

April-May 1960

Adyar, Madras 20, India

My dear friends,

The School of the Wisdom has just closed, with a very friendly and charming gathering. Four speakers had to say what the School had meant to them and one of the most pleasant was given by a Viet Nam member who does not really know English so well. Another was by Mrs. Viking, the Danish Bishop's wife. In the evening some of us went over to Kalakshetra to greet the late Belgian King, Leopold, and his wife. For their benefit a programme of Indian music and dance was put on. They both tend to be a little long for Europeans, but I must tell you a wonderful thing that happened. During the day the King and his wife went to look at our Banyan tree, the third largest in the world and very vast in extent. It really is quite marvellous. There Miss Olga Kaufmann met them and afterwards took them down to the Headquarters and showed them around. Whilst she was telling us she got the idea that we ought to give them some pamphlets at the meeting that night, so I gave my book, "The Ageless Wisdom of Life" and inscribed best wishes inside, and Olga gave American pamphlets. When the concert was over and the King got up to leave, Olga went up to them. "Oh!" they said, "There you are," and the King held her hand for quite a while. She asked them to really read them and they promised her that they surely would. Isn't that a nice story? I thought them both very good-looking. Indeed the Princess Liliane was quite beautiful. I felt she had a far-away resemblance to the Queen Astrid who died so tragically. They had one of the King's little daughters with them.

I think that Kalakshetra has become very famous, for every ruler who comes to India visits it. Not long ago we had Mr. Vorishiloff, the President of Russia, and his suite. He seemed to me to be very old. I would rather have seen the cheery Nikita. Not long ago Rukmini Devi spoke to us in the School of the Wisdom. She asked us what we would like her to speak about, and I suggested that she tell us how the idea came to her and how it all grew. So we had a most interesting account of Kalakshetra's growth and development. As I listened I thought it was a good thing that Rukmini was not tied down to specific Theosophical work. She could never have done the wonderful work she has done in this field if she had been. She is also a member of the Indian Senate, and has introduced a bill for the protection of animals. She has done a mighty big work and I wish her all the future success in the world.

We had special meetings on Adyar Day, February 17th. I think that was the day Colonel Olcott died. The continuation of Sri Ram as our President was announced. Geoffrey Hodson was there too and made such a nice speech. Before we knew the result I told him that I hoped he would not be elected, because he is such a magnificent teacher that to be occupied with all the tremendous details of administration would hamper his real work.

(This was written early in March. -- R.D.)

Now I am preparing to leave India and beloved Adyar. Next Friday I shall fly to Nairobi, stay three days with my friend, Mr. Patel. Then on to Salisbury in Rhodesia, staying three days there too, and then on to Johannesburg. I expect to be about a month in S. Africa, winding up affairs and attending the Convention at Easter time. My address there will be Box 863, Johannesburg. Then on again to England, to my sisters in London, 10 Steele's Road, London, N.W.3. When I am settled down I want to write a book I have had in mind for so long, "The Way of the Disciple." Whilst I write this letter I must ask all my friends who have sent me Xmas cards and letters, not to mind if they get no answer for some time. It is so difficult to write when one is always packing and moving! So many of you did send me lovely Xmas messages, and I thank you one and all, with all my heart.



My time here has been very valuable to me. I do not think any one can stay here without being changed somewhere inside. One may not be fully aware of it until one has left. It is not so much a change in one's brain-mind, but something deeper and more fundamental. It reminds me of Dr. Besant's words. The first time I came, when I stayed two years, I went during the last two months on a lecture tour of India. To my great surprise, I found my lecturing power was greatly improved. I told Mrs. Besant with joy when I returned. "Well, my child," she said, "you do not stay in this glowing atmosphere without your causal body being expanded." I felt the change most that first time, perhaps because I stayed two years without ever going outside the compound. But I have felt something too, each other time I have come. That first time I will never forget. I got on the boat train to Colombo and the other passengers told me that the Captain of the ship was not going to wait for us. I found I could not be upset, such a st peace held me. I used to wonder when I was a child whether I could stand to be tortured. In this state I felt I really could! Then, when I got on the boat at last I noticed another thing. Everyone looked so familiar, as if I had known them a long time. But when I finally reached London I felt terrible for about three months, as if I had been plunged into a dark pit. I suppose it was the psychic atmosphere of a great city.

I do not feel these things so much these days. I think as one gets older one is not quite so sensitive. I remember H.P.B. saying that no Initiate worked in the outer world. If he did it must be regarded as a sacrifice, because it was impossible to retain the finer responses to the inner world if one was ceaselessly exposed to the outer one. I expect what we should all do is to do as Catholics do, retire to a "retreat" once in a while, and with the strength and understanding thus garnered go out again into the world to spread knowledge of the truth.

I notice that Krishnaji this time spoke often of "passion", having a passion for things. The only passion that I feel is worth while is what the old-fashioned people used to call "a passion for souls", the love of men, and the desire to cheer, to enlighten, to lift the burdens of life. Do you remember the lovely words of Light on the Path: "Give your aid to the few strong hands that hold back the powers of darkness from obtaining complete victory." The Master says something like it Himself. He says that our Theosophical Society was not founded to become merely a hall of occultism, the sorrow and pain of the world needed relief and solace. He says, "Its suffering and its agony never cease." There lies our field of work pre-eminently. And it begins with all around us. I expect that is why H.P.B. said once that if every Theosophist did his full duty the sum of human ignorance and pain around him would be sensibly diminished.

Next Wednesday we are having a farewell luncheon to me at the Indian restaurant, the Bhojanasala. My plane takes off on Friday at 5 p.m. I do not much care about flying, but it is a wonderful way to get somewhere quickly. Miss de Wet flew back to S. Africa before I do. I am so very glad that she could come for this session to Adyar. Mr. and Mrs. Layton were here to. They and others with them have gone up to Darjeeling to see the Himalaya mountains and to go a walking tour. I would love to see them too, and also the Taj Mahal, but that must be for another life.

Goodbye to you all for the time being. My next will be written from London.

Your affectionate friend,

Clara Codd

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