aaight pass into the Mesoteric group. And of these, according to the "work and efforts they made and the degree of being and imderstanding 5i?feich they arrived at, might pass into the Esoteric group—^which is 'fkcy high indeed.

' After outlining the general work of the Institute he says that particular attention **will** be paid to those persons who show certain pathological symptoms, such as weakness of **Will,** wilfulness, apathy, laziness,

unreasonable fears, continual fatigue, irritability, irregular exchange of substances, abuse of alcohol or narcotics, and so on.

He mentions his accident in July 1924, whose effects caused him to review all his past activities and to hquidate that phase of the work of the Institute and begin on new lines. Later, when he was well enough to go to Paris, he 'hobbled' with two or three others, to see a film called *The Two Brothers.* Revolted by the senseless fashionable drivel of the screen, acceptable only because of the herd-instinct and the general hypnotic process, he went to the Cafe de la Paix and began to work out a scenario which he would call *The Three Brothers,* based on the functions of the three centres. After working on this for some time, and as a result of it, there came to him, from the memory of legends heard in childhood about the first human beings on earth, the idea of writing a book with Beelzebub, who was a witness of all those remote events, as the principal hero.

Regarding the third series of his writings, he says that acquaintance is permitted only to those who have a thorough knowledge of the first and second, and have begun to manifest themselves and react to the manifestations of others in accordance with his teachings. He entreats those who may be interested in his ideas never to read his books except in the order indicated, never to read his later works until they are well acquainted with the earUer ones. If the books are not read in the correct sequence, imdesirable phenomena may arise in people which even 'might paralyse for ever the possibility of normal self-perfection.'

He mentions an experiment he was making, so that, in the mentation of the many people who have met him on the ground of his ideas, but who persist in vegetating on earth, and on whom he had spent much time vdthout benefit to them or to himself—chiefly on account of their criminal laziness—there might arise *some shock of such intensity as would permit the formation in them {even automatically) of some for THINKING AND FEELING proper to man.*

He concludes by appealing to those who have worked with him and who have in their individuaUty that feeling of'self-revaluation' which has given them something that ordinary man does not possess and also have in themsdves the necessary data, with the help of his detailed explanations, for entering on the path leading to Real Being. He asks them to devote themselves for a defmite period—^by explaining his ideas—to helping the sons of our Common Father who like them have strayed, and lack as they do in their iimer world, all perseverance with regard to objective truth.

To those who are ofiended with him he says: Believe me, during the pvhole period of nry relation with you, my inner world never harloured either egotistical or altruistic impulses; there existed always and la everything, only the simple wish to prepare in all perfection for future generations the science of *objective truth of reality*.

7

THE LAST VISIT TO THE INSTITUTE FOR THE HARMONIOUS DEVELOPMENT OF MAN

WE HAD HEARD from the Hartmanns. They had left the Prieure and were living in Courbevoie, outside Paris. They suggested our coming to France so that my wife could study music with Mr. de Hartmaim, and in July we went to France, and lodged in a small pension in St. Cloud. We had many meals with the Hartmanns and took long walks together in the country talking about many things; the talk always coming back to GurdjieFF. Hartmann had reached the same stage as Orage, and GurdjieFF had made things extremely difficult for him. Gurdjieff had seen that it was time for Hartmann to make a change and to stand on his own feet; but Hartmann, after so many years and so many experiences, having got so much from Gurdjieff, found it almost impossible to make the break. GurdjieFF then put on such pressure that Hartmaim was compelled to choose; it had been such a painful process that for a long time he could not speak calmly about it, and could not even speak of GurdjieFF by name.

'You see,' he said, 'apart from the teaching, he saved my life when I got typhus in the Causcasus.'

'Who?' I asked.

He replied, 'He whom we aU know.' He continued, 'You see how difficult it has been to make a break. Now I shall concentrate on my own music; and I have begun to work on an opera among other things.' Later in the summer he went to northern France to work with some monks harmonizing Gregorian chant.

As soon as I could, after we arrived in St. Cloud, I went to the Cafe de la Paix to see Gurdjieff. He was sitting outside, no longer writing, but observing the people while drinking coffee. After talking a little

1 asked if I might go to the Prieure. He said, 'You come tomorrow,' and I accordingly found myself there the next day. As always on arriving there the first thing I did was to walk round. The gardens were neglected, the orangery in rums, the Study House deserted—some of the precious carpets had been damaged by rats and mice. The piles of stone that we had made years before still lay alongside the track through the forest. The Stjoemvals and the Sakmanns were still there and Gurdjieff's own people, and there were three yoxmg American men and a German or two. Miss Gordon was the only English person. Gurdjieff's mother and wife had died and were buried in Avon churchyard. The Prieure felt as if it were ruiming down, or rather as if this phase of its long and varied experiences was coming to an end; yet in lie Chateau itself, which was three quarters empty, preparations were being made for work the following year. In spite of the depression and lack of money a number of Americans were planning to come over. Salzmann was painting the doors in the Monk's Corridor and on the lintel of each the words 'in memento mori'. "What is this for?' I asked. He said, 'Georgivanitch is planning work on a big scale next year; and this is to remind people of their mortaUty, a reminder of the fact of death; you know that in *Beelzebub* he says that only the constant awareness and the realization that some day they must die can destroy the vanity and self-pride that prevents their inner development.'

I went upstairs to Cow Alley, where I usually had a room, knocking at doors to fmd someone to talk to, but the rooms which once were fijll of people were unoccupied. At last a voice in Russian replied to my knock, 'Mohzna'—come in; it was Rachmalevitch—an unusual f^batSK^ even for the Prieure. A Jew, he was said to have been one of i&e cleverest lawyers in Russia. He had met Gurdjieff in [Moscow and fead lent him his apartment, and at the revolution had followed him to France. He gave up his law practice and, when not Uving at the Prieure made a hving by peddling things from door to door or working road gang—as some Hindus give up their profession or business aad set out with a begging bowl and attach themselves to a temple. After some talk in halting French—^he spoke no English—I said, "Tell fflK, what have you got from these ideas in the years you've been work-^ with Georgivanitch?' He replied, 'Before I met him I never even isKw what sort of soup I wanted, but now I *do* know what 'soup' I 'Wish; but as for Heptaparaparshinokh and Triamazikamno, I know

I suggested to Gurdjieff that we do some work in the neglected garden, so he bought some implements and seeds at the 'quincaillerie' in Fontainebleau and put me in charge of the five young men. They worked hard while I was with them but when I had to go into Paris they stopped work—just sat about and discussed 'high ideas'.

Gurdjieff invited me to bring my family and stay for the summer, and nothing would have pleased me more but my wife was getting so much benefit from Hartmann's teaching that we compromised and I spent half the time at Fontainebleau and half at St. Cloud.

Gurdjieff was in a state of suffering. He has described it and the cause in the Third Series. While making efforts to start work on a large scale the following year he was all the time beset by difficulties—and money was needed to save the Prieure, as the mortgagors were now pressing for payment.

He took me about in his car, often to Paris, together with a Russian woman. He was now dressed in a shoddy ready-made brown suit and cloth cap. When we stopped at a cafe, instead of talking and joking, he sat silent or answered with a word or two. We, the woman and I, could feel his state of inner suffering. Like us he had his 'good' days and 'bad' days, runs of good luck and runs of bad luck; like everyone he had to bear his share of the weight of world suffering; and the bigger the man, the bigger the burden; the stronger the man the stronger the suffering.

Some Russians from Paris made frequent visits to the Prieure; he would often shout and storm at them. They asked me why he did so, and I said, 'Why don't you ask him?' But even when he was shouting at them I could sense that inside he was quite calm. He was trying to get them to see something; and I, whatever mood he happened to be in, as always was stimulated, more conscious, more alive.

He asked me if the English would be offended because of what he had written about them in *Beelzebub,* and I said, 'They will either agree or just ignore it. The English are more tolerant of criticism and of new ideas than Europeans. Orage says that the English are the best and most intelligent people on the planet. I agree with him, but this is a grave reflection on the rest of the human race.'

'The English have inner swagger,' said Gurdjieff. 'Pity about the English. They have the best butter and best meat in the world, but they export it and live on margarine and Australian frozen mutton. The English are sheep, Russians crows, Americans burros.'

He told me that he needed money and that a man was coming from Paris who might give another mortgage on the Prieure. The financier came to Ixmch, where conversation was general. Afterwards, Gurdjieff took him with Stjoemval and myself to a raised bank behind the orangery; Persian carpets and cushions were spread, and we sat in bright hot sunshine drinking coffee, while Gurdjieff spoke of the value and possibilities of the Prieure. Then we walked round the grounds, and as we walked the face of the fmancier became blanker; jfinally he left, promising to write after he had consulted his parmers. But as I went to the gate with him he muttered, 'Impossible, pas possible!' With the result that the Institute for the Harmonious Development of Man at Fontainebleau-Avon was sold the following spring and all its contents auctioned; and a large suitcase full of Gurdjieff's precious music in manuscript, written and harmonized by Hartmann, was rescued at the last minute by one of the women.

Although I received litde direct teaching from Gurdjieff this summer, as usual I learnt a good deal; to be with him was always a vital experience—one learnt without being taught—just by being with him and remembering oneself and observing oneself Again it was impressed on me that if you start on a course of action you must persevere and pursue it and extract everything you can from it even when it seems useless. But events are too strong or when its use as a means of effort has passed, then cut loose at once. It is the effort, the conscious labour that counts; it can help essence to grow and increase consciousness, will and individuality.

Though events were against Gurdjieff and his exterior life seemed to be running down the scale, on a descending octave, his inner life was on an ascending octave; for he made use of every circumstance and event to increase his being and thereby his understanding-

Exploring the house one day, poking my nose into comers, I came across a cabinet, and opening the drawers found some sheets of paper with forgotten sayings of Jesus translated in 1889.

'Those who would see me and reach my Kingdom must attain me with pain and [conscious] suffering.'

•• 'Be mindful of Conscious Faith and Conscious Hope through which is bom the Conscious Love of God and man that gives eternal life.'

When Jesus was asked when his Kingdom would come, he said: *When two shall be as one, and the without as the "within, and the male • with the female neither male nor female.'

'Keep that which you have and it shall be increased.'

'I am come to end the sacrifice and if you do not cease from sacrificing the wrath shall not cease from you.'

'If you do not make the below into the above, and the above into the below, the right into the left and the left into the right, the before into the behind and the behind into the before you shall not enter into the Kingdom of God!'

Just before leaving at the end of the summer I walked round the grounds impressing everything on my memory—the gardens, the forest where I had found what for me was a spring of living water, the Study House, the bams, the Chiteau. I felt that this was my last visit to the Institute for the Harmonious Developmait of Man, my last glimpse of Gurdjieff's Prieure, and I made an interesting and useful observation of myself. Gurdjieff once said, 'You are identified with places, Orage is identified with people.' Formerly, on an occasion like this I would have suffered at the thought of'the last time'; emotions would have surged up in me, as they did in Harpenden twenty years before, when I left home to go to Tasmania and said goodbye to the old house. Now, I found myself going round vwth almost complete detachment, even while reflecting that, in a few months this place where I had had so many vital experiences and met so many people with whom there was a bond stronger even than family, would have gone and everyone connected with the place.

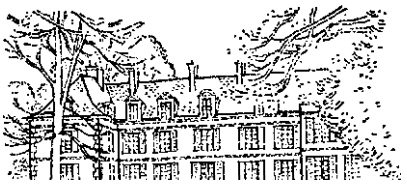
How fiitUe it is to be attached to, identified with houses and land and all the things pertaining to the planetary body which, though necessary, are ephemeral.

The Institute as an organization was coming to an end, but the results of the work that the pupils had done on themselves would remain. So with everything we do, all our past acts. The past is dead, yet we have to pay for every unconscious evil action; also, we can retain merit acquired through every conscious action.

Every incident of that summer with Gurdjieff and Hartmann is stamped on my memory, though some of the results appeared only years later.

It was not long imtil, of the four men who were always with Gurdjie£Fwhen I was at the Prieure—Stjoemval, Orage, Salzmann and Hartmann, only Hartmann was left; and he never saw Gurdjieff again. Salzmann had died, Stjoemval died about this time. Gurdjieff's mother and brother had died. The Prieure was no more, the group in America

was scattered, my tiny group in London was only a small spark. GurdjieFF's work seemed already to have come to an end. Yet he continued, no longer at the Prieure but at the Cafe de la Paix and his apartment in Paris—symbolically, on the planet Mars. 'The highest meaning contained in the sign of Mars—one which extends beyond Alchemy itself, is the measure of the Divine Word, the struggle between the positive and negative forces'.



Prieure

8

TALKS WITH GURDJIEFF

AT GURDJIEFF'S APARTMENT ONE DAY, while Waiting for lunch I noticed several women whom I had not met before, obviously American. After a time we went in and sat at the table waiting for GurdjiefF to come in; I was the only man. No one spoke, everyone was ill at ease, and a tension began to grow. At last Gurdjieff came in and, noticing the tension, looked round and said, 'What! No one speak? Is this a mausoleum? It's like when you sit on special seat and nothing happen!' Everyone burst out laughing and the tension disappeared.

The women were the kind who at that time produced in me a feeling of hostility—the intellectual and busiaess type. They were xmmarried and were working vwth GurdjiefF in a small group. But I found that he was doing some very interesting teaching with them and one day I asked him if I could work with this group. He said, 'No.'

'Why?' I asked.

'Not for you, not for men. These special type.'

There was no other regular group in Paris at this time, and he worked with them for several years and performed one of his miracles. He changed their inner hfe, so that from rather arrogant intellectuals and successful business types, as some of them seemed to me, they became warm imderstanding human beings. Katharine Hulme, Margaret Anderson and SoHta Solano were in this group.

I wanted to read the chapter caUed 'Professor Skridloff'in the Second Series which GurdjiefF had just finished and which I had got scraps of When I went to ^e apartment one day he left me by myself in the store room, then he brought in a pile of detective stories, and put them on the table and said, 'You wish read something perhaps?' I looked at them and said, 'Yes, but not detective stories, I came to see if you would let me read the Second Series, "Professor SkridlofF".' He said nothing and went out.

After Itmch I again asked him if I could read it and he still said nothmg, iand went to his room. I waited and then said to Solita Solano, who was his secretary at that time, 'Will you go and ask Mr. Gurdjieff if I may read "Skridloff"?' She went to his room, came back and reported, 'He says you're drunk.' 'I may have had a good deal of armagnac but I'm not drunk,' I replied, ' I feel a special need to read "Skridloff", please ask him again if I may read it; I'm returning to London in a day or two and may not be back for some weeks.' She went out again and in a few minutes came back with the typescript.

Stimulated by the talk at lunch, warmed by the armagnac, the story made a deep impression on me, especially when Father Giovanni tells Gurdjieff and Skridloff about the two very old men. Brother Ahl and Brother Seze, who visit them from time to time and preach to the Brothers of the Monastery. He tells them that when Brother Seze iSpeaks it is as if one were listening to the songs of birds of Paradise. When Brother Ahl speaks his words have a contrary action. He speaks "badly, his words are hard to follow, no doubt because of his great age. But, though the sermons of Brother Seze at the time produce such a strong impression, this impression gradually fades, imtil nothing remains. As for Brother Ahl, his words at first make almost no impression; but in time the essence of his discourse penetrates to the depths of the heart where it remains for ever.

Ouspensky and Gurdjieff.

There is some very moving music, composed by Gurdjieff for the reading of'Skridloff'.

The following day at lunch I remembered some questions I wished to ask Gurdjieff and made attempts to do so but each time he put me off. At last I said, 'Do you think I've changed in the last few years?', toping of course, that he would say I had changed for the better.

All he said was, 'Changed by age.'

'h that all?'

^You are still egotist.'

'I'm not sure of myself any longer.'

H**J** began to speak about something, nodding at me, but I could not follow him. Then he said, 'He is happy man because he does not imderstand what I say, so does not suffer.' At that I burst out with deep feeling 'I know that I am nothing and that I understand nothing.' iSejected I sat back with a realization of my own emptiness. He started ^ talk to Miss Gordon, then looked at me, smiled and said, 'You ®!iow, necessary sometimes to stick peacocks' feathers in certain place,'

(pointing to his tail), 'and' (getting up) 'walk, not so' (stepping in an apologetic manner) 'but so,'—and he strutted round wagging his large behind. Everyone, including myself, laughed.

He sat down and began to talk to me. Again I could not follow, and he said to the others, 'I tell him something, but he not understand. Next week he begin to think. Next month or next year, two years, five years, he begin to understand something.' All I could get then was that having realized one's nothingness one must not give way to despondency, but suffer real remorse of conscience. Regrets and self-reproach waste energy, remorse of conscience helps, in some mysterious way, to repair the past. Also that one must learn to use one's vanity and real pride. He repeated what he had said to me before about angels and devils having most vanity and added, 'But if you have real cunning, "canning", you can make them your slaves. Angel can do one thing, *dabbel* can do all. Man must have real cunning, not in present English sense but old English sense.'

Another time, at dinner, while toasting the idiots he again asked me, "What kind idiot you now?' 'I don't know', I said, 'You must tell me.' You should know,' he said, very forcefully. 'Man must know himself.' 'Then I think I'm hopeless, with some hope.' 'Yes, you are really hopeless idiot.' So the toast was given: 'To the health of all hopeless idiots, both objective and subjective. It is necessary to add that only those who work on themselves in life will die honourably; those who do not will perish like dogs.' The toast was dnmk in armagnac.

He asked me, 'Which you wish to be, objective or subjective?'

'Subjective, of course,' I said. 'I don't wish to perish like a dog.'

He added, 'Every man thinks he is God but a subjective hopeless idiot sometimes knows that he is not God. Objective hopeless idiot is shit. Never can be anything, never can do anything. Subjective hopeless idiot has possibihty not to be shit. He has come to the place where he knows he is hopeless. He has reaUzed his nothingness, that he is non-entity.'

He then handed me a red pepper and said, 'Eat, then will remember.' I put it in my mouth, and like the Kurd in *Beelzebub's Tales,* continued to eat though it was as if my whole body was burning. He said, 'Can be reminding factor.'

Which reminded me that, at the Prieure, one of the small boys was misbehaving and wodd not obey. Gurdjieff was watching. He then went to him, took hold of him and said, 'You must learn to obey your parents,' turned him round and smacked him hard, and said, 'This will

be reminding factor.' The little boy ran off crying and holding his behind, calling out, 'Reminding factor, reminding factor!'

After eating the red pepper, while I was getting my breath, Gurdjieff said to someone, 'Everyone speak about "hope, and "faith" and "love". Forget about your hope, faith and love as you have understood them. Now must have new understanding. I write all about this in *Beelze-hh:*

I said, 'What about people who have never met you, or will never meet you? How will they be able to xmderstand *Beelzebub's Tales}'* He said, 'Perhaps will understand better than many always around me. You, by the way, you see much of me and become identified with me. I not wish people identified with me, I wish them identified with my ideas. Many who never will meet me, simple people, will understand my book. Time come perhaps when they read *Beelzebub's Tales* in jAurches.'

Among my notes I found the following:

He who walks in the way of God is distinguished by five things:
He is free from anxiety about his daily needs.
Everything he does is done for the glory of God.
He struggles constantly with his weaknesses and negative feelings.
He strives to remember himself always and in everything.
He remembers that he is mortal and may die at any moment.

TALKS CONTINUED

JANE HEAP, who had been in Orage's group in New York, had the most stimulating and penetrating mind of any American woman I have ever met, and like all people with strong positive vibrations her negative ones were equally strong. She could be quite ruthless and regardless of near friend or old foe when she wanted something. She had a strong masculine side; as she said to me, 'I'm not really a woman.' In the abnormal life of our planet there are many who are either very masculine or very feminine or neither one nor the other, who are attracted by their own sex and certain types of the opposite sex: the masculine type of woman and the feminine type of man, a result of the wrong distribution of sex cells. GurdjieFF never refused any of these types, in fact he turned many of them into useful human beings.

Jane asked me if I would speak to Ouspensky about her going to one of his groups. I did so, but he refused, on the ground that the 'work' was not for such types, that it was not possible to do anything with such people. 'Not possible for him,' I thought, 'but possible for GurdjieFF.'

GurdjieFF liked her. And she was able to raise a good deal of money for him. She was a woman with real being and real imderstanding. I had known her intimately from 1924 to 1939 in New York, Fontainebleau and London, and at GurdjieFF's apartment. I once arranged a Ixinch for her with T. S. EHot; aldiough she had published his first poems in *The Little Review* she had never met him, so I invited them to a Spanish restaurant. We sat dovm at 12.30 and left at 3.30. I vwsh I had made notes of the conversation. Whether it was the wine or the talk or both, I was intoxicated and in the seventh heaven of literary conversation, which, besides being briUiant and stimulating had inner content. Both knew almost all there was to know about the arts and affairs of the time, and those who were producing them, and it needed only Orage to make a perfect third.

Once Jane said to GurdjieFF, 'You know, Mr. GurdjieFF, in England sometimes I forget when Aey play the National Anthem and don't get

Gurdjieff with Philos

1948

up—forget there is a king.' He said, 'You must always remember there is king and always stand up. This is organization, like when a man takes off hat in church. Outwardly respect organization, and do as others do. Man has two worlds, inner and outer. Inner world is yours, it is independent place. In inner world you can say king is merde, in outer world, not.'

Someone asked, wasn't this hypocrisy?' 'What is hypocrite?' he asked. 'In old Greek means actor, one who plays part. In life one must play part, but *remember* you are playiag part. Only with those with conunon aim can you be sincere about your inner world. To be sincere •with everyone is pathological.'

Jane or someone brought up the subject of journalism, and about newspaper articles and the people who write them. He said, 'These people are nothing, non-entities, and they use words only to hide their nothingness. A normal man caimot take nothing from nothing, but the psychopath can. These writers are psychopathic, they see something where there is nothing—in imagination. European languages have no roots. Greek has roots, and even Russian, some of whose words come from Greek, and have more meaning than the European languages which are based on dirty Latin—these European languages have no meaning, articles viTritten with these words have no content. This is one of the reasons why Kfe nowadays is so empty.'

Jane said, 'They only confuse people's minds.' Gurdjieff said, 'Mind not important. Can be useful, like policeman. Feeling and sensing nearer **to** Nature. Man must feel, feeling with sensing. From this begins self-remembering, consciousness of self.'

He told Jane that she was now priest, real priest, and that her tail was l)^;inning to grow. She said to me, 'When I got home I sat down very gingerly.'

Another time, when the idiots were being toasted and Jane was asked what her's was, she said, 'I'm no longer an idiot. I've worked through diem.' Gurdjieff said, 'What! Not idiot? Everyone idiot. I am idiot. Even God is idiot.'

, One of the women was speaking in surprised wonderment, even satisfaction, about quintuplets that had recendy been bom. Gurdjieff's teaction was that with five from one birth there could not be individuality. People would weep if they knew the meaning of it. People now Were breeding like mice. In ancient times even twins were rare. Nobody sees that quantity destroys quality. I said that if a farmer had poor horses he had to have eight to do the work of four; Gtirdjieff said that

Nature needed quality not quantity, but if men will not live normally she must produce quantity to give what she needs.

GurdjiefFwas very fat at this time. A most unflattering photo was taken of him and he had copies made the size of a postage stamp and stuck them on packets of sweets that he gave away. Why, I don't know. He would hand out sweets to everyone. At the Cafe de la Paix one day he gave some sweets to a couple of pretty women at the next table. One said, 'Who is he?' 1 don't know,' replied die other, 'but I think he's a chocolate manufacturer.'

Gabo, an old Russian pupil, one day told him that he was eating too much fat, it was not good for him. With a quizzical look GurdjiefF asked, 'Since when has egg told something to chicken?'

In 1944 Jane had a fairly large group of her own, which had grown out of the group I started in 1933; this she kept to herself, she seemed to want to protect her group. Even in Paris at the apartment her pupils who had gone there with her kept to themselves; they were a group apart. GurdjiefF addressed her as Miss Keep. We called her group 'The Keeps'. Jane helped many people and all her hfe she fought against ill-health.

Before I went to America in the war I gave her almost aU of Orage's notes that I had, hundreds of pages, some of which were pubHshed under the heading of 'Commentaries on Beelzebub', in *Teachings of Gurdjieff.* These she used for many years in her later group.

Jane Heap practically brought up Tom and Fritz Peters. I lived with the three of diem for a time in New York. Fritz Peters, in spite of all that Jane and GurdjiefF did for him, never understood GurdjiefF He relates that Gurdjieff, among a group of French pupils, appointed him his successor. But I saw Gurdjieff stage a similar scene in front of Orage and some of the men years before, and the 'successor' was a young girl. These were meant as shocks to those present. So with the list of bad words he asked Fritz to write down—he did the same with myself and others. With regard to the trip to Chicago, Fritz does not relate that another man, an older pupil, was with them, who told me that when they left Fritz and the group in Chicago for the Frank Lloyd Wrights' place at TaUesin, Gurdjieff said, 'Now must change, we are going to special place;' he behaved seriously and made a great impression on the pupils itere.

It is as if Fritz Peters's books were written by two people—one, the intellectual, the briUant writer; the other the small boy Fritz who was devoted to Gurdjieff. The intellectual doubts the Teaching and the

Teacher; the boy feels gratitude, yet does not know what to make of it.

On my visits to Gurdjieff in Paris I made notes and compared them with notes of others who were at the lunches and dinners; and though many of the things he said were repetitions of his sayings through the years, they struck one's essence with such force and freshness that it was as if one had not heard them before, and a flood of new Hght was thrown on them.

He was reproaching a man for asking a merely mental question and told him that his trouble was curiosity, always wanting to know more and more, never pondering, and never trying to understand what he, Gurdjieff, was pointing out to him. He said that curiosity stinks. But there is also real ciuriosity, which is to know what will help us to understand ourselves and the world around us. There are striking passages fii Prince Lubovedski about this. Lubovedski means love of new things.

Someone asked if it was true that man evolved from animals. Gurdjieff said no, man was from a different order of Nature, a different formula.

In speaking about associations he said we must let them flow, without them we would die; associations are a stick with two ends, a good end and a bad end. Some psychologists have called the flow of associations 'the stream of consciousness', reaUy, it is the stream of unconsciousness. We must be aware all the time and not let our attention be caught up in them or we shall begin to day-dream and fantasy, which is a sin.

•• We have thousands of associations which are useless for our own being. In giving a certain exercise he said, 'Treat your associations as another person. Say to them, 'Let me do my work now and you shall have your play later.'

Something was said about appealing to a man's feelings. I said, 'In fiagland they say the way to a man's heart is through his stomach.' Curdjieff said, 'You see, even EngHsh sometimes say interesting thing!' Someone asked, 'And where is a woman's heart?' He repHed, 'Woman's heart? Just below navel.'

Gurdjieff quoted an old saying about the rose saying to the nightingale, 'You can understand and love me only when you love my thorns; olily then am I your slave.' The nightingale says, 'Even though I hate your dirtiness I must love you and sing to you.'

in the Conference of the Birds Attar speaks of the nightingale's love

for the rose as an excuse for his not going on the pilgrimage to the Simurgh.

GurdjieFF said that the only flower worth growing was the rose; I understood why years later, when I began to grow roses. He added that all other flowers were 'merde'.

Speaking about interest in and work on oneself according to the Teaching, he said that if people have a common aim, a real aim—^not an ordinary life aim—a feeling of brotherly love will arise in them. If they live and work together they will always feel this, whether they love or hate each other. Not even family love can equal this feeling.

I was in the Cafe de la Paix one morning with GurdjieFF and two women of his 'special' group when the chasseur came and said that he was wanted on the telephone. He went upstairs, and in a few minutes came back, obviously upset. He sat down and said, 'Ah! Life! Life!'

'What is the matter?' I asked.

'Svetchnikoff. Died suddenly this morning.'

We had known the Svetchnikoffs for some years and had visited them and stayed near them in Les Andelys. GurdjieFF was very fond of 'Papasha' as he called him. At the Prieure, Papasha for a long period proposed the toasts of the 'idiots'. He and his wife were goodhearted simple bourgeois Russians 'of the old school'.

GurdjieFF was very moved. One could feel the force of his inner turmoil. After a while he said, 'Now I make change of habit, always when something like this happen I change habit and do something different. From now I drink no more armagnac.'

He gathered up his things and went back to his apartment. The same afternoon he drove to Les Andelys, taking small gifts from some of us to Madame SvetchnikofF He made all the arrangements for the funeral there and did all that could be done for the family.

His saying that he would never drink armagnac again was not to be taken Hterally, since he continued to drink it. He was saying something 'Podobnisimian' as Beelzebub says—speaking in similitudes, or aUe-gorically, as he so often did; always, when something unusual happened to him, 'good' or 'bad', he would use the shock to break some small habit or to do something different. He told us often that when something not to our liking happened to us, or even something very unfortunate, we should always strive to turn it to our own advantage and not just submit passively and be carried away by our feelings.

The death of Svetchnikoff again reminded me of Gurdjieff's constantly telling us that only by keeping the fact of oiur mortality before us, and the inevitable death of others, could we be delivered from the egoism, vanity and self-love that spoils things for ourselves and our relations with others. By keeping this in mind we bring about the death that is important—the death of the tyrant personality, the death of the old man; for without this death there can be no resurrection in the true sense. Silesius often speaks about it:

Die before thou die,
That so thou shalt not die
When thou dost come to die,
Else thou diest utterly.

Were Christ a thousand times
Reborn in Bethlehem's stall
And not in thee
Thou art lost beyond recall.

This kind of dying is also painful, for it means looking into oneself and seeing what one really is; and if we look sincerely and impartially, the false and 'lovely' picture we have had is destroyed. 'The way up is also the way down'. The more one can learn to look into oneself, into tlie depths, and see and reahze the horrible potentiahties that come out in oneself and others, in the bickerings with friends and family, in public life and war—^if one can see them without becoming identified, the more vdU one see the higher potentiahties. We have in ourselves the terrifying gargoyles of Notre Dame as well as the ascending angels, and we must know and face them all: not look at them direcdy or, like tite Medusa's head, they will turn us to stone—but indirectly, through the Teaching of correa self-observation with self-remembering; and the more that one understands about oneself the less will be the tendency to hate and judge others.

At Easter I had been to the service in the Russian Cathedral and was telling Gurdjieff that my wife and I were married in the Russian Gadiedral in New York and that I had been to die Easter and Christmas Services in churches in Russia. He said that it was good to go to these services, it is a 'feeling experience'. AH Christian ceremonies come from dtt old Greek Church. You don't understand the form of the service Of .why it is so, but it opens your feelings, because the men who com-, posed the ceremonies and Uturgies of the early church had great understanding of the psychology of people, but these ancient ceremonies have

been spoilt. Real, objective knowledge has always existed widi initiated people, a stream, which still flows, even today, and he mentioned the two streams, the two rivers, which he wrote about, one for initiates, one for ordinary people; there are two streams of knowledge in the Bible—one for diose with understanding, the other for those who take things literally, which is the Bible known today. People have spoilt the teachings in the Bible as they spoil everything good; someone always wants to change and 'improve' real teaching.

He said that 'Amen' means 'God help us'. It is far older than the Jews. Everthing is in this word, all the scale, from merde to God. In the Buddhist reUgion there is a similar word—OM. If we open our mouth as though to say AR and pronounce Amen or OM (Aum), slowly closing to 'm' or 'n', the whole scale of sound is there.

Someone spoke about studying the ideas in other religions. He said that it is far better to study one's own machine than to read about ideas. For real study, serious study, concentration is necessary; but concentration is difficult because of the interference of the emotional centre, which is scattered over the organism; so that when we wish to do something instinctively, or mentate with the mind, the emotional centre steps in and prevents concentration. Real concentration is directed attention in which aU three centres take part. Then man can move a mountain.

Ordinary language has no vocabulary for 'high' ideas; but only words for simple ideas, or how to produce things, fmd our way about, and so on. We must learn a new language.

You cannot imderstand essence with the mind, mind can only observe the manifestations of penonality. Our so-called will comes from personahty, but essence has no will, just desires. As we observe our personahty it becomes more passive, then our essence can become active and begin to grow, and eventually, with struggle against our weaknesses, individuality begins to take the place of personality.

Only a conscious man can tell which are the manifestations of essence and which are personality. The ordinary role we play in Hfe is personality, and with some people it becomes a fixed habit and is no longer even a role. Yet personality can react differently with different surroundings and people. Essence, when it does react, will always react in the same way.

Essence in Greek *ovaia,* means being, intrinsic nature, the thing in itself, inborn character, something that *is.* The opposite is personahty, persona, a mask, that which is not ours. But essence can be spoiled and

warped: 'Man, most ignorant when he's most assured. His glassy-essence plays such fantastic tricks. . .

When GurdjiefF spoke to some of Orage's pupils about forming a mesoteric group, he said that those who wished to be candidates had to be able to think— not 'it' thinking in them by association but 'I' thinking actively and purposively. He said that the emotional and moving centres must be 'educated'. Ordinary education is one-centred, concerned only with the formatory apparatus; only those schools which do something for the emotions as well as mind and body approximate to real education.

Our two higher centres are like strangers in our home. This work is to help people to become more conscious, first conscious of self, then objectively conscious. A really conscious man can produce any impression he wishes on others, and play any role he pleases.

With ordinary man hfe is the neutrahzing force, but when we have a real aim, the aim becomes the neutrahzing or reconciling force. We then have a real and constant centre of gravity, not a centre of gravity that can change, as it can change in life. In ordinary people the centre of gravity passes from one centre to another. Now it is in the moving centre, now in feelings, then again in the mental centre and often in the sex centre. When the Teaching becomes our centre of gravity, all centres participate, and their activity is directed towards our real aim.

We must study the positive and negative parts of each centre. A strong positive implies a strong negative—in this work as well as in life. Hiis work is a very strong positive and it must provoke a strong negative among certain people who do not understand it.

Every time we stop or even observe negative feelings coming in we can at the same time, create an opportunity which we can use to remember ourselves.

In the complex organization of the white ants in their hills, if the centre and sim, which is the queen, is killed, then all hfe and activity in the ant-hill stops and dies. It is the same with our sun which is our centre; if it stopped and died, all Hfe in our solar system would die. Our individual life is a tiny wheel in the great wheel of earthly life, which ^ain, is a wheel in the life of the sun, which again is a small wheel in life of the great wheel of the megalocosmos.

The process of man may be compared with the process of a butterfly. The egg dies and becomes a caterpillar; the caterpillar dies and becomes

a chrysalis; the chrysalis dies and becomes a butterfly. If man dies to his old self he becomes something quite different.

Self-remembering is a lamp that must be kept alight by energy from the instinctive and feeling centres.

Man is a sort of symbol of the laws of creation. Eti him is the law of three and the law of seven, there is evolution and involution, progress and regress, struggle between active and passive, positive and negative, yes and no. Without this struggle there cannot be real progress—there wiU be no real result for man.

Our thinking is mechanical because we think with the formatory apparatus, which is not a centre but a machine which has got out of order and functions wrongly. The formatory apparatus can be useful when rightly used for formidating and classifying one's feelings and thoughts. Real thinking is when mentating is combined with feehng. A philosopher said 'I think, therefore I am.' Much better to say, 'When I can feel and sense, then I can have the possibility to *he*—to have 'I am-ness'.

As we get older we fmd it more and more difficult to get new impressions. Real new impressions can be got only by effort, great effort.

The sub-conscious contains the results of all our experiences.

are the three forces in the Absolute. As, according to the law of the octave, the forces that flow down the ray of creation, that are involving, become more and more mechanical, so forces become changed. WUl becomes inertia; resistance, obstinacy; consciousness is regarded as per-ceptivity; individuahty as a personaUty, a thing.

Having realized this, our mechanicaHty, we then can have what the clergymen call a 'conviction of sin'. Then we have the possibility, with the help of a teacher, of beginning the long climb up—against the involving force, against the blind forces of Nature that make use of us—

agaiiist God, as it were. Yet, here is the paradox, in order to evolve up against the down-flowing current, we must work vdth Nature, strive to become conscious, and so, become worthy to be called a Son of God. Ordinary man caimot understand this. Evolution and involution—Jacob's Ladder.

All things are on a scale. Begin where we will, there is ascent, evolution; descent, involution. All things have a symboHcal value; what we see as results are also beginnings.

The body is an instrument for manifesting feelings, thoughts, and instincts. 1' is not body. 'I' am the Way, 'I' belong to light and air. To attain real freedom, inner and outer, I have to be re-bom. But 'I am shut up and cannot come forth'; 'He hath hedged me about that I cannot get out; He hath made my chain heavy'. 'God hath overthrown me and hath compassed me with his net'. (Psalms). God has imposed obstacles on man's real development; and at the same time he has given him the way to it. In fact, he gave us his only begotten Son, the Method, by which we can free ourselves from the world of ignorance, lymg, massacre, tyranny. First the inner freedom then the outer freedom. There are many enemies, but 'a man's (worst) enemies are those of his own house'. (Micah.)

Chief Feature in each one of us is a key to our actions and manifestations. It tips the scales. Always the same motive moves Chief Feature. It is like the bias in bowling, which prevents the ball going straight. Always Chief Feature makes us go off at a tangent. It is something mechanical and imaginary and is found in the emotional part of essoice. It gives the tone pitch to the three centres and forms the pattern of our wishes. It arises from one or more of the seven deadly sins, but dbiefly from self-love and vanity. One can discover it by becoming more conscious; and its discovery brings an increase of consciousness.

On types: If you observe yourself and note the things that attract you, what you like to see, to hear, to taste, touch, you may discover your type. Types begin with 3—man number i, 2, 3; physical, emotional, mental. The blending of these in different proportions deter-'liines the twelve basic types; then the division into twenty-seven; and aibdivision into seventy-two types.

Law of fusion of similarities: Experiences having the same rate of vibration will fuse; and in this work all ideas which have a bearing on

the work help the magnetic centre in ourselves to grow and become stronger.

There is a kind of immortality through children and children's children. And there is an immortality which comes from a man having to be re-bom in a succession of bodies until he has perfected himself

10

F. S. PINDER

THE ONE MAN in England, apart from Orage, with whom I could talk openly and freely was F. S. Pinder. Our early relationship had grown into a close and lasting friendship. Whenever we met I left him refreshed and renewed, mentally and emotionally. He had a deep understanding of the inner meaning of *Beelzebub's Tales.* After one of **Our** talks he gave me a copy of a talk of Gurdjieff's on learning to work like a man. Briefly, it is to the effect that all creatures work, from insects to man. One man works with his mind alone, another with only his body, and nothing can be expected from them; they are one-brained so to speak. Only when all three brains work together can it be said that a man, real man, works, otherwise he works like an animal. When all three centres work together then it can be conscious work, but one has to learn how to work hke this.

The least difficult is the moving centre, the next the thinking centre; the most difficult is the feeling centre.

At the Prieure Gurdjieff repeatedly told us to learn to work, not like a horse or even a labourer, but like a man.

Regarding the feeling centre being the most difficult, this may have to do with what he says in *Beelzebub* about the feeling centre not being concentrated in one place like the moving and thinking, but dispersed.

In doing a physical job, like digging or sawing, one has to be constantly on the watch not to get caught up in the flow of associations. The feelings easily become involved and an argument with someone is started in one's mind. One begins to work not even like a horse, la doing physical work like gardening or house-work one can, by sensing or counting and remembering oneself, save an enormous amount of energy.

Pinder also gave me his notes on the breathing exercises, and experiments that Gurdjieff made at the Prieure.

He stated emphatically that it is far better to do no breathing exercises at all than to do them without a genuine teacher. The systems of breatidng, yogi and otherwise, widely advertised, are based on only a partial understanding and thereby dangerous. The true yogis, who understand them, would never for money give out their real knowledge of breathing to all and sundry.

Gurdjieff said that in the breathing exercises as with everything else if the movements are done without the participation of the other parts of the organism they can be harmful.

He divided the pupils into three groups, according to type. He gave the three groups a difficult exercise with detailed explanation; and though the groups were doing the same exercise each group did it differently, according to type. He explained the three different ways of expanding the chest: by breathing in air, by inflation, by tightening the muscles.

