

Letter 80 February-March 1959  
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U.S.America.

My dear friends,

I hope you all had as happy<sup>a</sup>/Christmas time as I had! I spent it at Krotona, the Theosophical community in the Ojai valley, and I do not remember a happier time for me. Not only was I with many Theosophists, but I also saw again so many old friends of long ago. I think that is one of the lovely things about our T.S. It is like the Masonic Order, a real brotherhood.

Just lately I have been talking quite a good deal about the angel orders, so perhaps you will all be interested if I now continue the theme. Long years ago Professor Wodehouse wrote a splendid article about the angelic hosts in the Theosophist. He said that the angelic and human orders were the warp and woof of existence. Man, having descended to the dense physical plane had an aura much more cohesive than that of a deva which was more plastic and fluidic than ours. Also a deva generally embodies but one force in the universe, it flows through his body which on the psychic plane is visible in colour and light. I had a very psychic sister who often saw wonderful things upon the other side. One morning when she woke up she saw a great deva, about twenty feet high, standing in her room. He appeared to have mighty wings, so she said to him "I thought angels did not have wings?" He replied: "The higher devas are the channels of vast, out-rushing forces which lends them the appearance of wings." I asked her how one talked to a deva. Did one speak English, for example? She gave me the same reply as Mr. Hodson did once too. You think to a deva and he thinks back to you.

This explains how angels came to be drawn with wings. Another factor about them is that quite often they do not look exactly like humans. Another clairvoyante I once knew told me that they are protean, especially the lower forms, and can take any form they please. They mostly take a human form but always with some peculiarity or exaggeration. This is especially true of fairies or pixies. I was the first person to whom, long years ago, the father of the two children who took the famous photographs of fairies in the Bingley woods in Yorkshire, England, showed that first photo taken of five fairies dancing round the younger child. One or two of the fairies had short hair, so I asked the older child how that was? She told me that they copy us and since short hair had become so universal some of the fairies had adopted it too! One was playing upon a double flute, the "pipes of Pan." "I asked them if they could hear that fairy music and the elder child said she could hear it and it sounded like something very far away on a phone.

In the age now dawning man will go back to active and conscious co-operation with the angel kingdom. Great religious and Masonic ceremonies enlist their aid through special ceremonials. We may perhaps say that the Masonic method is one of evocation, commanding the lower elemental kingdoms, while the Church methods are systems of invocation, asking the aid of the higher and greater devas. It is an excellent thing for man and also for the devas to co-operate. It is a mutual benefit. Man lends the deva a certain consistency and definition; whilst the angel gives his human friend something of his plasticity and joy. There is a certain temperament which works with the devas more than any other and these are artists of any kind. They may not know the source of their inspiration, but it is always the deva kingdom. The word "deva" is a very beautiful one. It is a Sanscrit word meaning the "shining one", a term used by our own John Bunyan. The presence of many devas in a landscape lends it a magical aspect, and when the influence of the deva kingdom is very pronounced at any time in history it means a "renaissance", a time of great inspiration and art production such as the painters of Italy, the great musicians of Germany and the poets of England.

I think we may classify that very varied and populous kingdom,

even more varied than our own, in three main divisions. The orders and disposition of the angels was a subject taught in the early Christian mysteries, as Ignatius, the Bishop of Antioch, tells us. The lower classes, all of whom, have as yet no eternal spirit, are what we may describe as the soul of the elements. Mediaeval writers classify them as four kinds; the soul of the earth, the gnomes; the soul of the waters, the undines; the soul of fire, the salamanders; and the soul of the air and the winds, the sylphs. These last are the most evolved and intelligent of them all, and, either by attachment to a great angel or to a human being can gain an immortal soul which is the truth that lies behind the lovely story of Hans Anderson about the "little mermaid." It is possible, though rare, for a sylph to come over to the human kingdom, the origin among the Slav peoples of "fairy wives." It is also possible for a human to join their kingdom. There is the famous case of the old Scotch clergyman in the seventeenth century who saw and knew them well and who wrote a book about them called "The Secret Commonwealth". He was taken by them, but appeared to his nephew and told him that if he would jump through the fires at midsummer eve and repeat certain words which his uncle told him that the uncle would be able to come back. The nephew jumped through the fire all right but at the crucial moment forgot the right words, so his uncle never returned. A story like this is immortalised in Sir James Barrie's play "Mary Rose".

The gnomes work in the earth and I knew a miner who told me that alone in the mines at night he could hear them. They are ruled by a great Arch-angel called Kubera in the East and Vulcan in the West. The spirits of water and fire give these elements their validity. Without their presence fire would not burn nor water wet. I think this is really the rationale of "fire-walking". The priests have the spell which inhibits the fire elementals from acting. I remember a Breton lady telling me that in her village in Brittany there lived an old man whose family had the secret, handed down from father to son, of putting out fire, and once she saw him exercise it. One day two hay ricks caught fire. There was no fire station near enough to be of use, so the old man was sent for. He ran round the blazing ricks muttering unknown words and, to my friend's amazement every flame went right out!

The salamanders are brilliant red and gold creatures and they play in the flames as you and I would swim in water. The air spirits control the winds. (I hope by this no one is thinking that Miss Codd is becoming superstitious! Just because last time I talked about the Pope I found people saying I was turning Roman Catholic!) The ancient Greeks talked about Boreas, the god of the North wind, etc. but we can also find this in the Christian scriptures. St. John says in the Book of Revelations "I heard the angel of the waters say," and "I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds". And he saw "another angel coming out from the altar which has power over fire."

As I said before, the air spirits are the most evolved of them all. They weave castles and seas and "mackerel sky", etc. There is a very interesting book called "the Boy who saw true". It is the diary of a little boy in the Victorian era who was born psychic. He suffered a good deal from unbelieving relatives who thought he was telling lies. During a thunderstorm he saw wicked looking elementals flashing in the lightning and clouds.

It seems to me that I have taken up much space talking about these things and I have not nearly finished, so how about "to be continued in our next"? I will then tell you about the next two divisions, the soul of organised Nature and the higher devas connected with man. With regard to them I was interested in reading that the late Pope, Pius XII (dare I mention him?) told his people to get to know their Guardian Angel before they passed over. The deva will know you are conscious of him even if you cannot "see" him, and he will gladly work with you in bringing joy and healing to those you love or wish to help, but more of this later.

Your affectionate friend,  
Clara Codd.