

Dear Mary McCall: Such a sweet surprise to rec. the birthday card & greetings from you. You are a dear! I am hoping all is well with you. I send my love and best wishes always up

LETTER 48.

Johannesburg, South Africa  
June-July, 1953

My dear Friends:

Here I am in South Africa once more. I arrived just in time for our Easter Convention which was a most happy and friendly one. And now I am embarked again upon a series of lecture tours, Pretoria, Durban, Cape Town, and Johannesburg. At present I am talking in Pretoria, and we have quite a new kind of title: "Who am I? Why am I here?" et cetera. I must tell you about the voyages home. It was as smooth as a duck pond all the way. We stopped at so many places, Goa in Portuguese India, for one. My roommate was a pretty little Goanese with her little boy of five. Of course she was an ardent Catholic, so I got her to tell me all about the exhumation of the body of St. Francis Xavier which occurred there recently. The body was still untouched by decay as sometimes happens with great Saints. It was exposed for some days and thousands of pilgrims passed by and kissed his feet.

Except for a nice Portuguese family who could neither talk English or French, so reducing me to signs, I was the only white person in the second class. The ship was full to capacity carrying many deck passengers as well. Deck passengers camp out in the hold and on deck. It must be an awful way of travelling. Amongst them I saw several Arabs with great curved scimitars in their belts. I was surrounded by Hindus, Moslems, Sikhs and Goanese Christians. A dear little Sikh girl used to talk to me every day. The Sikh women wear trousers like the Moslems. When she got off with her very fierce looking father at Beira she took my hand and said God would bless me, et cetera. I thought how different a farewell that was from a European one when someone would have said "Cherio!" et cetera. One day I found a Hindu lady reading an English translation of the Mahabharata. She told me it gave her such peace. So I asked her if she had read the Bhagavad Gita, and when she said "No," I fetched her my copy and she read it over many times. I cannot say I had a quiet journey for the children kept up an incessant playing and shrieking!

Near Adyar I left behind me such a dear man, an Indian doctor. He gave me a photograph of the great Indian sage, the Maharishi, the teacher of Paul Brunton and others. He died two years ago. He has one of the most beautiful and spiritual faces I have ever seen. Everyone I show the picture to wants to have one. His eyes are full of life and fire and such a wonderful look of tender compassion. The Parsee lady I stayed with in Bombay saw me on to the ship. She was kindness itself. She is a sister of Mrs. Dinshaw who helps to edit The Theosophist at Adyar.

At the School of the Wisdom I held a weekly class on Meditation and the Inner Life. I will try to remember some of it for these Letters. I would like to reproduce here the words of the Master K. H. to Laura Holloway, long years ago. Mrs. Holloway was a natural psychic whom the Master hoped He might be able to train as a means of communication between Himself and the T. S. If you study the Mahatma Letters you will guess why the Master's hopes were not realized. I think C. W. L. took her place, later. Here is the extract: "How can you know the real from the unreal, the true from the false? Only by self-development." (I will comment on these sentences as I go along.) It is a primal necessity on the occult path to be able to discriminate between the real and the unreal, the true and the false. We can see that the Master does not tell her that He will tell her which is which, or that anyone else will. He says it can only be done by self-development, by our own steady inner growth. Now how is that achieved? The Master tells her.



"How get that? By first carefully guarding yourself against the causes of self-deception. And this you can do by spending a certain fixed hour or hours each day all alone in self-contemplation, writing, reading, the purification of your motives, the study and correction of your faults, the planning of your work in the external life." Most of us would not be able to give "hours," but at least we can give some time every day, thinking about higher things, seeing that the personal self does not rule our aims and actions, realizing quite honestly where as yet we fail, thinking out how best we can serve the Master and the Great Work. You will observe that the Master also says that no one, even the greatest friend, must be with us then. For our auras must be alone, and clear of extraneous influences, however dear and kindly.

"These hours should be sacredly reserved for this purpose, and no one, not even your most intimate friend or friends, should be with you then. Little by little your sight will clear, you will find the mists pass away, your interior faculties strengthen, your attraction toward us gain force, and certainty replace doubts." This is how insight, intuition, faith, grow in us. In another letter the Master says that "faith is the soul's unlearned knowledge." "But beware," says He, "of seeking or leaning too much upon direct authority. We rarely show any outward sign by which to be recognized or sensed."

Mrs. Holloway was always yearning for a direct word or more instructions, so the Master says further on in the letter: "Do not be too eager for 'instruction'. You will always get what you need as you shall deserve them, but no more than you deserve or are able to assimilate." I remember Dr. Besant telling us how useless it was to be always yearning for more teaching. She said that we did not really know a thing or a teaching until we had fully lived it. So surely we have not yet lived all that we have been taught! The Christ told us that he who lived the life would know of the doctrine.

This is a wonderful letter, No. II in the Additional Letters at the end of the last edition of Letters from the Masters of the Wisdom. I cannot too seriously reiterate that only our own ideals, aspirations and efforts can help us to grow in grace and in insight. No great leader, or even a Master of the Wisdom, can do that for us very much. As a flower grows by its own volition and in response to the warmth of the sun, so do our souls grow by our own will and desire and in response to the subtle, delicate, spiritual forces surrounding us from the Hierarchy and the Eternal, Himself. And spiritual growth is not necessarily religious. All that is lovely, beautiful and true belongs to it. "Brethren," said St. Paul, "do think on these things."

Your affectionate friend always,

Clara Codd