In connection with the breathing exercises he later gave very complicated exercises for the conscious use of air and impressions—in which a real breathing exercise is combined with another exercise. These exercises demanded one's whole attention and concentration and were to be done only by older pupils under the instruction of a teacher; and they never became easy.

. During the breathing exercises in groups with Gurdjieff two of the pupils collapsed. When they recovered he said that they must formerly have been doing ordinary breathing exercises. They admitted it. One had been a professional boxer; the other, a woman, a professional singer.

In the story of Ekim Bey, Gurdjieff relates that, concerning the pseudo schools of breathing, physical development and eating, the old Sheikh says, 'Let God kill him who does not understand, yet attempts to put others on the path.'

I often stayed vnth the Pinders in Christchurch. They owned their bungalow but were living on an income of five pounds a week; yet there was such a psychological richness in the atmosphere there, such a wealth of understanding of the meaning and aim of existence that whenever I went there I felt Ufted up. The talk always came round to Gurdjieff and the Teaching.

Speaking about Ouspensky, Pinder said, 'All that Ouspensky had of value, he got from Gurdjieff, and that only with his mind. He had a perfunctory fling at the movements; and even confessed to being lazy. Gurdjieff's main quarrel with him was that he, Ouspensky, thought he knew better, and was apt to kick over the traces. I met Ouspensky in

Ekaterinodar when I was in the army serving under Holman for Denikin. Orage had written to me and I took Ouspensky on my staff at Orage's request; incidentally, the War Office made me responsible for his salary, which I paid out of my own pocket. I got to know him fairly well. At that time he was seemingly working harmoniously with Gurdjieff, to whom he mentioned me, and Gurdjieff afterwards looked me up in Tiflis. Later, there seemed to be a rift between Gurdjieff and Ouspensky, but I did not know why. When the Institute was started at the Prieure I went there with my family and when Gurdjieff went to America, managed the Prieure for a time. On one occasion before diis, when Ouspensky came to the Prieure, Gurdjieff refused to let him interpret for him to a crowded Study House of EngUsh and Russians and visitors. Ouspensky, an educated Russian, was of course a more suitable person than myself, an EngUshman, but Gurdjieff said that as I had done it all along I had better continue. Ouspensky interrupted several times, objecting to my translation, and Gurdjieff retorted, 'Pinder is interpreting for me—^not you.'

'Of course Gurdjieff was difficult for an EngUshman to interpret, since even the Russians followed his Russian often with difficulty; he purposely made nothing easy. Ouspensky apparently thought that he understood Gurdjieff and his inner teaching—^which he did not, and Gurdjieff had to make him choose whether to stay with him and submit to the discipline, or break away. The episode was painful but according to law. Ouspensky knew the *theory,* better than anyone possibly—he had the knowledge, but he did not *understand.*

'When men Hke Ouspensky, and his followers, impelled by self-importance, give out what they have not fully digested, they are bound, according to Gurdjieff, either to vomit or to suffer perennial indigestion.

'Ouspensky could never forget Gurdjieff's attacking him in front of his pupils. Ouspensky had set out, in the Theosophical tradition in old St. Petersburg, in a role in which he saw himself as a successful cdigious teacher—^though he may not have been conscious of this. He was, as I have said, a professional philosopher.

'I've looked over Ouspensky's *Tertium Organum* and *New Model,* **but** have seen none of Nicoll's books. Both men were professional writers and philosophers, plagiarists of 'mystical' writings. Ouspensky, all his great brain, was, for what was real, unintelHgent; and it was inevitable that Ouspensky should cut himself and his pupils off from **Gurdjieff.** It is strange that there can be talk of'Ouspensky's Teaching', and 'Gurdjieff-Ouspensky System': the Teaching is *Gurdjieff's.'*

BOOK II

OUSPENSKY

A. R. Orage, Frank Pindcr, Rowland Kenney, Fontainebleau, 1922

11

OUSPENSKY IN LONDON

;IN THE EARLY SPRING following Orage's death, there was a ring at our (door. When I opened it there stood, to my joy and surprise, the Hartmanns. They had come over for a visit to the Ouspenskys and to attange for the publication of some of Mr. de Hartmaim's music. They spent the day with us and as usual we talked with hardly a stop. It was one of those occasions when, as GurdjiefF said, two people meet and Me sympathetic, something flows between them; the quality of their atmospheres changes. After spending the day with us they went on to Gadsdai, to the Ouspenskys. A few days later they came again, with a inessage from Mr. Ouspensky, to the effect that now that Orage was diead things had changed and he would like to sec us.

I drove the Hartmanns to the house in Gadsden, Kent, a fairly large place standing in its own grounds. We had not seen Madame Ouspensky for several years and I had seen Ouspensky only once before.

The large drawing-room might have been in Old Russia; full of beautiful Russian prints, ornaments and ikons. In a few minutes the Ouq)eJiskys came in. Ouspensky was not the cold, severe intellectual I expected to fmd, though this was one aspect of him; he was warm and friendly and easy to talk to. Tea was brought in by some of the pupils, everything very elegant. During tea Madame Ouspensky did most of the talking, asking me many questions about how I understood this and diat. Thai, after a long pause, she said, 'Ah! I see gaps in your understanding; many things you do not understand!' I replied, 'I know that I don't understand many things. In fact, I'm begiiming to realize that I anderstand very little, in spite of, or perhaps because of my work with page and Gurdjieff,' and I went on to say something about the group JSt New York, but she interrupted me with, 'There were many things >hat Mr. Orage did not imderstand or understood wrongly. Mr. Orage was too formatory for one thing.'

Tm sure Orage would have agreed with you but you had not seen

'But Madame Ouspensky went to the Prieure, and I knew her daughter and young grandson Lonia who were there.'

'Not after 1925. You see, GurdjiefF's mind never recovered from his accident.

'I cannot accept that,' I said. 'We cannot judge Gurdjieff from our level. He lives from essence and, in a great measure, according to objective reason, and a person who Hves thus can sometimes appear to our minds, spoilt by wrong education and conditioning, as not normal. For me Gurdjieff represents objective sanity; Orage who suffered much from GurdjiefF's behaviour and was often bafHed agreed with me. Gurdjieff gives shocks, makes difficulties, plays roles both for his own development and for those around him. He is perfecting himself as we are trying to do and all his actions are practical. He *lives* the Teaching, while we talk about it.'

'No,' said Ouspensky. He lost contact with the source after Essentuki. His behaviour goes contrary to his teaching. Then the accident. He drives a car as if he were riding a horse.'

'I can't agree that he's lost contact with the source,' I said. 'For me he *is* the source.'

Ouspensky was not even annoyed with me; he was sure that he was right. I began to see traces of the inflexible mental attitude that besets Russians, as individuals and in government; once they have adopted a mental attitude to a given situation they will stick to it, whatever the cost. Everyone knows, for example, that Russia produced more food before the revolution when peasants worked on estates and had their own holdings than imder the system of socialized collective farming. Yet the communist governments still persist in collectivization, while having to buy wheat from capitahst countries.

Ouspensky had adopted a certain attitude to Gurdjieff and persisted in it; and it grew stronger with time.

Regardhig the incident of GurdjiefF's visit to Ouspensky's group in London, Pinder told me that Gurdjieff had been concerned about the approach to the work of some of Ouspensky's pupils and about Ouspensky's own lack of understanding of the real purpose of the work and of Gurdjieff himself, and in the winter of 1922 he took Pinder with him to London and went to a meeting of Ouspensky and his pupils. Gurdjieff told Ouspensky that he was working on the wrong lines; he was too intellectud. If he wished to *understand* he must stop and begin again to work with Gurdjieff But Ouspensky could not take it and got angry. Also, he objected to Pinder interpreting for Gurdjieff whose English

then was not good. But Gurdjieif said that Pinder understood many things better than Ouspensky, that his Russian was good enough and his EngHsh better than Ouspensky's.

GurdjiefF tried to explain that all of Ouspensky's vast knowledge would be useless unless he worked on himself in order to understand some basic principles and that without this his pupils would get nowhere. He then got up and he and Pinder left. On the way back GurdjiefF said to Pinder, 'now they will *have* to choose a teacher.'

Orage's untimely death constantly brought to my mind the idea of recurrence and reincarnation, the wish to know something defmite about it, and one of the first things I asked Ouspensky was, 'Did GurdjiefF say anything more to you about recurrence than is in your writings?'

'No. In fact he said very httle, but he did accept my ideas as a theory. And I'm sure he understood much more than he told us in Russia.'

I continued, 'Orage once said that he himself had read everything he could get hold of and had studied every Oriental theory on Hfe after death, yet he knew absolutely nothing—was not sure of anything.'

'My dieory,' said Ouspensky, 'is that man is bom again on the same day in the same house of the same parents—and everything in his life will repeat. He will meet the same men, love the same women and so on.

'GurdjiefFimplies,' I said, 'that this may be so, yet if a man works on iiimself and changes, then circumstances will change with him. His ^Jbaracteristics will be similar but his essence may be different. He may ***he*** freer and so avoid many stupid mistakes. For example, in my own life dbere are incidents I do not vwsh to repeat—some of my school days, and my life in the army at the time of the First World War. The horrors of these are always with me; and I feel and know that my only hope is to work on myself, to remember myself, to practise Being-Parktdolg-4uty. As the aphorism in the Study House says, 'One of the chief inicentives for work on yourself is the realization that at any moment you may die.' The remembrance of these two periods of my Hfe and the aphorism help me to remember to work. And I see how easily, if I **! wete** a little more conscious, these events could be avoided in the future. Also I see how easily, lacking consciousness, I could repeat and repeat.'

' At the end of this talk Ouspensky spoke to me of something he had liWrittea in Russia and gave me a typescript translation of it in English, fie was thinking of having it published but was uncertain whether to

call it *A Cinema Drama* or *The Strange Life of Ivan Ossokin*. I found it very interesting—the most interesting treatment of recurrence in fiction that I had read. C. H. Hinton in *Scientific Romances* has a story based on the same idea.

I fmd it difficult to accept Ouspensky's theory that, for example, my father has been bom again in Ae same farm house in Harpenden, that he is now a boy going to the village school, that he will go to Luton and marry and I shall be bom in the same tiny villa there and so on and so on. There may be something in the theory of Milton's Mortalists: that the dead are dead until the end of the world and that the world will begin again and everything will repeat.

There is also a theory that, after a number of years we are bom again in similar surroundings and meet the same people in different bodies with different essences, since planetary influences may be different.

In the chapter on 'My Father' in the Second Series, Giurdjieff tells of his father saying that after death, something persists for a time and may even be affected by surroundings; then this dies. This may refer to the second death mentioned in Revelations, and the second sacred Rascooamo of *Beelzebub's Tales*.

Every rehgion, from the most primitive to the most highly organized, has some theory or other about life after death, but most of these theories are just fantasy and lead to endless and useless speculation.

I once asked Ouspensky, 'Where have all these people, Socrates and Plato, for example, gone to? Where are they, whatever is left of them? And what happens eventually if we work and perfect ourselves to a certain degree?'

'I don't know,' he said. 'But there is a possibility that we may go to another planet, where conditions are more favourable.

'You remember perhaps that in one of my group meetings I spoke about the various ideas of life after death: the so-called scientific idea of death as complete disappearance; the spiritualists and their idea of survival and tie possibility of getting in contact with what survives; the Christian and Mahommedon ideas with rewards of heaven and punishments of hell; the theosophists and their idea of reincarnation; Buddhist ideas of reincamation and the rest. All of these taken simply, and not from the point of view of their wiseacrings and distortions, have *something* that is right.'

Gurdjieff, as I have said, has a good deal to say in *Beelzebub's Tales* about death and after. Much is hidden and each must find it for him-

iself. The more I study the book the more am I convinced that he has said the last word on the sulyect for our time and that his formulations I are according to sane logic. In the book one is constantly reminded of the idea that if a man, by conscious effort or by accident, has acquired die conception of a soul he must, willy nilly, become coated again and again with a planetary body until the soul becomes perfected, or it suffer and languish eternally. This Teaching is to help these unfortunates, people like us.

If we review our life sincerely and impartially we cannot but be appalled and shocked at our stupidities and mistakes, which, if we had made an effort at the moment, could have been at least mitigated. So many things that, according to subjective morality seemed to have been 'good' turn out to have been 'bad'—'sin'. We missed the mark.

"What is the soul.? Gurdjieff says that a soul is a luxury; itisnotnecessary to the average man, who can function perfectly well without it. lixe Muslims say that women do not have souls but that they can achieve one through a man. A soul is something rare—that 'something' which is immortal and which can be achieved by those who have a deep wish in their essence for continuation. This work is for those who have in themselves the conception or beginning of a soul, of the immortal spark, and it provides a practical method. The question of the soul is connected with that of essence, which is said to be a sort of compound of realities both simple and complex—it is capacity and faculties, all that we have inherited from our ancestors, intermixed with planetary influences, warmed by solar fire. Essence has its defects, but it has rich possibilities and real eternal vnshes.

12

OUSPENSKY'S GROUP. TALKS WITH OUSPENSKY

OUSPENSKY'S GROUP MEETING to which we had been invited at the house in Warwick Gardens was timed for 8 p.m. We arrived, my wife and I, about 7.45. In the hall a woman sat at a table with a list of names, she took ours and we went into a room filled vdth rows of chairs which soon began to fill up. The atmosphere was rather tense; there was a feeling of expectancy and I had to remember myself with all my might to keep my emanations to myself and not let them run to waste; Gurdjieff said that emanations which mechanically flow out from people stink, but that if one keeps them to oneself they will accumulate, not pass from one, and will crystallize. The energy that passes from people—the emotions of a crowd at a football match or a revivaUst or a poHti-cal meeting, goes to the moon. But a man can collect energy from a crowd, as a dynamo collects electricity from the atmosphere. I found that I was able to, so to say, collect some of the energy from the group and keep my own from rtinning to waste.

Soon every seat was occupied and people began to glance round every time the door opened. It was with a feeling of reUef when, half an hour later, one of Ouspensky's older pupils, a man, came in and sat at the right of Ouspensky's chair and asked for questions, which were taken down by a woman secretary. Sometimes this man would answer the questions himself, others he let pass, which were later answered by Ouspensky. In about fifteen minutes Ouspensky came in, followed by four prosperous-looking professional-looking well-dressed men, older pupils, who sat round him facing us. Ouspensky took up the Hst of names of those present and scanned it, then sat back and, with rather a severe expression glanced round the room and said, 'Well, any questions?'

The questions were read out, he answering, clearly and concisely.

Then followed other questions from the audience; their whole attention being on Ouspensky. As the evening went on I became more and more impressed with the breadth and clarity of his massive and powerful mind—so far as *knowledge* was concerned.

Soon after the questions began I glanced at my wife and we both smiled broadly; the questions were almost identical with those asked in Orage's early groups in New York; though, while those were spoken with a broad American accent 'as if mouth were full of cold potato' according to Gurdjieff, and answered by an Englishman, here they were asked in what Americans call 'a cHpped EngHsh accent', 'as if mouth were full of hot potato', and answered by a Russian. And the answers, if not exactly the same, were strikingly similar.

Pondering this I saw why questions, at least in young groups everywhere, must follow a pattern; each will ask questions according to his type. If you understand types you will know what questions they will ask even before they open their mouths. Gurdjieff imderstood types, hence his extraordinary, almost magical, power of seeing into the human psyche. The science of types has been known to real initiates from the earliest times. Attar's *Conference of the Birds* written in the twelfth century, is partly based on this. Since all men everywhere have the same basic emotions all men have the same sort of feelings—including vanity and self-love; but, as the reason of ordinary man is abnormal and belongs to the reason of knowledge, all men think differently. Only those who possess the reason of understanding can think in common.

Ouspensky's replies to questions, the general atmosphere, stimtilated Eoe. My lazy inefficient mind needed this kind of work at this time. I can say now that the important thing I got from Ouspensky's meetings and talks with him was the further training of my mind to formulate my thoughts and feelings.

The meeting ended about ten-thirty. The audience, mostly young and young middle-aged men and women, were asked not to loiter outside. There was Httle talking and evetyone went his way.

Though we still had a small group of our own of people I had got together in 1932 and which Jane Heap was now directing, I felt the need of Ouspensky's groups and the contact widi the Ouspenskys. But from the first I noticed a difference between Gurdjieff's and Orage's pupils on the one hand and Ouspensky's on the other. In the Ouspensky group it was as if one were associated with a Russian secret society—the hush-hush and the precautions; pupils were constandy on the watch

as to whom they spoke and what they said; as if the police might be expected at any time. I missed the emotional freedom and mutual exchange of Gurdjieff's and Orage's pupils.

The secretiveness had very Httle to do with what they called the 'work'. It was Russian. Anyone who has Hved in Russia, or read the memoirs of those who visited Russia, wiU understand. Even in the eighteenth century, travellers from France and England who wished to talk privately would go to the centre of a large square in Petersburg or Moscow to walk up and down, so as not to be overheard and be reported to the police. One could understand this with regard to the Ouspenskys. They were Russian; and one of Ouspensky's sisters, a brilliant young woman, had been exiled to Siberia by the Tzsar's government for 'revolutionary activities' and had died there. Another cause was the real difficulties that Gurdjieffhad created for Ouspensky in 1922, specially created, according to F. S. Pinder, for Ouspensky's possible inner development. Gurdjieff wished Ouspensky to apply ihe teaching practically but Ouspensky either would not or could not submit to the severe discipline that would have been necessary. He admitted to Pinder that he was physically and emotionally lazy. So he continued with his philosophical school; and became a sort of Plato to Gurdjieff's Socrates, teaching the theory, the philosophy.

Shortly after they moved to Lyne Place, Ouspensky showed me round the grounds, pointing out the work the pupils were doing. Later, in his study, he asked me to come down and work with them. I said I would have to think about it. I did think about it, and was greatly tempted. It would be pleasant to work with these people, whom I liked; yet I saw that I could be in a false position. My contact with them would be only personality contact, since I would not be able to speak to them from essence about the ideas, essence for me being Gurdjieff and his writings. So, although he several times brought up the question it came to nothing.

As far as I could see no real tasks were given in physical work as at the Prieure and no exercises apart from one or two very simple ones. There were no 'shocks' as Gurdjieff used to give; and it could not have been otherwise. It was a well-run philosophical school, unique in our time perhaps, with nearly a thousand pupils; and no breath of scandal ever touched it. Sometimes I wished that Gurdjieff could come and throw an essence bomb and wake these nice people into life; yet how much poorer their existence would have been vwthout the life at Lyne Place

Meanwhile conversations with the Ouspenskys continued—they lasted, in fact, until the war. Ouspensky would invite me to his study and open a bottle of wine, and after three glasses, as Gurdjieff had recommended, I was able to open up and talk freely. Gradually the jjlring for him warmed into a r e i affection, for here I saw quite another side of him; not die somewhat forbidding philosopher, but a warm and sympathetic man.

I made no notes, as our talks were reaUy an exchange of subjective opinions. He spoke about his life in Russia and the result of some strange experiments he had made. "We compared notes about our travels and, of course, talked a great deal about Gurdjieff.

Ouspensky said, 'I tried many times to come to an understanding with Gurdjieff, but it was not possible, and when he came to London and tried to break up my group I had to sever my connection with him.'

It was not possible to come to an 'understanding' with Gurdjieff. You either accepted him as a teacher or you did not. And when you had absorbed as much as you could carry you went away and digested it.

'As for liquidating your group,' I said, 'he did just that to Orage in New York in Orage's last year there.' And I related the incident. 'Gurdjieff's methods were drastic,' I said, 'but as we are so sunk in apathy, so mechanical, he had to give us violent shocks.'

As always, Ouspensky listened to me patiently and even widi interest, but I felt that nothing I could say would change his attitude in the least.

A year later, during a conversation, Ouspensky said, 'It is necessary that we get in touch with an esoteric school'

'Do you know of an esoteric school?' I asked.

'No, but there must be schools, either in Europe or the Near East.'

'But why is it necessary? "We have a school.'

'Where?'

"The Prieure was an esoteric school. Gurdjieff himself is, so to speak, an esoteric school.'

'No, I cannot accept that. It is necessary, as I say, to get in touch with an esoteric school.'

He went on to say something about there being a missing hnk, which I then could not follow.

'For me,' I said, 'the esoteric school is in Paris. I feel no need to look for another, nor have I s a j wish to do so while Gurdjieff is alive.'

Onspensky said nothing. We sat quietly smoking, then he said,'Why won't you come and work at Lyne?'

For one thing,' I said, 1 find it almost impossible to make any real contaa with your pupils. They are friendly, but there is always a barrier. You kiow, they seem to be more English than the Enghsh in not wishing to give themselves away; there is a feeling of restraint about them. In other words, I like their personalities but I can't get at their essence. All that I have got in the system is based on Gurdjieff's personal teaching and *Beelzebub's Tales,* and these I have agreed not to speak about.'

He smiled and said, 'But you will get to know them in time.'

I thought for a bit and said, 'Why don't you let me read *Beelzebub's Tales* to a small group of your older pupib, either here or in London? This is something I could do. No discussion, just reading.'

'No, it is not possible.'

'Why?'

'For one thing *Beelzebub's Tales* needs a great deal of mental preparation.'

'Not mental preparation,' I said, 'but an ability to read between the lines, and patience and perseverance. Many simple people can take it, though intellectuals are frequently baffled, they can't fit it into any category or school of psychology or philosophy.'

'No,' he said, 'I can't agree to your reading it to them nor to their reading it.'

'But you read it. You have a copy!'

'No, I've glanced at it, but not read it.'

'You haven't read it? Why?'

'It sticks in my throat.'

From sheer astonishment I could say nothing, and he began to talk of something else.

Some time later he gave me a typescript to read, saying that he was writing down all that he could remember of what GurdjiefFhad said to him. When he asked my opinion of it I said that it was wonderful stuff; it was in a different vein from *Tertium Organum,* and *A New Model of the Universe,* much higher in the scale of ideas; it was a verbatim report of Gurdjieff's talks.

'But you will surely publish this?' I asked. 'Apart from *Beelzebub's Tales* and the *Second Series,* it's the most interesting collection of Gurdjieff's sayings and doings that could possibly be got together.'

'I may publish it—but not if Gurdjieff publishes *Beelzebub's Tales.*

To my question 'Why?' he did not answer. It was eventually published, after GvurdjieFF's death—*Fragments of an Unknown Teaching,* which the American pubUshers stupidly dubbed *In Search of the Miraculous.*

I enjoyed talking to Madame Ouspensky—she was always stimulating, but I never felt close to her as I <Hd to Ouspensky. She was always jhe Grand Duchess, keeping you at a distance, and I never felt the !#armth that Ouspensky, in his mellow moods, radiated. But then, I've always found it more stimulating to discuss ideas with men than with women.

Some time after meeting Ouspensky I was in Paris with GurdjieFFand at lunch told him about my contact with him and about our going to his group. He listened, and made an unflattering remark about Ouspensky. 'Mr. GurdjieFF,' I said, 'I like Ouspensky and I enjoy talking to him.'

'Oh yes, Ouspensky very nice man to talk to and drink vodka with, but he is weak man.'

A day or so later, he called me into his store-room. This store-room, which later became famous, was overflowing with every kind of delicious food from every part of Europe and the Near East—fruits, dried meat, cold sausages and salami, sweets, preserved and canned food, and herbs. The room was permeated with the smell of lovage, one of my favourite herbs; and even now, when I go into my garden and smell the lovage, by association I am back in the store-room. There was a large refrigerator, a small table, and a chair for GurdjieFFand one for a visitor. GurdjieFF produced three large boxes which he filled with twenty different delicious things to eat—sweets, sausage, preserves and so on. 'Now,' he said, 'tie them up and take them with you. One is for your family, one for Mrs. Howarth and her daughter, one for Madame Ouspensky.' They weighed about ten pounds each.

' On the way back to London I pondered what Gurdjieff had meant ,by Ouspensky's being a weak man. Every one'of us on this planet has '.his weahiesses, his vanity and self-love, his dark side and his light side, bis possibihties and impossibilities, and every man has his suffering. Biake knew it:

I wander thro' each charter'd street.
Near where the charter'd Thames does flow,
And mark in every face I meet ^
Marks of weakness, marks of woe.

In every cry of every Man,
In every Infant's cry of fear,
In every voice, in every ban.
The mind-forg'd manacles I hear.

What was Ouspensky's weakness? Where was it? As I reflected I gradually came to see that it was, as with most of us, in his emotional centre. All of us (including, perhaps especially, intellectuals, like Shaw and Bertrand Russell) are undeveloped emotionally. One notices it particularly with intellectuals, since one expects them to be adult emotionally—^which they are not.

Both Orage and Ouspensky had extraordinary and unusual intellectual integrity, and one could rely on this. But I had come to see that emotionally, I could trust no one and nothing, least of all myself. Our feelings can change from week to week, day to day, and even hour to hour.

Ouspensky's attitude to Gurdjieff was chiefly emotional, hence partial and subjective; but his approach to Gurdjieff's system was intellectual and impartial—it had integrity. Orage also had intellectual integrity; yet he always accepted Gurdjieff as the Teacher.

On the mental plane, as regards Ouspensky, I sometimes felt like the mouse when the elephant looked at him and said, 'But you're so small.' And the mouse rephed, 'Well, I've been sick!' But emotionally I never felt inferior to Ouspensky. I was discussing the centres with him one day and said, 'My horse is too strong for me; it so often takes the bit between its teeth and gallops off, landing me in difficult situations. I lose control of it, and often have to pay heavily for this. My feelings—you know—the carriage, the horse and the driver. My f e ^ g centre is too strong.'

He said, 'A strong feeling centre is a gift of God.'

I said, 'One can have a strong feeling centre yet be conscious of a weakness in the solar plexus.'

One was always aware of the great strength of Gurdjieff in the region of his solar plexus—the region of essence, of 'I-am-ness', of will, of being.

In my own way, because of the efforts I had made I had become aware of a growing strength in the solar plexus, an 'I-am-ness', so that I was better able to cope with myself and other people.

When I arrived from Paris with the parcels from Gurdjieff I wrote to Madame Ouspensky and received an invitation to Lyne. She gave

me tea in her own beautifully furnished room. In vain she tried, to conceal her delight when I opened the parcel for her. Then slowly she unpacked it, savouring each item, sorting them into three heaps. 'This,' she said, is for Mr. Ouspensky, this for my helpers, and this for myself.'

After tea she asked me about GurdjiefF; how was he? What was he doing? What did he say? I gave her the picture in detail as far as I could.

On my next visit to GurdjiefF I told him what had happened, and on each of my visits to Paris I took back three boxes. Each time I took one to Lyne and with Madame went through the ritual of unpacking; afterwards I related in detail what GurdjiefF had said and done.

When they moved to Lyne Place I had suggested to Ouspensky that he should let Mrs. Howarth and my wife teach his pupils some of the dances that GurdjiefF had shown in the demonstrations. He agreed to consider it. Some of the pupils came to our flat in Hampstead and were shown the obligatories, and eventually classes were formed at Lyne Place. Much later, there was a big 'do' at Lyne at which some of the movements were shown. I very much wanted to go and was somewhat chagrined to be told that it was not possible. Madame had decided to punish me, I gathered, because I would not take an active part in their work.

Ouspensky again asked me to join in the work at Lyne Place. There were various activities and he suggested that I should run a small j^fintii^ press they had, which, being a publisher, was in my line. Apart from my not feeling 'at home' there, it was physically difficult as it was a long way from our cottage on the farm near Redboume, to which we had recently moved from London. Most of my free time was spent with my young family and our small GurdjiefF group in London.

In addition to Ouspensky's groups Maurice NicoU had a group of over a hundred at Amwell in Hertfordshire. In 1935 our own group in London consisted of some twelve people. In Paris with GurdjiefF were a few Americans, English and Russians and in New York the scattered remains of Orage's old group, about twenty.

Outwardly the life at Lyne Place had a resemblance to that at the trieure. Inwardly it was iiFerent. There was no individual work on |iupib as there had been with GurdjiefF—nor could there have been.

There was no family life there, no children. One missed the patriarchal life of the Prieure.

Ouspensky gave only one exercise in his groups, as far as I could gather—'stopping thoughts', which was itself a part of several exercises given by Gurdjieff. For me to have worked there would have been Hke going back to school after having been at university.

Once, after the usual talk with Madame on my return from Paris she said, 'I don't quite understand what you get from Mr. Gurdjieff. Tell me, what is it you get from him?'

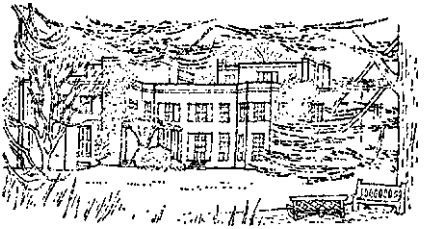
It was difficult to formulate briefly what I did get but, after thinking a little I said, 'Mr. Gurdjieff says things to me about myself which hit me right in my feelings, in my essence, so that I never can forget them; and little by little the effect is to change something in me and give me more understanding of myself and other people; at the same time it is accompanied by a realization of how little I actually do imderstand. Mr. Ouspensky appeals to my mind and I'm never tired of listening to him. But this doesn't change things in myself. I think I can say that I get more for inner work from one lunch with Mr. Gurdjieff than from a year of Mr. Ouspensky's groups.' She thought for a moment, then said, 'Yes, I think I Imow what you mean.'

I continued with Ouspensky's group, once a week, while my wife went to Lyne Place once a week with Mrs. Howarth to teach the movements. Although I enjoyed meeting and talking to the Ouspenskys at Lyne Place, I began to fmd the group meetings at the house in Warwick Gardens more and more unsatisfying. The work was too theoretical, too one-centred, intellectual-centred; and often I would leave with a feeling of emptiness, of emotional himger. Even our own small Gurdjieff group of ten people was more satisfying.

Maurice NicoU invited us to his place at Amwell in Hertfordshire. We went once or twice and were impressed with the quahty of his pupils. Mrs. Howarth and my wife showed them some of the obligatories. Nicoll was an unusual man and it was a great pity that he had cut himself off from Gurdjieff after only a four months stay at the Prieure in 1922. But Nicoll was able to attract people, good material, for whom perhaps Gurdjieff's ideas, and even Ouspensky's, were then too strong.

Gurdjieff was the centre of a school of objective teaching, an esoteric school. Outside this central point was the circle of the older pupils of Gurdjieff, then, some of their pupils. Outside this again were those in

Ouspensky's groups; then NicoU's pupils; and so on. The ripples in a pool widen and become weaker the farther they get from the centre. With powerful ideas, the more diluted, the more people are attracted.



Lyne Place

13

FORTUNE TURNS HER WHEEL

AT THIS TIME, in Ordinary life the effect of the Solioonensius was bringing about increasing tension in human beings. Each day in the newspapers there was little but news of Hitler's and Mussolini's threats and diunderijtigs and the massacres of Stalin. The Spanish civil war was in full blast with tens of thousands of people of the same country indulging in 'mass reciprocal destruction'—a preludeto the greater horrors that were to follow in Europe and Asia. Everyone was affected by the tension but chiefly the people in Germany. Three destructive forces were at work on the planet: Nazism, Communism and Western CapitaHsm. I saw something of Nazism when, with two friends, my wife and I motored to Austria. When we crossed the border from Belgium into Germany it was like going into a vast open prison. The intensity of the general negative emotion stirred up was oppressive in the extreme; the hotels, cafes and restaurants were pervaded with fear. The two chief features of German behaviour, arrogance and servility, were blatant—arrogance of those in uniform, servility of the people. The friendly 'Griiss Gott' I had known had been replaced by the threatening upraised arm of 'Heil Hitler'. I talked to many 'simple' people. They Imew war was coming and were afraid.

Gurdjieff said that English are sheep, French donkeys, Americans burros, Germans jackals. The wolf is an honourable animal, he takes what he wants, and you know he is coming. With the jackal you never know. If you are afraid, he will attack you, but if you beat him with a big stick he will fawn on you.

Mimich was crowded. The only rooms we could find were in a large hotel, Jewish, and the whole atmosphere was one of disturbing negative emotion, of fear and resentment. On going out the next morning we noticed that all the cars of the residents of the hotel had had their tyres deflated; ours, fortunately, was in a garage. It seemed as if an hysterical explosion might break out at any moment. Germany was a Ivmatic asylum, its people governed by madmen. Some kept

their sanity but they were helpless against the power of the strong •negative forces caused by the planetary tensions.

In Austria there was still something of the old Austria I had known, and when we returned through Germany it was like **going** back into a prison; and to cross into Belgium—even Belgium—was like coming out of a stifling room into the fresh air. It was as if the Gods, having destroyed Russia, had resolved to destroy Germany and were making • the Germans mad.

GurdjieffF says that men are only partly to blame. Cosmic laws are iie cause, but man, because of the abnormal life he has made for himself, is also greatly to blame, and is responsible for the horrors of modem war. Life is becoming more compUcated, more stupid, more unsatisfying physically, emotionally and mentally, and the only remedies offered by our experts are more money, more psychology, more education, more science, more government, more chemical fertilizers, more poison sprays, more injections, more drugs—everything but plain common sense. We are threatened with another flood, a flood of the false values of pseudo-civihzation which may drown all who have not an ark.

We have an ark, in which we can take refuge from the flood. The 'teaching', based on ancient objective knowledge, is an ark; and in this ark are preserved the seeds of that from which a real culture, a real civilization could grow.

The hfe of a man is similar to the hfe of the earth on which he lives, with its heat and cold, storms and earthquakes, oases and deserts, peace and plenty, struggle and breaking down; he has his ups and downs, his strivings, his runs of good luck and bad luck.

My own Hfe, after the First World War, as regards outer conditions, up to the time of Orage's death, had been, as I have said, as favourable as it possibly could have been in ways material and spiritual. I had had endless opportunities, some of which I had taken, though there had been many that through sheer lack of understanding in myself I had failed to profit by. In any case, outer life had been fuU of interest, with ^ friends, a wide circle of acquaintances, and the essential satisfaction of family life. But always, inside me, from the time of the War there fead been suffering. Not just mechanical suffering, but the pressure on ^e feelings which is part of the suffering that l^s to be borne by all Hving beings. In this last, since meeting Gurdjieff, the suffering was aow not completely wasted, I could use some of it for my own deveflopftient. And this made all'the difference: I had a centre of gravity and a

real aim. It can happen that when a man is losing all that in outer life is regarded as good—money, comfort, property—^his inner life is growing, developing.

In outer Ufe existence became more and more difficult. Three million people in England alone were living half-starved on the dole, while food was still being destroyed and farmers were being paidnot to farm; businesses were going bankrupt—everywhere—^broken by the banking system. Ours began to get into difficulties; deprived of Orage's sound literary advice we made mistakes. Trouble also began with our landlord in Hampstead, an ItaHan Jew, who Hved beneath us, and complained of the noise of the piano and the children. One Boxing Day he put the bailiffs in, our rent in advance being one day overdue, hoping thus to turn us out. The banks were shut and I had no cash; but it so happened that the bailiff came from my village; we had been at the same school and of course knew everyone. So, while we waited until the next day for my father to send the cash, we chatted pleasantly, and he gave me much useful information on how to deal with landlords and bailiffs, which, up to now, fortunately, I have not needed. Not long after this episode the landlord paid me to move, and we went to live in the country.

We enjoyed the Hfe in our cottage on the farm near Redboume. The boys, age five and eight, went each day to a school in Berkhamsted run by Ben Greene and his wife, seven miles away; Ben was a brother of Graham Greene. My parents lived ten miles away and we had old friends in the neighbourhood; so for nearly three years we were able to live a good simple country life.

In business we struggled on. Publishing firms were closing, and directors from three different puUishing houses came to us for jobs. But we were on the way out too, and soon had to close down. This was a blow—^first because it was the most interesting business I had been in, and second because I had to endure the humiHation of an examination at a creditors' meeting; in the process of'eating dog' my self-love and vanity received some nasty jars.

I did not know then that if we could have held on we would have been saved by the demand for books occasioned by the war. Now, with the economic Hfe of the country getting worse every week, I was unable to get work of any kind. At last my father offered me a small job in his factory in the city, which I had to accept. So here I was back where I had begun at the age of seventeen in conditions ahen to my essential nature. Again the situation had something of Ouspensky's

'reoirrence' in it. The factory was five minutes walk firom the original one in Wood. Street, where my father had started the business in 1890. i was right back in conditions and early associations of my branch of the Nott family. I wasn't resentful against my family—I felt close to them; I was resentful of my having to go back into the hat business. It was as if I were going down and down and for some days I was in a state of anguish arid depression. But the organism, if one does not give way to despair, can surprisingly adapt itself to strange conditions; and after the first few weeks in the business, (which on three occasions I thought I had left for ever) I puUed myself up and began to try to extract as much as possible out of an impleasant situation. I even became useful to the business, and when, a few months later, on the recommendation of a friend I was offered a good job in a big pubHshing house, I refused it. I had become interested in the factory, I hked the men and women who worked there and I was free. And again I felt tliat I was working out something of the pattern of my life, repairing something in my past. I was reminded again of what was said about my horoscope: 'You come under the influence of Saturn. Saturn is a cold hard planet—but a teacher. Every time you think you have got a inove on you will be pulled up with a jerk. All through Hfe you will find yourself coming under the influences of Nott, of your family, negative influences, but you will work yourself out and in doing so will learn. In Alchemy Saturn represents lead, and from lead is produced gold.'

I kept in mind Gurdjieff's saying that one must pay for one's existence. fulfil one's destined lot, repair the past. One cannot escape the pattern except by working it out—^but consciously, which I tried to do. If. like Brother Lawence, we accept a situation which is displeasing, and remain collected inside, we not only save a lot of nervous energy, but we can use it for our own being. Brother Lawrence calls it 'the practice of the presence of God'.

Not long after I began anew in my father's hat factory, I had an experience of'the timeless moment'. I had got on my usual bus to the factory. *The Times* under my arm; and as I sat down a strange feeling came over me, as if I were being filled with power and Hght and under-.standing, but mechanically I opened *The Times* and began to read, and tihe power or whatever it was, disappeared, leaving me feeling so fhysicaUy sick that I thought I was going to be ill. I put the paper down and tried to recapture the feeling, but it had vanished. AJl day I thought

about it. Then I recalled the two or three similar experiences I had had before and I realized that I must always strive to 'watch', be awake, and remember myself at these moments, be aware of them and let the power flow in, and experience a few moments of real consciousness.

Pondering the way that hfe—the sequence of events—^was going for me, I came across some more sayings of my grandfather, sayings that come from hfe experience which, if one can remember them, can be useful. But one forgets. Among them were the followng:

The mill cannot grind with water that has passed.
One sound blow will serve to undo us all.
Would you know what money is? Try to borrow some.
In time, he comes whom God sends.
He who deceives once is ever after suspect.
A man of understanding vnll not fret about what he cannot have.
No sooner is a temple built for God, than the Devil builds a chapel hard by.
Many have regretted their spoken words more than their silences.
A wise and understanding father is better than a hundred 'educators'.
Whom God punishes, he first takes away the understanding.
To him that will, ways are not wanting.
Good craftsmen are seldom rich.
Be sparing of praise, for all are fickle.
Don't give Peter so much that you will have nothing for Paul.
Fine words dress ill deeds.
A fool can throw a stone into a well that a hundred wise men may not pull out.
Everyone thinks his sack is the heaviest.
God is, where there is peace.
Great force is hidden in a sweet request.
Emotional love makes a good eye squint.
Only the wearer knows where the shoe pinches.
Health without money is half an ague.
The shortest answer is in doing.
He who offends never forgives.
There is truth in astrology but our modem astrologers cannot find it.
Three things are hard: a diamond, granite, and the knowing of one-self.

Discontent often arises from our wants rather than from our needs.

He who is always complaining is never pitied.

You cannot hunt two hares with one hound.

He who marries for love with no money has nights of joy but days of care.

Three women make a market.

