

Box 863, Johannesburg
South Africa
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My dear Friends,

I almost forgot this time that I should write Letter 65. We are here getting ready for our annual Convention, which is always held at Easter time, and this year it will be in Johannesburg, so there is much to think of and to do. We always have a theme-note for Convention and this year it is the words of the Master K.H. to Mr. Judge: "Trust yourself to life." The Master continued, "as a bird trusts itself to the air, indoubtingly." They are such beautiful words and they remind me of similar ones by Robert Browning: "I see my way as birds their trackless way.... He guides me and the bird, in His good time!" Next time, when our convention is over, I will write about this lovely thought. This time I would like to give you something of what I wrote yesterday.

I remember Bishop Wedgwood, long years ago speaking of a book by a great German divine, Rudolf Otto, called "Das Heilige", "The Holy". He points out there that modern man has very largely lost the sense of the Holy, which is the real religious sense. This is easily seen. So many people have lost the faculty for wonder, for worship, for ecstasy, for the great purifying force of simple love, the uplifting of the heart to God, if we give Eternity that much abused name. There is a danger as well as a great blessing that sometimes comes with the knowledge of Theosophy. The great principles and ideals of Theosophy are so vast and wonderful that if we happen to have rather small minds and are therefore beset by a critical spirit, we may dwarf and circumscribe that beauty and render it sterile and hard. We can face the fact that the world sometimes accuses us of being "hard," self-satisfied, little "know-alls." It is true sometimes.

I think there is only one power which can keep the hearts of men liquid, flexible, glowing, and that is the force of simple, unselfish, glowing, potent emotion. The mind alone is always the slayer of the Real.

Pure and high emotion is life-giving. The very word shows us that, for it means the "moving force." Mind and heart are the two wings by which man flies to God. He cannot fly with one alone. Whilst he must possess "an open mind, an eager intellect, and unveiled spiritual perception," he must also possess a pure heart, a love for all, an unceasing aspiration on behalf of all. The sense of wonder, of the Holy, the awareness of, and the love for, the Lovely, the Pure and the True, these are in their nature tremendously purifying, cathartic emotions. Yet millions of men hardly know them from the cradle to the grave.

The faculty for prayer has largely been lost, and prayer is not so much a begging of benefits as a wonderful uplifting of the heart to the Heart of the Universe. There is a beautiful versicle in a Christian ritual. "Lift up your hearts," says the priest, and the congregation replies: "We lift them up unto the Lord." To approach the Holy in love, humility, self-forgetfulness, is to reflect in small measure its illimitable glory. "Draw nigh unto God, and He will draw nigh unto you." But we must draw nigh first. The ability to do this truly is sometimes considered to be given by the "grace of God" It does not

require great intellect or knowledge. Sometimes the simplest man is nearer than the man of knowledge. There is a lovely story told by the Curé d'ars of a simple French peasant who, coming back from work, spent many a minute in life in the little church, apparently doing nothing. His fellow-workmen laughed at him. "What do you do there, Jacques?" they asked. He replied, "I look at God, and He looks at me."

The sense of beauty, of wonder, can only be given by beauty itself. But beauty is to be found everywhere. "The heavens declare the glory of God," and the smallest flower shows the marvel of His handiwork. To the soul that is awake and alive to the Holy, "every common bush is afire with God." How sad it is that so many of us have eyes but do not see, have ears and never hear. Sometimes books, education, business, life, shut our eyes and our ears and they never open again in life. That is why so many people are unhappy. To be happy we must love and respond to loveliness. We must live as God meant us to live, not as man thinks he must. Happiness is the result of "self-knowledge, self-reverence, self-control," so that we have an instrument which can register the glory of the heavens and the wonder and beauty of life. To see and to hear is the beginning of wisdom, the starting of love, the rapid beat of the wings of the Soul.

How blessed is the man who has that power, for it is the elixir of life, the soma of the "ever-young." And it is a power that grows more and more as the years pass. Age has no effect upon it. If we have developed it in life we shall find that it glows even more beautifully when the body fails and the veiling of the spirit grows thin. The young in heart are the tender of heart, to whom adoration, wonder, speechless bliss, can make of their hearts a Temple unto the Lord.

Your affectionate friend,

Clara Codd

Also from Miss Codd, on a separate note: "... that wonderful present from the Group members. ... Do tell them how touched I felt for their tremendous kindness. No one is so good to me as the American members. I think I will be born there next time!"

CC/rd