

*Dear Mary D: Thank you for
X-mas greeting, the donation
to expense fund & your new
address. Know you are doing
good wherever. Love
Ever*

LETTER 46.

Adyar, Madras 20, India
February - March, 1953

My dear Friends:

Convention at Adyar has just closed. It was a very happy and friendly one, although there were few visitors from overseas. One was a former Swedish General Secretary, Mr. Eric Cronvall, who showed us some movie films taken by himself of former congresses in Europe. During Convention there was a little store on the grounds and a restaurant served by the Besant School children. We all used to go there between meetings.

Convention began each day with the Prayers of the Religions either in the large hall or under the banyan tree or in the Adyar theatre. The President opened Convention with an address describing the work done during the past year. You will see all the addresses printed in The Theosophist, so I will not speak of them here. There were five principal lectures. The President took the first, his subject being: "The Principles of Good and Evil." The other four: One was by Rukmini Devi on "India's Greater Freedom." She specially stressed the danger of India's becoming too materialistic by imitating the West. The Indian General Secretary, Mr. Rohit Mehta, gave an eloquent speech on "From Intellect to Intuition." Mine was on "Saintship: its Meaning and Value," while N. Sri Ram gave the last on "The Spiritual State." At first I thought that he would speak about a national state, but he described a spiritual state in ourselves. Professor Duncan Greenlees, the famous author of the World Gospel series, gave an address on "The Path in Ancient Egypt" which was much appreciated, and he showed us a beautiful picture of one of the Pharaohs. He is an Egyptologist and can read the hieroglyphs.

Shorter lectures included one by the Governor of Madras, Sri Prakasa, who is the son of the famous Bhagavan Das, and knew Mrs. Besant well when he was a boy. He spoke on "Dr. Besant and India of Tomorrow." As you will suppose, he said that she really laid the foundation of India's present freedom. The Vice-President, Mr. Cook, spoke on "Aspect of Living;" Miss Hilda Yarrow, an English National lecturer, spoke on "Mankind: Whither and How?" Bishop Shores gave an address on "The Inner World of Heart and Mind," and Mr. Coats spoke on "The State of the World Today."

Of course there were many other meetings, Masonic, et cetera. On Christmas Eve there was a very full attendance at the Midnight Mass. The Indian brothers seem to like the Christian service. In the Sanctuary were not only Bishop Shores, but Bishop John Cordes and Mr. John Coats. On Christmas Day over 100 people sat down to dinner. Everyone invited guests. Mine were Dr. and Mrs. Cousins.

It was fine meeting old friends of long ago once more. One old gentleman told me that he had had the room next to mine at Benares nearly 50 years ago. And one made such nice new friends, too. I wish I could go round India and lecture for them again, but this time it is not possible. I am always pleased when I am invited to an Indian party for I like their food much better than ours. I also hope that our Indian brothers will never adopt our dress. Their own is so much more artistic and beautiful. You have no idea of the grace and beauty of the Indian sari. And what a blessing never to have to think of the dictates of fashion! Many Indian gentlemen wear trousers now instead of the dhoti. I wish they did not, for I cannot imagine a more ugly garment than that which our men are condemned to wear. I am glad to hear that in the Sixth Root Race they discard such creations.

My time at Adyar will not be long now. The first week in March I shall go to Bombay for a week, setting sail for Africa on March 9th by the "Kampala." I shall get back just in time for Convention, which will be this year at Pretoria. I am very glad I could come for this five months. As I said before, residence at Adyar is chiefly valuable for the wonderful atmosphere which pervades the whole place. It has the effect of suddenly giving one understandings and insights which I think we may properly call, after St. Therese, "lights." It would be difficult for me to put into words now all the "lights" that have come to me here. But one is a new understanding of karma. All of us, as we live, make innumerable mistakes. Do not let us try to put them right ourselves. We have not the necessary insight and power. Let God do it, which means His Will, the Great Law. I think we spoil much of life by trying too hard to interfere and alter things. How often have I quoted to you those words of the Master K. H. to Mr. Judge: "Draw on the breath of the great life throbbing in us all, and let faith (which is unlearned knowledge) carry you through your life as a bird flies in the air--undoubtedly." Robert Browning expressed a similar thought:

"I go to prove my soul!
I see my way as birds their trackless way,
I shall arrive! What time, what circuit first,
I ask not; but unless God sends His hail
Of blinding fire-balls, sleet or stifling snow,
In some good time, His good time, I shall arrive;
He guides me and the bird, in His good time!"

It is always difficult to see ourselves, not that we should worry unduly about it. Light on the Path asks us to learn to look intelligently into the hearts of men. Only one thing, it says, is more difficult to know, our own heart. But only the god in us can understand that mystery and we begin to share his knowledge when we cease to care too much what we do, and try to see what God and the Master would have done. Much clearness of insight can get lost in the hurly-burly of the world. Therefore, it is a good thing sometimes to go apart from this busy world of men, and in silence and stillness view life as a whole. Adyar is very much such a place where one can do that. The Master K. H. wrote to Mrs. Holloway: "How can you know the real from the unreal, the true from the false? Only by self development. How get that? By first guarding yourself against the causes of self-deception. And this you can do by spending each day a certain fixed hour or hours all alone... Little by little your insight will clear."

What a work is ours, my friends, the infiltration of universal spiritual ideas and ideals. Each one of us can help in that great work. Not only by what we say or write, but most of all by how we live. Once St. Francis, the most beloved and greatest of all the Christian Saints, went on a teaching travel with his monks. He walked along and never said a word of a sermon anywhere. When his monks asked him when he was going to begin preaching he replied: "We have already given our sermon. Everyone has observed our loving behaviour."

Your affectionate friend,

Clara Codd