One of the Chinese characters for 'quarrel' is two women under one roof

Though laden with gold an ass is still an ass.

A fault denied is already doubled.

He who is occupied with what people say about him shall never know peace.

Time went on and I was beginning to get established again. We were now living in a tiny flat in Gondar Gardens, Hampstead; the children went to the Burgess Hill School nearby, and weekends and hoUdays were spent at the cottage in Hertfordshire. In spite of the depression and the struggle for money, my personal relations and family life, the contacts with my parents and friends, were very satisfying.

One Saturday in spring I drove to Houghton Regis to see a friend of the family, a woman, part Jew, part Gipsy. After tea, during which I talked about my difficulties, she, as usual, took out her cards and said, 'I'll see what the cards have to say.' She told me to shuffle them in a special manner, went through her little ritual, spread them out in a special way and began to teU me various things, all, as usual, vaguely. Suddenly she gave a jump, and said, 'But he'll get over it, he'll get over it'

'What do you mean?' I asked.

'It's one of your sons. But don't worry, he'll get over it.'

I had never taken fortune-telling very seriously and in a day or two forgot it. Then, about a month later, one beautiful June evening, a strange feeling came to me that something unusual was going to happen; whether to myself or to someone else I did not know. I was in an emotional state and restless, and to a woman who was staying with us I said, 'You know, you can have no confidence in life. You nfever know what it holds for you,' and more in the same vein.

The catastrophe happened next day—an accident, in which our younger son aged six just escaped vnth his life and was permanently

crippled. The circumstances were such that we seemed to be paralysed with grief; and I understood how people can lose their reason or die from shock. Fortunately for the boy, such is the resilience of the human organism, especially with children, in a few weeks he was swimming again, and riding his bicycle with an artificial leg. In time he learnt to ride a pony, a motor-cycle, to drive a car, to sail, to dance and to do everything that a fully equipped man can do. He became stroke for a crew at St. Paul's School and then at the Thames Rowing Club. But aU this was in the future. And in the meantime we, his parents, suffered. I thought about what our friend had seen in the cards. She *had* seen or rather felt something through the medium of my presence and the cards. But how? Was the accident fore-ordained? Had she seen it in the pattern of our son's Ufe?

I remembered GurdjieFF's accident but could not make clear to myself why such things happen—^not the outer obvious cause, but the real hidden cause. The real causes of the things that happen lie deep in ourselves, in our past, or in combinations of influences. But why?

No wonder that Hassein in *BeelzebuVs Tales,* though he never doubts the fact of justice, asks, 'Why?.'

It happened that Jane Heap just then was going to see GurdjieFF, and I gave her a small sum to give to him—'in gratitude' I said. She wrote, 'I saw Mr. G. at the apartment and told him about the accident and gave him your gift, telling him you had said it was "in gratitude". A look of sorrow came into his eyes and he said, "Why gratitude to me?" I said, "I don'tknow". He looked thoughtful and then said, "Is good, is good." '

As soon as I could I went to see GurdjieFF and foimd him in the Cafe de la Paix. I mentioned the accident and he said he had heard about it and began to speak about preparing for the future. I was in too emotional a state to listen quietly and he very soon got up and went upstairs. When he returned he said, 'You have business to do?' I said, 'My business is with you.' He said, 'I go now. You come to lunch.'

There were two people besides myself There was little talk and as soon as the meal was finished he sent them away, beckoned to me, and went into the sitting-room. For a few minutes we just sat quietly, then he took up his hand-harmonium, and keeping his eyes fixed on me with a look of deep compassion and power, began to play a simple melody with strange harmonies, repeating and repeating yet all the time with different combinations of notes. Little by little I became aware that he was conveying something to me both through the music—the

combination of the notes—and by the telepathic means which he understood so well. A change began to take place in me; I began to understand something, and a feeling of conscious hope and conscious faith began to displace the dark hopeless depression.

The music went on for about ten minutes. When he stopped we sat without speaking. Then I got up and took his hand and said, 'Thank you. This is what I came to hear.'

A healing process of psychic wounds had begun, and I returned to England in a very different state of mind and feelings.

Two things I discovered as a result of the disaster. One was that underneath the suffering of my organism—the instinctive, feeling and mental suffering—was something calm and unmoved—the kernel of the essence, where objective conscience Hes, perhaps. It was the sort of feeling I had had many years before on one of the hellish battlefields of France, when I thought I was going to be killed. In times of acute suffering the personality—the outward manifestations of the organism, can be stripped away, and in the quivering mass of suffering essence, objective conscience, which can perceive life so clearly, is uncovered, and something remains calm and undisturbed among the whirlvdnd of grief or suffering: the still small voice.

The second thing was the real goodness and compassion of my parents, of the Ouspenskys who had sent their own doctor, and of all our friends. Not so much by what they did—though that was not Uttle —as by their attitude.

Children can forget scars, physical and emotional; with parents the emotional scars remain.

A TASTE OF BUREAUCRACY

NOT LONG AFTER Tffls, bccausc the cconomic life of the country was going down, my father's business got into difficulties and had to be reorganized, and I was out of a job again. For three months I worked with a government organization set up to help the Czech refugees who were pouring into the country, fleeing from Hitler. This was my first (and I hope will be the last) experience—not counting Hfe in the army—of working for an official organization. The head of my section was both shrewd and stupid, a vain man who resented any suggestions from those below him, and wasted time and money on useless schemes and plans. Yet my colleagues were congenial; they had learnt to accept everything he said without question. As long as one did not use one's mind for thinking all was well. The vanity and self-love, the stupidity, of some of the power possessing beings—even the small ones—in government and municipal organizations is often incredible; the wonder is that pubUc Hfe goes on at all.

My experience reminded me of the story of the man who was fmding it difficult to think things out and went to a doctor to see if there was something wrong with his head. The doaor examined him and said, 'If you will leave your brain with me I'll go over it carefully; you can call back for it in a few days.' The man agreed, left his brain, and went off. Time passed and he did not call. After some weeks the doctor telephoned him: 'You know, I have that brain of yours. Aren't you coming for it?'

'Oh that,' said the man. 'I don't need it now. I've got a government job.'

In government, in politics, in big business and law, real feelings and real thoughts are not only not necessary, but often a hindrance. A man needs only the formatory apparatus.

My work with the organization took me one day to a large house in Bloomsbury where the Jevnsh refugees from Germany were interviewed. In the big hall crowds of Jews were waiting. When I went iA

it was as if I were hit with a palpable and harmful force, and I realized that it came from the negative emotions of these hundreds of people who had left their homes and their near ones in Germany and were now in London, apprehensive, resentful, and fearfulof theirfuture. The negative emotions of despair, fear, hatred and bitterness compressed in this confmed space made the atmosphere tremble with harmfiJ vibrations.

Even before I met the Teaching I had the gift, in certain conditions, of seeing into people, especially when they were in a state of hate with another person and trying not to show it. I could see, however much they tried to disguise it, the inner change taking place in them; sometimes it was so unpleasant that I would try not to see it. I was, as they used to say, 'psychic'; which is nothing more than a normal essence reaction to the vibrations of people—which many children have. And now, in the process of discovering more and more ugly things in myself, which formerly I would have shut my eyes to, I became aware also, of being able to see other people through and through; and it was only by keeping in mind the fact that I was like them and they like me that I was able to be at all impartial. I was coming to the stage when, no longer able or wishing to deceive myself, I could not be deceived by others. I thought of the story of the man who, when a person looked back at him over his shoulder, saw the person's imier life in all its ugliness; and the experience became so painful that at last he went to live on an island by himself; and so that he should never by chance look over his own shoulder and see his own inner Hfe, he never had a looking glass.

WAR

IN JUNE OR JULY of this year Madame Ouspensky became very ill, and when I spoke about her to one of the older pupils, he said, 'You know, we've done everything we can. We've had the best advice we can get, but nothing that is done brings a change.' He added, 'I'm going to tell you something, which may appear rather strange, but you must give me your word that my name shall never be mentioned.'

I agreed to this, so he continued, 'I'm convinced that only one man can do anything for her.'

'Who is that?'

To my astonishment he replied, 'GurdjieFF.'

'GurdjieFF!' I said.

'Yes. But he is not the man he was. Is he?'

'How do you mean?'

'Well, I understand that after Essentuki he lost touch with the source, and since the accident, which impaired his mind, he has not done much teaching.'

'First of all,' I said, 'I've agreed not to discuss him with any of you, but this concerns Madame's well-being, so for this once I won't keep to the arrangement. I agree with you that he is the one man who could help. As for his not being the man he was, I will say that he is even much more so. He also is perfecting himself and is doing it in his own way. Not only is he not mad as some of you seem to think, on the contrary his is absolute sanity—the sanity of objective reason. However, leaving this aside, do you think it would be possible for Madame to go and see him?'

'No, she could not make the journey now.'

'I wonder if he would come over.'

'See what you can do,' he said. 'I'U do what I can, only I must ask you again to give me your word that you wiU not mention my name in connection vsrith it.'

Of course I agreed. In Paris I told GurdjieFF about her illness and

about how she always wanted to know everything about him, and what he was doing and teaching; and I told him what Ouspensky's pupil had said, that he, GurdjiefF, was the only person who could really do anything for her.

'If it can be arranged,' I said, 'would you come to England and see her?'

He listened gravely and quietly, thought a little and then said, 'If possible I wiU come. But she also must make effort.'

Yet I had a feeling at this time that it might be very long before I would see Gurdjieff again. Hitler was screaming for war and Mussolini was threatening us with his 'eight milHon bayonets'. GurdjiefF would not answer my question about war starting again but spoke about not allowing oneself to be carried away by mass psychosis, that we must strive to deal intelligently with whatever situation might arise. When I asked him what I could do so far as the work was concerned he spoke again about the role I could play and what I could do with regard to groups; if not now then in the future. He also spoke again in an indefinite way about the horrors on an enormous scale that were about to take place. When war did come, he said, it would be 'a nasty mix'. When I had said good-bye and was standing on the pavement outside the apartment he leaned out of the window and again spoke about what I must do.

It was nearly six years before I saw him again, and much longer before I could play the part in the work that he had indicated. Yet it all came about eventually, and unexpectedly.

Our plans for getting him to London came to naught. After a good <iieai of trouble arrangements were made, and more than two or three people were excited at the prospect of seeing GurdjiefF at Lyne Place; but, a few days before his expected arrival in London war broke out. Life again was turned upside down. Madame Ouspensky slowly got better and later was able to go to America, where, many years later, ^e ended her days.

In the last year of peace Ouspensky's meetings were held at 46 Colet Gardens, a large building with a hall to seat five hundred people. Here he sat on the stage with one of the older pupils who took questions, and was even more the philosopher answering the questions of his pupils. All the meetings were crowded, and the sense of secret society hush-hush restraint was even more marked.

A demonstration of some of the dances and movements that Mrs.

Howarth and my wife had been teaching was given at Colet Gardens. Ouspensky announced briefly to the audience that the dances they would be seeing had been collected by some of Mr. Gurdjieff's pupils. The demonstration was most impressive and it seemed as if the exercises and dances might be the shock needed to bring new life into the work at Lyne Place.

As I have said, Ouspensky, though he was not teaching the Method, nevertheless was giving a thousand people something that otherwise they never would have got, and I felt that the time would come when many of them might wish to know more of Gurdjieff's inner teaching.

But, as so often happens on this planet, just when something good is about to flourish, it is overwhelmed by negative forces; it withers, or has to struggle to keep aUve. It seemed that Gurdjieff's work might even disappear; and the negative force was war.

Gurdjieff, in Paris, had been kept going in a modest way mainly by the old Orage group of about thirty in New York, the small group of Americans in Paris, and a few EngUsh pupils—a fraction of Ouspensky's thousand. Only one or two French were interested.

The general tension increased, everyone sensed and felt it, yet everyone hoped and tried to believe that it would not come. But no one could do anything or could have done anything to change the course of events. Gurdjieff had said during the First World War that 'Everything is happening as it must happen.' So now, everything was happening as it must happen. The causes were not in Hitler, Mussolini, Stalin or Chamberlain, who were merely puppets thrown up; yet each represented the bad and stupid in the people they ruled: Hitler the neuroticism in the Germans, their arrogance, brutaUty, sentimentality, self-pity; StaHn, the cruelty in the Russians, their indifference to the suffering of others; the hollow pomposity of the Italians in Mussolini; the avarice, spite and vindictiveness in the French character imder Laval; the smugness, complacency, hypocrisy and dull stupidity of the English in Chamberlain. The lowest and worst in each race was being manifested in the opening phase of the destruction that was to follow. Yet I could still agree with A. R. Orage, that the EngUsh are the best and most intelligent people in the world, though this was a grave reflection on the rest of the human race.

Having lived in America, France, Germany and Russia and visited twenty other countries and studied their way of life I am still of the

opinion that the English are the most intelligent people. Yet, when one considers the life of man objectively and impartially one is oppressed by the terror of the situation.

As I was walking down Chancery Lane to see Philip Mairet in the office of *The New English Weekly* I stopped by a group of people Hstening to a radio: it was the news of the invasion of Poland; a repetition of the news of over a hundred years before: 'Napoleon has crossed the Niemen'. A httle further down the street a man was pinning to a board a government announcement about preliminary preparations for defence, asking those who had no pressing business in London to leave and go to the country. A young woman was reading it. We looked at each other sadly and I said, 'It's come then.' 'Yes,' she said. 'At last.' There was no feeling among people of being about to start on a great adventure as there had been in 1914; no thrill of excitement—only an awareness of an approaching great catastrophe, like a slowly overwhelming flood or an erupting volcano, that even yet might calm down.

At this time I was by myself in the pleasant house that I had acquired in Hampstead the year before; my wife was in France seeing GurdjieFF, the two children were staying with friends in different parts of the coimtry. In a few days we were together again, not in the house but in the cottage near Redboume. Everyone expected London to be bombed and people were urged to leave. We were too near, even at the cottage, so when a friend wrote offering her house in Dorset near Corfe Castle, which seemed far enough away, we packed our movables in the car and, making a wide detour through High Wycombe and Thame, taking by-roads, missed the exodus from London which had already begun, and got easily to Corfe Castle.

The house looked over the downs to Kingston, and there was enough land with it to keep us going in vegetables and poultry and eggs. We soon, more or less, adapted ourselves to our new life and I was already plaiming to do what I had long wished—take a small-holding there and grow food, and I even looked eagerly forward to doing so. But while the feeling of pleasant anticipation made itself aware in me, another feeling also began to flow. Coming events cast their shadows; and before we left London I had found myself thinking about New York in the way that we sometimes find ourselves thinking about |>eople or places long before events connected with them come to pass. The thoughts and feelings associated with New York were accompanied by feelings of dejection and almost repulsion for that city, though there was nothing to account for this since all my associations with New York

had been useful and pleasant—Orage and the group, Gurdjieff and the first demonstrations, and our good friends there.

One morning there was an annoimcement that Chamberlain would make an important speech on the radio. We knew what it portended and sent the children to play in the garden so that they should not hear. After his speech we sat talking, and the elder, aged nine, came in and said, 'It's war, isn't it?' How often do parents think they are cleverly concealing facts from children, when all the time the children know!

England had declared war and a week later we heard that plans were being made to evacuate children to Canada and America. After talking things over, my wife said she thought it would be best for her to take the children to America; it was natural for her to wish to return to her native country, especially as our jobs had vanished; there she had her relations, and the children would be safe. My feelings were against it—a real love of country, of parents and friends, were against our leaving England but, reasoning calmly I saw that it would be best for them. I subordinated feelings to reason, and this time I was right, though I did not reahze it until much later.

As soon as the decision was made that the family should go to America, there began in my solar plexus a dull ache, a pain; what is called 'heart-ache' (the solar plexus being what we call 'heart') and this was to last for nearly six years.

The next day I climbed the steep downs above the cottage and walked along the ridge and sat by the three ancient barrows. It was a day in one of the most beautiful Autumns I remember, clear and bright and warm, with a thin gauze-like haze, which went on for six weeks. To the north-east was Corfe Castle and the wide stretch of Poole Harbour with Badbury Rings in the distance. To the west the steeples or towers of five village churches, to the south Swanage and the bay. I thought about the war and wondered how many himdreds of times in the last five thousand years of our history, from the time of Avebury, had reciprocal mass destruction come to England. How many times had men felt as I was feeling and had watched their old Hfe being broken up! Even in our own times had come the Romans, the Northmen, the Angles, the Saxons, the Danes, the Normans—^killing, destroying, burning. The French had tried to come and now the Germans would try. From where I sat, on the ancient barrow, men had watched the fight between Alfred and the Danes in Swanage Bay. So much 'glorious' history, soaking the earth a mile deep in blood. Each time an old, and often good, way of life had been broken up, and each time men had

built up something new and often worse. And now again a way of life was going to be destroyed by what GurdjieFF describes as 'the horror of horrors in the great universe' that runs like a scarlet thread through all the life of man on this earth—war.

The countryside of Dorset and Wiltshire is littered with the relics of a once great civilization whose centre was Avebury and whose 'Rome' was Ancient Egypt—a civiHzation of which we know nothing. Future generations may contemplate the ruins of our own, wondering what sort of people we were, and what was wrong with us that our 'great' civiHzation came to nothing.

For twenty years the threat and dread of another war had been wilh us and now: 'the thing I feared has come upon me'. Each day the children played in the sun and each day I would say to myself, 'Another day over, only a few left.' When the day of sailing arrived early in , October I drove my family to Southampton trying not to show signs of the heavy load on my solar plexus. I watched them go up the gang-way and disappear into the ship, then I went away feeling that a phase of my hfe was finished, and I forced myself not to think that I might never see them again. An instinctive emotional type like myself can suffer too much and unnecessarily if he allows himself to be a prey to feelings and thoughts. Yet unless one does have an instinctive love for children and family one is not a complete human being; the difficulty is, while having this feeling, not to allow oneself to be completely identi-fied with it. The 'animal' instincts are sometimes spoken of as being unworthy of 'human' beings. We belong to the animal kingdom and have much that is good in common with animals—mating and love of the young. In my sheep-farming days in New Zealand I used to listen to the tender note in the bleat of the ewes for their lambs, and was sur-prised that such a silly creature as a sheep could be so near to humans in this respect. All creatures love their yoimg and care for them until they are grown. An ItaHan writing about his experiences in Africa relates that he saw a buU elephant tramping along trumpeting with rage; he was followed by a small elephant, and behind this child the mother, who at intervals gave the child a whack with her trunk which sent him ^rawling. Each time that he picked himself up and went on she would give him another whack, ignoring his cries. The natives told the writer Aat the young elephant had been in the habit of running away from his parents, and they had had difficulty in fmding him. Now they were changing ground and punishing their child for giving them so much anxiety.

As I drove back to Hertfordshire I realized how deep was my need of home and family, how much I needed the patriarchal life.

I gave up the pleasant house in Hampstead and stored the furniture—which was destroyed later by bombs. "With the things at Redboume I furnished a cottage on the Chiltems lent by friends, near their country house. I stayed first with my parents in Harpenden and later with these friends. I still occasionally went to our small group in'London and to Ouspensky's groups, but London seemed Hke a city awaiting destruction —^blacked out at night, sand-bag protection everywhere. In Hyde Park they were digging trenches, some said for shelter from bombs, others that they were for the future burial of the thousands who would soon be killed. Never 'us'; Nature prevented 'us' from realizing the possibility of our ovwi death. Yet the idea of death was always with us; and this may have been the reason why people were begiiming to feel more for each other, to have more essential relations with each other.

My friends with whom I was staying belonged to one of the old and great families in England; they were not rich but very well-off. They represented all that was best and most liberal in English life; and were as much part of the English soil as landed aristocrats as my people were as yeomen farmers. Because of this I had always felt at ease with them and felt something in common, whereas I had never felt anything in common with the moneyed class like Chamberlain, the Communists, or the pseudo-intelligentsia. As an American said about my friends, 'These people are the salt of the earth.'

At dinner one evening I was speaking about the vagaries of fortune as regards myself. A few weeks before I had been in comparative affluence, living an interesting and varied life, and now I had nothing—neither home, nor family, nor work, nor money, and was trying to exist on a pound a week. 'It vwll be the same with us probably,' they said. 'Everything is breaking up, all our social life; you're going, M. is going, N. is going,' and so on. 'Even if we are alive, life will not be the same. War destroys everything; the most we shall be able to do will be to begin, like the ants when their nest is destroyed, to build up something again.'

A little later they gave a party, a hundred and fifty people in the large hall. Everyone seemed to feel that it was the last that many of us would have here—the last of many such gatherings, but there was neither gloom nor forced gaiety; and we set out to enjoy ourselves. It was in fact the last time we were all able to foregather. Many were dispersed,

some were killed, and others, including my friend, our host, died before the war came to an end.

Life for me became like a dream, but a bad dream, from which I woke only when I visited the group in London.

For three months I tried to get a job, but during the phase of what was called the 'phoney war' there were none for those over forty—^not even work on a farm. There were still over two million on the dole. Then I heard from my wife in America that things were becoming very difficult, and they wanted me to join them; and again came the clash in myself of wanting to stay in England and wanting to be with them. In the end I applied for a visa and after a great deal of trouble was given one, and with borrowed money booked a passage on a Dutch ship.

I spent the last two weeks in England with my parents. Again, the idea of repetition was brought home to me, for I began to experience the sort of feelings that I had had long ago when in the same village, in the old house just down the road, I had been waiting to sail for Tasmania—^feelings of depression and homesickness at leaving my parents and all the associations of my part of England. As then, so now, I counted the days and woke each morning with the feeling of'another day gone'. On the last morning it was almost the same as the last day of twenty-five years before when, with an ache in the solar plexus, I had said good-bye to my mother and father.

BOOK III

AMERICA

i

NEW ROCHELLE

AT THE END of January 1940 I sailed from Southampton for New York. For luggage I took just necessary clothes, and the two quarto volumes of *Beelzebub's Tales* in typescript bound in buckram.

As we steamed into the Channel past The Needles I kept my gaze on the shifting land until it faded into the dusk of the winter afternoon; and the words of the Victorian ballad came to me: 'Shades of evening fall not o'er us, leave our lonely barque awhile. Morning's gleam will not reveal us, yonder dim and distant isle.... Isle of Beauty, fare thee weU.'

The ship was crowded with Dutch and German Jews, refugees like myself fleeing from the wrath to come. There were not even enough seats to sit on, and the atmosphere of negative emotions, the continuous din of raised voices, made it the most unpleasant voyage I have had.

As soon as I arrived in New York, although glad to be with my family again, the dream-state which began vsdth the war became intensified, and was not eased by a bad attack of flu, with a temperature. It was twelve years since I had left the city, and everything, for the first three weeks, except my family, seemed completely strange and imreal. Walking down 42nd Street in a snow storm I found myself saying, 'Am I really in America? This *must* be a dream. I know I shall wake up and find myself in the house in Hampstead.'

This partial paralysis of the faculties was the effect of the various shocks of misfortune which began with the death of Orage and culminated in the shock of war. I tried to remember Gurdjieff's warning about not letting ourselves be identified with the general mass psychosis and ibout three weeks later, woke from my state of dream and began to take stock of our situation with a view to getting estabhshed. Yetj ihad ic been possible for my family to go with me I would have taken Ae next ship to England, so strong was the urge to be there—this longmg which never left me imtil, some years later, I did return.

Our situation was similar to that of refugees through the ages, especially in Europe since the First "World War. "We had one room in a lodging house in New RocheUe, kept by a pleasant woman whose husband had retired from married Hfe and left her with four children, one of whom went to work, the others to school, and helped in the house at weekends. The other lodgers were an electrician, a truck driver and three nondescripts. It was a rambling house with a large kitchen in which we all took turns to make breakfast at the ancient black gas cooker. The house was heated by hot air from the cellar, and smelt of anthracite gas. There was no refrigerator—^there was no need of one, or even of ice in the ice box, as the kitchen was always cold; there was no washing machine, and hot water for baths only occasionally. It had the deficiencies of a cheap lodging house in England; the difference being in the furniture, fixtures and fittings, which were American "Victorian, like in the old silent films. And we, as a company, could have been characters in the setting of a comedy film of the period. But the people were fiiendly and we got on well together.

"We had almost no money; though my wife made a little by teaching, but I found it impossible to get a job. There were over seven million people unemployed, 'on relief, and I, being nearly fifty and not American, was unemployable. So, while theshops were fullof food we were usually hungry—for two months we never had enough to eat, and for the first time in my Hfe I knew what it was to be half-starved and worried on account of die children; hunger always gnavwng at one's stomach. Only on Sundays were our stomachs filled, when we had dinner with my brother-in-law who lived not far away, and which just saved us fi:om real starvation. 'To have too much money brings care, to have none brings grief.'

The boys went to the public school, a bad change from the pleasant Burgess Hill School in Hampstead where they had really enjoyed learning. This was a huge education factory of six hundred children, mostly of first generation Central Europeans, who taunted our sons with losing the War of Independence in which 'our forefathers fought yours and beat them'.

One evening in late February while I was reading to the children in bed we heard a noise like the report of a gun outside, then another and another. The cracks and reports continued, and I thought it must be a battle between rival gangsters, but when I peeped out of the window I could see nothing. The reports went on. After a time I carefully opened

the door. A fine drizzle was falling, and as I looked out there was a loud report and a branch of a tree suddenly crashed to the grotind, then another; and I noticed that the tree-lined road and the gardens were covered with fallen branches—the fine rain falling on them had frozen and the weight of the ice had broken them off. The next morning it was as if the place had been under gun-fire, the road blocked by boughs and branches.

The month of March passed hxmgrily and drearily. We saw one or two old firiends, who unsuccessfully tried to get me a job, and I went the round of the book pubUshers, with no result. We went to one party, it was in Orson Welles's flat in New York, where the main room with a gallery was as high and big as a baronial hall. A corridor leading out had been painted to resemble a London brick alley with a pub at the end. In one of the bedrooms a long mirror was placed above the bed. There was every kind of wonderful food and drink for two hundred people, and I managed to secrete quite a lot to take back to our lodgings.

Towards the end of March my spirits got lower and lower. I began to see that I must make a big effort to get money, and the only way to get it was to ask for it. The Jewish refugees were being helped to find jobs by their organizations and were given money to tide them over but there was no organization for EngUsh refugees. We had among our friends two or three rich women, who might have given us money, but my vanity, self-love and false pride rose up like a blank wall every time I thought of asking. In early April, with the coming of spring, things were so bad that at last the resistance of my negative attitude was overcome by feelings for the welfare of my family. By reasoning about it, I compelled myself to sit down and compose letters to these three rich women. For a few days after I posted the letters I was on tenterhooks, wondering if they would be offended, and what they would think of me; when their letters did arrive I could hardly bring myself to open them. I could have saved myself a lot of nervous energy, for the replies were not only friendly and helpful, but the letters contained cheques and fat ones too. The change in our condition was inaedible. From the direst poverty we were now in possession of, for us, riches—a weekly allowance equal to half what our feUow lodger the truck driver was earning. It changed our lives. The first thing I did was to go to the Super Market and buy food. From this time everything changed. The effort I had made did a great deal for my psychological state; also, from this time we never lacked the means to get

what was really necessary for the planetary body. As so often with real effort—not one thing changes but everything changes; for the change is also in oneself and people feel it and respond to it.

I was able to buy a big Chrysler convertible six years old for which, with petrol a shilling a gallon and tax of a year, cost less to run in America than a mini car in England.

Then with our old friends of the Orage group, I organized a recital of GurdjiefiF music by my wife and Carol Robinson in a studio in Carnegie Hall where Gurdjieffhad held group meetings. Only people who had met Gurdjieff or Orage were invited. Even so, we were able to send a good sum of money, subscribed by the audience, to Gurdjieff in Paris.

Meanwhile bad news came from Europe; the English and the French were being beaten everywhere by the Germans; one country after another over-run by the Nazi hordes. The 'war to end war' that I had been in twenty years before, 'the war to put a stop to the tyrannizing of Europe by one nation', for which milUons had died, had come again. The Communists in America like those everywhere were denouncing the war of the 'imperialists and fascists' and condemning tiny Finland for having attacked mighty Russia. When the Nazi-Soviet pact was annoimced it was as if the Communists had been shell-shocked—they were stupefied, not a word was heard. Americans returning from London were saying that England was finished and that in a few weeks Hider would invade England and rule from Whitehall. But, even when things seemed at their worst and the bombing began in London I knew (or something in me knew) that England would not be beaten; it was an inner conviction. A new and friendly attitude began to arise in the Americans towards the EngHsh; our misfortunes gave them that blend of satisfaction and wish to help that one feels at the misfortune of a friend one envies because he seems to have something that we do not.

Neither Hider nor the Americans understood the EngHsh; they could not understand why England would not make peace. No one understands the EngHsh; other nations have thought they did and have always been wrong and have paid for it. The reason that others don't imderstand is simple: the English do not understand themselves. Also, the EngHsh have a kindly tolerance to new ideas even when they don't accept them; they are easy going, and will put up with all kinds of abuse for a long time; but when they are pushed too far they will turn on the baiter and never let go until they have given him a thrashing

The news from Europe intensified the ache in my solar plexus. It was not the illness of the feelings called nostalgia, which is a longing fot

something in the past, but an ache for one's native land, like the ache in the solar plexus from love emotional. It is a kind of disease of the emotions. As I met and talked to people—^French, Norwegians, Dutch, Danes and others I foimd that almost all the first generation of New Americans were suffering from the same thing. And later, when the Germans invaded Russia, the Russian-Americans caught the sickness. In a shop in New York where I was able to get real bread, black bread, instead of the white blotting paper which goes by the name of bread, I talked to the owner, a Russian. He began to speak about Russia and how he longed to be back there, and the tears began to flow down his cheeks. I said, 'But you are an American, you've been here thirty years. Why do you feel like this?' 'I don't know,' he said, 'I've never felt like this until this war and now I long for one thing, to be back in my native country.' An American friend to whom I spoke about it said, 'I can't understand this, I can't imderstand why anyone should be so identified with their country; I've never felt this for America.' Yet when the American soldiers went overseas they too became infected with the illness of homesickness, the longing for their native land.

What is it in life that often causes a run of good fortime to be followed by a run of bad fortune, or a nm of bad luck to be followed by one of good luck? It has to do with the Fifth Stopinder in the law of the octave, that which causes the unexpectednesses that give us shocks in order that Nature's purposes may be fulfilled. Life perhaps is relatively safe and comfortable only when things are fifty-fifty. Life for me, which, for seven years had been a struggle agaiast ill-luck, had, as I have said, begun to change. Fortune had begun to smile and even to laugh good humouredly.

TALIESIN AND THE FRANK LLOYD WRIGHTS

TO GO BACK a bit. In May 1939 we had had a pleasant surprise—a note from Olgivanna Lloyd Wright saying that she and her husband were in London and would like to see us. We had not seen her for ten years; it was a joyful meeting and we talked far into the night. She invited us to a series of lectures that Frank Lloyd Wright was giving at the R.LB.A., and we were given front seats with her. The lecture room was packed, people almost standing on each other's heads, mostly young men. Buildings, their shape and form, their proportions, had always interested me and I found Wright's talk extraordinarily stimulating, full of ideas based on sound common sense. Films were shown of the students working at Taliesin, the Wright's beautiful estate in Wisconsin, and I diought how wonderful it would be if I could pack up and take my family and live there for a time; but a visit to Taliesin seemed as remote as a visit to the moon. Wright, from his Welsh forebears had inherited the Celtic imagination and eloquence, from his English half the gift of improvisation and practical application. These, with his inherent genius made him one of the greatest architects of our time. The audience listened with all their attention and at the end the applause, as they say, nearly lifted the roof.

We went to all the lectures and had many talks. When they left for Paris to see Gurdjieff they invited us to stay at Taliesin. I thought, 'Yes, in ten or fifteen years perhaps; most probably, never.'

Happening to go to Paris on business I telephoned Gurdjieff's apartment and asked if I could go to dinner. 'Yes, yes. Come,' said a man's voice. When I got there I was pleased to find the Wrights arriving with their young daughter lovanna. There were also some of Gurdjieff's group of women.

I expected and hoped to listen to Wright asking interesting questions and hearing the answers. But he behaved rather like a brilliant undeiv

graduate, and it was clear that of the ideas he understood nothing. He seemed to regard GurdjiefFas having achieved almost the same level as himself, and even knowing more about some things than he, Wright did. It is sometimes gratifying to discover that 'great' men have their weaknesses, their vanity and self-love, the same as oneself; and I noticed that when GurdjiefF provoked Wright's prickly vanity, something malicious in me had a feeling of mild satisfaction.

During the toasting of the 'idiots' Wright said, 'Mr. Gurdjieff, I find these idiots of yours very interesting. I've invented some myself.' GurdjiefF said nothing, and Wright continued, 'You know, you are a very good cook. You could earn a lot of money cooking.'

'Not so much as I coidd earn shearing sheep,' said GurdjiefF.

'I've raised sheep,' said Wright. 'My people were farmers. But I don't know anything about shearing.'

GurdjiefF said something about 'difficult to leam to shear properly'.

After the meal was over we went into the sitting room, where the Wrights admired the glass case in which were hundreds of litde figures of people from all over the world, arranged and lighted in a special way; really a litde work of art, though GurdjiefF's apartment itself was an objective work of art in a peculiar way; it was shabby and crowded, and together with some fine examples of Eastern art there was a good deal of trash, small badly painted pictures which he bought from time to time in the Cafe des Acacias, from refugees, whom he called his 'parasites'.

GurdjiefF brought in a chapter from the Second Series, *Tales of Remarkable Men,* and asked for someone to read it, and went out. Wright took it and said, 'I don't want to hurt the old man's feelings' (he being about the same age as GurdjiefF) and began to read. GurdjiefF coming back, Wright said to him, 'This is very interesting, Mr. Gurdjieff. It's a pity it's not well written. You speak English very well, it's a pity you can't dictate. If I had the time you could dictate to me and I would put it into good EngHsh for you.'

He resimied the reading of the chapter for a time and then said he must stop as he was very tired and that his daughter was tired and that he had better go back to the hotel. Gurdjieff said, 'Better stop for her sake, she is still yoxmg and only begin, but you are old man and your life is finished.'

Wright got red in the face and said angrily, 'My hfe is certainly not finished, there's plenty I can do yet!' or words to tiiat effect. He got up and left with his family in what is called 'high dudgeon'. Like every

one of us in front of Gurdjieff, Wright's mask came off. Everyone, without exception, while eating and drinking with him revealed his essential seE Perhaps this is why so many of us at times were tongue-tied; afraid of giving ourselves away.

Not long after our arrival in New Rochelle I had written to Olgivanna Lloyd Wright telling her we were in America and that we would like to see her if she came to New York. She replied at once inviting us all to spend the summer at Taliesin. So, here was granted that deep wish of mine, which seemed, only a year ago when I had seen the film of Taliesin in London, to have been absolutely unattainable, and she even offered to send one of the students with a station waggon to fetch us. But I had the Chrysler and in June we packed up and left the lodging house of dismal associations and set off for the heart of America.

We started in a heat wave which got worse as we went further west, up by Bear Mountain, crossing the Hudson by the bridge looking down on the lovely river where Henry Hudson sailed, then along an ordinary main road, up and dovm, rather narrow and with so steep a camber that we could do no more than thirty-five miles an hour. It was heavily wooded country with farms among the trees that had been cleared two hundred and fifty years before. The road went through the state of New York by way of Wurtsboro, Monticello, Deposit, Binghampton, and Elmira—where Mark Twain, and my old fiiends Max and Crystal Eastman had Hved—to Horseheads, Painted Post, Olean, to Lake Chatauqua. At Westfield we struck the road that runs along the shore of Lake Erie, having the idea that for a hundred miles or so we should have a magnificent view of the lake; we saw the lake but once, by malcing a detour of some miles, and the way was flat and uninteresting. In Pennsylvania we went through the country of the Pennsylvania Dutch, the oldest German settlement in America; these people are fair with yellow hair and an interesting type of face. We also saw the Amish, a strict reHgious sect whose men wear broad-brimmed black felt hats and long black beards. At the town of North East we crossed into the northern tip of Pennsylvania, at Conneaut we entered into the state of Ohio, to Painesville and Oberlin.

It was cheap travelling, for we stayed at tourist camps—collections of painted huts usually pleasandy situated. There were also plenty of nice looking houses widi 'Tourist' signs up. For 75 cents each we got good sleeping accommodation, and the places were clean and the people neighbourly. For food we cooked our breakfast in the open, and had

sandwiches and fruit for lunch; and managed to get a full meal in the evening at a roadside 'Diner', where the food was usually only just eatable, and the coffee as bad as English boarding-house cofee, though usually good at the drug stores in the towns. The towns all looked pretty much the same—with tree-lined roads and attractive wooden houses with open unfenced lawns. The shopping and business sections had little character, while the industrial sections were like those between Birmingham and Wolverhampton—dreary and desolate. And so, on to Fremont, Bowling Green, and Napoleon to Fort Wayne in Indiana, where we came into the com belt, hundred mile after hundred mile of Indian com on flat prairie country with white farmhouses and big red bams in endless repetition; the Httle towns so much alike as if they had been mail-ordered.

It was in one small town that we met an example of what is known as American friendliness. I went into the local bank to ask the way, and the manager, an untidy young man with a jolly face said, 'You're EngHsh, aren't you?' 'Yes,' I said. 'Why, say . . . Hey, Bill,' he broke off, calling to a customer who was just going out, 'here's an Englishman.' 'Well, how are things over there?' he began. 'My, that was a great thing you people did at Dunkirk.' He phed me with questions and was so good natured that I really beheve he would have asked us all to lunch and got the rest of the townspeople to meet us. I might even have made part of our expenses by giving an impromptu lecture, but we wanted to get to Wisconsin. The people we had met on the road so far had been almost as reserved as the EngUsh are supposed to be, and far less cordial than French or Russian peasants.

In another small town a few miles forther on we saw for die first time that familiar sight in America—a girl drum-major, a good-looking, strapping young woman leading a brass band of men and boy players; she pranced ahead whirling her baton with a broad fixed grin on her face. My wife thought it was rather symbolic of the way in which women take the lead in America; I was rather embarrassed.

The heat had been like a hot cloud sinking down on us, and though I wore a big straw hat I could not stand in the sun for more than a few ^ u t e s without feeling sick. It was a fierce heat, the night even worse iian the day, for it was too hot to sleep. But this was an ordinary heat-Wave, and they say that in a bad one cows and horses sometimes drop dead in the fields and fowls fall dead off the perches. Later on in the season there are tremendous storms, and vraiter is as cold as the summer is hot—bitterly cold, with 70 degrees of frost. The climate is like a very

emotional person—^sometimes hot and raging, sometimes cold and hard. In diis fierce climate organic hfe matures quickly. In Wyoming they say they have eight mondis winter and four months cold weather.

For two days we drove over the flat prairie of Indiana and Illinois which a hundred years ago was grass, buffaloes and Indians.

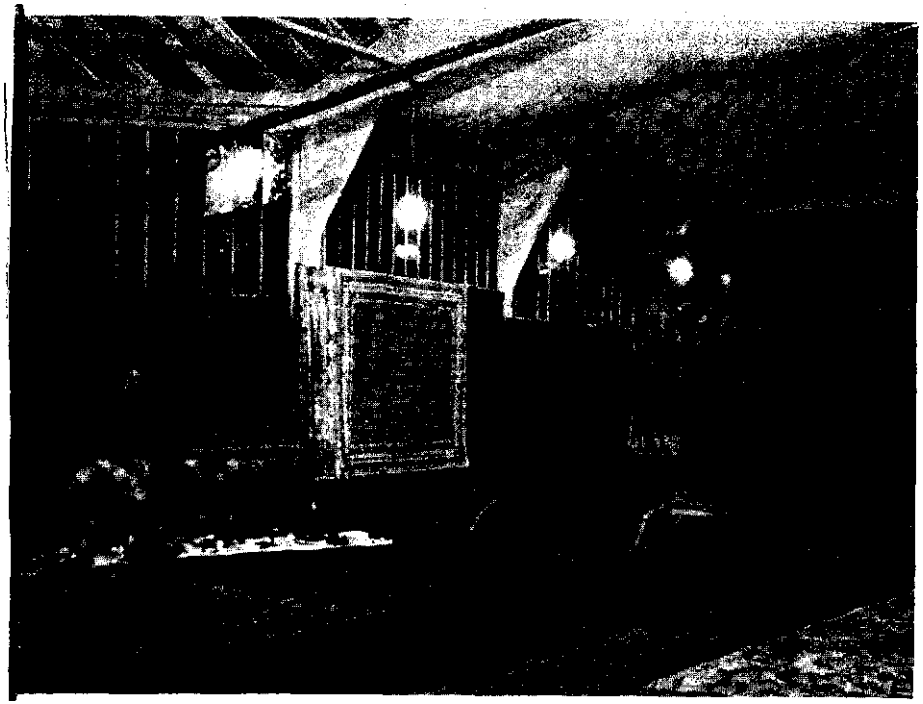
In some of the smaller towns, the houses and stores which were built in earlier times have, superimposed on their top, a large kind of hoarding supported by timbers, which makes the building look larger and more important. These 'false fronts' are a kind of defence against, and defiance of, the limidess prairie; anyway, they could not have been for ornament.

There were no road patrols like our A. A. or R.A.C. In England, a comparatively small country, with villages every few miles, every car seems to have an A.A. badge, and the patrols are everywhere; yet, while an Englishman tinkers with his car and usually gets it going, an American will leave it and get in touch with a garage perhaps twenty miles away.

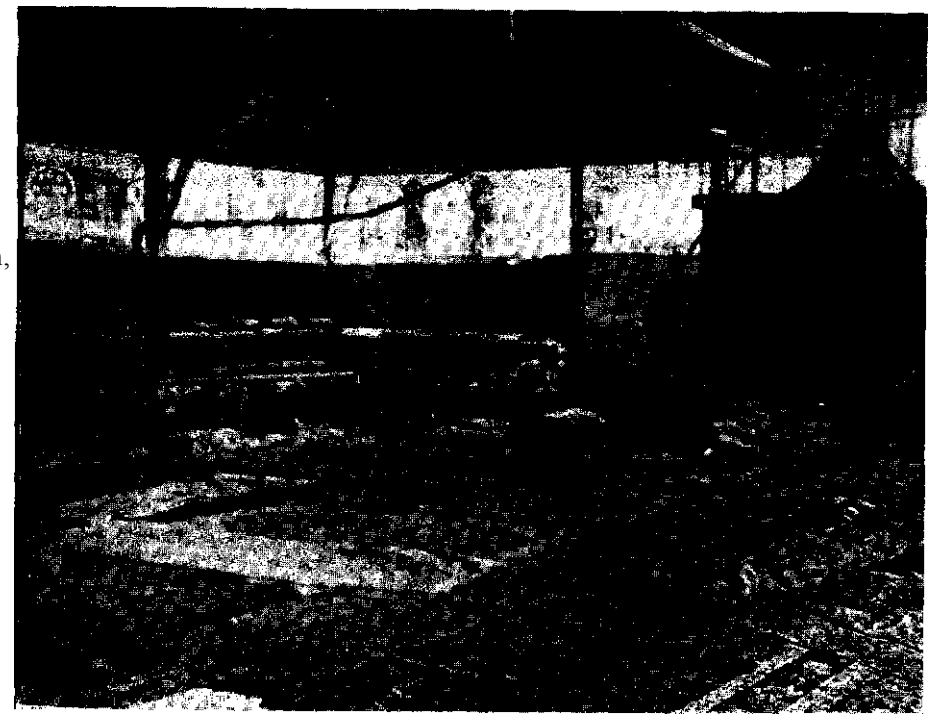
Much of the scenery was obscured and spoilt by enormous hoardings pleading with us to buy what we had no use for, planted there by the men from 'Ulcer Gulch' (Madison Avenue) New York, to whom nothing is of value unless it can be used for advertising to get money.

Crossing from Indiana into Illinois it seemed for about fifty miles as though a blight had passed over the land. It was neither town nor country; and the people were no longer friendly but looked at us, strangers, almost with suspicion; it was the outer fringes of Chicago—the second largest and the wealthiest city of the United States. The heat was still suffocating, so we avoided Chicago and drove by way of Valparaiso, Peru, Marseilles and Rochford to Madison, Winsconsin, a pleasant town built on the shores of two lakes. Here we rested in a nice old fashioned coffee-room of one of the hotels; in the writing-room, to make us feel at home, was a full-length portrait of Queen Victoria in oils lighted with shaded lights.

In Wisconsin I felt that we had indeed left the Eastern States behind. Here was a different and nicer atmosphere. We were a thousand miles from New York and felt the better for it. One thing we noticed about the different states we passed through; although the towns looked much the same, the houses more or less alike, and the people wore the same kind of clothes, each State had its own atmosphere and its own accent. Perhaps, in five or six h^dred years' time, the American states wiU be as varied and interesting as the countries of Europe.



Study House Prieure



Study House Prieurd

Putney School Winter 40° below zero

Putney School Summer 100° in the shade

In a drug store where we were having ice-cream a group of people came in—a boy and girl with their parents and a few friends; it was the wedding reception of the yoimg couple, who obviously had just come from die registry ofEce. No one seemed to know what to do except drink coca-cola, so one of them turned on the radio from whence came the noise of a crooner, his unearthly voice moaning stupidities. It was radier pitiful; a kind of automation wedding ceremony. I compared it with the peasants' weddings I had been to in pre-Soviet Russia—the lovely singing in the Church, the vodka, and the folk dances afterwards. This was one of those marriages which are no more than two people getting a permit from the authorities to sleep together. This permit, from an official who may be a rogue or drunk is necessary, as otherwise the couple would be living in 'sin', and, according to some, in danger of Hell fire.

Wisconsin captivated us. There is a lyrical quaHty in the Indian name 'Wisconsin', and the places had lyrical names—^Black Earth, Blue Mounds, Arena, Mazomanie, Black Hawk, Lone Rock, Tvdn Bluffs, Dodgeville, Friendship, Fairplay, Forward, Endeavour, Dickeyville! One could make a poem out of them; and the number plates on the cars carried the inscription 'Wisconsin, America's Dairyland'.

I was again reminded of the Russian who said to me: 'Part of American life is sometimes so unlike what its press, its movies, its radio and public speeches lead me to expect that, when I do see something that is really new and unusually good, I can hardly believe it.' Such was Wisconsin. And more so was TaHesin, Spring Green.

We arrived in the afternoon, and drove up the long ascent to the house where some of the pupils met us and took us over the hill to wnere Mr. and Mrs. Wright were talking to a group. Olgivanna welcomed us warmly, Mr. Wright, in his blue beret and flowing blue doak, looking rather like an actor, gave us a casual nod and walked on. This was just an act; later he was always very friendly.

During the first two days we did nothing but wander roimd accompanied by one of the pupils,

Taliesin, 'Shining Brow', is a thousand-acre estate setded by Frank Lloyd Wright's Welsh grandparents on his mother's side (his father was English), in lovely country of round tree-topped hills. A mile away below flowed the wide Wisconsin River bordered by stretches of primeval forest. In the distance were high hiUs with rocky bluffs. Part of the estate was a farm—catde, pigs, Indian com, barley, grapes,

melons, vegetables and fruit of all kinds. The land flowed with milk and honey and, above all, with cheese; and plenty of wine and cider to gladden man's heart. The buildings were of a style of architecture I had never seen and they gave me a sense of pleasure and well-being that die truly beautiful, new and old, always does. They were not functional, not colonial, not copies of anything, but a new kind of architecture—a break with the past as defmite as was the break of the Tudor with the Gothic, and the Georgian with the Tudor. Yet, Hke them, it was in the tradition, for its roots were in the past. And what was strange is that, although the style of the buildings was so different, in style more modem than the modem, the effect gave a sense of repose that one associates with mellow old buildings in Europe; there were no jarring harsh vibrations that come from much of the modem commercial-industrial-military barrack type of architecture, the grey concrete bee-hives of our time.

Every day something new, some fresh aspect in the views, delighted us; and the landscape was that of an Italian master-painter.

But all this without the 'life' would have been no more than a lovely picture. Here, the energy of forty or fifty young people, directed by their elders towards a real aim, produced a satisfying feeling of 'crea-tion'.

The place was run as a fellowship—'The TaUesin Fellowship' under the direction of Mr. and Mrs. Frank Lloyd Wright, whose aim was to produce an organic architecture in an organic hfe; the idea being, that to bring about an organic state of society, men and women must begin by Uving a three-fold life, a Ufe simultaneously of the instincts, the feelings and the mind. Their feet must be firmly planted on the earth and they must be able to use their hands; they must be able to appreciate the things of the feelings—music, poetry, painting, and so on; and they must be able to be interested in ideas, be able to think. This three-fold activity gave the place an extraordinary vitality. It was a real architec-tural school, in which the pupils lived with the Master, who taught them that if they wished to design houses they must also be able to build widbi their own hands, to know the feel of the materials they worked with.

The Community consisted of the Wrights and their family, young men and women—some married, two or three working carpenters and a man to look after the regular work of the farm, and some visitors.

The cooking and waiting at table was done by the pupils, who also helped in the gardens and on the farm, drove the tractors, trucks, road-

grader and so on, while the women did the washing and ironing. There were all kinds of modem machinery; and for the first time since we arrived in the U.S.A. I saw a washing machine and an electric ironer—the last being the one in my brother's house in England. There was always a good deal of repair work going on and new buildings going up; new materials firom the manufacturers and pre-fabricated articles were constandy being tried out.

On one hill was a large group of buildings growing out of the hillside. Here were Mr. and Mrs. Wright's living quarters, the dining room of the students, offices, galleries, stables, bams, sheds, and some of the living quarters. Down the slope and over the hill a mile away was another group of buildings—die draughting room, the theatre, art gallery, and other living quarters. On another hill was a vnndmill, a kind of beacon, a very high slender wooden structure with a prow, over which the wind from the terrific storms passed harmlessly. The roof of the draughting room was so light and graceful that you felt you could Hft it off-with one hand, yet strong enough to stand the great storms that sweep over the Middle West.

As to human beings, it would not be possible to meet a more delightful and intelligent group of young people anywhere; they were courteous, helpful and efficient, there was something about them which was 'younger' than those in the old world, and this 'youngness' gave diem a special kind of charm, and it did not have the outer sophistication with which 'educated' Americans in town so often cover dieir adolescence. This 'youngness', this potentiality of American youth to leam, gives them great possibilities; at the same time it leaves them somewhat nsuve Itt Regard to the enormous world outside America—a world which, though they may know it from the outside, has an inner something which eludes them. In general, compared with Europeans Americans are adolescents, and they have the inexperienced adolescent attitude to life and world affairs.

At Taliesin, the rising bell went at 6.30, breakfast was at 7, and at 7-30 all went to their various tasks until lunch at midday, which was usually brought by truck to some part of the estate, where we ate outside and listened to Frank Lloyd Wright talk. On wet days lunch was in the theatre, followed by music or singing. After tea at five there was often a choir practice in one place and an orchestral practice in another; and the pianos, of which there were several, were going all day. After supper at seven we met at one another's places or studied something or odier. Very often before lunch we went down to the Wisconsin

River and bathed in the cool waters, for the weather was very hot, over 100 degrees in the shade at times.

On Saturday afternoons the visitors arrived, well-known men and women from various walks, or 'runs' of life. On Sunday there were picnics. About lo o'clock the truck would set off with food, we following an hour later in a cavalcade of cars to find a roaring fire in some lovely spot by rocky bluffs or high hills where meat and potatoes and com on the cob wfre being roasted. Then back to Taliesin, to see a film in the theatre, to ^^ch the farmers and other local people came. For supper, everyone put on evening clothes and went to the Wright's living quarters where, after cocktails on the terrace supper was served in the big loimge, beautiful food and drink, home-made wine and cider; Mr. and Mrs. Wright sitting on large chairs, rather like a king and queen on their thrones.

There was plenty of friendly talk at supper, and when the plates had been cleared, the choir sang Palestrina and Bach, or Negro Spirituals or English and American songs, followed by the chamber orchestra, playing to the light of candles pieces from the early English composers. Then my wife would play Bach and Handel on the piano and Mr. and Mrs. Wright's daughter lovanna the big harp. I've seldom enjoyed chamber music so much.

A good thing about the life here was its patriarchal quality, the foundation of an organic life, for patriarchality has been gradually disappearing from American Ufe since the break-up caused by the Civil War. In Russia it was swept away by the revolution and in Germany by Nazism. It is disappearing in England too, and in China it is regarded as 'bourgeois imperialistic'. Its disappearance is part of the present general break-up of not only Western civilization but the ancient civilizations of the East; and there are signs that in America and England matriarchy (or rather, women-archy) is taking its place.

Tahesin, after New Rochelle, was an earthly paradise, and our sons began to bloom Uke flowers transplanted from sterile ground to good soil; it was as if their Ufe in England had begun again but with an added something supplied by this new and true American way of Ufe. They, with the other children, did their turn in the gardens in the mornings, and in the afternoons helped in the draughting rooms on the models of Mr. Wright's 'Broadacre City'. They also found time to ride the ponies and study drawing and music.

One has to pay for everything. And we, perhaps, by existing in New Rochelle had paid for our present rich experience. But millions who

were living in the Bronx, New Rochelle or Hendon or Sydenham—would never have what we were having.

It seemed to me that in Taliesin (and other places like it, if there be such in America) lie the seeds of the true American civilization, a civilization that can be of benefit to the whole world—^as opposed to the radio, advertising, films, crooning, t.v., newspaper, business, chemist, drug-taking, poison-spraying civiUzation, which is as great a menace to the good life of our present world as was the Finance CapitaHst Industriahsm of the nineteenth century, and the Communist-Fascist-Nazi forms of govenmient of the twentieth century.

The 'wide-open' spaces gave me a sense and feelmg of elation, of physical freedom; and there were so few cars on the roads. One day, lunch was packed, and with six cars loaded with people we drove through rolling country, passing fields fenced with wire or snake fences until, when we had gone about fifty miles, we came to a place where a waterfall tumbled down the high rocks into a deep pool, the water running off through green pastures, ***We*** were quite alone; some bathed while others made a fire and roasted a whole sheep on a long spit, and baked sweet potatoes and com on the cob. After we had eaten our fill we lay dovra by the water-side and dozed, while some of the students sang, in low voices. The sweet music mingled with the sounds of the waterfall and the breeze blowing softly through the trees gave me a feeling of peace and contentment such as I had not knovm for many years. For a brief hour we were in complete harmony with ourselves with each other and with Nature. Later we played games, then, as the sun began to sink we got into the cars and drove home.

At sunset on those hot days the frogs began their chorus, a definite tune and rhythm with their croaking which at times was almost deafening, though not irritating. At dusk the fireflies came out flashing their torches among the trees.

The roads, apart from the main highways, were dirt roads; in dry weather clouds of dust arose, and after heavy rain they became rivers of mud, though they soon dried in the hot sun. One didn't mind the rain, it was warm and refireshing. Mosquitoes and the poison-ivy were the pests, especially the ivy, which exuded an oUy vapour, and die least contact with the skin brought watery bHsters with an intolerable irritation; some people were made quite **L**Q by it.

A number of the farm houses round about were built a hundred years before, when the first setders came. The houses were of wood, cool in

summer and warm in winter, even when the thermometer dropped below zero, and I was told by one who had lived in England that diey were much warmer than the EngUsh houses in the winter, being well-insulated. In summer the food was kept fresh in ice houses and deep cellars. Some kept it in a damp cloth suspended under a tree, where the wind blowing on the cloth kept it cool. Those by streams kept food in boxes in the water. But many of the farms were no bigger than fifty acres, tucked away remotely in folds of the **HUs.**

It was hard to realize that this country a hundred years ago was virgin soil and that people got about in ox-waggons and on horses; that Inchans were living along the river and that pioneers were travelling in their covered waggons on to the Dakotas and Nebraska.

The people in the little towns and villages were a very good type—the best of the British, Scandinavian and Germans, their personahty was dijSferent from the foreigners in]^ew RocheUe—the Poles, ItaHans, Czechs and Hungarians. In Wisconsin there was none of the surly aggressiveness that one often meets among some of the new Americans in the Eastern States. Even the Germans were not of the arrogant Prussian type.

I spent a few days with fnends in Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minnesota, driving up by the Mississippi River. The ugliness and dreariness of the business districts of the twin towns were like any other industrial town in the world; when Western man goes into business or starts an industry it is as if he breathes a poison gas; and the love of money—that root of all kinds of evil—^numbs his aesthetic faculties, not to speak of his feelings.

Other friends whom I visited in MinneapoUs had a house as large as a castle. They gave a party where all the people were middle-aged. In Europe at a party you generally meet some young people; and at a country house there will usually be people of all ages from children up. I remarked about this to a man who said, 'Oh, the young people are having a party to themselves downstairs—^they don't mix with us—we're too old. The children are having a party too, in another part of the house.' So I never saw the yoimg people or the children.

On the outskirts of Minneapolis I visited a Frank Lloyd Wright house built of brick in a tree-lined road, which occupied the space of an ordinary city lot, but such was the spacing and the lay-out that, surrounded as it was by a graceful wall, it gave the impression of a miniature estate; like the spacing, the lines and distances, the proportions, of houses and courtyards in China. Its big airy living-room looked on

the garden through a wall of glass; but the heating was so well-designed —^with pipes laid in cement under the floor rather Hke a Roman hypo-eaust—^that the house was comfortably warm in the coldest zero weather, and the air did not dry up as with steam radiators.

Next door was a 'modem' house by a European architect, that in its way was a good and interesting house. But it looked as though it had been made somewhere in a box factory and placed in the middle of the lot, whereas the Wright house looked as if it had grown there—a contrast to the box and to the English modem brick villas and 'desirable residences'.

I travelled the 300 miles back by bus. In the Eastern states people seldom speak to strangers in buses or trains; like the English they keep to themselves. But here a man got in and sat beside me, said, 'Hello', asked my name, where I came from, what my business was and so on. I rather resented these personal questions, yet he was so friendly that I could not help but answer him. And when, as soon as I could get a word in, I asked him the same questions, I felt a little embarrassed; but he answered readily enough and we talked about ourselves for an hour until he got out. It was late and dark when I arrived at Spring Green and I did not look forward to the three mile walk to TaUesin, but one of the men was waiting for me with a car and in a few minutes I was back and in bed. Coming back to Taliesin was like coming back to life as it ought to be, a life not just of money, business and poUtics, but of the physical man, the emotional man and the thinking man working harmoniously together. A life truly creative, in which young men and women were given an opportunity to actualize their potentialities.

Although no one at Taliesin had a good word for the British govemment there was a liking and respect for the individual Enghshman. They knew the English better than the people in the East, for many British had settled here, and in the early days a good type of younger sons of the aristocracy went out to Wisconsin and the Dakotahs and Wyoming and raised catde. Yet there was a strong anti-British, or rather, anti-British Government, feeling, which I had been aware of from the first. |t was caused pardy by distorted education (of the War of Independence for example), partly by the growing son's trying to shake off fatherly influence, and pardy by the inherited malice in human beings, the ;|>redisposition to hate someone and blame them for their own suffering.

The criticism of the British by Americans was that of an elder son of his father but for whom he has a great respect. One friend of the

Wright's from Chicago, after a recital of the crimes and deficiencies of Britain turned to me and said, 'Yet, you know, I feel more at home with a cultured Englishman than anyone else.'

'It's strange,' I said, 'that you criticize the British Empire, which is coming to an end, and its wars, but you yourselves are building up an American Empire; and this is happening as unconsciously as the British Empire happened. In building your empire you've fought the Indians, the EngHsh, the Canadians, the Spaniards, the Mexicans, the Germans; and each other in the Civil War in which more men died than in all the English wars of the nineteenth century.'

I was talking vnth some of the students about my love of England—not love of its conquests, its 'glory', its Empire, its bloody history, but love of that something of England which comes from the farms, the downs, the uplands, the chffs, the sea, the villages and country towns—and of the London in a radius of two miles of Piccadilly.

One of them said, 'I think I know what you mean for I've read what your writers and poets have said about it, but I don't feel that way about America, I'm the fourth generation, and the last two generations have lived in Indiana, but I can't say I love America as you seem to love England; and after all, the Middle West is not yet our coimtry. We don't yet belong here, it's still the red man's country. Same in the Eastern states too.'

The strange seer, Swedenborg, says of the English in the Spiritual World: 'The English nation, the best of them, are in the centre of all Christians, because they have interior intellectual hght. This light, though it is not apparent to anyone in the natural world, is quite evident in the spiritual world. The highest acquire it from their liberty of speaking, writing and thinking; in others who do not enjoy such Uberty that light is obscured, because it has no outlet. This intellectual light, however, is not original but dependent on the authority of men of reputation; when such men declare their opinion, their light shines forth. It is for this reason that the Enghsh in the spiritual world are ruled by distinguished governors and priests, in whose decisions their national character leads them to acquire. The Germans... Uving imder a despotic government, do not enjoy freedom of speech and writing like die Dutch and English; and where their freedom is curtailed, freedom of thought is also curtailed . . . thought rises no higher than freedom of utterance. For this reason Germans rely upon records rather than upon individualjudgment, and therefore they particularly cultivate

history, relying upon quotations from recognized authorities. The state of mind is represented in the spiritual world by a man carrying books under his arms; if anyone questions his opinions he takes one of these books and reads therefrom his answer. . . . Free nations are like stags with branching horns, that roam the moors and forests in perfect freedom; whereas nations that are not free are like deer enclosed in royal parks. Again, free people resemble winged horses that fly like Pegasus over seas and hills; whereas people that are not free are like horses adorned with costly trappings in the royal stables.'

What he says about the Enghsh can, to some extent, be said about die Americans, yet, though there is more physical freedom in America, in England there is more intellectual freedom and far more good-natured tolerance of unfamiHar ideas and eccentricities.

Why were the EngHsh endowed with certain quahties which constrained them to wander over the planet and establish their way of life over miUions of square miles—America, Canada, AustraHa, New Zealand? and in spite of their faults, it is as good a way of Hfe as any on this planet. And all done without the massacres and revolutions that have happened in other countries. The only devastating war of EngHsh-speaking people happened among the Americans in the Civil War.

Our Hfe at Taliesia was as different from our hfe in the lodging house at New RocheUe as Heaven is from Hell. New RocheUe represented the lower middle class of America with its very Hmited capacity for Uving; Taliesin represented the highest culture that could be foimd in America and with it went the feeling of freedom that real culture gives. Apart from the Prieure, which of couarse was on a still higher level, our Hfe at TaHesin that summer was as full a life at it is possible to have on this planet. It was a three-centred Hfe: the hot weather and beautiful country and the good food and physical work; the harmony of the buildings, the music, good films and singing; the discussions at table and Frank Wright's stimulating talks to his pupils about architecture and its meaning, was about as rich as ordinary Hfe can be.

Yet, apart from the architectural school, the person who inspired the life of the community was Olgivaima Lloyd Wright; and she had received the inspiration from the Prieure, from her work with GurdjiefF. In the many talks with her about Gurdjieff and his ideas there was tiiat something that raised the talk above ordinary conversation.

She told us about Gurdjieff's visit to them just before the war. He arrived, with one of the older New York pupils, after his visit to

Chicago, which Fritz Peters writes about with an utter lack of understanding of the role that Gurdjieff was playing. GurdjiefF had made a great impression on the pupils at Taliesin, who still talked about it; and this was partly because of his cooking. Once he asked them to bring him the oldest and toughest fowls they had. While cooking them he took out of his pockets a number of little paper bags of spices and peppers and herbs and put pinches now and again in the pot, and produced a superb meal. It seems that one evening when they were gathered in the big lounge after dinner, drinking coffee, Gurdjie£f was talkuig to the pupils who were listening with attention. Wright said, 'Well, Mr. GurdjiefF, this is very interesting. I think I'U send some of my young pupils to you in Paris. Then they can come back to me and I'll fmish them off.'

'You fmish! You are idiot,' said Gurdjieff angrily. *'You* finish! No. *You* begin. I finish.'

'You know, Frank,' said Olgivanna, 'Mr. Gurdjieff is right.'

Wright himself never spoke about Gurdjieff to us, perhaps he hadn't forgotten the criticism in Paris. As regards 'being and understanding' Wright was a child compared with Gurdjieff. Yet, as I say, Olgivanna and her daughter Svetlana often talked about Gurdjieff and his ideas. Svetlana, whom we had known at the Prieure as a little girl, was now a beautiful young woman, married to one of Wright's pupils; she had a quiet iimer strength, and a mature mind that you seldom fmd among young American women. We were very fond of her.

I had brought my type-script copy of *Beelzebub's Tales* with me, which I lent to Olgivanna, who had a copy made. My wife had brought some of Gurdjieff's music in manuscript and I wanted the pupils to hear it and asked Wright if an evening could be arranged for a recital. Time after time, for some reason, he put me off, until at last I pinned him down and got him grudgingly to agree. The recital was given in the theatre, and made a deep impression on the pupils; Wright said afterwards, 'His music runs the whole gamut of human emotions.'

I always enjoyed talking to him and hearing him talk. Even when he was wrong (as he so often was when talking about anything but architecture) he was stimulating. One part of him had the peculiar charm that many Welsh people have, like Lloyd George. Even if you do not trust them you cannot help liking them; this Welsh type is completely different from the dull English stupidity of Neville Chamberlain or the dour limited mind of the Scot, like Ramsay Macdonald or Bonar Law.

Like all geniuses Frank Lloyd Wright was intensely vain; he was also naive and would believe anyone who was nice to him and flattered him; he could not see through people. One day he came to me and said, 'Do you want to make some money?' I said, 'Of course.' 'Read this,' he said, handing me a letter. 'It sounds genuine, and if you'll go I'll put up the money for the expenses.' The letter was from a man in Mexico who knew where a treasure was hidden, but because of his present situation he himself could not get at it. If Mr. Wright would advance him a thousand dollars he would give him a share, at least five thousand. After I had read the letter I said, 'You don't really believe this, do you?' 'Why not?' he said, 'It seems genuine to me.' 'It's one of the oldest swindles I know,' I said. He did not beHeve me, and it was only when a friend of his on a Chicago newspaper, who was staying at Taliesin, confirmed my opinion that he reluctantly gave up the idea. With all his genius as regards architecture, with all his strong personality, in essence he was a boy. Perhaps this was one of the reasons why we all loved him.

He was very anti-British Government and said that it was trying to drag America into a war which did not concern her. 'Why do the EngUsh have to fight Germany?' he asked. 'They are the same race and ought to be friends.'

'They are not the same race,' I would argue. 'For one thing the EngHsh are one of the most mixed races in Europe—pre-Celt, Celt, Roman, Angle, Saxon, Dane, Norman, French, Hugenot, to say nothing of Scottish and Irish and a great deal of Jew. The English and German point of view and character are quite different.'

'But why does England compel Australia and New Zealand to come in and fight her wars?' asked one of the pupils.

I tried to explain that she didn't, that they were free to do as they liked. But I soon gave up trying to correct the distorted views about the world in general and England in particular which are instilled into young Americans under the name of education, and I kept off one of their favourite subjects: the way England had treated America a hundred and fifty years before; and so we got on very well together.

Frank Lloyd Wright was working on his autobiography for a New York pubHsher. He discussed it with me and asked me to work on it with him. It was one of the most fascinating, and in parts fantastic, stories of a life that I have read. I noticed that the expression 'democracy' constantly recurred, and asked him, 'What do you mean by democracy?

Every journalist and politician in America is constantly talking about 'democracy'- England, Russia, China aU claim to be 'democracies'. What do they mean by it?'

But he, like others, had never defined it, and there is no common definition. In America it means one thing, in Russia another; it is like the expression 'dialectical materialism' which the Communists are always using and which not one in ten thousand can define. And so with every popular expression in politics and religion. No one asks, 'What does it mean?' Like the man in one of Gurdjieff's tales who, giving a long explanation of hysteria to GurdjiefF as a youth, ended with, 'but hysteria is hysteria!'

It was during this summer that I had the first deep and vivid experience of higher consciousness. The three previous experiences of this unexpected impact of higher forces were a taste of real consciousness of self. The present one was different. One hot day I was walking from the house across the fields to bathe in the Wisconsin River. About half way a strange and wonderful force began to enter into me and permeate my whole being, and fiJled me with Hght and power. I stopped and stood still and let the force flow. Although I was aware of my surroundings—the forest and fields and the hot sun, they were only a background to the inner experience; all anxieties and cares of ordinary life dropped away; at the same time I saw myself and my relations with people quite clearly; I saw the pattern of my hfe, my organism moving as it were along its appointed path. There was time no longer, and an understanding of the whole of life seemed possible for me. It was as if for a few moments I had entered into my real life; and the outer life, which had seemed so important and took up all my time, was not the real Hfe but something ephemeral, a sort of cinema film with which I was identified. Only the inner something was eternal—I, the real self of me. *I AM.*

If I were to write a book I could not convey the reality of this experience; only those who have had it can understand. The writings of the real mystics—Christian, MusHm, Buddhist, Hindu—are full of records of those who have experienced this ecstasy, in various forms. It was the state of which the Sufis say, 'The spirit at once comprehends the universe and dwells in the heart of man.' It was an appearance of His Endlessness to the suffering souls on the planet Purgatory; the coming of the Son of Man.

Little by little the vision passed but the effects remained, and I thought

of the words of Jesus Christ. 'Again I say unto you, "W^atch", for you know not when the Son of Man will come.'

Blake understood this: 'When the doors of perception are opened.' Poets, artists, lovers and madmen can have these moments of perception. The force is in ourselves but the doors are shut and can only be usefully opened by the grace of God or by work on ourselves; they can also be opened by accident or by disease. Vincent van Gogh is an example; in the last years of his hfe the doors of perception in his mind became weakened by disease, the force poured into him and caused the marvellous flow of his painting but, since he was not able to control the force, it drove him mad and kiUed him.

In parts of the East harmless lunatics were regarded as being under the protection of God; perhaps because people understood that they have periods of being able to see through the facade of Hfe—moments of ecstasy, of higher consciousness, but Aey do not know how to make use of this experience. Many sick pathological types in the West are attracted by real higher ideas—and they also cannot *do* anything.

Mr. Wright had been talking about getting out a magazine for the Taliesin Fellowship and asked me if I would produce it. As in everything he did the magazine was original both in design and format; consciously , pr unconsciously he followed the advice of Gurdjieff's grandmother: •Never do as others do. Either do something different or just go to school and leam.' The magazine was to be printed by a small firm at Mineral Point, a village near the borders of Iowa—three craftsmen whom you might have found in England fifty years ago. Since they did not have the fount of type Wright wanted he ordered one specially from Chicago. I enjoyed working with these men; they took a red interest in their work and together we produced a well-printed modem magazine, of which we brought out two issues. I beUeve only a third was published. What happened to the expensive fount of type I don't Jaiow, but if Frank Lloyd Wright wanted something, expense was never considered even when money was short. As he said, 'Give me the luxuries of life, you can have the necessities!' Like most men of geaiius he produced abundantly. Like Gurdjieff he would say, 'If take, Aen take. Whenever I do anything I do a lot of it.'

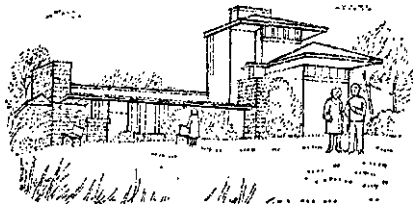
As with so many men of genius, his personality had been developed ax the expense of his essence. His personaHty and his genius were .fascinating and stimulating. In architecture and ideas for an organic .life he was so right—so 'Frank Lloyd Wright'; but his inner life, his

being, had not developed with his knowledge, so that his inner life was strangely empty; and most men, even geniuses, are like this.

The tropical weather was coming to an end and the clear hot Indian summer with its cool nights was beginning. We gathered grapes and apples and made wine and cider and helped with the harvest. In September my wife was offered a well-paid job in New York teaching music so she left us to take it up, while I stayed on with my two young sons, until November. The Wrights were preparing to leave for Arizona and asked us to go with them. But my wife needed her family and, with the coming of more EngHsh people and the Ouspenskys to America, events drew us back to New York. And so ended a summer of real happiness for us; one that I never think of brat with a feeling of gratitude to the Wrights.

I have wondered why such a beautiful place as Taliesin, with an atmosphere so calm and peaceful, should be connected with so much tragedy and unhappiness. Again I asked myself 'Why do accidents happen to people?' This could be answered only if we could see our present Hfe completely, and the hves which perhaps we have Hved before, and the planetary influences surroimding us—and those near to us. Accidents have their causes in past results, in our abnormal life. In the Koran it says, 'When misfortunes come to you they are the results of your former deeds.'

I was thinking of Frank Lloyd Wright's autobiography in which he tells of the Negro buder who went mad, killed Wright's wife and two children and four men, and then set the house on fire. Not long after it was rebuilt it caught fire and was again burned down. And a few years later, our beloved Svetlana was killed there in a car accident.



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NEW YORK AND OUSPENSKY

WITH MY TWO YOUNG SONS I drovc back to New York by way of Iowa to the Mississippi River to Moline and Kentucky; here, even though it was November, the weather was bright and hot, but when we got into West Virginia a cold rain began. In Virginia it snowed and by the time we got to New York after ten days on the way the weather was cold and frosty. With its varied scenes and minor adventures, our journey had been full of interest.

We setded in an apartment on Lexington Avenue on the border of Yorkville, the German settlement. America was not yet at war; but, when one crossed the street it was Hke going from America into Germany, into an atmosphere of hate, resentment and hostility; and in the restaurants the waiters and waitresses treated us vwth typical German arrogance. We went to a cinema to see a film of Nazi Germany, complete with Hider screaming and shouting, mihtary bands and goose-stepping, and at the end there was a collection for the 'Winter Hilfe' in Germany. The atmosphere was similar to what I had felt in Berlin just before the war and I whispered to my wife, almost afraid to speak English, 'Are we really in America?'

It was not America. It was Yorkville, a town of a himdred thousand non-Jewish Germans, whose dislike of me, when they heard my English accent, was evident. Their attitude was, 'We've conquered the Poles, the Dutch, the French, and it won't be long before we've conquered the English.' The atmosphere was like a whiff of poison gas. The Germans, like the Russians, take good-vwll for weakness, tolerance for ineffectiveness.

The Central Europeans and the small shop-keepers in New York were often curt and brusque. This disconcerted me at first, being used as I was to the friendliness of small traders in England and France; then I found that it was not because of me personally but because I was a stranger. These htde business people radiated fear—of the gangsters, the protection rackets, the pohce and the poHticians; yet when they got

to know us they became friendly enough. It was quite different with the real Americans—^no fear here, only friendliness.

Friends from England had arrived in New York, some from Ouspensky's group, and now we no longer felt emotionally and mentally isolated and alone; through these friends our two sons got a full scholarship at the Dalton School, one of the best and most expensive schools in New York. I began to look for a job, but not even the British Office of Information would employ me, let alone the Americans. Eventually I got a part time job on a small magazine which, if it did not bring in much money, brought me in touch with all kinds of people, especially the English refugees who were now arriving in hundreds, children mostly. So, what with our jobs, our friends from England and those of the old Orage group, Hfe again was rich and full. As my grandfather used to say, 'Health without money is half an ague.' So had it been in New Rochelle; now, in New York, we had health and enough money for our needs, and, with the Orage group, were still able to send money to Gurdjieff in France.

During the winter I realized with surprise that I was never cold. Although at times there were twenty degrees of frost and heavy snow falls, and though I wore the thinnest underclothing I was never cold. In London in winter, since the first war, I have always suffered from the cold. It was one of the English stupidities that a warm house is rather xmhealthy—^unless you were rich and could have servants to make fires in every room; it is the cold Enghsh damp that chills the marrow of my bones; New York cold is dry.

In Spring we heard that Madame Ouspensky had arrived and was staying with some American pupils of hers in Rumson, New Jersey, not far from New York. We immediately got in touch with her and went to see her. The change had benefited her and she looked well. Here, by herself, away from Lyne Place, a refugee like ourselves, she had no need to surroimd herself with a protective fa9ade. She was warm, sympathetic and understanding; a highly developed woman with inner power. We talked a great deal, about Giurdjieff's ideas and about ourselves, and returned to New York stimulated and vivified by the host of new impressions—^the third food. A little later Ouspensky himself arrived; he invited me to limch in his hotel in New York with two of his pupils from England, and during the talk spoke about starting groups and asked what I was doing. I told him about the Orage group and said that we were trying to arrange for Gurdjieff to come over and work with us in

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Taliesin 1940

Author and Frank Lloyd Wright, Wisconsin

New York. 'If he does come,' said Otispensky, 'I shall go to CaHfornia.'

I spoke to the Orage group about Ouspensky, and suggested that we meet him, to which they agreed. Ouspensky was willing, but asked • that there be no discussion of *Beelzebub's Tales* (understandable, since he had not read the copy I gave him) and on the appointed evening I called for him at his hotel and took him along to Muriel Draper's house on Madison Avenue. I was rather nervous, Ouspensky himself was not at ease; it was the first time that I had seen him a little nervous and I hoped that nothing would be said to offend him. About twenty were ^ere, quietly curious, self-possessed. After I had introduced him there were some questions, but with long pauses. On the intellectual plane no one could cope with his massive armoury, but when it was a question of Gurdjieff's personal teaching I felt that some of Orage's pupils had an understanding, through suffering Gvurdjieff's probings, which Ouspensky had not reached.

Questions were asked about the new book he was writing, *Fragments of an Unknown Teaching,* and he gave us the impression that it would be possible to hear some of it read, but nothing ever came of this. After about an hour silence fell. No one had anything more to say; when Ouspensky got up and took his leave I went downstairs to the door with him and he asked me to go back to the hotel, but I wanted to know what the group was thinking.

I asked them, 'Well, what was your impression?'

'No authority,' said one of the older pupils. 'He speaks from his mind,' said another. 'Too intellectual,' said a third. Another said, 'He 'Seemed to want to impress us when he told us that he had nearly a diousand pupils in London, but Gurdjieff says he needs quaUty not quantity.' Only one, and she had not worked much with Gurdjieff, said that she thought Ouspensky was a better man than his teacher, though later she changed her mind.

For me, my five years' contact with the Ouspenskys had created a sort of bond; and as I needed very much to do something active with the ideas I helped form a group for Ouspensky, to which some of the Orage people came. For us he made no conditions about speaking about Giurdjieff; except that we should not put questions about *Beelzebub's Tales* in the meetings, and he said that he wotild not accept any money from us; we should send it to Gurdjieff. His group satisfied a certain mental need, yet it could not supply the essential needs as Gur<^ieff and Orage did; we naissed the warmth and mutual discussion

of Orage's group and the fire and force and fundamental teaching of GurdjieC

The groups increased, more of Ouspensky's middle-aged pupils arrived from England, and people in New York who had read Ouspensky's books joined the group. Many of these latter came from curiosity and left after attending a few meetings; yet there remained about fifty or sixty serious people; but almost from the first there was a dividing line, a barrier, between those of us of the Orage group and Ouspensky's pupils from England; Ouspensky's pupils, in spite of war and totally new surroundings, were not allowed to speak about Gurdjieff to us: hence there was a strained attitude in contrast to the feeling of brotherhood among us of the Orage group.

One day Claude Bragdon, the writer, with whom I had been friendly in my bookshop days, said to me. 'Ouspensky tells me that GurdjiefF is suffering from paranoia and this accounts for his strange behaviour. A good many people are saying this.'

'Ouspensky has this idea fixed in his head and nothing will change it,' I said. 'None of Gurdjieff's own pupils think this. Orage, and Professor Saurat too, said that GurdjiefF represents absolute sanity. Almost all serious people even in ordinary life will admit in private that life in general on this planet is a state of lunacy; the obviously mad suffer from it in a more acute form. No, to my mind Ouspensky himself is a bit touched on the subject of GurdjiefF. You know that GurdjiefF has told us that at times he himself has played the role of an eccentric in order to keep the intellectuals away from him; and so far the world of the ordinary intellectual has ignored him. How could a man suffering from paranoia write a book like *Beelzebub's Tales,* and compose that wonderful music and those marvellous dances?'

I offered to lend Bragdon the typescript of *Beelzebub's Tales* but he explained that he was working in his own system of yoga and did not wish to mix things. He added, 'I've enjoyed hearing Gurdjieff's music at the recitals your wife and Carol Robinson gave; and, of course I'll correct this story of Ouspensky's about Gurdjieff if anyone mentions it.'

Bragdon, a well-known writer, was responsible for the translation and publication in America of Ouspensky's 'Tertium Organum'. It was this book of which, as Ouspensky writes, Gurdjieff said to him, 'If you understood what you have vmtten I would come to you and bow dovm to you and ask you to be my teacher.'

Ouspensky only once *maittoned Beelzebub's Tales* to us in the group,

saying that it was only for the few and required a great deal of mental preparation in order to understand it; and that if GurdjielF published it he would not pubUsh *Fragments of an Unknown Teaching.* Again I said that *Beelzebub's Tales* needs, not mental preparation, but a certain emotional attitude.

I saw very much of Ouspensky at this time, often alone in his apartment; already I felt that he was a sick man, suffering from the weaknesses and lawful informities of old age, as well as from some specific disease, and he was drinking strong concoctions that I could not take. 'You must have a stomach of iron,' I said one day when he offered me one of them. 'It's too strong for me.'

He said, 'It's the only thing that relieves the boredom and depression that comes over me at times.' In these periods of loneliness and depression of his a deep feeling of compassion for him would come over me, a love for him and a wish to help, but, apart from talking with him I could do nothing. Emotionally and instinctively I felt older than he; but, as I say, intellectually, apart from Gurdjieff's ideas, compared with him I was a child. Yet I did not envy him his massive mind; it was overdeveloped at the expense of his other centres. In our talks about Gurdjieff Ouspensky would say things in disparagement of him, as if defending himself, criticising his 'stupid behaviour'. He spoke about the need to separate Gurdjieff the man from his teaching—his interpretation and exposition of eternal truths; for Ouspensky there was Gurdjieff the 'impossible' man who had 'gone off the rails', and Gurdjieff's 'system' which Ouspensky taught. It was this faculty of being able to keep his mind separate from his feelings that enabled Ouspensky to write down objectively what he had heard from Gurdjieff in Russia. Ouspensky's intellectual integrity enabled him to produce in *Fragments of an Unknown Teaching* a work which, though not 'objective' is a work of art. I never would agree with him that Gurdjieff had 'gone off the rails', and would say that we could not judge him according to our level; it was not possible to separate the man from his teaching. Gurdjieff lived his teaching, and what, in his behaviour, according to the subjective morality of the Western world, was stupid and v^rrong, was, according to the teaching, objectively moral. Gurdjieff was perfecting himself and used every means to this end. He says that that which furthers the aim of self-perfection, of the acquiring and expansion of 'being' and understanding, is objectively moral; that which contracts being and hinders understanding, the xmconscious self-imposed limitetjon? and inhibitions, 'the mind-forged manacles', that which wastes

precious energy—all this is objectively immoral. Objective morality increases being and understanding and does not harm others; subjective morality contracts and constricts and makes us more mechanical. GurdjiefF lived according to Objective Morality; but this, Ouspensky and NicoU and most of their followers never could understand.

Ouspensky one day rang me up at my office and asked if I would come and see him, it was urgent. When I arrived he said, 'Look at this!' It was the blurb of the jacket of a new printing of *A New Model,* which stated that Ouspensky was working with GurdjiefFin a large community they had established not far from London, and so on.

'What can I do about it?' he asked. 'I speak to you because you have had experience of publishing and imderstand my position.'

'Why do anything?' I said. 'Does it matter?'

'It matters to me. I must make my position clear. This statement puts me in a ridiculous situation. Can I make the publisher withdraw the jacket?'

'Have you the agreement?'

He did not know where the agreement was, probably somewhere in England, so I suggested his getting in touch with Alfred Rnopf the pubhsher, asking him to withdraw the jacket but, as the books were already in circulation there was not much point in it.

'I shall write to him,' said Ouspensky, 'and tell him that imless he prints a new jacket with the wording changed I shall take no royalties on the book and refuse him further publications.' He also asked if I could get him an interview in a paper so that he could publicly explam his position. I said that I would see what could be done, so long as he did not disparage GurdjieffFand his work in America. He said that was not his intention. However, Ouspensky not having recently arrived, and not having had a book recendy pubHshed, was not news and therefore of no use to the papers and magazines.

What happened, I don't know, for soon after I gave up going to the group for some time. I had become dissatisfied vdth what I was able to give and what I was able to get. Ouspensky had wanted me to reply to questions in the group, and take an active part, but since I could not do this without referring to my own experience widi Gurdjieff and with my understanding of *Beelzebub's Tales,* it did not seem right to do so. Also at this time a stupid incident arose; it happened that one evening just before I set out for the group die telephone rang, an old fiiend of ours, an American woman, had just arrived from occupied France, from where she had escaped wiA her three children. Her

French doctor husbaad had saved my life in Paris when I had an attack of pneumonia. We at once went to see her and spent the evening vdth her and her family, and this began the renevrang of a close association, but her sudden arrival had caused a turbulence in my emotions, so that my mind did not remind me to telephone Ouspensky that I would not be at the group. A day or two later one of the yoimger members of the Orage group came from Ouspensky to tell me that I was no longer secretary of the group, which I had got together, and that he was taking my place. This could never have happened in Orage's time, and I was so dumbfounded that, instead of going to Ouspensky and explaining the circumstances, I stupidly said nothing.

However, life changed for me and events caused me to leave New York. The magazine I worked for faded out, and I thought a good deal about how to get money and at last put before a publisher an idea of a book; the idea did not interest him, but he asked me if I could do a book on Winston Churchill in his young days, a book for boys and girls; if so, they must have it in nine weeks. I had written two unpublished manuscripts and to do a book in nine weeks seemed impossible. But the need of money wiU sometimes achieve the impossible. I accepted the offer, got together the few books on Churchill available, and interviewed two people who had known him at school. My wife and younger son went to Taliesin and my elder son stayed with the Elmhirsts in Martha's Vineyard. Some friends in Connecticut lent me their house, and here I worked twelve hours a day, seeing no one, sending batches of manuscript to the pubHsher to be typed. The book was finished on time and eventually published, and to my surprise it was well reviewed and brought in money. This pleased me and I thought that now I could turn out a book a year and make a good living. Alas, my efforts were useless; all my attempts to satisfy a publisher came to nothing. Really, I was not a writer, and this book was what they call 'a natural'—it just happened. It was fourteen years before I produced another book.

Work on the book had exhausted me physically and nervously, so I drove up to Bedford, Massachusetts to meet my son and together we made our way to Taliesin, by a different route from the year before so as to see more of America. At Taliesin we took up our life again, almost as if a year had not gone by; and for two months repeated the happenings of our first visit, though, of course there was not the intensity of those first impressions and experiences, yet the summer at Taliesin was peacefid and satisfying. We returned to New York by way of Chicago,

visiting on the way Frank Lloyd Wright's building for the Johnson Wax Company, an oasis of functional beauty in a wilderness of ugly factories, then to Niagara Falls and so home, that is New York. Here we took an apartment ia the arid desert of 114th Street around Columbia University and the Cathedral of St. John the Divine.

It is not strange, now that organized church religion is losing its inner vital force, that this cathedral, being American, is now the biggest church ia the world; it is the last of the gothic style, andhas everything but the kernel, and the essence.

Our apartment on the fourth floor was dark, the sun never shone into the windows, but it was next door to some old friends, and was cheap, and so served its purpose.

When we arrived we learnt that the Ouspenskys, through some of their pupils, had acquired Franklin Farms in Mendham, New Jersey—a very large country house with three hundred acres. We were invited and went there on a briUiant hot day of the October Indian Summer. It was as if Lyne Place had been Americanized and transferred to New Jersey; not only the house and park, gardens and groimds were similar, but many of the same people were there and already the atmosphere of Lyne was being created. There was the same kind of magnificence and the same kind of work and the same rules were being estabhshed—^no discussion in Franklin Farms of Gurdjieff or *Beelzebub's Tales,* no talk of the organization in general to people outside; and no children were allowed to stay, though they were invited for special parties; and pupils, even from the Orage group, were told that they must not address each other by their Christian names.

However, if you are himgry and want a loaf of bread and someone offers you a quarter of one you do not refuse it. My instinctive centre craved physical work and at least here was an opportunity to satisfy it. I again went to Ouspensky's groups, which now had many pupils both old and new. Having no definite job at the time I asked if I might go and work at Franklin Farms, and having agreed to the conditions—^not to speak about Gurdjieff or *Beelzebub's Tales* to the pupils there, I was allowed to. I enjoyed the physical work, the good food and the surroundings; and I liked the people, yet I felt that I was a black sheep. At the same time I was able to turn circumstances to my own advantage. For example, I had always been ready and eager to discuss the ideas and GurdjieflF's way of working with anyone who was interested; and here, to make a task of not discussing them while working at Franklin Farms was a good incentive to remembering myself. Ouspensky's pupils were

intensely curious about GurdjiefFand from time to time even mentioned his name to me as if in the hope of learning something, but I kept strictly to the agreement not to discuss GurdjiefF or *Beelzebub's Tales* at Franklin Farms.

Very soon Mrs. Howarth and my wife were teaching the dances at Mendham, as at Lyne Place, and there was much activity at week-ends, and with all its limitations and inhibitions the Ouspensky organization was becoming a factor for good for those new people who had never studied the system; and many people will have cause to remember the Ouspenskys with gratitude. In this world of lunacy and fantasy they offered them an opportunity of getting at least something real. And when you study the lives of some ofthe'saints', with their bickerings and hmitations, you realise that the lives of the Ouspenskys were of a high order.

When the news was annotmced that Germany had invaded Russia I happened to be with Ouspensky. He was shocked and astonished. 'It's incredible!' he said. 'How can it have happened? It does not seem possible!'

'Why so incredible?' I asked. 'You yourself have written that this kind of situation must occur.'

'Where have I written this?'

'In the *New Model,* where you speak about empires as great organisms, preying on the organisms of small countries and devouring them; and how these great organisms eventually turn on each other and fight. This is an example.'

He had forgotten. Why is it that we often forget what we ourselves have written or said—even some real trudi? It is because the fact has come to only one part of us, the mind; it has not been felt and worked out, it is not understanding but only information, and we forget it.

Not long after this, my wife and I while waiting to go out to tea to some acquaintances casually turned on the radio. A hideous crooning streamed from the machine, as of someone in dull pain; but it was only one of the manifestations which they call 'singing', ofthe highest state of civilization the world has ever known'. Almost at once it was cut off and a man's voice began excitedly to speak; gasping for breath he could hardly get the words out. 'I have to aimounce,' he uttered, 'one of the greatest—greatest, uh, uh catastrophes that—that—^the world has ever known; one ofthe most terrible things in the history of man: Japanese planes have bombed Pearl Harbor, dozens of ships have been

sunk and twelve thousand people killed!' And so on. It was such a shock that we could not take it in and went to tea with our acquaintances, where with half our minds we listened to a woman speaking about the shortcomings of Ouspensky. Only next day did we grasp and realize what had happened, and were able to think of the possible results that would follow. The papers and radio were full of the news that America was at war, and an arnioimcer reported that enemy planes had been seen over Long Island; there was no panic, only a growing realization of what was going to happen. My first feelings of stupefaction were followed by reUef: we English were no longer alone—we and the Americans were in it together. Then a feeling of pity arose for all those thousands of young American men now living, who, sooner or later, would be drawn into this second great collective world catastrophe and destroyed. Yet life went on, and no enemy planes appeared, of course; we were too far away, and safe from bombs.

Again, a perceptible change in the attitude of Americans towards us began to take place; even the most anti-British could not now accuse Britain of trying to drag them into the war—Japan had done that.

An incident in the destruction of Pearl Harbor, which I had visited years before, brought home the fact of how thousands of lives can depend on some small thing, from an attitude arising from vanity and self-pride of one insignificant man. It seems that one of the radio men whose turn it was to listen for supicious sounds reported to his superior, a lieutenant, that he was hearing noises like the engines of strange aeroplanes, but this vain and stupid man told him to 'forget it', and the instrument was turned off. So, instead of being alerted, the forces were totally unprepared. Ck>nfronted by the event of war, as of earthquakes and volcanic eruption, individual man is helpless; everything happens as it is bound to happen; and everything would happen now as it must happen. The causes were in the past, brought about by cosmic forces and the abnormal life of man; and the war would stop only when the results of the causes had worked themselves out.

One result of America and the war was that we were now cut off from all contact with Gurdjieff and the last news was that he had taken his family and gone into the country. Only after the war did we learn about his extraordinary activity during the occupation, his forming of the first group of French people and their intensive work with him. Again, he had turned a disadvantage to an advantage to himself and many others; and the extraordinarily difficult situation, with the Germans and the Vichy French constantly on the watch, produced factors

for self-remembering and self-observation among the members of his group.

Some American pupils arrived who had left Paris just in time to escape the Germans. GurdjiefFhad warned them against letting themselves be caught up in the wave of mass psychosis, and to 'keep' themselves—'Iramsamkeep', 'I keep myself'. The fact that we were cut off from Paris brought those in New York who had worked with GurdjiefF closer together. We met and discussed the ideas, speaking about how we tmderstood the application of them to our own lives and although there were frequent arguments and even quarrels about mundane things the disagreements served to make our common roots strike deeper. It is no small thing to be able to disagree with a friend on matters that vitally interest you, yet not let the disagreement harm the friendship.

While living in the dismal fourth floor apartment on West 114th Street I had an experience which subsequently made some things clear to me. The beU to the door of the apartment had a very shrill ring and after a few weeks there I was wakened up at night by the ring, and got out of bed and went to the door. No one was there. This happened at intervals. None of my family heard it; I thought someone was playing a trick, though we never saw anyone. Then it ceased. Some months later, when I was on a farm in Vermont, I was wakened one night by the shrill ring of the same bell. I sat up, thinking I was in New York, dien I remembered that I was in Vermont and there were no bells in the house. I had dreamt it—or rather I had heard an echo in my sleep; or was it hallucination? Having realized that it was not real I never heard it again. There was a sequel. Some years later, when I was back in England, my father died; as time went on my mother began to look worried and at last she told us that she was being wakened at night by three knocks on her bedroom door. She would get up and open the door and there would be no one there. She believed that my father was trying to communicate with her, but she never saw his ghost. Her parson came to see her and advised her to pray, and said that he would pray for the peace of my father's soul, but diis did not stop the mysterious knocking.

The family began to worry about her. I puzzled my brains, and in time fotmd diat each morning my mother's companion brought her a cup of tea in bed, giving three knocks at the door before going into the room. I spoke to my mother about this, and told her of my experience

in America and explained how hers coidd be a similar echo or hallucination. Gradually she reaUzed that it must be so, and she never heard the knocks again. Many ghost stories have been based on similar dream echoes of sounds; and sights too, figures seen in a dream may persist after the dreamer wakes—^hypnopompia; for a few seconds he thinks he actually sees the figures and that because they vanish into thin air they must be ghosts.

There is no limit to man's suggestibility and auto-suggestibility. He can believe anything about anyone or anything if it is put to him in a certain way by others, or even by himself.

19

THE PUTNEY SCHOOL, VERMONT

IN THE AUTUMN I wctit to Stay with a young couple in Guilford, Vermont, and was so delighted and taken with the country and the people that I plaimpd to get my family there. In the following spring the young couple gave us the use of a house near them, where we spent die Easter holidays. We had been told about an interesting school not far away, at Pumey, and I wrote to Mrs. Hinton, the head, who invited us to dinner. What was our surprise to fmd several of the boys and girls from Burgess Hill School in Hampstead where my wife had taught and our sons had been pupils. It was a most joyful reunion. Mrs. Hinton's late husband was a son of C. H. Hinton, who wrote *Scientific Romances* —science fiction with ideas that had inspired H. G. Wells.

Mrs. Hinton had started the school a few years before. What particularly interested us and what gave it a particular vitality, was its three-centred way of Ufe—very similar to the Taliesin Fellowship. The ®ttgiish idea of a sound mind in a sound body was good as far as it went but it left out the third force—^the reconciling or neutralizing, the emotions. At Putney the idea was that the pupUs, from the age of twelve to seventeen, should have a good physical hfe—^not organized games and. physical drill, but a natural life, which was provided by work on the thousand acre estate; the mental life was supphed by the three R's and ordinary school work; while the young growing emotions were fed on music, singing and painting, and drama. The school made a deep impression on us and once back in New York an idea began to simmer. For one thing, I was finding it impossible to get work, and I was not ^ell. The idea of getting a job at the Pumey School began to grow in my mind and ultimately took possession of me. I can't say that I decided to do anything, something in me pulled towards it; again, perhaps I was being pulled by that 'something' along the path of the

pattern of my life. Anyway, the wish to go to the Putney School became stronger, at the same time the wish not to leave my family also grew strong; our Uves together since I arrived in New York had been satisfying and, after New Rochelle, very happy.

The old struggle repeated itself—a wish to do something which would be usefial and the wish to be with my family.

In the end I wrote and offered to work on the farm at Putney for a month for board and lodging; if I satisfied them they could pay me something, if not, I could return to New York. Mrs. Hinton agreed, and I loaded die car with my things, including the two large volumes of *Beelzebub's Tales,* tore myself from my family, and set off to drive the two hundred nules to Vermont.

It was early May when I arrived, after the mud of the April break-up had gone, and the air was crystal clear. The workers on the estate, of whom I now was one, said little to me for a day or two; they were sizing me up, but as I didn't put on airs and did my work as well as I could they soon accepted me as one of themselves. Life, for me, almost from the first, became full of interest. There was the same feeling of creating and grovnng that one had felt at Taliesin, the feeling that comes from living and working in three-centred activity. Every pupil had to work part of the time on the farm—cleaning stables, helping with the cattle, working in the fields or doing carpentry. The farm workers, carpenters, painters and so on were all Vermonters, bom and bred; some hved on the estate, others in Putney dovra in the valley but the teachers were from all over America. The native Vermonters were of the real old New England stock. Their ways were like the EngUsh, even thdr accent was a sort of mixture of Bedfordshire and Dorset; and die country was so beautifiil—green mountains covered with forest, and the fertile valleys below. Most of the farms were on the tops of the hills, for in the early days, when Vermont was the new North West Frontier, the English who moved from the coast went up in the hiUs to be away from the Indians who kept to the river valleys. As a boy in Hertfordshire I had read a book from the Simday School library called *The Green Mountain Boys;* it was about this part of the country, a story of Ethan Allen and his men who were fighting the EngHsh in the War of Independence. This book had made an impression on me—and now here I was; it was as if the impressions and feelings aroused in me on reading the book were a foretaste of things to come forty years later. Vermont—'Green Mountain'.

From my first days I felt at home at the Putney School; like Taliesin

it was as near to a normal life, apart from GurdjiefF's school, as one is likely to find in the western world.

I soon saw that I should have to play a role—that of a farm-worker and odd job man—I must never criticize, nor appear to know more than those around me, but be willing to take orders from the manager, the painter, the carpenter or whoever I happened to be working under. Apart from the brief period with the refugee committee in London it was the furst time I had been 'under orders' since die army. It was a good exercise for me, a good task, a factor for constant self-remembering not to let my egotism, self-love and vanitv express themselves, yet everyone had a pleasant way of asking me to do jobs. As men gradually began to be drafted into the army it became necessary for everyone to turn their hands to anything and I learnt a great deal—about farming, carpentry and painting, above all, about myself. I read *Beelzebub's Tales* constantly and, as GurdjiefF's teaching is not just a philosophy, but a practical method for dealing with life, for living, I tried to put the teaching into practice. There are times when one must be outwardly active, and there are times when one must retire into oneself, while being outwardly tolerant and considerate towards others. This was a time when I must adopt an outwardly passive role but inwardly be active. As the ancient Chinese philosopher said, 'It is sometimes neccessary to do nothing yet not to be idle.'

The farm was managed by Mrs. Hinton's son, with whom I got on very well, and when he discovered that I had had a book pubHshed and had travelled, he asked me if I would give a talk to the pupils. The old struggle in myself began again—the effort to do something that I TOshed to do and the resistance to doing something that part of me dreaded. The idea of speaking to an audience had always fiUed me with terror, though I had by this time got over the period when I could speak oiJy to one person at a time, and was no longer tongue-tied in the presence of two or three at table; but the thought of an audience still aroused intense nervous anxiety; it arose from self-love and vanity —the feeling that I might say the wrong things, or things in the wrong way and so look foolish in the eyes of others. On reflection I realized that here was an opportunity of 'doing some small thing that I wished **Co** do but could not', and make myself do it. I agreed to give a talk but for some days went about in a state of nervous apprehension. I thought over my talk and made notes but when I stood up before the crowd ;of young people and teachers in the lecture hall I forgot everything, notes and However, after the first few halting sentences words began

to flow of themselves and soon I felt that I had captured my audience and when, after an hour I sat down, I was greeted with a storm of delighted applause.

This changed somethiag in me, and consequently, the attitude of people to myself; I already felt a new strength in the solar plexus.

One of my chief weaknesses was a lack of self-confidence when bemg faced with the possibility of doing something out of the current pattern of my ordinary mechanical way of life. Yet I knew that it is only by maWing efforts to overcome this mechanicality that one can grow and develop inwardly. At first we have to be reminded and helped by a teacher and in groups, later we have to do it for ourselves; yet it is never easy to go against die inertia of one's lazy inclinations, or to go against the current of ordinary mechanical life; everything is in a conspiracy to 'help' us not to make real effort: inertia of the organism, established conventions, the opinions of those around us and near to us and so on. One had always to be on guard against oneself, one's tendencies.

The talks to the pupils became a regular feature of my life at Putney and were so well received that I began to think it was easy and took less trouble to think over what I would say, and one evening, when I had not sufficiently prepared my talk beforehand I felt for the first time that it had fallen flat. I had spoken only from my head and not with feeling as well.

One is always forgetting, always dozing off; and when we doze the dogs within us begin to bark and lead us astray. One has to try, every day, not to fall asleep, but to 'work', to remember one's aim, so I gave myself the task of reading *Beelzebub's Tales,* and each day tried to remember myself and to do the exercises Gurdjieffhad given us while repairing wire fences or ploughing with the tractor; and sometimes in the middle of monotonous physical work there would come to me such a sense and feeling of 'I-am-ness' that it permeated every part of my being—^body, feelings and mind.

"when at midnight God goes to the pious in Paradise all the trees adore him and their songs awaken the cock, who in turn begins to praise God. Seven times he crows, each time reciting a verse. The first verse is: Lifi: up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lifted up ye everlasting doors, and the King of Glory shall come in. For the fifth verse he crows: How long wilt thou sleep O Sluggard? When wilt thou arise out of sleep? The sixth verse: Love not sleep lest thou come to poverty. And the sevendi: It is time to work for die Lord.'

My life at the Putney School was really, three lives: Life with the Vermonters, the workers on the estate—the physical hfe; life with the pupils, boys and girls—emotional life: life with the teaching staff-mental life. My body was nourished by the physical work, my feelings with the music and singing in the choir in which I joined, and my mind by talks with the teachers; and my inner life was nourished by striving to work according to Gurdjieff's system.

A good feature of the school was that the pupils were encouraged to attend the aimual 'Town Meeting' in the hall in Putney Village, where the locals met to discuss affairs and business for the year, appoint 'select-men' and so on. The meetings, which lasted two or three days, were directed by a chairman—'Mr. Moderator'.

As I have said, in their own peculiar American way, the ideas which lay behind the organizations of Taliesin and the Putoey School, could be the seeds of a really good civilization for America and for the world, in contrast to Hollywood, Madison Avenue advertising, T.V., jazz, crooning, wailing guitars, newspaper, business and technological so-called civiHzation, which is rapidly corrupting the human race, in the East as well as the West. I never ceased to be astonished at the contrast between so-called 'civilized' life of America which all the world strives to copy and which is only a sign of degeneration, and the essential life of Americans which has such good possibilities.

At the end of June the summer term ended. The pupils and most of the school staff went on holiday, and preparations were made to receive tie campers. I arranged for my family to take part in the camp life; then I went to New York, gave up the apartment, stored the furniture and drove my family back to Putney. In a few days a new staff arrived, together with counsellors and a hundred or more campers, boys and girls between twelve and sixteen years of age. For the next two months we took part in the life of the camp. In the mornings the campers worked on the farm and gardens; in the afternoons they were free; in the evenings they took part in activities—music, singing, acting, square dancing. There were games, canoeing and swimming. It was a rich life, every hour was full and the camp was free from the organized false heartiness, the artificiality, that goes vwth much of the organized camp life in England and America—and on passenger ships. No wonder that at the end of August when they had to go home there was weeping and wailing among the girls and gnashing of teeth by the boys.

We had a little house to ourselves about two miles away. July and August are two very hot months in Vermont, and every day we went to the ice-house by the lake where was stored hundreds of blocks of ice in sawdust, which never thawed even when the thermometer stood at a htmdred outside. The blocks we brought back wrapped in sacks, which kept our food fresh through the almost tropical summer.

After camp was broken we stayed on for a time. I wanted us all to live at Pumey where both my wife and I could have taught. She had been teaching at Sarah Lawrence and now was offered a good position at the Friends' Academy on Long Island, with a scholarship for the younger boy. I had already, with the help of a friend, arranged for a scholarship for the elder boy at the Pumey School so, after talking it over, weighing up the pros and cons, or, as they say now, after an 'agonizing appraisal', it was arranged that I should stay and she should go to Long Island. Again we were parted.

'Every stick has two ends, a good end and a bad end', the good end in this case was that, although our total income was forty dollars a week, our sons were being educated at two of the best schools in America—that is, schools which accorded with the best of the American way of life, and we were able to exist comfortably. The bad end was the separation of the family.

I now began to feel a need to be away from people for a time; and the writing itch, which had been dormant, began to stir. Happening to mention this to the Raymond Gram Swings, who had a country house just over Putoey Mountain, they offered me a derehct farm-house on die way to Newfane to camp in; my family and I had camped in it during the summer and had thoroughly enjoyed ourselves, so I took leave of absence from the school, packed a bit of furniture and cooking things and my dog in the car, drove over the mountain and settled myself in the farmhouse. At that time there were hundreds of deserted farms scattered over Vermont, which could be had for almost nothing; well-built timber houses whose owners had eidier left for the far West fifty years before or had given up in despair. The difficulty in farming was the quantity of rocks and great round stones among the fertile soil, every former had a stone-boat, a sort of sledge, with which every year he carted away the stones from the fields. What with the dense forest, the rocks and stones, the long cruel winters, the steep hills, **farming** in Vermont was as difficult as anywhere in the world.

The days of the Indian summer were clear, hot and still, the nights

cold and frosty. Each day the leaves on the mountains changed, not into the warm brown tones of England or even Long Island, but to glowing shades of red, which made the hiUs look like frozen fire.

At first the novelty was enjoyable though I was somewhat uneasy at night, when my senses and instincts became intensified, keyed up, like an animal's. Sometimes my dog would start up while I was reading in bed (a mattress on the floor) and fix his eyes on a point and begin to growl. Wild creatures came round the house at night from the forest—deer, porcupine, wild cats; and one night I heard the snuffling of a bear. Bears are harmless left alone, though a man had been killed by one in the district not long before, he having shot at it and wounded it. Porcupines are dangerous to dogs. Calling at a farmhouse one day I found the farmer's wife pulling porcupine quills out of her dog's head with pUers. 'If you leave one in,' she said, 'it'U fester and probably kill the dog.'

The country I was Uving in was not unlike the part of New York State that Washington Irving wrote about in his *Sketch Book.* More than thirty years before, I was living in a shack with an old man in one of the loneHest parts of the world—the tussock country of the farthest south of New Zealand, where the only trees were a row of pines through which the wind sighed day and night; where no birds sang and no animals moved except miUions of rabbits; and there were no people. In this shack I found a copy of the *Sketch Book* and read it and read it, the loneliness arousing and intensifying the impression which the book made.

This part of Vermont reminded me very much of the country of Rip Van Winkle and the queer Httle folk he met. I was even more impressed when one day four strange-looking Httle men, like gnomes, drove up in a two-horse waggon; they accused me of stealing their firewood, of which there was a stack in the bam, and letting my two great horses eat their hay. I thought they were going to attack me, but I explained that I had been told to use it, and did not know that they had bought it. So they calmed down and took it away. They were four brothers who had a farm not far off. The two horses, almost as big as elephants, and the waggon, had been borrowed by the Swings from a farmer. With them I carted wood each day, and got a little money for it.

The people on the farms and in the villages seemed to have become ingrown—^not degenerate but Umited in their outlook, cut offf—even more so than in isolated peasant commimities in Europe. When men

lose contact with higher forces, even vrith cultural forces, they begin to go down the scale. In the isolated towns and villages of America, Australia, New Zealand and Canada, people Hve a one-centred life, a life of the physical body whose only needs are food, shelter, sleep and sex. In the old world, the peasants had, and still have, an instinctive-emotional life: folk-dancing, folk art—and crafts—and the richness of church liturgy.

After the War of Independence, Vermont became the north-west frontier, and must have been a thriving state. It stiU had an atmosphere and a feeling of organic Hfe, like parts of Wales. Rudyard KipHng, who once lived not far from Putney, felt this.

Driving about one day I stopped at a wild-looking deserted cemetery and walked round reading the names of those who had hved and died there a hundred years before. Among the stone monuments was one 'To the memory of Sir Isaac Newton' who was buried there early in the nineteenth century. Bom into a Newton family his parents had christened him not Isaac but 'Sir Isaac', and as such was he known. Guilford, not far from Putoey, was usually referred to as 'Algiers'—because die young men in the early days behaved like 'Algerian pirates'.

Newfane, three miles away, was a pretty village, a New England village, in a valley with the familiar eighteenth-century church and school house. Formerly it was on the top of the adjacent mountain but when the Indians left the district the people moved the village, house by house, into the valley by the stream. Apart from radios and cars it was stiU living in the early nineteenth century.

Here, in Vermont, I always felt 'at home', never had the feeling of being an exile that had oppressed me in Australia and New Zealand. For one thing the flora and fauna were similar to northern Europe and the seasons were the same. Spring was in March and Christmas in cold winter—there were no April autumns as in Australia or spring in October and Christmas at the hottest days of the year. Also there was none of the **feeling** of being a foreigner as I always felt myself to be in New York City. Yet even in Vermont, I was seldom free from that gnawing home-sickness caused by the war, the longing for England—a kind of intermittent emotional neuralgia.

I felt at home in Vermont as I had felt at home in British Columbia before tie First World War. So much of our feeling life or emotional hfe is a matter of association; often, as with young animals, it is instinct. I have seen a calf that we were driving along the road to market make terrific efforts to escape and get back to its mother and friends. With

children and with cats and dogs, though instinct plays a large part in their attachments to places and persons, as they get older associations become stronger; and with older people much of their life is motivated by associations of people and places. Then there are the influences of literary associations; much of my own enjoyment of the Malay States and Java was caused by the literary associations with Conrad and others whose books about these places I had read. Half of my love of Dorset as a youth was caused by the Hterary associations aroused by the writings of Thomas Hardy. Much of my liking of America was a result of associations of the northern hemisphere—even to the similarity between the prairies of America and Canada and the Russian Steppes. Speaking of comparison by association, a man I travelled in the train with in China constantly commented on the scenery—but only because he associated it with other parts of the world he had been to 'That reminds me of Arizona—or Egypt, or India. . .

Each day I wrote steadily. Sometimes I wondered why it is that people look up, almost with reverence, to those who write. Why this worship of the written word? Why do people believe, at least vnth one part of themselves, what they see in print even when it goes against their own experience? Most people instinctively sense that the mind is the higher part of man—and indeed the *real* mind is; unfortunately, with the mind as with other things, people 'take the ephemeral for the real'—the formatory apparatus for the thinking part.

I myself when young looked up even to a cub reporter as a kind of superior person; and many journalists do regard themselves as superior people; their being able to write gives them a feeling of power, which corrupts them. Yet no one is so easily forgotten as a journalist who has stopped writing. In the scale of writing joiamalism is low; popular journalism and reporting, the lowest—the negative absolute.

This came to mind because of a small incident that had happened at Pumey School early in the summer. One day I was stopped on the road at the Lower Farm by two young women hikers who curtly asked me the way to the school. Half an hour later they came back where I was working, beaming aU over and said, 'We hear you're quite a person, you've written a book, and we thought you were just an old Vermonter.' 'You've made a mistake,' I said, putting on the local accent, 'I'm not a vmter, and I am—just an old Vermonter.' Their faces fell and they went away with a puzzled look. Orage said that writing is something that can be acquired, like a wart. People in general cannot

discriminate between the real and the transitory—in writing and in other things. In the introduction to *Meetings with Remarakable Men,* GurdjiefF in a few pages, puts more common sense into a criticism of contemporary writing than in the thousands of words poured out each week year after year by critics and reviewers. From my earliest years I always wanted to be 'a writer' but fate or providence prevented it. After I met Gurdjieff I no longer wanted to be 'a writer' but I still wished to be able to write, that is, to discover if I had anything to say that would be useful for others and agreeable to myself and to be able to express this in words that would be clear to myself and to the reader or Ustener. And it took me nearly forty years even to begin. I learned a good deal from A. R. Orage, and from *On the Sublime* by Longinus, and something from Pope, who said:

True ease in writing comes from art not chance,
As those move easiest who have learned to dance.
'Tis not enough the words give no offence,
The sounds must seem an echo to the sense.

There is also something in what the duchess said to Alice in Wonderland:

'Take care of the sense and the sounds will take care of themselves.'

For me it is always an effort to write. I would rather do physical work like gardening or even house-work than sit down and MTrite. So writing for me is a good task; and when I have made the effort and have done my stint I feel refreshed and stimulated. There was a time (when Gurdjieflf had said that for me writing was an iUness) when I Meed nothing better than to take pencil and paper and write just words, words, 'pouring from the empty into the void'. This period I associate in my mind with one of William Blake's shorter poems, written while sitting in the privy:

If Blake could do that when he sat down to shite,
What could he do if he stood up to write!

Yet writing has its uses—it is a help in formulating one's llioughts and feelings, and it is useful for recording entertaining stories, or putting down technical knowledge. And there is the highest use of writing-producing an objective work of literary art.

By the end of October the loneliness had become too much for me. I needed to be with people again, so I returned to the school and began to work—putting up the heavy framed double windows against the bitter frost that was coming.

In the middle of November it began to snow and it snowed until the whole coiintry was covered with a thick white shroud. After that, the frost, when the thermometer sank lower and lower until it was thirty-degrees below zero; yet, so well were the houses built, all of them wood, and some a hundred years old, that I never feh cold indoors. And the cold outside was less chilling than it is in England on a raw day vwth the thermometer at 40 degrees, when the cold damp North and East vnnds pierce the bones.

Inside the school life went on as usual. At 'Thanksgiving', to which my wife and younger son came, two hundred people, pupils and parents, sat down to dine off twenty turkeys brought into the large dining room by pupils to the soimd of music. The diimer lasted nearly three hours; between the courses the orchestra played sweet music and songs were sung. A most pleasant and fitting way for Americans of all races to celebrate their deliverance from the 'tyranny' of the hated EngHsh some hundred and fifty years before. 'Thanksgiving', to Americans, has become as important as Christmas; and, like all 'history', American history has been arranged, and is taught in schools, for a special purpose—to glorify their famous freedom.

At Christmas my family, the four of us, met in New York, where I rented a service apartment for the hoHdays. Madame Ouspensky had invited us to Franklin Farms for Christmas Day. We were eagerly looking forward to the visit there, as they always did things well, but on Christmas Eve we went with some old friends from England and their children to the midnight service at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine for the singing and the procession. Our younger son caught a chill, and Christmas momuig had a shght temperature, so I told my wife that I would stay with him while she and the other boy went to Mendham. When they had gone I went out to buy food, but every shop, even the delicatessen, was shut, and all we had was half a loaf and some tea and butter. This was our Christmas dinner. So there we were, surrounded by food from all parts of the world in the midst of festivities, alone in an apartment in New York on Christmas Day existing on toast and tea, which of course was all the boy could take. The other two came back late that night having had a wonderful time with the Ouspenskys and their pupils, with food and drink of every description. The following day the sick.boy had quite recovered. After the holidays we parted,—they to Long Island, we to Putoey.

So the winter passed, with skiing arid tobogganing on the hills and skating on the ponds. The thermometer gradually rose until, when it was only eight below zero it seemed comparatively warm. I worked indoors all the winter, spending part of my time teaching English. This I found interesting and, using some basic principles of writing that Orage had given us in his literary classes in New York, I was able to teach usefully.

Towards the end of March, though snow still covered the ground, sap began to flow in the maple trees. Buckets were hung on small spouts driven into the tree through which dripped the sap, rather like sweet water. The sledge, with its fifty gallon tank, drawn by horses, was got out, and every day two or three men and myself would follow the sledge through the forest, gathering the sap and emptying the buckets into the tank from the himdreds of maple trees. The sap was then taken to the sugar house and boiled down to syrup. When I was nine I had read a story in the *Boys' Own Paper* about a family in Vermont gathering sap in the forest and boiling it, 'sugaring off' as they say. A bear had appeared and frightened them away. This story had stuck in my memory. But everything about Vermont to me was familiar and friendly, as though I had always known it.

For six weeks we gathered sap—eighteen thousand gallons, which yielded a himdred and eighty gallons of the most delicious syrup in the world. There is nothing to equal it, except honey in the comb.

When 'sugaring off' was fmished I had to sort the gallon cans into five categories by taste and colour. At first it was wonderful tasting a sip of this delicious syrup from each can—and swallowing it of course; but little by little it began to sicken me and by the fiftieth gallon I could not bear the taste or even the sight and had to stop sorting. So in life and in love, what begins as nectar can become poison, and what begins as poison can become nectar.

April came, with warm days and the break-up of the ice and melting of the snow. The moimtain tops appeared in living green. The whole earth rejoiced that winter, with its five months of snow and ice, was over. The road to the lower farm was knee deep in mud and the fields were mud; in May it dried and cultivation began again.

In addition to *Beelzebub's Tales* I read books about other ways: Buddhism, Hinduism, Islamism, also the large volume *of Fragments of a Faith Forgotten* by G. R. S. Mead, a collection of Gnostic sayings. In these teaching of various real religions I was able to dig out truths; but

I found that I was only able to discover and realize truths to the extent that I had worked on myself and pondered the sayings of Beelzebub. The effort I had to make to understand the inner and inmost meanings *o£Beelzebub's Tales* brought understanding of truths of other teachings.

Regarding my physical life, I have always loved the good earth, and can draw strength through it, and my type needs physical work. As an exercise I compelled myself to do physical jobs beyond the point when they bored and tired me, and never skimped them.

Each day I also did certain exercises that Gurdjieff had given us, and sometimes while working in the fields or driving the tractor when the sense and feeling of intense l-am-ness' would come to me, I would stop and put myself in a state of self-remembering and do a special exercise. In these precious moments of true self-consciousness life was real and not just a dream, not just a succession of events consisting of 'before' and 'after'; and they were accompanied by a sense and feeling of 'I Am Now'. 'I Am, Father, Son—^Yesterday, Tomorrow'.

Also, at this time, I became increasingly aware of two streams of Hfe: the stream of my daily life, of work in the school and on the farm, my contact with people with whom I lived, spoke to and worked as an ordinary man; and the stream of my iimer Hfe in which I thought and felt and lived according to my imderstanding of the teaching; and if at times this stream of inner life seemed to disappear, I knew it was there; and suddenly, I was in it again, a drop in the flowing, and again would come the comfort and assurance that accompanies the Faith of Consciousness and the Hope of Consciousness. These two streams, though flowing side by side, never mixed. And I could not talk about my iimer Kfe to those around me. For this I needed those who had had similar experiences.

Also I became more aware of the three men withm me—the man who was thinking, the man who was feeling, and the man who was working with his animal, his body, that was interested only in food, sleep and sex; and it was when these three men were working together simultaneously that the experience of I Am-ness would come.

I had tentatively spoken about the ideas to some of the staffi", but got no response. There has to be a need in people before they take to the Gurdjieff ideas. Perhaps they were fortimate. As I have said, life at Putoey, l^e that at Taliesin, was as near to a relatively ordinary normal life as is possible on this planet in the west. These not yet spoiled young people radiated something very good—the 'divine prosphora' that Beelzebub speaks about perhaps; and there was good feeling among

the teaching staff themselves and the workers on the estate. Like TaUesin it was without masters or slaves; there were directors: Mrs. Hinton and the men at the heads of departments, hut no class feeling. During almost two years I never had an angry word with anyone nor even a feeliag of resentment.

But, as Gurdjieff says, 'Every satisfaction is accompanied by a non-satisfaction.' The non-satisfaction was, as it had been at Tahesin, the undercurrent of war and the longing of something in me to be in England, and I even made enquiries at the British consulate in New York about returning to England and the possibihty of getting a job there, but was told I was over age. So I accepted the situation of remaining in America more or less indefmitely. We had lost all contact with Gurdjieff and there were rumours that some of our near friends in France had been killed by bombs. Letters from England came more or less regularly, though it took over a month for a reply. My mother, then eighty, spoke of the difficulties they were having, and the trouble with bombs, but always ended her letters (to placate the censors, 1 suspect) with: 'but after all, we have a lot to be thankful for.' And it *is* something to be alive, even to exist. 'A living dog is better than a dead lion'.

In Pumey, the war was remote. Most of the men on the staff were married and were not called up, and three others had disabihties. The mind and feelings could not or would not grasp the significance of the terrible slaughter of masses of people in Germany and Russia, not as we slaughter animals with humane killing instruments, but with every kind of cruelty and torture of the body and mind that devils can think of on this planet, this festering sore in the universe. Yet the fact of the war was always a weight on the solar plexus.

At this time a young man named Elmer with degrees from one of the famous agricultural colleges came to manage the farm. He was one of those people who had read all the books and knew all the answers, and he soon began to teU me about processes of sowing and planting and growing that I had knovm for years, since I also had taken a degree at an agricultural institute. Formerly, his patronizing manner of explaining the 'scientific' way of doing things would have irritated me beyond measure and I would have retaHated and a great deal of unnecessary friction would have arisen. Now I remembered Gurdjieff's warning: If you allow yourself to be irritated and resentful at another's behaviour you show yourself weaker than him; and that it is sometimes

necessary to turn the other cheek. So I compelled myself, in this case, to endure his displeasing manifestations and even asked his advice, so that he began to think well of me. But all the time I kept my own inner organic self to myself; and was able to be not even inwardly resentful. Elmer knew everything and imderstood nothing.

But 'Vengeance is mine' saith the Lord. 'I will repay.' It was not long before he told me to plant three thousand strawberry plants he had bought. I pointed out that the stems were rather woody, but he said they were all right and had come from a good firm in New Jersey. So I planted them carefully, but they all withered and died, and when I asked one of the local Vermont men what was wrong, he pulled up a few and said, 'They're all old plants; they won't grow in this soil.' When I pointed this out to Elmer, not without a touch of inner satisfaction, he was mortified. I said that I would get some more, and I planted another three thousand, strong young plants from Senator Aiken's nursery in Pumey, in land that had been heavily spread with farm-yard manure, using no artificials, and the plants grew and prospered and yielded a crop worth more than two thousand dollars. Another thing, early in June I noticed that Elmer was working with some pupils, showing them how to plant tomato plants. Round the root of each they put a handful of super-phosphate. 'A dangerous thing' I thought; 'but it may be the American way', though I had not seen artificial fertilizers used on the school farm before, and I said nothing. A few days later I was examining the plants, which were all wilting, when Elmer came along. 'I can't understand it,' he said. 'I planted them according to the latest scientific ideas and they're all dying.' 'The cause is simple,' I said. 'You've killed the roots with super phosphate,' and pulling up some plants I showed him. I added, 'I've not had a scientific education like you but I never would have put super-phosphate round the roots of a plant.' He went red and walked away. This was an occasion when as Gurdjieff says, 'It is sometimes necessary to give the other such a smack that he will forget his grandmother.' After this he never gave me any orders but only said, 'Do what you think is necessary.' In time he was released from his job and became a butcher.

Not long after ^is I was sitting at dinner in the big dining room with three of the boys aged about seventeen. One of them began to talk about science, how necessary it was, how things ought to be done scientifically, that scientists were now the leaders. 'What do you mean by science?' I asked. He hummed and ha'd for a time and then said, 'But you know what science is. Everybody knows.'

'But do you?' I said. 'I'm asking what you mean by science and you can't tell me. People talk about science, as they talk about democracy; because the words sound grand they think the things they represent must be equally grand. People think that if a thing is 'scientific' it must be good, like bombs and machine guns and powerful poisons. As for democracy, even Russia, you think, is one, because it no longer has a royal Czar, yet Russia is suffering under one of the greatest tyrannies the world has known. And you call it "democracy".' I mentioned Elmer's experiments, which had been so wasteful and expensive. 'He was being "scientific",' I added.

One of the others spoke up. 'I agree with Mr. Nott. There's too much worship of "science". My father, for example, has a farm in Vermont and he got a local man to manage it who had taken degrees in scientific farming. In a year the farm had gone down and instead of making a profit was losing money. My father fired him. But the man had a brother who had never been to college but always worked on farms, so my father gave him the job and in two years the farm was again paying. What do you make of that!'

There was silence for a bit. Then another boy said, 'At least, we have freedom in America.'

'Freedom for what?' I asked. 'Certainly there is more physical freedom in America than England; it's a bigger country. And certainly more freedom to do what you want to do than in Russia and Germany. But there's more freedom in England and France as regards a man's own personal Hfe; a man doesn't have to be one of a crowd and think and feel Hke them as he does in America. In England a man, so long as he does his job, is free to follow his own eccentric ways in his private life and to be interested in unfamiliar ideas, but a businessman in America would have to be very careful and not let his companions know that he was interested in them.'

This was getting above their heads. So I said, 'But you haven't told me what you mean by science, and since you can't define it I would say that the word originally meant the knowledge of something; that is, the knowing about something acquired by study and the result methodically set down in one's mind or on paper. Originally science meant the study of philosophy which in turn was an effort to understand what man's life is and what it is for; an enquiry into the meaning and aim of existence. Now, the word science has become so degenerated that if some idiot of a manufacturer prepares a food from which all the active elements have been extracted and puts it in a pretty package and calls

it 'a food scientifically prepared and scientifically packed' everybody will buy it. Your bread, for example, is scientifically baked from scientifically prepared flour so that nothing good is left and it tastes like blotting paper. Perhaps you have noticed that I never eat it. In Nevsr York we had real bread, the bread the poor Jews and ItaHans eat. In Russia I could go three days on the black rye bread alone that the peasants ate and, with a Httle butter and tea was well and satisfied.

'You Americans despise the superstitious Hindus and their attitude towards the sacred cow, but you are worse, you worship the word "science" and look what science is doing to us now in the war in Europe and the Far East. There never has been such a war and on such a scale of destruction. Science is the sacred cow of the West.'

I enjoyed talking vwth the young Americans whose minds and feelings were not yet spoiled and set as are those of most adults. Yet, I noticed a difference between the American children, and the seven or eight EngHsh pupils and those American children who had spent some years in England or France with their parents. The latter were drawn together as it were, and they had an imspoken something in common which the rest of the pupils did not have—their minds and feelings were more developed than the untravelled American children, they had more poise—something more in their inner world; and I thought of what a nation could be, given a combination of the EngHsh and the Americans: the thousands of years of experience and knowledge of world affairs, the toleration, of the English, and the power and adaptability of the Americans. But men do not govern their affairs according to common sense, nor do they order events in the world or their own lives—events move men. Every event is the result of a cause and the result also becomes a cause, and so on without end. In nations and in individuals it is the same, and the case would be hopeless if it were not diat from time to time teachers in touch with higher forces firom above, men with real power and understanding, are sent to show us a way to rise out of, escape from, the endless turning of the wheel of Hfe. To escape from this machine is *real* freedom as opposed to the 'freedom' that everybody talks about.

With one of the farm workers, a strong young man, I was planting cabbages. We often worked together and there was a friendly rivalry between us, and he would usually set the pace to try and get ahead of me. But although I was already an old man according to American

standards, I had learnt at the Prieure how to economize energy and how to work methodically and, except in actual trials of strength, I could keep up with him. In this planting of cabbages, he as usual, set the pace, but by establishing a rhythm and a method I was able to keep up with him, and though he planted nearly eight hundred cabbages in the day I was only twenty-five behind. Another time we were scything a large orchard together and although he tried to keep well ahead I was able, by maintaining a rhythm with the scythe, to keep close behind him. I made it an exercise to compel the organism to make more effort when it wanted to stop.

As for the inner exercises, they never became easy. Each day I had to make an effort to start them and an effort to continue them. A fly, or a movement of something, a sound, would distract me and divert my attention; ('Where my attention is, there am I') or I would fmd myself falling asleep, or tensing myself instead of relaxing. More often my attention would be caught up by something or other in the stream of associations—^physical, emotional or mental—which begins at birth and never stops until death, and which even then according to Gurdjieff, may go on by momentum for two or three days. Caught up in this stream, my attention would be dispersed in day-dreaming, or in disputing with an imaginary person, or talking to myself This stream of associations, called by psychologists 'the stream of consciousness', is really the stream of 'unconsciousness', since it flows on mechanically without our participating in it, unless we make a 'conscious' effort to do so.

When my exercises were interrupted by exterior and interior happenings I would have to re-collect myself and begin again; and I acquired more real force from the exercises than from working in the fields. The force came from constantly compelling myself to overcome the inertia of the organism and its vmwillingness to do the exercises. There was almost always the struggle between T who wished to do them and 'it' which did not wish to do them; as if the organism were in a way fulfdling its functions of the denying part against the affirming of 'I Wish'. Constant struggle between the affirming and denying leads to understanding—of oneself, those around us, and the universe.

Yet it seemed to me that, apart from brief periods of self-consciousness, real consciousness of self, I for the most part, went about my work in a state of semi-consciousness, like an intelligent animal.

As I have said, I enjoyed working with the men—the carpenter, decorator, groundsman, dairyman. In the evenings I often visited them in their homes, as I did those of the teaching staff, and talked to them. The workers, the men who had served their time in their jobs, were scornful of the 'educated' Elmer, yet a bit envious. As one of them said: 'You see, Mr. Nott, I haven't been educated. You've been to Oxford and Cambridge. You're educated. I feel the loss of it. It's a drawback not being educated.'

'How old were you when you left school?' I asked.

'I was sixteen.'

'Yet you learnt the necessary things—to read, to write and to do sums. And what you don't know about farming in Vermont is not worth knowing. I left school when I was thirteen, having leamt nothing —^not even to do sums. I read and wrote without schooling. But, like you, I feel the lack of education. I mean real education—Gleaming languages, algebra, the principles of drawing and music, or medicine. I wasted years working in a shop learning to be a salesman and in my father's warehouse, when I could have been learning useful things, like carpentry or building. But after I was eighteen I began to be fortunate in meetmg men from whom I could learn about life and, if having experience of people and life is education, then I have had a good one. At the same time I have always been sensible of the handicap of not having had a good grounding in the three "R's" in my youth.'

'There's something in that,' he said. 'I mean educated hke Elmer. In this country, if you've been to college you're a somebody, if not, you're like me, a nobody.'

'But Elmer only knows how to farm in the class room,' I repHed.

'I know. When he tells me to do something I listen and then do what I know ought to be done. Things done his way are ruining the farm. But he, as he's been to college—though he knows nothing about practical farming or knows it wrong, because he's got it from professors and books—is looked on as educated.'

Science is one of the sacred cows of the West; there is another—education.

Here, where everyone was called by their Christian name, as all over America, no one used mine. Only two people in the whole estaUishment were not called by their Christian names—the highest and the lowest (at least, the one with the lowest pay), Mrs. Hinton and myself Yet my relations with everyone were friendly.

Mrs. Hinton was a remarkable woman. She instinctively sensed how young people should be prepared for life, how they should be given opportunities for their general development and hot only have useless information rammed into them. Her system worked—it 'drew out' of the pupils what was in them, allowed their potentiaHties to grow.

During my business Hfe in New York I had been struck by the slowness of the reactions of business men, who would often talk round a subject for ten minutes or more before coming to the point. When you spoke about something to Mrs. Hinton she would Hsten, think a moment, then give an answer, yes or no. With the pupils she never spoke a great deal, but was always observing without its being obvious, always weighing up. She was one of four remarkable American women I have met; the others being Jane Heap, Margaret Anderson and Muriel Draper.

Summer came again, and with it the camp, and the various activities, in which my family joined, my wife and younger son coming up from Long Island.

During the summer I took some of the pupils in English, which was interesting, stimiilating and profitable, and I made more money in one week of half days than in a month working full time as a labourer on the farm.

I might have continued to get money for life by teaching at the school, but something in myself, or events, brought me to a stop. A need for a renewal of family life was growing in me, and a need to work with people interested in the Gurdjieff ideas. The school world of Putney, though among the best of its kind, was begiiming to be somewhat hmiting. Teachers as a class are hmited, and they have little personal experience of what they teach; even business people are less limited.

Gathering sap, Putney School, Vermont

2 0

MENDHAM

AT THE END OF SEPTEMBER we loaded **Up** the Car, dog and all, and with regretful hearts left Putney and drove to Locust Valley, Long Island. Here we lived in a wing of a beautiful rambling eighteenth-century timber-built house, belonging to friends, an old coaching station, standing in grounds and gardens.

Yet Locust VaUey, after Putney and Brattleboro in Vermont, seemed foreign and decaying. Foreign because, against the background of the real old American famiHes, with fine estates with parkland encircled by walls or fences, the small businesses were run by first and second generation Central Europeans who seemed not to belong to the country —alien, and the menial work was done by them.

Though I missed the school and life in Vermont it was very satisfying to have a family life again, and my wife and younger son were happy at The Friends Academy, and the elder at Putney. I soon was able to get money by doing carpentry jobs and shingling the roofs of houses. Material life flowed peacefully and we renewed our contacts with friends in New York, forty miles away.

Tliough we no longer went to groups we had not lost touch with the Ouspenskys and I sometimes had talks vnth Mr. Ouspensky. At the end of October I began to feel a need to work at Madame Ouspensky's commimity. Franklin Farms at Mendham, New Jersey. Ouspensky himself was in charge of groups in New York, and not often at Mendham. At the end of my last visit to Franklin Farms I had 'had words' with Madame. During a talk I had said, 'You know, working here vnth your pupils in the Gurdjieff system, without speaking about him and *Beelzebub's Tales* is rather Uke trying to spread Christianity without mentioning Jesus Christ or the New Testament.' This had hurt and shocked her somewhat. But she so often spoke about being 'sincere', and in this respect I was trying to be sincere. Shortly after this I had returned to Putoey. The memory of this incident set up a resistance in me, and so began the ding-dong—' "I" wish; "It" does not want. "It"

does not want because it will have to humble itself and perhaps be refused.' I brooded over the idea, trying to overcome the resistance of self-love and vanity, wasting a lot of nervous energy. I said to myself, 'If I put aside the idea I shall save this nervous energy, but I shall be inwardly weaker. If I make the effort and ask, even if I am snubbed, I shall be stronger.' In the end I made an effort and wrote to her at Mendham, and at once a feeling of strength came to my solar plexus. She rephed, saying that if I obeyed the conditions, not to speak about Gurdjieff or *Beelzebub's Tales* at Franklin Farms, I could come. I went, and spent some satisfactory weeks looking after pigs, repairing bams, harvesting the com with Lonia, Madame's grandson, and doing various odd jobs. I talked with Madame about Gurdjieff and the ideas, and also with some of the pupils, but in very general terms. At weekends many people came from New York; and at the big dinners we put on tuxedos and black ties. Again, it was as if Lyne Place had been transported bodily from Surrey, England, to New Jersey. The same feeling of constraint—people so busy trying to 'remember to remember' themselves that they forgot to be 'themselves'. Even some of the old Orage group, who, for twenty years had been addressing each other by their Christian names, began to call each other Mr. and Mrs. They took literally the rule that pupils were not to call each other by their Christian names, and when I encountered an old friend in the kitchen and greeted him with 'Hallo, Bill, how are you?' looks of constemation appeared on faces. The good idea of not letting people become jocularly familiar had become transformed uito a constrained pedantry. 'Every stick has two ends,' 'With every good thing goes a bad thing.' And in oneself, as weU as groups and organizations in this work, one has constantly to be on the watch not to forget one's aim and the aim of the work, and become so identified with one's own attitude to the work and with the organization, that one loses sight of the real aim.

At Mendham I often felt the flowing of the current of the octave, both up and down. I found that by working on myself, using the life around me, the contacts, as reminders, I was able in my own small way to learn a good deal, yet the group itself, little by little, owing to more and more organization was, I felt, moving away from the fundamental aim of Gurdjieff's teaching. The same thing can be seen in the study of the httle we know of the groups of early Christians; the same with the teaching of Buddha and Mahommed. Pupils soon became identified with their own attitude to the work, and if they have money or power they are listened to by others and these others are influenced and get

pushed away from the original teaching. But we have *Beelzebub's Tales,* a touchstone and a guide; and the exercises, movements and dances, if strictly kept to, will help people to keep in the right path. Always, according to the law of the octave in this work as well as in other teachings and in ordinary life,—organizations Httle by little get further and further away from their first intention.

I hked Ouspensky's pupils, some very much. But, in relation to myself, it was as if they were in a magic circle. Gurdjieff relates that he saw a Yezidi boy trying to get out of a circle drawn around him in the dust. Even when Gurdjieff went up to him and tried to pull him he could not get out. Only when the circle had been broken was he able to escape.

Everyone and those in every organization tends to get into a magic circle—to become hypnotized, and until the circle is broken by another force there can be no escape, which perhaps is why Gurdjieff so often liquidated the Institute and groups—and people. The Sufis, when work has reached a certain stage, 'liquidate' it and begin something new.

Now it happened that, a mile away on the outskirts of Mendham, a married couple, pupils of Ouspensky, was living. This sympathetic couple, whom I had known for some years, invited me to dinner. During an excellent meal the talk turned on Gurdjieff's book, and they asked me what it was about; *{Beezlebub* they called it.) As I had never agreed to conditions with Ouspensky and his pupils regarding not speaking about Gurdjieff and his writings outside Franldin Farms I said: 'It's the Bible of the "work", the body of Gurdjieff's ideas. It is an impartial criticism of the hfe of man on this earth, a relation of the causes of his fall and an explanation of the means for his redemption. There is everything in it that relates to this work; there is all that we can know about life from the atom to the megalocosmos. It is writing of the highest kind; it is scripture. Gurdjieff says that in time to come men will write epics on a partial understanding of some of the truths tdntained in it. In other words, it is an objective work of art.'

'We've never seen it. Isn't it possible for us to read it?'

'You must ask Madame Ouspensky,' I said. 'I gave Mr. Ouspensky a copy ten years ago. If Madame agrees to a few of the older pupils hearing it I will read it to you.' They seemed grateful and said they would speak to her. They then asked about Gurdjieff and I gave them some of my impressions of him and some examples of the way he •Worked with me. We passed a very pleasant, and what seemed to me fruitful, evening; and I felt that at last I had established a real contact,

a bond, with at least two of Ouspensky's pupils. Also, with the war spreading and conditions in Europe going from bad to worse, and no news coming from France, it seemed that we might never see Gurdjieff again, and something usefrd might be done in America—with the reading *o£ Beelzebub's Tales* in groups a new impetus could be given to the work m Ouspensky's growing organization. I felt quite cheerful about the prospect. But man proposes and organization disposes.

The next day was Sunday, a bright cold day in early December. About mid-day I was sitting with others in a frosty field husking com when someone came widi a message that Madame Ouspensky wished to see me. At once I felt that something strange had happened. What, I could not imagine.

Madame was in bed (she had to rest a good deal at this time) in her large handsome room.

She looked at me rather severely and began, 'Some things I like about you, other things I do not like.'

'What is it you don't Hke?' I asked.

'I do not like the way you break rules and conditions.'

'What rules have I broken?'

'You have been talking to the S—'s about Mr. Gurdjieff and *Beelzebub's Tales.'*

'Yes, I have. But this was outside Franklin Farms. It was outside, m their own house.'

'This is mere quibbling. You know very well that you agreed to conditions.' She was angry.

'Not quibbling,' I said. 'And I don't see what I have done wrong.

'You agreed to keep the conditions not to speak about Mr. Gurdjieff and *Beelzebub's Tales* to our pupils.'

'Only here. I made no conditions with Mr. Ouspensky and his group in New York. And since Gurdjieff and Orage laid the foundations of the work in America I could not have agreed to such conditions. For seven years in London I kept the agreement not to discuss the book or Mr. Gurdjieff vwth your pupils, even more strictly perhaps than I needed to do. You agree that I did so?'

'Well, yes.'

'And I have kept conditions here in Franklin Farms, often against difficulties. But outside I consider myself free.'

'Then I can't let you have any contact with my pupils.'

She continued in the same vein as if trying to make me feel how gravely I had misconducted myself. I saw the absurdity of the situation

and said, 'But don't you teach Mr. GurdjiefF's system? Isn't all your work based on what you got from him? Mr. GurdjiefFwas your teacher and he still is mine.'

'This is quite another matter,' she said, and again began to berate me. And now a something that had been quietly simmering in me for years suddenly came to the boil. My feehngs got the better of me and I repHed, very emotionally, 'But this is too ridiculous. For me to try to work with your pupils in these circumstances is impossible. And, you know, your pupils have got stuck at the note 'mi' and to get to 'fah' they need a shock and the shock would be for them to meet Mr. Gurdjieffand to read *Beelzebub's Tales.* As for me, my staying here is useless. I will leave tomorrow. But let me say that I personally like you very much and Mr. Ouspensky too, and I am sorry to go away from you. The stumbhng block is Mr. Gurdjieff and his book. He is my teacher. I have looked on you both as friends, and our relationship has been that of friends, this I have appreciated for it has meant a great deal to me. But I see that a teacher-pupil relationship between us is not possible. And now I must say "good-bye".' We shook hands and I left the room. This was really 'good-bye' for although she hved for nearly twenty years more I never saw her or Ouspensky again.

At lunch that day I saw the S—'s, who could not look at me. They had the unhappy expressions of a man and woman threatened with expulsion from Paradise, and I noticed a perceptible change in the atmosphere of the Ouspensky pupils; the temperature, as it concerned me, had dropped. The pupils radiated a something towards me—the man who had committed the unforgivable sin. Only Lonia, Madame Ouspensky's grandson, showed no coohess. He came to me while I was feeding the pigs and said, 'You're not really going, are you?'

'Yes, I'm leaving tomorrow.'

'But when shall we see you again? When shall we see you again?'

'Who can say? Perhaps soon, perhaps never.'

The next morning, as I waited for the car to the station with some of the pupils I noticed that they edged away from me. Formerly they had rushed to help me with my heavy bags. Now, no one lifted a fmger. And when we got into the train at Mendham they avoided me. This was the last straw. I moved into another coach and never saw them again, except one, and him years later.

From that time we had no more contact with the Ouspenskys either at Mendham or in the groups in New York, though Madame sent us gifts at Christmas and I wrote to her.

As time went on and I pondered the situation I saw that I had acted hastily under the influence of my emotions; perhaps because I was more attached to the Ouspenskys than I realized. I liked them as hiunan beings and I had always enjoyed the convivial gatherings at Lyne Place and Mendham; this was not 'work' in Gurdjieff's sense, it was a human social thing, and I missed it. Yet I understood better that when Ouspensky cut himself off from Gurdjieff, his work began to lose its value. His philosophical school had become more and more groups of mental questions and answers. What life there was came firom the physical work at Mendham. Yet all through, Ouspensky had been steadily working on *Fragments of an Unknown Teaching* and, being a trained journalist and writer, possessing intellectual integrity, he was able to separate his thoughts from his personal feelings and so produce a volume of Giurdjieff's sayings beyond price; and by this alone, perhaps, he has paid Nature for his 'arising and existence'. He had given me the almost complete manuscript to read and I realized what a masterpiece it was. Also, although Ouspensky's school had little value so far as inner development went, nevertheless it gave somediitig to people. It helped to keep up their interest in ideas that are above ordinary mechanical life. And the pupils will be to some extent prepared when at some time or other they feel a real need to work on themselves, and when they meet a real teacher, such as Gurdjieff, or the work in another form.

Individual Russians have given a great deal to the world, but as a race they are much more rigid in their mental attitude to life than the English. They represent in their existence the Hmitless stupidity of man. Consider collective farming again. As I have said the rulers of Russia after the revolution adopted the idea of'collective fiirms'. They know now that three or four times the amount of food in proportion is produced by people growing food on their own land, on their own initiative, and they feel that the collective system is wrong; yet in the face of facts they still persist in their attitude, and for forty years, because of collectives, have been short of food and have had to import wheat from the hated 'imperialist capitaUsts'. The same with their satellites—Hungary for example, which before the revolution exported food.

Ouspensky's rigid attitude was Russian and it would not allow him to admit that he had made a mistake in cutting himself off from Gurdjieff and, like the Russian rulers in regard to collective farming, although he felt something was wanting he had to hedge his pupils in with rules to preserve his attitude towards Gurdjieff. As I have

said, when GurdjiefF saw that a phase in his work had served his purpose, he would hquidate it and begin something new. Ouspensky continued always to keep on in the same way, and so had got fiirther from the source and further from the aim of the work. Cut off from the source, his work had been steadily though imperceptibly, under the influence of the 'merciless Heropass', losing its value.

I suffered a good deal because of this incident and began to see that if I had acted more inteUigendy I need not have caused such a commotion, which set going a train of events that went on until after Ouspensky's death. If only our foresight were as good as our hindsight both our inner and outer world might be different. But we are as we are; I was as I was; the Ouspenskys were as they were, and events moved in the only way they could. A lot of energy is wasted in speculating about 'if. 'If he had done that or this.' 'If only I had done so and so how different it would have been.' 'If Napoleon had acted thus instead of thus he . . a n d so on. The truth is that nothing, while we act unconsciously, can be different. A few words, said in the wrong way, can have far-reaching consequences. Now that I understand more, given the same situation, I could say the same things in a different way and so put myself in a strong position instead of a weak one. When one has realized that one has allowed the feelings to become identified with a given situation one should suffer remorse of conscience and thus help repair the past. This idea is in Ouspensky's *Strange Life of Ivan Ossokin,* the manuscript of which he had given me at Lyne Place—the idea that unless there is an inner change brought about by work on ourselves we cannot help but repeat our actions in the same and in similar situations. In this work one learns that one has to pay for everything—either in this life or another. People often think and feel that if they were in another place, in a different situation, another country, they would be different, happier,—and sometimes they are; but though their outer hfe may change for the better their inner life may remain the same or even shrink, deteriorate.

'The causes of all misunderstandings may be sought for only among women,' says Gurdjieff. This may be taken both literally and as referring to the passive part, the lower emotions. "When we act from impulse, from a prompting of the lower emotions (which really are all we have and are negative) things go wrong. A few heated words can set up an emotional attitude which may take years to break down.

However, since women feel more than men, and are more influenced by their feelings, it can be said that the cause of much misunderstanding

will be found among them. Men are more logical. Yet women can recover from the effects of an expression of negative emotion quicker than men. Gurdjieff also says that if you arc about to undertake a new project, talk about it with women—then do the opposite. But of this, enough.

LOCUST VALLEY, LONG ISLAND

FROM JANUARY UNTIL AUGUST I passcd a not Unpleasant existence in Locust Valley. I was offered a post in a library but found that I could make more money and be freer by doing odd jobs for people—shingling roofs of houses at which I became very good—carpentering, gardening and so on, work that I Hked. Not being an American citizen. I was not eligible for any kind of responsible position. But we had, real friends and many acquaintances, some of tfaem very rich Long Islanders, others poor school teachers and salesmen.

Once at a cocktail party I found myself talking to a good looking intelligent woman, a Russian, and we discovered that we had mutual friends among the White Russians in London. I happened to mention Prince Youssoupoff, Rasputin's killer, whom I had met. 'You know,' I said, 'he had such a resdess haimted look that I asked a Russian friend who he was. He told me that it was Youssoupoff, who had said that he wished he never had killed Rasputin. It had been a mistake and far from improving things had made them worse.' 'It's true,' she said. 'Ra^utin was not the charlatan he is made out to be. I knew him. He was the only man who helped the Czarevitch. And he saw the way things were going and tried to influence the Czar to do something to stop the useless slaughter and destruction. He said openly what many people were thinking, including people in England like Lord Lansdowne, that peace ought to be made. He was not a saint but he did not kill people, and he did not live on the sweat of peasants but tried to help them, and he robbed no one. But because he tried to influence the Czar to stop the war he was regarded as a nuisance by the power-possessing beings and had to be got rid of And because he liked wine and vodka and women, as every man does or would if he could, the smug looked down on him.'

There was very much in old Russia that was good, that gave a richness to its inner life, that made it 'Holy Russia'. The revolution killed

that rich inner life of Russia; and the whole world is poorer and emptier for it. But the momentum set going by cosmic forces and the abnormal life of man during the nineteenth century was such that the war could not be stopped; and it went on to the next great war and still continues, and life goes down and down the scale; and now, only thirty years later, we are faced with almost total destruction. That is, unless something exceptional in the cosmos happens, or that by means of higher forces enough men with power, because of the threat, will have their attitude to life changed.

The effects of mental power are astonishing. I was thinking of the effects of the Ouspenskys' mental power on the minds and feelings of their followers, most of whom were men and women of the intelligent world, and how their Hves were influenced by it—and chiefly for good. Yet the mental powers of Gurdjieff were a hundred times greater than Ouspensky's. Think of the mental power of Jesus, by which his words, spoken two thousand years ago, can still influence men for good; and the priests and police and Roman soldiers of his time whose power was able to destroy his planetary body, have disappeared so that not even their dust or memory remains. The ideas and the teaching of Jesus are still a vital force. Ideas, which cannot be seen or touched, are more powerful than tyrants, dictators, kings, poUce, judges and armies. The outer Hfe of man is always changing; his ideas on philosophy, subjective morahty, psychology are good only for a nine days' wonder, yet the inner teaching of the great teachers and real saints remains unchanged.

La the last fifty years there have been such dbianges in the life of rDm on our planet as never before in recorded history: the First Great War, revolutions in Russia and China, the discovery of oil which has brought the new plague of cars and aeroplanes and bombs, the virtual disappearance of the horse, the use of chemicals and poisons in producing food; the Second War, the hydrogen bomb, the break-up of old civilizations in the Far East that had much good in them, the twin curses of commercialism and communism, and so on and so forth—aU this during my own short life. Yet inwardly, man remains the same.

In the summer we were again invited by the Frank Lloyd Wrights to spend the vacation with them at Taliesin but I was waiting for "a passage to England. Then the Raymond Gram Swings offered us their house in Newfane for a few weeks. This we accepted as it was only

two himdred miles to drive instead of a thousand, and we were able to visit our friends at the Putney School.

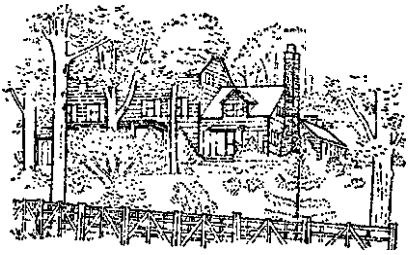
All this year I had been thinking about getting back to England. There was the need to find some way of getting money for life, of preparing for the future; also, there was a feeling in the air that the war was coming to an end—at least, that it was only a matter of time before Germany would give in. Being fifty-seven years old I had no hope of a job in America and in June I put my name down for a passage to England.

It was difficult to get a passage; one had to be ready to leave at forty-eight or even twenty-four hours' notice, and if peace were to break out the rush would be overwhelming. Also when the soldiers eventually began returning home to America I might fmd it impossible to get a job, even as a gardener. One can be poor in Europe, even England, with dignity. In America, to be poor was regarded as in England up to 1914—a sin.

At the Svnngs's house on Putney Mountain life was satisfying. "We had only two visitors, a man and his wife from the old Orage group who were now working with Ouspensky. I happened to mention *Beelzebub's Tales* and asked P. if he still read it. 'No,' he said in a special tone of voice, that wasn't his at all. 'You see, *Beelzebub's Tales* needs a lot of mental preparation and we haven't got that far yet.'

'Oh, come off it. P.,' I said. 'You are talking just like Ouspensky does. In fact, you are using his very words. You know very well that the book does not need "mental preparation", but an emotional attitude. Why do you speak in this way after the years you spent with Orage? You have been hypnotized by Ouspensky.'

He looked at me in surprise, thought a bit, and then laughed. 'You may be right,' he said, speaking in his own voice. He was a sympathetic man but weak; one of those many who, not having acquired a measure of individuality, unconsciously imitate their teachers.



Locust Valley, Long Island

BOOK IV

ENGLAND

RETURN TO ENGLAND: SOME NOTES OF ORAGE ON THE *MAHABHARATA*

WE HAD BEEN in the Raymond Gram Swing's house two weeks when a telephone call came from a government agency that there was a passage for me on a ship to England in two days' time. Hastily we packed up our things and without being able to say goodbye to our friends at Pumey School drove straight to Locust Valley, Long Island. There was no time even to see friends in New York; only another parting. The last day with my family was painfid; they came to New York with me and said goodbye at die dock gates and when they had left I turned away and wept; again, a sort of dying.

The ship's smoking room had been turned into a dormitory for men, forty of us, all British. On deck the loud speaker was busy sending out announcements in the buUyiag tone that the American police use, as if with a mouth full of cold potato: 'Listen awerybody, listen awerybody!' then the instructions, winding up with 'That's all,' and it came as a shock, as soon as the ship left the dock, to hear a rather high-pitched English voice with a mouth full of hot potato say, 'Attention please, attention please!' then the instructions, winding up with a polite, 'Thank you.'

The first night I turned in early. The next morning going on deck I saw an amazing sight. We were in the centre of the front line of five lines of ships, sixty of them, steaming at the same speed, each keeping its place. In the far distance were the watch-dogs, the destroyers and corvettes, alert for submarines. And day after day all these ships kept dieir place on a calm sea in the hot August simshine until we reached the shores of old England. The nights were pitch black and we might

have been completely alone on the ocean yet, the next morning all the ships were there still in place as if they had never moved. A striking example of how men can efficiently organize themselves and the works of their hands in defence against the forces of material destruction. The ten days from New York to Liverpool passed peacefully, apart from the burial at sea of a very old lady who died from heart failure; and one startling event of which our ship was the cause. Four nights out I was dreaming that I was in a big car vwth another man, who was driving. The engine sounded powerfully as we went along, then suddeiJy he pulled into the grass verge and got out. 'The engines have stopped. They've broken down,' he said, lifting the bonnet. I woke. It was early morning and the ship was quite still, no vibration from the engines. I went on deck, and saw that we were alone on the ocean, drifting, a perfect sitting target for submarines, the convoy a faint smudge on the far horizon; only a small corvette which steamed towards us gave us a look round and made off for the convoy. We had been told that if any ship broke down it was to be left to its fate; fifty-nine ships could not be put in hazard for the sake of one, but for safety's sake they had put us in the centre of the front line, because we had on board, among the five himdred passengers, two hundred Canadian women, the yoimg wives of EngUsh airmen, going to join their husbands in England. From a position of almost complete safety we were in one of absolute danger. The life boats were hoisted out in their davits and we were lined up in our Hfe belts. No one showed signs of panic or even fear; there was a common feeling that nothing could be done except to wait for a submarine and, if lucky, to get into the boats. We could only accept the situation and resign ourselves to whatever might happen. When we are faced by forces greater than our own there is nothing to do but submit. AU that I could do was to remember myself and not give way to negative feelings of worry and anxiety. I recalled the many times I had read about and imagined such a situation—taking to the boats and drifting on the boundless indifferent ocean, but it is one thing to read about and imagine, another to be faced with the actual fact; it is the difference between knowing with the mind, and personal experience. This incident so impressed itself on my three centres that, over twenty years later I can recall not oiJy the actions but the feelings and thoughts aroused in me.

Hours passed in suspense. We even sat down to lunch as usual, but with lifebelts on, waiting for an explosion, then, in the afternoon, the engines started up again full-speed ahead instead of the usual half-speed

of the convoy. We went to bed in our life-belts but, waking next morning, to our enormous relief we found ourselves as if by magic once again in the centre of the front line.

To go back a bit. Hardly had we lost sight of the cloud-capt towers of New York when my feelings of grief at leaving my faniily were diverted into another subjective state. In the crowd of passengers eyeing each other as they sauntered the decks I saw a pupil of Ouspensky, a man I had never met to talk to, but had seen in a group of men aroimd Ouspensky on my first visit to Warwick Gardens, and once at Mendham, and had formed the impression that he was one of Ouspensky's oldest and closest pupils, 'high in the work', as they say. I spoke to him and we began to talk. It was a real joy to meet a man who was interested in the same ideas as myself and with whom it was possible to discuss them; I realized the truth of Gurdjieff's saying that this work establishes a bond between people stronger even than family. We had meals together and spent a good part of each day talking. He was unaware that I had left the Ouspenskys and why, and I wondered what instructions Ouspensky would have given him had he known we were to meet. As for myself I was only too pleased to talk about GurdjiefFand *Beelzebub's Tales;* even had Ouspensky forbidden our meeting I doubt whether, faced as we were with the possibility of being sunk at sea by submarines, this pupil would have refrained. I speak of this because of what followed in England. However, we had not been talking together long before I began to be aware of how little he understood. He knew the theory of the system better, perhaps, than I did, but as for the method of self-sensing, self-remembering, self-observation, he, like all of Ouspensky's pupils, understood almost nothing. In the course of a day or so, he began to question me about various aspects of GurdjiefFand his teaching, and as he was serious I gave him some of my notes to read and some chapters in typescript of the *Second Series.* He kept on saying, 'But this is fascinating, this is most interesting. We've never had this. Why has this never been given to us?' I could only say, 'Ask Ouspensky.' The *Tales of Beelzebub* aroused his greatest interest, and I lent him my copy of the typescript, which he read for hours at a time, sitting on a stair of the companion way, which was the quietest spot on the overcrowded ship. 'Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness for they shall be filled,' I thought, and was glad that in my small way I was able to do something towards appeasing one man's hunger.

Our contact made all the difference to our life on the ship; a kind of life which, on all my other voyages, twenty-six long voyages in all as

a passenger, I have often been bored. It would seem logical that people herded together on a ship cut off from land for six weeks or even ten days, would try to get to know each other and that one would be able to discover at least two or three who would be able and willing to discuss vital ideas. My experience is that as soon as people find themselves on a passenger ship a veil comes down over their real selves—^if they have any—and their whole time is given up to triviahties, trivial talk, trivial doings, trivial gossip about others. Young people can flirt and dance and for them it is not too bad. And one long voyage can be a pleasant and unusual experience. For me now it is an infliction; and my idea of heU is to be condenmed to sail for ever on a 'pleasure' cruise in a luxury passenger liner without even the privilege of jumping overboard.

This present voyage was different. Apart from the talks with my new friend, there was a serious atmosphere in the ship and a good feeling among the passengers and the crew; faced with ever present danger people opened out. By day we played deck games or read and talked, at night there was a concert, a bridge drive, a chess tournament or something of the sort. It was one of tiie most enjoyable and satisfying voyages I have had.

As we were twisting and winding our way through the minefields of the Irish Sea towards Liverpool my friend said, 'You know, I can never thank you enough for what you have given me. It is maima to the starving. If you will form a group to read *Beelzebub's Tales* when you land I will join it.'

I agreed to do so but told him that he, being Ouspensky's pupil, must speak to him about it. He said that as soon as he arrived he woiild go to Lyne and speak to the people there and send a cable to Ouspensky in New York for permission. We parted in Liverpool. 'In a week's time you shall hear from me,' he said.

But never a word or line did I have from him, nor did I see him again until some years later, after Ouspensky's death, when I met him accidentally at a Gurdjieff meeting, and he explained why: he had been told that if he joined my reading group or had anything whatever to do with me he would have to leave Lyne. He was a good and sympathetic man and later helped me very much at a time when I needed money.

The days across the Atlantic had been days of unbroken sunshine which continued when we arrived in England, and all the time in tlie train on the slow journey to Harpenden I looked out of the windows

and drank in the English scene. It was one of those cloudless late summer days when the light on the fields and the gentle haze are so perfect that it can happen nowhere else on this planet; it seemed to me that never had I seen any country so beautiful, any men so fine or women so attractive, and the people, after the slow-speaking, slow-moving serious Americans, seemed energetic, purposeful and even gay. The ache in the solar plexus, the longing of the past four years, the gnawing pain of homesickness disappeared and never returned. A taxi was waiting for me at the station and soon I was sitting with my father and mother in the same room just as I had left them four years before, when I thought I would never see them again; a repetition of the same situation, in the same village even, with the same feelings. Yet something in me had changed.

Sitting together that first evening there was a distant explosion and my mother gave a jump. "What's that?' I asked. 1 suppose it's a buzz bomb,' said my father, as if he were speaking of a car down the road, and went on talking. Almost every night and sometimes in the daytime we heard the buzz bombs. One day when my father had gone to the kitchen to make a cup of tea, the house was shaken by an explosion, and my first thought was that he had left the gas on and had been blown up. I rushed in and found him calmly pouring out tea. "What's the matter?' I asked.

'How do you mean, the matter?'

'The explosion! I thought you had blown yourself up!'

'Oh, that,' he said with a faint intonation of contempt. 'Another buzz bomb, I suppose.'

It had fallen in the park at the back of the house.

I sometimes wondered why Nature had not endowed me with some of my father's instinctive philosophical calm and instead had given me so much of my mother's restless nervous emotionaUsm. In 1940, after the night of the Great Fire, he had been turned back from the gates (Aldersgate and Cripplegate) of the City of London, because his warehouse and factory had been bombed and was burning to the ground with the rest of the city, and his life's practical work, his business, which had lasted over sixty years, had been destroyed. He had turned back, gone down the stairs at Aldersgate Street Station, taken the next train home and told my mother, 'I won't be going up to the city again,' and had busied himself with something else. He was then about eighty.

The thought of dying seemed not to worry him, for he was sure that

he would go to heaven, the heaven of the Wesleyan Methodist rehgion. My mother, on the other hand, was always internally considering others, concerned about what they might be thinking of her; and the Methodist rehgion gave her no hope or consolation, only a feeling of guilt for having occasionally drunk too much, which might prevent her going to heaven. She often spoke about it to me and, although I reasoned with her and tried to comfort her, she could not rid herself of a feeling of guilt, that God would not forgive her for drinking alcohol. The religion that was a blessing to my father to her was a curse. Yet except for occasional fits of depression she was gay and cheerful. In her sixties the disease of the craving for alcohol had disappeared and a new life, of good works, began for her. She became the charity organizer of the county, and everyone admired her and loved her.

I had not been home long when the V2 rockets began to arrive; there was no warning, only a devastating explosion. On one of my visits to London I had been to Staples Inn in Holbom. A quarter of an hour after I left, walking up High Holbom there was a shattering explosion: Staples Inn, 'the fairest Inn in Chancery', had disappeared.

At this period of the war the streets of London were very empty, with half the shops closed and most windows boarded up against flying glass. The city that I had known so well was a mass of ruins; its churches, shells. People went about their business unconsciously alert, like deer, always sensing; and with the feeling, 'It probably won't be me.' I was always relieved to get back to Harpenden. Though little was said about the bombs everyone was intensely aware of the danger. Human beings, like animals, can accept the possibility of being destroyed, and nature mercifully prevents them from realizing a desperate situation—in a besieged city, the eruption of a volcano, a hurricane, a sinking ship, the Jews waiting for the gas chambers. After the first shock a situation is often accepted. Usually it is only in dreams that the terror and horror are realized.

One morning, hearing an enormous drone of aeroplanes, I went on to the common and looked up. The blue sky was full of planes towing gliders, moving slowly in the direction of Holland—^hundreds of them, each full of young men in the prime of manhood, and I thought, 'In a little while, an hour or two, hundreds of those yoimg men now full of life wiU be dead or dying, some even before they've reached the ground, sentenced to death by lottery, and no one nor nothing could stop it.' They were going to Amhem.

With the possibility of sudden death or injuries always at the back of their minds and feelings the English seemed more human; their thick mask of personahty had been, at least, partly melted, and I was often reminded of Gurdjieff's telling us always to try to remember that we and everyone we see are mortal; and Beelzebub's request to His Endlessness, to implant in beings an organ, like KundabufFer but which would have the effect of compelling them always to be conscious of, to be aware of, the fact of their own death and the death of everyone around them: Only this has the possibihty of destroying the vanity, conceit, self-love, touchiness, resentment, greed for money and power—all that which spoils mutual relationships which could be helpful, and which hinders them from becoming normal men and women.

Because of the disharmonization of the Fifth Stopinder, according to Beelzebub, nothiag on this planet ever goes as expected or even as it logically should go. Hence, life is always confounding the 'experts'. And not only the 'experts'—the scientists, educationalists, psychologists, politicians, and so on, who are almost always wrong, but even those ordinary people like ourselves who are endowed with a measure of common sense, and who know that they do not know everything!

It was necessary for me to get a job as soon as possible in order to send money to my family in America. I went first to the pubhshers, but they wanted not help but paper, the supply of which was cut to the bone. Then some friends who were connected with the heads of The British Council advised me to interview them, as men with pubhshing experience were needed, and they offered to speak for me. At the interview everything seemed to go well, and I discovered that the personnel officer was an old friend of mine who assured me that he would recommend me. So I returned to Harpenden vnth a hopeful feeling; but not a word did I hear, and a friend hinted that it was my age. They were taking no one over fifty, though I looked ten years younger. I then wrote to the friends whose country house in the first vwnter of the war had been a second home, yet I had a feeling that something had happened to them as their letters had stopped six months before. Now, the wife wrote, 'Edwin is dead. Come and see us and cheer us up.' I remembered his words of over four years before when I had said goodbye: 'Our old life is finished. Everything is breaking up. You are going, A. is gone, X. is gone. It will never be the same again.' Nor was it, for when I arrived I found that his wife was running the estate as a dairy farm and market garden, and the place, like everywhere else in

England then looked neglected. They and everyone were overworked. Yet she had managed to keep going. Only the house, with its centuries of the atmosphere of the Hves of people who had lived and died there, the house whose radiations were still of peace and well-being, seemed permanent in the changing world. Yet that ancient house with its 'immemorial elms' was, like everything else, formed of planetary material, always in jeopardy, in a state of change; it could be destroyed in a few hours by fu:e, or in an instant by a bomb from Germany; even without diat, time, that wears away all things, was changing it imperceptibly every minute.

I was at home there: My essence was satisfied by the work on the farm and my personality by the aristocratic way of life; and being used to a farming life my work was useful and a suggestion was made that I should stay and share in the running of the place. But I needed more money than they could afford to give me, though I did stay for some weeks.

My friend often had difficulties with the foreman, a tough north countryman. One morning at breakfast, seeing her pensive I asked why. 'It's that foreman again,' she said. To divert her I told her that I had had a letter from my son at Pumey, Vermont, in which he related that a man had been killed by a bear while hunting in the forest not far from the school. She seemed not to be listening, but after a pause said, 'You know, I like bears better than men.' There was a general laugh from everyone but her.

After some weeks I had an offer of a well-paid job from my brother in Luton. Hats being severely rationed, his factory was turning out all kinds of baskets and bags from waste material, and doing very well. He had a man spraying material with a very primitive and inefificient small ancient machine, and suggested that I take over the rtmning of it. Needing money so badly I could not refuse, but it was a horrible job. There was no outlet for the fumes of the spray, no extractor fan and even with a mask my lungs were coated with the vile spirit fumes, in which it was impossible to work more than four hours a day; a violent change from working at the pleasant old coimtry house and estate in the Chiltems, but it brought in money and I was able to send a good sum each week to my family in America.

I began to manipulate the authorities and in a few weeks was able to get a permit from the Board of Trade to buy a modem spraying machine and extractor fan. "With these installed work was easy and simple and I was able to employ a gjrl to help and by working a few

hours a day drew in over twenty pounds a week, equal to sixty pounds now. I lived with my father and mother in their little house and went to Luton each day. Again I was back in the family business, this time in Luton where I was bom and working in a room of a building that my maternal grandfather had built about 1870 to start a dyeing business.

The wheel of time had brought me round to the beginnings of my existence on this planet. Events had, it seemed, compelled me to follow a course, back to family influences, back to beginnings once more, when I thought I had been moving on and out; and again it seemed that there was something else that I had to work out in the pattern of my existence, even to be able to pay for my arising—my working as a factory hand in my younger brother's factory, and by doing it consciously and to the best of my ability, without mortification or resentment, I would be working out something negative in my existence, in myself, and at the same time, in some strange way might be helping my grandfather, which idea was connected with what Gurdjieff often said to pupils about not mortifying their grandfather, and helping those who have gone; though 'grandfather' has more than one meaning. He also said that if fathers will drive in the comfortable 'britchka', sons must follow in the springless 'firmanka'.

However, I extracted a good deal of pleasure, profit and rehgion from this new experience: profit in the shape of money, religion in pondering Gurdjieff's teachings, pleasure in doing a job well. A few of the men who had been in the family business since I was a youth were still there; formerly I had regarded them as they, the workers, and we, the owners, now I was able to work with them as a man like themselves and to like them.

I was not unhappy, I no longer suffered from homesickness; but I needed my family.

In Luton as in London there was the acceptance of the fact that at any moment a V2 or a buzz-bomb might fall without a warning; and although the factory had a strong dug-out the new bombs gave no time to go down to it; and the 'secret weapon' did fall, but not onus.

Before leaving America I had tried without success to get a complete set of the English translation of the *Mahahharata,* of which Orage had so often spoken, so I searched London and by chance went into John Watkins's shop just off Charing Cross Road and was delighted to be

able to buy his last set. I took it home and began to read it, and I read it every day. It consisted of eleven closely printed volumes, about two and a half million words, probably the longest book in the v/orld. I set myself the task of reading it through, which took over a year. It was a good task, it needed all my attention and perseverance, for the Indian translator had put the Sanskrit into pseudo-English—biblical language, which was tiresome. Even so, the story comes through; the translator has preserved the essence, the flavour and the 'tone of voice' of the original, which makes it more satisfying than the fragments by Muir, Milman or Romesh Dutt. The *Mahabharata* is an objective work of art of the highest kind in Hterature and the reading of it is immensely rewarding? i* opens up new horizons of ideas and thought and, apart from the *Bihle* and *Beelzebub's Tales,* has affected me more and made a deeper impression on me than any book I have read. While I was reading I searched the files of *The New Age* to see what Orage had written about it and made the following extracts.

The Mahabharata *and the* Upanishads *are world classics that the world has simply not yet discovered. Plato had to lie comparatively unknown nearly two thousand years—the Indian classics will comfortably lie te sand years and will emerge as up-to-date as ever. Philosophers yet unb will make their reputation out of them. Schopenhauer, the odd explore covered them, and became a notable philosopher on a partial understan them.*

*

More real Mysticism can be gathered from the Mahabharata *than fro whole of modem mystical writings.*

The Mahabharata *is the greatest single effort of literary creation of culture in human history. It is difficult for any ordinary mind to conc mind that conceived it; and the effort to do so is almost itself a libera The* Iliad *and the* Odyssey *are episodes in it; and the celebrated* Bhagavadgit *issimplythe recordof a single conversation on the eve of one of its ma Never was a writer more currently aware of his readers than Vyasa, th Ganesha, who had transaibed it under Vyasa's direction, had stipulat that he should be released if once the meaning should cease to be plain and he was not released until the end.*

Taken as literature simply, as the most colossal work of literary art created, its example and inspiration are as vital and multiform as Tim It contains every literary form and device known to all the literary sch

every story ever enacted or narrated, every human type and circumstance ever aeated or encountered.

Unlike the reading of derivative works of art, the reading of the Mahabharata *is a first-hand experience. One ends it differently just as one emerges differently from everything real.*

*

Ancient India stands in the same relation to us 'children of Europe as ancient Egypt stood to the 'children of Greece. Europe today is ancient Greece writ large. India, moreover, is our ancient parent, our oldest racial ancestor, our Adam and Eve.

*

The greatest books are only to be grasped by the total understandiflg, which is called intuition. Idiom is the fruit of wisdom on the tree of language; and experience is both the end and the beginning of idiom. And what, again, is more familiar than the experience of 'having been done good' by reading a great work, particularly a great mystical or poetical work, like Blake or Milton, still more by reading such works as the Mahabharata? *The 'sub-conscious' of every great book is vastly greater than the conscious element, as the subconscious of every one of us is many times richer in content than our conscious minds.*

*

The three great treasuries of stories—the Greek, the Scandinavian and the Teutonic, were all derived from the East by divers ways, and the source and container of them all is—The Mahabharata.

*

Vyasa says: The reading of the *Mahabharata* destroys all sin, and produces virtue; so much so that the pronunciation of a single sloka is sufficient to wipe away much guilt. This *Mahabharata* contains the history of the Gods, of the Rishis in Heaven and on Earth, of the Gandharvas and the Rakshasas. It contains the life and acts of the one God, holy and immutable and true, who is Krishna, who is the Creator and Ruler of the Universe—who is seeking the welfare of his creation by means of his incomparable and indestructible powers, whose actions are celebrated by all sages; who bound human beings on a chain, of which one end is Hfe, the other, death; on whom the Rishis meditate and a knowledge of whom imparts unalloyed happiness to their hearts. If a man reads the *Mahabharata* and has faith in its doctrines he is freed from all sin and ascends to Heaven after death.

2

THE END OF THE WAR
PARIS

so, WHILE MY DAYS were spent in the factory spraying materials with different coloured spirit, wearing a mask and gavintlets to protfcct myself against the poison, my evenings were spent with my father and mother, reading the *Mahahharata,* with frequent weekends at my friend's country house.

I began to understand why men work in dangerous trades: it is either because they have been brought up to it, like coal miners; or for the love of money, like those who work imderground in hazardous conditions; or fmally because of an instinctive sense of responsibility towards their families, to get 'good' money. I was in the last category.

Summer had been bright and rainless, and the hot dry weather lasted until the middle of October, when the rain came, and then, in December frost and snow and a bitter winter with the whole earth bound in iron. Then again the everlasting miracle of spring, when the dead black trees and fields came to life, and in May, with the coming of spring came also the incredible, vinbelievable news that for us the war was over. I went to London, and watched the people celebrating in Trafalgar Square, and found myself standing on the same spot where I had stood twenty-seven years before, when news came of the armistice in the First World War, 'the war to end war' of 1914-18. Everything was repeated—the same great crowds singing and dancing; men and women, strangers, kissing and hugging each other in frenzied joy. For hours I stood there watching, sharing their gladness that the years of horror were over; glad because a heavy weight was lifted firom our hearts. Twenty-seven years before I had been one of them and had believed that it had been a war to end war and that there was to be 'A New Jerusalem in England's green and pleasant land'; now I knew that this could not be and that while men remain as they are, sleeping machines,

while the vital spark of heavenly flame lies buried in the tomb of the body, Hfe will be the same. Watching the crowds I saw everything as it was all those years ago, everything repeated, only the exterior slightly changed.

When I returned to Harpenden that evening, windows everywhere, for the first time in nearly six years, were Ughted up.

Both of my parents were now over eighty, but while my father (who had had only one serious illness in his life as a young man) was getting feeble and could not walk very far, my mother, who, when young, was always ill with nerves and had had to spend a lot of time in bed, was now as active as many women of sixty. My father had always smoked, and drank in moderation, while my mother had often drunk immoderately, and all their Uves they both drank quantities of strong tea and coffee and ate what now would be considered too much. They were both still handsome; my mother, beautiful, and they had good hearing and good sight. They knew everyone in the town and everyone loved them. They had reached, so far as it can be attained in this world, a happy old age, and I often thought how fortunate I was, in spite of their limitations and narrow Methodism, to be bom to such parents.

For them, I was always a litde 'queer', a bit of a black sheep. My father never could understand why I had not stuck to the drapery business and become a manager of a shop, and my mother, who was very fond of me, always felt that I was not of their world. I had suggested driving her about ui my car which I had got from storage but she always put it off, so one day I asked her, 'Why don't you let me drive you? You let the other three (my brothers), but they've only driven in England while I've driven all over Europe and America. Why is it?'

'Well,' she repHed thoughtfully, 'you're rather different from the rest, aren't you?'

The difference was partly that while my father and brothers were only interested in business, business was the least of my interests; it was only a means of getting money for life needs. Their main topic of conversation was business, which rather left me only a listener, so I made frequent trips to London to meet friends of my world with whom I could exchange ideas about the arts, Hterature and affairs.

One of the furst people I looked up was my old fnend Professor Denis Saurat. He spoke of Gurdjieff and said that he would like to meet him again and asked if I could arrange it. I did try later, several times,

but events never fitted, in, and they never met again. Saurat at this time was working on a book dealing with the occult tradition in English Literature, using the word 'occult' in its real sense, 'hidden'.

Spenser especially shows its influence. In one of the cantos of the Faery Queen there is a partial description of the enneagram:

The frame thereof seemed partly circulare,
And part triangulare; O worke divine!
These two the first and last proportions are:
The one imperfect, mortale, feminine.
The other immortal, perfect, masculine:
And twixt them both a quadrate was the base
Proportioned equally be seven and nine:
Nine was the circle set in heaven's place:
All which compacted made a goodly Diapase.

Saurat traces the tradition from Chaucer down to Milton and Blake. Shakespeare (or those who wrote the plays) has a great deal of the tradition; you can go through the plays with a kind of tuning fork and with it discover the short passages written in by a Master Mind, passages sometimes put in the mouths of knaves and fools and clowns. The occult tradition in literature was particularly strong in the time of EHzabeth. After Blake, apart from hints it disappeared from literature (though books continued to be written 'about' it) until the publication of Rene Daumal's *Mount Analogue,* which is in the esoteric tradition.

Saurat showed me notes of some other books he was working on and which were eventually published—*The End of Fear, Gods of the People* and *The Christ of Chartres,* which also are in the occult tradition. At this time he was head of die Institut Fran^ais in London, but de Gaulle removed him when he came to power, because Saurat disagreed with him on some counts.

Denis Saurat, like Orage, was an extraordinary man, in Gurdjieff's defmition of the term; that is, he had individuality in place of personality and, depending on the resources of his own mind, acted on his own initiative.

As soon as the mass psychosis had died down after Germany's surrender, and life had become less abnormal, I set about trying to get to Paris, but this was impossible imless one had definite business. We had heard vaguely that Gurdjieff had gone into the country and that the Hartmanns had disappeared. Then my wife wrote me from America that Gurdjieff was back in Paris and that the Hartmaims were in their

house in Garches, an outer suburb of Paris. Although it was forbidden to send money to France I managed to get some smuggled to GurdjiefF by a sympathetic Russian friend, and I got in touch with the Hartmanns, and my wife sent food parcels from America to them. They asked me to visit them, so as soon as I was able to give the passport powers enough unreasonable reasons why they should give me a visa to Paris I went there, arriving at the Gare du Nord at midnight to be met by the Hartmanns. To meet 'Foma' again, whom I loved as I loved Orage, whom I had not seen or heard from for six long years, filled me with joy. For three days we did Httle but talk—about our hfe in America with the Ouspenskys and the Frank Lloyd Wrights, and how the Hartmanns had existed in France during the occupation.

Madame de Salzmann came to see me at the Hartmanns in Garches, so I related all that had happened in America about the Frank Lloyd Wrights, the Ouspenskys and the Orage group. They said that I should not have cut myself off from Madame Ouspensky who 'is a wonderful woman'. They were right; I ought to have acted more intelligently, from reason; not in a state of agitated feelings. And I saw how often in my life I had spoilt relations with people through reacting while in a state of hurt feelings.

GurdjiefF, they said, was still in his apartment in the Rue des Colonels Renard, still toasting the different categories of 'idiots'. Madame Salzmann had brought him a lot of new pupils shortly after the war had begxin, all French. It was from this nucleus that the large French group grew, which eventually became the head and chief centre of the study and practice of GurdjiefF's teachings; the last big group to be formed around GurdjiefF, it became the first in importance; the American, the second group to be formed and which supported GurdjiefF for nearly twenty years became the second; and the Russian and English of Ouspensky in London, which had been the first, became the third.

I supposed that I would fmd GurdjiefF as usual at his 'ofFice', the Cafe de la Paix, and made two or three visits, sitting and waiting and drinking coffee at his usual time of appearing there, without a sign of him. At last I went to his apartment, up the dark familiar stairs, and rang the shrill bell. The door was opened by himself He looked at me for a moment, then said, 'Ah! Come in.'

At once I was struck by the look in his eyes—the deep compassion and sadness. He gave me cofFee in his little store room, where we talked about America and my family, then he said that he was expecting someone but that if I was free I could come back to lunch at half past

one. It was as if the six years since I last saw him had been like last week and nothing had changed. Yet everything had changed; we had changed, tie world had changed, and generally for the worse.

When I returned, a young Frenchman who spoke fluent Enghsh opened the door. There were just the three of us at lunch. GurdjiefF told me to give the toasts of the idiots, but I had forgotten the correct sequence, and the young Frenchman took over. When it came to 'hopeless' Gurdjieff asked me, 'What idiot are you?' I had been thinking that perhaps my 'idiot' had been changed and wished to know what he thought, so I said, 'I don't know now.'

'But you should know. A man must know himself By this time you should know!'

'I don't know,' I said. 'You must tell me.'

'I not tell. You teU.'

'WeU,' I said. 'I was "hopeless".'

'Yes. You really hopeless idiot. But you still know what you wish to be? objective or subjective?'

'I know that I do not want to be an objective hopeless idiot.'

So the other guest proposed the toast: 'To the health of all hopeless idiots, both subjective and objective. That is to say those who are candidates for an honourable death or those who are destined to perish like dogs. He who works on himself will die like a man; he who does not will perish like a dog.'

I related to him the events of the past years in America, about the old Orage group and about the Ouspenskys and the Frank Lloyd Wrights. He hstened carefully, but when I began in a rather injured tone to speak about what happened with the Ouspenskys he cut in sharply: 'But that's all finished, that belongs to the past. Now must begin something new.' He began to speak of something else and we continued to talk.

The apartment was full of light and Ufe, positive vibrations from GurdjiefF and pupils who had worked there over the years, and I left tremendously stimulated and with profoiind satisfaction, but at the same time with deep remorse of conscience that came from a realization of what I was and what I ought to be—the enormous distance between Gurdjieff's knowledge and being, his degree of inner development and my own. Had I been an objective hopeless idiot I would have said,^ 'What is the use of going on? I shall never reach Gurdjieff's state of being.' I would have given up the work, or perhaps rationalized my attitude and said that now I could work alone—^which I could not have

done; but being a 'subjective hopeless idiot', I had realized the hopelessness of trying to get real and permanent inner satisfaction from the things of ordinary life; I had seen my emptiness, non-entitiness, my insignificance—and my own significance, and had gained a measure of the 'hope of consciousness' and the 'faith of consciousness', and had realized the necessity of being in touch with a group and a Teacher.

A heat wave descended on Paris, and for a few days it was so intense that it affected my health and I could not go to see Gurdjieff. Garches was on a hill and the heat bearable; but below, in the city, it was worse than a heat wave in New York. I stayed indoors during the day, listening to Hartmann composing his new opera *Esther,* or playing pieces that he had composed during the war. His music was without a trace of Gurdjieff's influence; in fact, it seemed as if he was making an effort to compose music that was entirely his own. As Orage, because of something in him, had had to work out part of his destiny through the *New English Weekly,* so Hartmann was having to follow his path through his music. Whether their writing or music would have been better had they then been in contact with Gurdjieff is not the question—they had to follow their ovra path. In this Fourth Way each, in his own fashion, has to work out in life what he has learned from the teacher as I, in my small way, was trying to do. Neither Hartmann nor Orage ever saw Gurdjieff again after they left him to stand on their own feet but the whole of their inner lives to the end of their planetary existence was permeated vwth and subject to his teaching and his influence; the same can be said of Dr. Stjoernval and Alexander de Salzmann.

When the heat lessened I again went to the apartment and Gurdjieff asked, 'Why you not come before? Where have you been?'

Gradually I learned something about what he had been doing during the war. Madame de Salzmann had brought many of her pupils to him. With these he had started a new group and had worked intensively with them and had taught them new movements, at the SaUe Pleyel. These movements were different from the dances of the demonstrations given in Paris and New York, the ones we had learnt; movements really, rather than dances, some very complicated, very beautiful, very impressive. Many of them were based on the enneagram. After seeing them and listening to Gurdjieff answering questions of the pupils at meals, I realized more than ever his power as a teacher. After working nearly twenty years in Paris, making apparently no impression on the French, where his pupils had been Russian, English and then Americans,

he had seized the occasion of this new material and had created something vital, of use for his work, with these young French people, which in the course of time has, as I say, become the chief of the three main Gurdjieff groups.

I spoke to Gurdjieff about my living in Paris and working with his group. He agreed that I could. 'But what about family?' he asked. 'They in America. You bring them here? You have business here?'

I said that I saw no way yet of getting a living in Paris.

'First responsibihty is to family,' he said. 'Perhaps you start group in London.' It was a long time before I was able to have groups.

I returned to England and resumed my spraying activities in the factory. Life, generally, was in a state of chaos; we were like ants, busily engaged in trying to build a new hill out of the ruins of the old. As for the 'ideas', I was completely out of touch with Ouspensky's people at Lyne Place and knew only two people in London who were interested in the ideas, so I set to work to get myself established and to get my family over from America.

In the meantime I continued reading the *Mahahharata* and *Beelzebub's Tales.* When I thought about the tremendous blind forces working according to law that all the time are trying to make us more mechanical I was appalled. Yet when Jesus was asked, if it were so difficult for the elect to be saved, what happens to the multitude, he answered that with God all things are possible.

So with the exercises that GurdjiefFhad given us from time to time. Although I had done them regularly every day, the more difficult ones since 1930, they never became easier. One of these exercises is similar to something that is said in *The Seaet of the Golden Flower.* The exercises, like the movements and the dances, have to be done exactly as laid down; they are based on fundamental principles, thousands of years old, and being so, they never become easy. One has to mobilize all one's powers of concentration and attention to keep the devil of wandering associations away. But the constant doing of the exercises, day after day, year after year, brings iimer power, wiU, attention, the power of concentration, understanding of oneself and others; it is a process of building one's house upon the rock of the teaching that exists from everlasting to everlasting, instead of the shifting sands of ordinary restless outer existence.

As an accomplished pianist has to spend part of each day at the piano' so in this work one has to spend part of each jday in exercises and in pondering, otherwise one slips back. With this there are also periods

of greater, more intense effort and also periods of purposeful relaxation. Yet time has to be spent on the needs of the organism, 'getting everjr-^g really necessary for the planetary body', for this carcase that we inhabit—for its needs, not its gratifications, since our organism is the only thing we have to work with. Without the organism we would have no sight, no hearing, no taste, no feeling, no thought—only that small something that is the reality of us and which can persist and which contains the results of real work on ourselves together with our potentialities—that something which is the 'real Self of me', which may take on another body, become coated with it, and which again has to begin to pay for its arising, to purge itself from the undesirable elements still clinging to it, and to pay for the sins, still unredeemed, of its former organisms.

So, while spending part of each day in exercises and pondering and part in reading *Beelzebub's Tales* and *The Mahabharata,* I spent most of my waking time at the factory, spraying, to get money to keep my organism supplied with its needs, and the organisms of my family in America.

2

DORSET
SPRAYING BASKETS

WHILE STAYING WITH FRIENDS near Corfc Castle in Dorset it happened that through a chance remark which set in motion a series of events, I came in possession of a field—a three-acre field on the south slope of the downs near Corfe Castle; one of the most beautiful fields I haye ever seen. From the top of the slope by the lane sheltered by a hedge of flaming gorse you could see for ten miles and the towers of five village churches. At the lower end of the field was a bluebell wood and a spring. A walk of fifteen minutes took you to the top of the downs and one of the finest views in England; on one side the whole of Poole Harbour and the country round it to Badbury Rings, on the other side to the open sea. And not a sound but the wind in the grass or the song of a lark. On the very top were the three mounds, graves of men dead three thousand years ago, that I have spoken of

I did not know what to do with the field. It had been worked by a farmer who for years had grown crops on it with plenty of artificial fertiUzers so, having seen the good results of farming without chemical fertilizers at the Putney School farm and the harm done by an over-use, and having just read *Plowman's Folly* by an American farmer, I decided on an experiment. I had the field disced, sown to a grass mixture without fertilizer, disced the crop, then had it re-sown and let it out for grazing. The result was that the farmer's cows in the next field, sensing die wholesome taste of organically grown grass, constantly broke through the hedge to feed on my grass, and when I complained, the farmer, who was what they used to call 'a gentleman' angrily replied, "Well, what do you expect? It's a great temptation to cows to have a field of grass like that close by.' He had to strengthen his hedges.

In time, the field, and the house I later built on it, became a sort of symbol of intense effort, a struggle vdth myself

I returned to Harpenden. The first thing was to get my family from America and to that end I began to look for a living place in London. I

searched London on and off for six months, but houses were scarce, and as people were returning to London to live, prices were going up. At the end of the six months, after seeing fifty or sixty places, I found a house in Chelsea near the river and took it by sharing it with a firiend. By doing a lot of work on it myself my family were able to live there in comparative comfort for twelve years, with three bedrooms, a ***living*** room, a kitchen and bathroom, at a rent ***of*** a week including rates. Then for the next eight years rent free, by letting part of the house. Up to this time my longest stay in any place since the age of ten had been three years, and then only on two occasions—I was a tent dweller, living Uke 'those who are about to depart'. It was not that T chose to be always on the move, but something within me; whether it was the nomadic instinct of the distant forebears of my Arab grandmother, or planetary influences in the pattern of my life, I don't know.

My wife and younger son arrived in October—the elder staying on at the Putoey School—and with their return a great blank in my emotional life was filled, a deep need was satisfied. We stayed with my parents for a few days then moved to my friend's country house in the Chiltems, then to friends in St. John's Wood, and fmally into the house in Chelsea. After all the break-ups, the partings and meetings and again partings, the wanderings, the turmoil, the outer and inner strivings, here we were again in London—everything the same yet everything changed.

Though now I had a setded home I still had no settled occupation, and never was to have. I had decided to set myself the task of continuing to live the essential life I had begun in America, that is to get enough money to provide for the needs of my family and to get it by doing only those jobs that I really wished to do. I was able to get enough money for hfe-needs from my basket-spraying business for the next three years and even to own a car. Little by litde Hfe began to flow more or less relatively normally. But the times were difficult; food, clothing and materials of all kinds were scarce and one had constandy to exercise all one's ingenuity to overcome the restrictions imposed by people in government offices who, to keep their jobs for which we were paying them, made thousands of useless rules and regulations—^the bureaucrats. Had I obeyed all these rules and regulations I could not even have kept my family aHve but, like many others, by pitting my brains against dull officialdom I was able to provide for my family quite well.

To sell my baskets I travelled about London visiting the big general stores. At one big store, as I was talking to the woman buyer and showing my samples, she looked at me and bmrst out into a fit of hysterical laughter and went out of the room—at my appearance and manner, I suppose, which was totally different from the average commercial traveller. Her assistant grinned and went out also but came back in a few minutes with a large order, enough to keep me going for some weeks. The baskets I bought from the actual makers in Somerset, wicker baskets made by men and women sitting on the floor with their boss, rapidly weaving by hand. All told I sold a thousand dozen, and as I had no overheads except my fare to Luton and the cost of the cellulose and baskets I did very well, yet I still could not overcome my dislike of going cap in hand to the buyers; there was always the automatic habitual resistance that I had first acquired as a boy of fourteen in the draper's shop. One day I was sitting in a grubby tea-shop in Balham, coping with the inner resistance to calling on another draper's shop, and comparing my life with the pleasant days on the magazine in New York, with the Frank Lloyd Wrights at Taliesin, and the useful rewarding times at the Putney School in Vermont. The wheel of repetition had again full turned and I was trudging the streets of London with a box of samples, interviewing buyers for orders. A bleak depression settled on me on this cold winter's day in the Balham High Street; it was as if once more I was caught up in circumstances from which I could not escape. Then, at this moment, when things seemed at their worst, the miracle happened—I began to be fdled with a kind of light, with real hope—the hope of consciousness; with real faith. Again I saw the whole of life, and everything was revealed to me. I understood. I saw that all this petty outer life that seems so important is really nothing, a passing thing, and that the inner life is the reahty. Again, it was as if time had had a stop; a vision of the Holy Grail, a glimpse of His Endlessness, a moment of real consciousness in these dull squalid surroundings, a moment such as I had had among the beauties of TaHesin; an actual contact with the higher centres. I sat there in a state of ecstasy among the clatter of cups and spoons, babble of talk and noise of trams, absorbing my state to the utmost, savouring it and thanking God. I could not describe a hundredth part of what went on in me. The intense ecstatic state passed, but the effect remained and I sat quietly for a long time pondering the words of Jesus Christ: 'Again I say unto you, watch!'

An hour or so later there happened one of those strange coincidences that often arise. I was walking down the street looking for a certain shop, and after searching for some time turned a comer and saw a httle man, a Jew, getting out of a car. 'I'll ask him,' I thought and went up and began, 'I wonder if you can tell me . . then stopped. 'Why,' I said, 'it's Metz.' 'Yes,' he replied, 'and you're Charles Nott.' It was almost twenty years since I had seen him and that was at the Prieure in Fontainebleau where he had spent a year. I had even forgotten his existence. We went off for a drink together and he began to talk of GurdjiefF. 'You know,' he said, 'I shall never forget what Gurdjieff did for me. When I went to the Prieure I had no confidence in myself, I could hardly speak to people and couldn't hold a job. He changed something in me, or he helped me to change something in myself, I don't know what, but I was different when I left the Prieure. I came back to London and borrowed some money and started a shop here, and in six months had repaid the loan. I got married and now have a family and a nice house and two shops, and I owe it all to what GurdjiefF did to me. Yet I've never seen him or heard anything of him from the day I left, nor have I met anyone in the work imtil I met you this morning, but I've often thought I would like to do something for him.'

I then told him all I knew about GurdjiefF and what had happened to myself and to our mutual friends of the Prieure days, and ended by saying, 'What can you do for GurdjiefF.? What can any of us do? There is only one thing at present, we can give him money for his work. At least, you can, perhaps; I can only get just enough to keep my family.'

He took up the idea and offered to pay my expenses if I would go to Paris with him. The upshot was that we went to Paris. He gave GurdjiefF money and we had an interesting and profitable time at the apartment in the Rue des Colonels Renard.

One result of die experience in the noisy little cafe in Balham was that I understood Blake when he said that he saw an angel in a tree at Peckham.

There are angels that may be seen by some in the trees in Battersea and Chelsea. And this, for no reason, reminds me of an incident. My neighbour in Oakley Street, besides letting rooms, collected antiques, and one day discovered in an antique shop in Chelsea an image of the Virgin Mary, very old and valuable. He gave it to the local Catholic

Church and the Pope, hearing about it presented him with a medal. One day, a Chelsea lady was in Gladys's sweet shop round the comer. She turned to her companion and said, 'Have you heard? The Pope's given Mr. X. a medal. Yes. He found a virgin in Chelsea and presented her to the Church!'

2

SOME NOTES ON THE GNOSTICS

SOME HAVE SAID that there is nothing new in GurdjieFF's ideas, and in a sense this is true, since they are as old as man. What is new is the interpretation—^which makes them new for us. As one understands one truth after another one says, I've always known this, but till now I've never been conscious of it.'

It was while I was studying that difficult chapter in *Beelzebub's Tales* 'The Law of Heptaparaparshinokh', the law of the octave, that I came across the following in a magazine:

'J. A. R. Newlands was the first man in our time to appreciate that the chemical elements fall naturally into families and groups. Newlands also noticed that, if the elements were arranged in a certain way, the same physical and chemical properties reappeared after each interval of eight. He therefore called his discovery the "Law of Octaves". Developed by others later it eventually emerged as the "Periodic Table", which has proved of immense practical value, and enabled the existence of unknown elements to be predicted with remarkable accuracy.

'A Londoner, bom in 1837 of Scottish and Italian parentage, Newlands was educated at the Royal College of Chemistry. He fought with Garibaldi in Italy but returned to London to practise as an analytical chemist. Later he taught chemistry at Southwark Grammar School and elsewhere but finally became chief chemist at a sugar refinery at Victoria docks. Though his Law of Octaves was laughed at when he first propounded it to the Chemical Society in 1864, time proved him to be right. In 1887 he was awarded the Davy Medal of the Royal Society for the discovery of which, for 23 years, had earned him little but ridicule. He died in 1898.'

Together with the law of the octave I was studying the third striving

of objective morality: to know ever more and more concerning the laws of World-Creation and World Maintenance, which is connected with the law of the octave, and of the law of reciprocal feeding, of how and why the world was created and how it is kept going, and its relation to man.

I read all I could get hold of about the ideas of creation and of the three forces and made many notes. The following is a somewhat scattered collection, chiefly from the Gnostics.

Some of the Gnostics said that the Father was the creator, others the Son, others the Serpent, others said that a woman was the creator—Pistis Sophia; others said that the creator was Satan or the Devil—the denying or the passive force.

Among certain Greek tribes Priapus was worshipped as 'the good one', the creator; his statue, with its enormous genitals painted red, was placed in gardens. Everywhere on earth the worship by conscious men of God as Creator of the universe, and of sex as the divine force, became, on lower levels, the worship by unconscious men of gods of fertility and the powers of Nature. In many ancient reHgions is to be found the idea of a Supreme Unknowable Being above all who, dividing himself into male and female, produced God the Creator. In none of them, and only among certain European rationahsts, scientists or Communists is to be found the idea that the universe just happened.

According to Milton:

> **The Father first they sung, Omnipotent**
> **Immutable, Immortal, Infinite**
> **Eternal King! Thee, Author of all Being**
> **Fountain of Light, Thyself invisible. . . .**

He also speaks of the Unknowable God, and his Son—God the Creator.

Some of the Gnostic stories of creation are connected with the Law of Three. The Naasenes say that the First Cause was a Man and Son of Man who was divided into three—mental, psychic and earthly. They called him Adamas, and said that the knowledge of him is the beginning of ableness to know God. The three parts came together in Jesus, the perfected man. This knowledge, they say, was handed down by James the brother of Jesus to Mariamne.

The Serbians said that there are three definite principles of the universal, each having boundless powers. Everything that we perceive or

do not perceive is formed to become each of the principles. The substances of the principles are light and darkness; between the light above and the darkness below is pure spirit which is like the fragrance of balsam or incense and penetrates everything. The darkness, which is sensible, is a fearful water, and knows that if the light is taken away it vdll remain desolate and inert; so the darkness tries in every way to retain within itself the brilliance of the Light and the Fragrance of the Spirit. From the three principles or forces all things are made. They said that from the first fusing of the forces or principles there appeared the pattern or seal of heaven and earth shaped like a womb; and then the patterns of everything appeared, and all things were made, in the same way.

The Docetae taught that the three principles or three forces came into being from the First Principle, and from these all was created. But the First Principle, God, abides alone.

The only begotten Son was conceived by the three forces. He was wiser and better than the Father. (There is a correspondence here when Beelzebub said that Rakhoorkh, the 'result' of Gornahoor Harkharkh, was better than his 'producer'.)

Marcion said there were two powers: Love and Strife. Strife rends things apart. Love draws them together. A third force results from these two.

The Manichees considered our planet to be the worst of all possible worlds. Some said that the imiverse, being created by the denying force, was evil and that therefore all creation was evil, and some carried this to a Hteral, logical conclusion by refusing to marry and have children, and by being castrated.

Many of the ideas in these early teachings are similar to those in *Beelzebub's Tales;* the idea of the Choot-God-Litanical period, of our Unique Burden Bearing Endlessness, of a suffering Creator, and of our being able to leam to bear our small portion of the imiversal suffering and so reheve His Endlessness of part of His burden.

In connection with this, Gurdjieff once was telling EUzabeth Gordon, who was with him from 1932 until her death in 1946, that he had made a mistake. He went on to say that even God made a mistake, one big mistake. Miss Gordon replied that she thought God had done everything necessary to forestall the effect of the Merciless Heropass—'Time, that wears away every hving thing'. Gurdjieff said, 'Yes, everything but one thing; he made an umbrella when he shoxJd have made an enema, and now he is idiot and like everyone else sits in galoshes.' This

seemingly senseless expression puzzled me; only after a long time did I begin to perceive a great truth in the parable.

Valentinus said that above all is the Father from whom came the Demiurge the Creator, and from the Demiurge came evil as well as good. Christ came from that Fullness in the Pleroma to save the Spirit which had gone astray, the spirit that is in our inmost parts. This will be saved but the flesh will perish. He also said that ours is the lowest and last formed of the planets.

There is the idea that almost from the beginning of creation something went wrong, something imforeseen entered into the growing universe—something tindesirable, something evil. Gurdjieff speaks of this as the Choot-God-Litanical period whose meaning is in the three names. This apparently was before the appearance of Kundabuffer on our planet.

Carpocrates the Gnostic taught that we must work out all our transgressions, but that it is possible to pay for or work out many transgressions at once by conscious effort and so shorten the years of our exile in this world below.

The Stoics also taught, as did Krishna, that men must fulfil the lot foreordained for them; even if men do not wish to follow a course of action, they are compelled to do what is foreordained. A conscious man can, to a certain extent, choose; an unconscious man cannot.

The idea of reciprocal feeding has always been known to esoteric and even to occult schools.

Robert Fludd, the seventeenth-century alchemist, says:

For know, whatever was created needs
To be satisfied and fed: of elements,
The grosser feeds the purer; earth the sea,
Earth and sea feed air; the air those fires
Ethereal; and as lowest, first the moon;
Whence in her visage round those spots impurged
Vapours, not yet in her substance turned.
Nor doth the moon no nourishment exhale
From her moist continent to higher orbs.
The sun, that light imparts to all, receives
From his alumental recompense
In humid exhalations, and at ev'n
Sups with the Ocean.

Connected with this is the idea of man's being of use and help to' God, that God needs a certain help from man. Hassein in *Beelzebub's Tales* speaks of 'days for helping God'.

Silesitis says:

I know that without me
The life of God were lost,
Were I destroyed he must
Perforce give up the ghost.'

'God could not without me
A single insect make.
I must sustain it too
Or it wiE straightway break.

GurdjiefF, in *Beelzebub's Tales,* relates that in the beginning, when His Endlessness decided to create the universe, he created it by an act of pure will, consciously; but, after the second order suns appeared, creation, according to the law of the octave, became partly automatic; as the tremendous note 'doh' descended, down the scale, creation became more and more automatic or mechanical until it reached, in our own ray, the earth and moon. The conscious positive active force that begins in the Sun Absolute becomes, in the dovm-flovnng of the octave, on our planet the denying, passive force—the devil, Satan. (In the Bible Satan is spoken of as a Son of God. The Son as the denying force.)

Since all creation comes from God—everything is God. God is the Megalocosmos, and thus, in the flowing down of the law of the octave God becomes the Devil.

Men have in them emanations and radiations from the Sun Absolute and other suns and planets, they must therefore struggle against the denying force, the down-flowing, the involution of the octave, and strive with the help of the affirming evolutionary force to ascend against dhis current, against God as it were, in order at some time to arrive at union with God.

The idea of two Gods is often mentioned in the fragments of the Gnostics—the Ineffable, and the Just and Suffering Creator. The fall of man and a way to redemption; of the Ray of Creation; the laws of Three and Seven; of the idea that something undesirable became mixed in our making; that we must pay for our sins both voluntary and involuntary; and the idea of a practical method for self-perfecting. They also speak of the 'World-Sound'. All these ideas are developed in detail in *Beelzebub's Tales.*

The idea of Good and Evil runs through all rehgions and real teachings.

According to the Hebrews, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil represents a universal understanding of all things—^good and bad.

Our remote ancestors, almost the first beings, could not have been allowed to acquire this understanding.

In one of the Gnostic teachings it says that Christ came to free the universe from the evil that had entered into it, Christ beiug the Method of Self-Perfecting. The Christ descended into Jesus at his baptism. He understood then what he had to do—why he was sent from above. There are some wonderful poems in the Gnostic teaching—'The Hymn of the Robe of Glory' and 'The Gnostic Crucifixion' are two.

The Gnostic teachings were imderstood and practised by the early Christians but around 170 **A.D.** the 'Fathers' of the Church dubbed the Gnostics heretics and turned them out of the Church.

Some modem writers, not understanding the inner teaching of the Gnostics, complain of the 'fantastical' notions and ideas; but they certainly are not more fantastical than the notions of the Fathers of the organized church about Paradise, Purgatory and Hell.

Fragments of the Gnostic teaching were preserved by a happening in which the unlucky became the lucky. Their sayings are said to have been collected by Saint Hippolytus—who, as they used to say 'flourished', that is 'existed'—about 200 years after Jesus Christ had died. This Hippolytus had joined the small Christian church and seeking power, was anxious to become pope; but he had a rival, CaUixtus, who also wanted to become pope. They caused a lot of disturbance in the streets of Rome by their frequent brawling, and eventually the authorities exiled the two of them to the salt mines in Sardinia. When later they were allowed to return, Hippolytus got himself made pope of the Roman faction, CaUixtus of the Greek. Hippolytus, to strengthen his position, collected what he could of the various Gnostic and other teachings and put them into a book called Philosophumena—a refutation of all heresies. He not only included Greek, Hebrew and Egyptian teachings in the heresies but CaUixtus as weU, calling him antichrist and blasphemer. Almost aU the written records of the Gnostic teachings were destroyed by the 'Fathers of the Church'. Only the refutations of Hippolytus and some other fragments in writing were preserved.

CaUixtus was given charge of the cemetery in Rome which stiU bears his name. After their deaths, CaUixtus and Hippolytus, because they had been exiled by the authorities, were set up as martyrs and later made saints.

It is to St. Hippolytus that I am indebted for solving a problem that long puzzled me: Why did the foUowers of Pythagoras refuse to eat beans? He says it was because candidates for government offices were

elected by the dropping of beans in a bowl; then, as now, as soon as men were elected as rulers, power went to their heads; they became corrupted and even temporarily or permanently insane, seeing things only from their own point of view. The Pythagoreans, who tried to live their lives according to objective reason and sane logic would have nothing to do with them; and by refusing to eat beans, they constantly reminded themselves that they must not be identified with ordinary life.

St. Hippolytus also points out the resemblance of the growing beans to human sex organs. In broad beans especially the growing pods on the stalk resemble the male organ in various stages of tumescence; and part of the bean itself, when ripe, to the vagina. He also says that if beans are chewed and left in the sun, the smell resembles that of human sperm.

2

BUILDING A HOUSE

ABOUT THIS TIME I began to see that I need not be indentified with and become a slave to any business or circumstance. It was as if something were changing in me and that the struggles and strivings of the past twenty years were beginning to have results. I felt a new and growing freedom—an iimer and outer freedom. I was far from having arrived at a state of perfection or higher consciousness, but something was happening, and some special kind of effort was needed to carry me over into another octave.

After a lot of thought a plan, which may have been the shadow of a coming event, began to form in my mind. It was to build a house on my three-acre field near Corfe Castle. Ever since I was a boy of fourteen holidaying in Swanage, Dorset had always had a great attraction for me, especially later when I was learning farming near Winterbourne Whitechurch as a youth, Uving with the farmer and the farm workers. There were no buses then and the valley road to Swanage did not exist, and there were few cars. People still travelled to the markets in the 'tranter's' (the carrier's) cart, or van. The counties of England still possessed their own essence, personality and individuality^, and their own accent and customs and appearance. Dorset was still permeated with the vibrations and the atmosphere of the ancient civiHzation of the Druids and the later monasteries, both long since disappeared. Its neighbour, Wiltshire, was a sort of inland Dorset.

Even when I was very young and knew nothing, I used to feel, walking over certain parts of the downs, this ancient influence. I, having been brought up in the darkness of nineteenth-century education believed with the rest that the ancient Britons were savages who painted themselves with the blue dye called woad, and the cruel and superstitious religious priests, the Druids, sacrificed and burnt people in cages; and that oidy when the Romans came did the savages learn the blessings of civilization. But almost always the truth about history is die opposite of what popular education teaches. The religion of the Druids

was far higher in concept than that of the Romans, and their unwritten literature far richer. In the latter days of the Druids, when their religion had degenerated, people may have been burnt as sacrifices to the gods of fertility. But even so, how few compared with the sacrifices of the christians to their God; for fifteen himdred years they have been torturing and burning heretics by the thousand, and reached the grand climax of six milHon 'heretics' offered up as sacrifices to the German gods in the space of six years. No pagan or heathen nation can compete with this. Of course they had not the means, they did not have the wonderfiil weapons and chemicals that we have for killing people. Even the Romans had to do all their killing of each other by hand, a long and laborious process, while now, two men can kill a hundred thousand in a few moments. In our wonderful world it seems that the more people that can be killed in the shortest time with the least possible effort is esteemed the highest civilization.

Well then, it happened that my wife got a satisfying and interesting job at Hanford School in Dorset, some fifteen miles from my three acres of land on the Dovms. (There is a good description of this old manor house in Richard Hughes's *Fox in the Attic).* So we planned to leave Chelsea and build a house on our land near Corfe Castle, I to run a small-holding, she to teach music. We had no money apart from an income which provided just food and lodging and an ancient car, and it was extremely difficult and usually impossible to get a permit from the Labour government to built a private house. The problem was how to build a decent house vnthout money while keeping to regulations and bye laws. The case seemed hopeless. The only thing to do was to make a task of it—to set myself a task of building the best post-war house in Dorset.

It took a year of difficult negotiation to get even a permit to start, as it was the custom for an official 'no' to be given to any request.

"While the house was building I Hved in a lined corrugated hut, ten feet by twelve, that I had put up by the spring, a pleasant, quiet, secluded place, and I went up to London for a week or so at a time.

Labour and money were scarce, but I managed to borrow enough money to make a start, and when the walls were up a mortgage company made a loan. I got a jobbing tiuilder, a local stone mason and a labourer to help, and worked on the place myself. The stone came from the quarries at Langton Matravers and the shingles for the roof from Oregon, which shingles I nailed myself since there was not a shingler in the district. I wanted it to be the best and most modem house in Dorset,

and I began by discussing it with the town planners, by visitijig the building centre in London, reading pamphlets and books, and so got hold of the then latest ideas. But all kinds of obstacles and frustrations arose. It took three years to fmish the house and cost *£2,000,* though a local builder told me it would have cost him ^£4,000. And it was an almost ideal house.

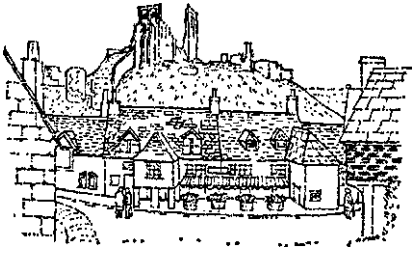
However, a year after I began it, when it was half finished, my wife got ill and had to give up her job and return to Chelsea. She was imable to take up work again for some time and I returned to Chelsea too, and soon realized that we would never be able to make enough money to live on at Corfe Castle. I had several good offers for the unfmished house and the land, and ordinarily speaking, it would have been sensible and profitable to have taken an offer and given up, but so often in my life I had taken the easy way and given up a course of action; now I resolved to accept the difficult task and see it through.

Difficulties arose, both physical and psychological. It was similar to the task of fmding the spring at the Prieure, which I have spoken about in *Teachings of Gurdjieff,* yet more difficult since I did not have Gurdjieff to prod me. But I had more inner strength now, and so was able to overcome the resisting denying force in myself—the fits of deep depression, the frustrations and hopelessness. I had a conscious wish and, as Gurdjieff says, 'with conscious wish everything comes'.

When I had nailed the last often thousand shingles on the roof I got a room ready upstairs and lived in it, cooking on a primus stove. On a cold morning in late December I woke up to fmd the country beautiful OTid desolate, covered with snow; the one thing needed to complete a period of terrible depression that I had been going through. I dressed and began to make tea among the cooking utensils on the floor, and as I leaned down I found myself repeating a sentence of St. Teresa, 'God walks among the pots and pipkins'; as I said it, light flooded my whole being, and the depression disappeared. I sat down and let the light pour through me, and although I was aware of everything around me it was again as if time had had a stop. Again, it was a state beyond self-consciousness—a moment of objective consciousness. Sitting quietly, feeling the force filling me, there came an understanding of Gurdjieff's words in the chapter on Purgatory in *Beelzebub's Tales:* 'And three-brained beings who have attained a greater self-awareness eagerly apd even joyfully permit during their ordinary being-existence, for the reaHzation of these aspirations (self-development), these mpleasant-nesses to their presences which proceed from the accepted privations

to their planetary body, because such beings already well understand and instinctively feel that this lower being body of theirs is, in their own sacred law of Triamazikamno, the indispensable source for a certain kind of denying manifestation, and as such always must and will manifest only as denying for the affirming part, that is, that this lower part of theirs must be obhged to be always opposite to what is required for them by their higher being part.'

The words became *real—I* had realized an objective truth. Perhaps the whole process of building the house had been organized for this one realization, which I had instinctively felt from the first. It had become a crystallized truth. The effect of the experience lasted strongly the whole of the morning; and when the glory passed I took up my task again with renewed faith and hope.



Corfe Castle

2

PARIS WITH GURDJIEFF. GROUPS

EARLY IN 1949 I had heard that Ouspensky had returned to England. A meeting had been held and he had shocked his pupils by telling them that he had never taught the system and that they must begin all over again. It may have been that he had realized that he had never taught the *Method.* He certainly had taught what he called the system, and his older pupils were well grounded in it, but he had not taught the method of inner development through self-sensing, self-remembering and self-observation: Conscious Labour and Voluntary Suffering, and the five strivings of Objective MoraHty, which are the basis for all inner work.

Ouspensky had returned from America a sick and dying man. Madame Ouspensky remained in New Jersey and continued to supervise the work at Franklin Farms.

The only direct news I had had of Ouspensky was from the Hartmaims, who stayed with us in London several times after the war. They visited Ouspensky, and told me that he was angry with me for saying that his pupils had got stuck and that the only hope for them was to meet Gurdjieff and read *Beelzebub's Tales;* and he sent a message asking me not to speak to any of his pupils. In any case they avoided me, even when I encoimtered some of them occasionally in public.

Then, one day, I read in the paper that he had died, and a deep feeling of compassion came over me and I wished that I had been able to have kept in contact with him. He was a good man and helped hundreds of people. His attitude towards the ideas was one of absolute integrity and the evidence is *Fragments of an Unknown Teaching,* a masterpiece of objective reporting. But some kink in him had caused him to reject Gurdjieff as a teacher. Ouspensky always had wanted to found a reHgious philosophical school; and he had founded a very successful one, with a large organization in England and America. Yet it had not given him real 'being-satisfaction'. At the end of his life he had, it seems, come

to realize that a philosophical school was not the basically important thing for him. It may be that he, like others, had had to work out something from the pattern of his Hfe: his philosophical school and all his theories in connection with it, and next time' he may be better eqtupped to understand the real work of the iimer Teaching.

"When Ouspensky died there were a thousand people in London studying his exposition of Gurdjieff's teaching—^working at Lyne Place and meeting at the large hall in Colet Gardens. Of the immediate followers of Gurdjieff, there were about two hundred in Paris, New York and London.

I attended the requiem service for Ouspensky in the Russian Church in PimHco, a church which had many associations for me—^weddings of friends, Easter services, funerals. And now this church, whose very stones were permeated with the good vibrations of thousands of people who for brief periods had been there and had received something not connected vrith ordinary life, has been pulled down and the space turned into a parking place for motor coaches.

About three weeks after Ouspensky's funeral I was in GurdjiefF's apartment in Paris and, who should I see, to my astonishment, but some of Ouspensky's close pupils, one of whom I had last seen at Franklin Farms, New Jersey, on the day I left. However, since one was constantly confronted with extraordinary and unexpected events in connection with Gurdjieff I kept my astonishment to myself, but thought, 'How strange, these people, who would not speak to me because they considered that I had disobeyed one of Ouspensky's rules, are themselves talking to Gurdjieffand reading the typescript *of Beelzebub's Taksl'* At lunch Gurdjieff explained the ritual of the science of idiotism to them, some were given their categories of 'idiot' and their healths were drunk. After lunch we crowded into the sitting room and sat quietly. Then Gurdjieff began to play on his small hand organ, moving the bellows with one hand, playing with the other slow melodies, with few notes, but producing such poignant sounds that some of the Ouspensky pupils began to weep. He touched their higher emotions as never before in all their years in the work had they been touched.

Gurdjieff constantly reminded his pupils: 'You must feel, you must feel, your mind is a luxury. You must suffer remorse in your feelings.'

The reason for the appearance of Ouspensky's pupils in Gurdjieff's apartment was that after Ouspensky's death Madame Ouspensky had advised them all to go to Gurdjieff. It was a big shock for them, after being told for years to have nothing to do with Gurdjieff or his pupils.

I spoke to some of them, and said, 'Now we are all in the same boat.' They replied, 'Yes indeed.'

Two weeks later, with three others, I was at supper at GurdjiefF's table when the bell sounded. Someone answered the door and came back and said, 'Mr. and Mrs. Bennett are here with their pupils.' There were about twenty. Room was made for them at the table and food brought in, and they began to eat. No one spoke. After a period of silence during which Gurdjieff observed them with attention, he began to talk to Mr. Bennett about the science of idiotism, and the categories of 'idiots', and appointed Mr. Bennett toast master for the occasion. When Gurdjieff asked him which category he belonged to, of co.urse he did not know. Gurdjieff told him, and at once, as it happened to everyone to whom he gave their 'idiot', Mr. Beimett's character was made startlingly clear to some of us.

After dinner we went to the Salle Pleyel to watch the French group doing new movements. Then Gurdjieff called Mr. Bennett and his pupils and assigned each one to a French pupil, who showed them the postures, gestures and movements of one of the dances.

A talk on the dances and movements was given later by an old pupil who was Gurdjieff's 'right hand', which supplemented the talk given in Leslie Hall, New York, at the first demonstration there.

Sacred dances and movements have always played an important part in the work of real schools. They express an unknown dimension and reveal what is hidden from the average man—the reality of a higher level of being. If we are able to pass from our ordinary level to a higher, it means that something in us is changed. The changes are governed by definite cosmic laws, and a knowledge of these laws exists and can be discovered. Gurdjieff in his early travels and sojourns in temples and monasteries in the Middle and Far East and Central Asia witaessed and took part in various ritual dances and ceremonies; and he realized that the dance could be used as a language to express knowledge of a higher order—cosmic knowledge. This language is mathematical, according to exact measure. Every movement has its appointed place, its duration and weight. The combinations and sequences are mathematically calculated. Postures and attitudes are arranged to produce definite, predetermined emotions. In dieSe, he who is watching them may also participate—^he may read them as a script, in which the higher emotions and higher mind can take part.

In creating these movements each detail has a meaning, the smallest elemej-t is taken into account, nothing is left to chance or to iinagination. There is only one possible gesture, posture and rhythm with which to represent a given human or cosmic situation. Another gesture, posture or movement would not present

the truth--it would be false. If there is the least miscalculation in the composition of a movement the dance would be desecrated, and fantasy would take the place of knowledge. Mr. Gurdjieff,during a long life devoted to study and questioning, mastered the principles of those sacred dances which constitute a branch of objective art. Understanding the principles, he was able to demonstrate truths through these movements.

The student, even from the beginning, through the high degree of sustained attention required to perfect himself in the movements, is using one of the specific means of self-knowledge, and of attaining 'the cognition and comprehension of reality.'

The following morning I was at the Cafe des Acacias with Gurdjieff drinking coffee, and said, 'Mr. Bennett and his organization and all these pupils could be a very good thing for the work; they seem to have money too.'

Gurdjieff replied laconically, 'Beimett is small thing. Useful for money, yes. He will bring me a thousand pupils and out of these I shall choose perhaps ten.'

This summed up the whole of Mr. Bennett's future association with Gurdjieff and his teaching. His personal association with Gurdjieff was for a period of a year and a half, with intervals, till Gurdjieff died. Twenty-five years before he had been at the Prieure for about two weeks.

I saw a great deal of Mr. Bennett and his pupils after this, at Coombe Springs. My wife, with Gurdjieff's permission, taught some of the dances there; but Mr. Beimett soon parted from the Gurdjieff organization and worked on his own. Coombe Springs then became for a time dhe headquarters of Subudh, dien a centre of the Sufis. Eventually it fell into the hands of what are called 'developers' who turned it into more 'beehives' for the expanding population.

With the coming of those Ouspensky pupils who had felt the need for a deeper knowledge of the teaching, Gurdjieff decided that the time had come to publish *Beelzebub's Tales to his Grandson, All and Everything,* the book that we had been reading in typescript since 1924. Mr. Beimett was appointed Gurdjieff's representative in London and began to work on the publicity with an article in *Everybody* magazine. 'This wiU be read by eight million people,' he said.

'And how many wiU respond? I asked.

• 'Hundreds, thousands perhaps.'

I disagreed with him, and with the large and garish posters which were designed.

'We want to reach the man in the street', he said.

'But this work is not for the man in the street.'

'Gurdjieff wants pubHcity', said Mr. Bennett.

'Not this kind of pubHcity. You don't cast pearls before swine.'

Actually, eight letters were received as a result of the article. The posters were never used. A week or so later two of Ouspensky's pupils were appointed GurdjiefF's representatives and, after his death supervised the pubhcation in New York and London of *Beelzebub's Tales.*

I spoke to Gurdjieff about the articles that were appearing in London. He asked why were these people, who hardly knew him, writing articles about him in England? I said that they probably thought he was becoming 'news' and wanted to be in on it.

Frank Pinder, who was there, asked Gurdjieff 'Why do you publish *Beelzebub's Tales* now? Every page has grammatical errors, faulty pimctuation and even mistakes. It ought to be properly edited.'

'It's a rough diamond,' said Gurdjieff. 'There's not time now to edit it. It wiU have to go.'

Why let them pubHsh it at all?' asked Pinder. 'They'U only spoU it.'

'They've spoilt better things than that,' replied Gurdjieff. 'Now necessary to pubHsh.'

And so the book that for twenty years Orage and his group had worked on, and had raised the money for printing, and which had been denied to Ouspensky's pupils, was now being pubHshed by the efforts chiefly of these same pupils.

Those Ouspensky pupils who had not joined Gurdjieff stayed on at Lyne Place for a time; eventually it was sold and became a sanatorium for mental iavahds; the Prieure was a convalescent home, but for physical invaHds.

The Gurdjieff school in London now became really active. Demonstrations of dances and movements (or 'open lessons' as they were called) were given semi-privately, and once, five hundred people came to a meeting and to eat the good food provided at Colet Gardens in the large hall where Ouspensky had held his meetings. Later a pubhc demonstration of some of the dances was given by the French group in the Fortune Theatre in London. Even at high prices every seat was sold out.

The wheel had come full circle. Ouspensky, who had held the first groups in London organized by Orage, and had broken with Gurdjieff, was now, through his pupils, responsible for the renewal of the real

GurdjiefF work in London—diough the source was in Paris. Those pupils of Ouspensky who did not go to Gurdjieff", more than half, started their own organization and began to hold groups to study Ouspensky's philosophical ideas, somehow linked up with 'economic science', thus continuing Ouspensky's school of philosophy, but not the Teaching of Gurdjieff", who, they say, forsook the system after Essentuki; and since they never met Gurdjieff" or went to the Prieure or to Paris, they, of course, should know. It reminds me of the Duke of Wellington, when at a party a man went up to him and said, 'Mr. Bellamy, I believe.' The Duke repHed, 'If you believe that you'll beheve anything.'

Ouspensky's pupils in America left Franklin Farms at Mendham and dispersed. Rodney CoUin Smith and his wife, who never met Gurdjieff", went to Mexico and started a school of their own, using the movements that they remembered from the classes that Mrs. Howarth and my wife had taught at Lyne Place. Gurdjieff" went to New York. With the old Orage group and Madame Ouspensky and her pupils, great activity began. Gurdjieff" himself visited Mendham to see Madame Ouspensky, though he would never stay there. Madame had presented him with the complete typescript of *Fragments of an Unknown Teaching,* and Gurdjieff", hearing it read, said that Ouspensky in this respect was a good man. He had written down what he had heard from him, exactly: 'It is as if I hear myself speaking.'

The community at Franklin Farms lasted for some years after Gurdjieff"'s death and after Madame Ouspensky died. Eventually the property was sold. The groups in New York increased and at this time, 1968, several hundred people are connected with it. They have a country place in New York State where pupils work in the gardens and at various crafts. Some of the original Orage group (which had its begiiming in the talk in The Sunwise Turn Bookshop in December 1923) are among the leaders of the present groups.

Our son Adam was now nineteen years of age, James, sixteen. Adam was at school in France, James, at St. Paul's, London. We had never spoken to them about the ideas nor had we refrained from discussing them in front of them with our friends. Only once did Gurdjieff"'s teaching come up, when the yoimger said disdainfully, 'I'm riot interested in what you call real ideas!' I retorted, 'No, they are not for you. They're only for certain people.'

Six months later Easter was near. For some time I had felt that it was

necessary to take the family to Paris to GurdjieffF, but was hardly able to make ends meet, and between the two ends nothing was left for trips to France. Yet I have always found that if I have a deep wish to do something, a real wish, and not an idle 'wanting', if I do not carry out the wish at aU costs, I suffer. On the other hand if I make the effort to do so, I gain a deep satisfaction, and often, blessings. So, a week before Easter I began to dig up money wherever I could and gathered enough for almost the last tickets on die last train to Paris on the Wednes<ky before Easter, Even then, it was touch and go, because of the traffic; and we got to the train two minutes before it left.

Our elder son Adam met us in Paris. Every day we went to lunch and dinner at Gxurdjieff's small apartment in the Rue des Colonels Renard which was crowded with pupils from the French group, from London and from New York, yet however crowded, diere always seemed room for another ten.

When we returned to London, James begged us to let him go to Paris and Hve and study with Gurdjieff. This he did and spent several months there. Adam, whenever he came up to Paris from his school in the Cevennes, visited Gurdjieff. Both have been with groups since. However, had I not made that particular effort on that particular festival their contact with Gurdjieff might have been delayed for a long time. It is fitting that it happened at Easter

When my wife was in Paris with Gurdjieff, he said to her, 'Rosemary, you remember those first months at Prieure, nearly thirty years ago, when you were young girl! I tell you many things then. Now you married and have sons. They come to see me. You know, I surprised they so good!'

I did not see very much of Gurdjieff in the last months of his Ufe; for one thing I seldom had money enough for fares to Paris; for another I was getting deaf and fmding it difficult to understand what people were saying. Though I could hear voices plainly, it was as if they were speaking in an unknown language; words became blurred. Having visited several 'specialists' who took my money and gave no help and having tried every instrument without getting aid, I was told at the hospital that I was one of many men of my age suffering from nerve deafness, caused by gun-fire and shell-bursts in the first war, there was no help and no cure for it and it would betome imperceptibly but progressively worse. Aids were no good, since I, and those like me, need clarity not volume, and aids give only volume. I began to

feel die strain and to worry, but I was not aware of what was happening to me until Gurdjieff said one day, 'You are getting a bad expression on your face because you can't hear. I know a very good German machine for hearing and will get you one.' I explained that they were useless for me. He talked with me for a while and this changed my attitude to myself and my deafness. I began to accept it and the strained, worried look disappeared. I even began to make use of it. By degrees I found that, in general conversation at table, I could understand only one person at a time, and only if they sat opposite to me. For five years I went to Hp-reading classes, but made so Htde progress that I gave them up; one has to begin young with Up-reading. Gradually I became cut off from the exchange of ideas with people; I would miss a word and so get the sense of a whole passage wrong, and my reply would often provoke either a smile or a look of frustration. At first it was diiEcult to accept deafiiess, for I had always enjoyed talking to people and exchanging ideas, but when I did completely accept it a kind of inner peace came, and a deeper understanding of myself and of people. I began to know what people were thinking and feeling—intuition increased. At a dinner or a gathering, a reading or a talk, hearing but not understanding, I would do mental exercises or study the people around me, their postures and expressions, and so learn something of them.

Fortunately, I could still enjoy music if I sat near the instruments, though, apart from the piano and viohn, sounds were blurred. And I could still hear the shrill chirping of the birds. The noise of jets and traffic is as evident to me as to people with normal hearing.

At the present time there are few people whom I can understand. I can hear them, but the sounds of their voices are blurred, as objects are blurred to a short-sighted person; and yet a short time ago I had a three hour conversation with an old friend, a writer. I had taken the precaution of bringing sheets of paper, for he had to write down every question and every observation. I, of course, could speak to him. At parting, he said, 'You know, this is the most interesting and stimulating conversation I've had for a long time.'

One thing I have noticed, few people want to listen to *you;* they want you to listen to *them.* I've had casual conversations with people lasting twenty minutes, by using the principle described by Gurdjieff in" the chapter on America in his book: he needed only five expressions in order to carry on business and other conversations. I now, frequently, can get along by using two words—'Yes' and 'No'. I smile when the

other smiles and laugh when he laughs; when he appears to be asking a question I shake my head, as if in doubt. They may think I'm a nit-wit. What does it matter? I may even have given them pleasure by listening to them. Sometimes I can catch a word, and by repeating it give the impression that I'm followmg them inteUigently.

Gurdjieff speaks of the subjective destiny of a person which appears to be unjust, but may have the result of being fruitful for others. As I began to fmd myself cut off, I began to think about what I could do; and an idea came to me through the chance remark of a friend, who said, 'Why don't you write down all that you can remember about Gurdjieff, his doings and sayings, while it is still in your memory. In twenty years we shall all be dead. His sayings and doings need to be recorded for those that will come after.'

I realized that here was something I would wish to do. I had always wished to be able to write, to be acknowledged by the reviewers as one who could write good English, a wish I had had from boyhood, always a gnawing. But even as the idea came to me and the wish to put it into practice began to grow, there appeared at the same time the adversary, the denying force, the devil tempting me, pointing out that I did not know one rule of grammar and that I had written books in the past which had been rejected. I do not count the one that had been pubhshed in America, the book for boys. Then I remembered that Gurdjieff had said, that if we wish to gain attention, will, individuality, consciousness, we must begin with small things. 'Take one thing, some small thing, which you wish to do and cannot do, and compel yourself to do it. Doing this will give you a taste of real will.'

I had no wish to write as I had wished some years previously; I only wished to put down what I remembered of Gurdjieff. So, after a period of 'yessing' and 'noing' with myself I began, and as soon as I began I felt better; but it never became easy and for seven years I laboured at my writing, often with long periods of nothing in between.

Being bom with strong instinctive and emotional centres and never, until I met the Gurdjieff teaching, having occasion to use my mind, any kind of mental effort like writing was extremely difficult, and I found myself making excuses to work in the garden digging, or at carpentry, or even washing up in order not to sit down and vrate; even the thought of it repelled me. But, as soon as the effort was made and I began to write, I was aware of a sense of release and well-being.

After each period of not writing I had to make greater efforts in order to begin again. At last, after seven years, I had compiled enough

for a book from my own recollections and notes, and the notes of other pupils. I proposed to have copies done on a duplicating machine for the use of groups. However, having showed it to some elders in the main group, they urged me to give it to a putHsher. I was against it as I thought no publisher would be interested. In the end, I agreed, and left the typescript copy with a pubhsher, accompanied by a note to the effect that I personally did not think they would be interested, but that some friends in the Gurdjieff work had suggested my doing so.

To my surprise, in less than a week came a reply saying that contrary to my own feelings they would be very glad to publish the book. It was published. *The Journal of a Pupil,* and was reprinted several times, and the reviews were far better than I had expected or hoped. Letters followed from people all over the world. So, by making this effort I had done something for my neighbour and something for myself.

But it was as if the book were being done through me, as if I weret he agent so to speak. In other words, 'I' wished to do it, and 1' had to compel the organism to labour and suffer to work it out.

The feeling of being an instrument, or of 'I' using an instrument, came to me strongly while translating *The Conference of the Birds* from the French. It was as if I was in touch with Attar and understood what he wished to say.

Writing did a great deal for my own development. Things that before were vague, amorphous, became crystallized. Questions and their answers became more clearly formulated; and in passing on to others something of what I had learnt, it became my own.

Another thing. In this work a pupil comes to a point when, in order to keep what he has experienced, he has to pass it on to someone. I began to feel the need of doing this; and it happened that I was visited by an Australian who had been reading the books. We had talks over a long period and eventually I was invited to go to Sydney. I did not want to go. Although I had worked and Uved in Australia as a youth I had never liked it, in spite of having many relations there, old Australian famihes, with whom my family was on good terms. It was the last country I would have chosen to visit. However, it was an opportunity of doing something I wished to do.

I made an effort, and went, and started the beginnings of a group which, after many difficulties and disappointments has now nearly a hundred people connected with it.

GurdjiefF, once speaking about starting a group in these ideas said, 'You will make enemies', and it was so.

Many people now are becoming interested in GurdjiefF's Teaching, and most want *just* to be interested. When their vanity and self-love begins to be hurt, as it must in any real group, pupils tike offence and leave. Yet those who can compel themselves to see themselves as they are, whatever the suffering, reap a rich reward—they begin really to live, they become the twice-born. The practice of this Teaching, which at first appears easy, 'just what I was looking for,' is the most difficult thing in the world. Everything is against—both inside and out—the knowing of ourselves, against efforts to be conscious of ourselves. The Sufis call it 'Sirat', a road or path, a bridge from the old life to the new—fmer than a hair, sharper than a sword, beset with briars and thorns; but by following the path and crossing the bridge a man receives blessings beyond price.

In Paul's letters to his churches—^his groups—one sees the same difficulties now as then, for people remain the same inwardly, however much the exterior changes; there are the same dissensions, the same disagreements. And these arise in whatever part of the world the group may be. Yet, in spite of the difficulties and in spite of being seriously ill on both of my visits to Australia, whose results lasted long after I returned to England, the results have justified the effort. Australians have good possibilities, and they have quahties that are neither EngUsh nor American. I have tried to pass on to some of them something of what I have learnt from Gurdjieff and his Teaching over the past forty years. In so doing I have kept something of what I had. 'What I gave I kept'.

In my time at the Prieure, Gurdjieff's companions were men of a high level of development; it is sad that few of them survived their teacher. Nowadays it is sometimes given as a criticism of groups that many of those responsible for them are women. If this is so, is it not because men in general are becoming more and more identified with 'knowledge and progress' as ends in themselves, and less open to *feeling* about real ideas? It may be that Nature needs the creative conserving feeling force, which normal women have. Yet men *should* be the active positive force, and those who put the 'Teaching' into practice become so.

As a body of real ideas spreads and more people become interested, groups increase, and they have to be organized. The 'Teaching' is one

diing, organization another. There must be organization but inevitably some become identified with it, become identified with their own attitude to what they call 'die Work'; some even forget what die organization is for. This also is according to law. But serious strivers, while recognizing the necessity for regulations, can remain unidentified with organization and remember their real aim.

Where the soil is rich weeds grow in plenty. Already there are appearing those who profess to expound GurdjieFF's ideas and to teach the movements—^people who do not have the smallest idea of the inner teaching; whom Gurdjieff calls 'stealers of essence values'.

The Teaching remains the same; its outer manifestations change. Gurdjieff, when a phase of his work had served its purpose, Hquidated it, and began something new.

It is said that other schools are spreading the Teaching in another form, reaching different kinds of people. Yet I doubt if anyone in the West today has anything approaching the force, the power, the nuderstanding of G. I. Gurdjieff. As regards Gurdjieff's work, it has been said that it finished with his death, and that groups are now repeating words, without understanding the inner meaning.

This may be true of some groups, but what groups? Certainly, there are groups in London and other parts of the world that are being led by people who never met Gurdjieff, some studying Ouspensky's philosophy. These groups have little value as regards the inner Teaching; yet they may be a means of leading a few to feel the need for something more.

But there are still people who worked with Gurdjieff for some years who are handing on in groups what they got from him personally, and this is of great value.

Gurdjieff's ideas are spreading, and there are people in many parts of the world, in England and France, North and South America and Australia, who are studying them under the direction of pupils who worked directly with Gurdjieff; and many in these different groups are getting something which helps to satisfy the inner longing to be not just a machine or a vegetating animal. I have observed in scores of people the change diat can take place in a few years—the inner change and thereby Ac outer change. As their inner Hfe has grown, they have become better human beings.

It may bfe tliat as Gurdjieff writes of the Buddhists, after the third generation the study of his ideas will become more dieoretical, the 'followers' wUl spHt into sects. There will no longer be the first generation

of Gurdjieff's pupils; and the interpretation of the teachings, little by litde, according to the Law of the Octave, will become changed. But his writings will remain, his music, and his dances and movements; there will be some, even if they did not know him, who will understand the inner teaching.

His writings, even for people who never knew him, can have the effect of changing their attitude to Hfe; they will begin to think in a different way, more normally. I have a friend who has never been in a group nor met anyone interested in the ideas except myself. He is a key figure in a giant industry. A few years ago I introduced him to *Beelzebub's Tales,* and he tells me that it is his bedside book. He says that people don't realize the depth of Gurdjieff's understanding of real science.

Then the movements and the dances. These have been carefully recorded and filmed, and if they are done exactly according to the rules laid down can have a vivifying effect on people for generations to come. They are objective art, and even to see a film of some of them produces a deep impression on an audience.

The same -with the music.

Professor Denis Saurat more than once said that Gurdjieff's teaching will have a profound effect on men's thinking a hundred years hence.

Life becomes more comphcated every year, and less satisfying; the old hfe is breaking up everywhere. Men are acquiring more knowledge, and as they get more ordinary knowledge, their understanding diminishes. Men *know* everything about everything—and mderstand less and less. Their energy is being used by their minds alone, and their *feeling* for a good way of life is becoming almost non-existent. If it continues our civiUzation may perish from too much knowledge. Only the Teaching can give a new direction, show the way for the acquisition of *being,* which can coimteract this excessive knowledge.

Krishna says, "When civihzation falls into decay then I manifest myself;' and the Teaching is given out in a form suitable to time and conditions. It arises in the East and comes from the real Sufis. It has existed firom the time of the fall of man and is given out in different forms at different periods. Gurdjieff adapted the perennial Teaching for the West and our time. He said that we should always be grateful to the person through whom we met the Teaching.

Whoever is the elder in understanding is the teacher. Like Evangelist in *Pilgrim's Progress* the teacher can say:

I have sown and you have reaped; and the day is coming when, 'both he that soweth and they that reap shall rejoice together': that is, if you hold out, 'for in due season ye shall reap if ye faint not'.

And now I will end with the words of a Coptic scribe who lived about **A.D.** 150

Lord have mercy
on the soul
of the sinner
who wrote this hook.

FINIS

INDEX