

10, Steele's Rd. London, N.W. 3
 (-- until July 7th)
 June-July, 1961

My dear Friends:

I left Holland about a month ago and am now back again in London. We have just come to the close of our Annual Convention. It was what I call a real "matey" one. There was such a friendly spirit everywhere. Our new General Secretary, Mr. Wallace Slater, asked me to give world greetings at the Convention, so I asked him if I might take the opportunity to say goodbye to the English members, for on July 7 I fly to Chicago, arriving on the opening day of Convention at Wheaton, and afterwards I shall be going on to California, to the Ojai Valley, where I expect to reside for some time. (Address: Krotona, Ojai, Calif. -- R.D.)

I much enjoyed my stay in Holland. It gave me the opportunity to get to know the residents there well, and to become very good friends. I also liked the Dutch peasantry. They give one the impression of being such good, kind, simple people. As you can picture the tulips were blooming, making Holland a sea of colour. I left via Belgium, staying a day or two in Brussels where we had two meetings. I shall never forget those meetings in Brussels, there was such a wonderful power and unity about them. And I was very happy to meet the Belgian members again. I tried to speak a little in French, but it is more than sixty years since I spoke it, so I only did a few sentences, and happily I had a good interpreter, a lady who is a professor of English in a college in Liège. One member said to me, "I can understand your English better than your French," which shows how much I have forgotten! I told the Belgian members that I have quite fallen in love with their young Queen Fabiola. I have only seen her in the big illustrated papers, all full of her wedding to King Baudouin, but she completely won my heart. She looked so sweet and good and dear. I like people who look really good. That is one reason why I feel devoted to our president. He is so really good, whatever I mean by that term. King Baudouin was always such a solemn young man, but Fabiola has made him smile.

We had a very interesting lecture from Mr. Tom Redfern at our recent Convention about "Getting Ready for 1975". You will remember that Madame Blavatsky told us that the Great Brotherhood always send a special Messenger to the world towards the close of every century. They try to help us specially at that particular time. In 1875 the Theosophical Society was founded, and Madame Blavatsky was Their special messenger. Mr. Redfern says, and I think he is quite right, that H.P.B., as we call her, has been unduly and cruelly vilified. And, as a consequence of that, we members are largely considered by the rest of the world as credulous and gullible. That does not upset me personally one atom. If there is one thing that I am immortally certain of, it is the truth of the Ageless Wisdom that she taught. And I notice that the study of her works is increasing in our Society.

At one Adyar Convention, long ago, Dr. Arundale, the then President, arranged a meeting where certain well-known members amongst us had each to stand up for a few minutes and tell us which Theosophical book they would choose if they could only have one. I remember Professor Emile Marcault holding up the Mahatma Letters, and Mrs. Ransom the Secret Doctrine. They would both be my choice, too. I have not yet read it, only dipped into it, but Mr. Geoffrey Barborka's book on the Secret Doctrine, "The Divine Plan", looks immensely interesting. I remember many years ago a publisher telling me that the Secret Doctrine was our best seller. "But," I asked him, "how is that? It is so very expensive, many of our members cannot afford to buy it." He replied, "I sell it to University professors and students." I can see why they buy it for in the S.D. there is information which is not to be

found anywhere else, wonderful accounts of the past history of our globe, and indeed of the whole solar system. Many people find its study difficult. I would suggest that we leave alone what we cannot as yet understand, and ponder long upon striking statements when they occur. A.P.B. herself counselled us to first of all get well into our consciousness the great principles described in the Proem and in the chapter called "Summing Up". She also said that the study of the Secret Doctrine developed a hitherto unused portion of the brain.

Of all A.P.B.'s works my best loved is "The Voice of the Silence." That one little book alone could keep one going for a lifetime. I remember Dr. Besant's favourite was the "Bhagavad Gita". Mr. Jinarajadasa loved "Light on the Path", and Dr. Arundale "At the Feet of the Master." I wonder sometimes, now that the Chinese Communists are supreme in Tibet, whether those ancient writings are safe? But I feel sure the Masters of the Wisdom can take care of them. At the time when the wonderful Alexandrian Library was burnt down, they rescued very many priceless manuscripts and took them to the subterranean museum and library which A.P.B. describes in the Introduction to the S.D. I once heard Bishop Leadbeater talk about that museum, for he had often been there in the astral body. He said there were maps of the world at different stages of its development covering millions of years, and also figures of man depicting what he looked like at those different stages. He saw the Stanzas of Dzyan, and told us that as you looked at them they became alive and reproduced in miniature the cosmic past.

Another book of hers I like so much is "The Key to Theosophy." I must quote what she says at its very end about the coming opportunity in 1975. The Adyar simplified edition is the easiest to read. She used to get her students to ask her the questions which she has incorporated in the book. The last chapter deals with the future of the Theosophical Society, and she writes that its future will depend almost entirely upon the degree of selflessness, earnestness, devotion, and last but not least, on the amount of wisdom and knowledge possessed by the members. And she says that she does not refer to technical knowledge but to unbiassed and clear judgment. "If the present attempt," she writes, "in the form of our Society, succeeds better than its predecessors have done (there have been such societies before, C.C.) then it will be in existence as an organised, living and healthy body when the time comes for the effort of the twentieth century." Men's minds will have been improved by the spread of its teachings, and some of their dogmatic illusions removed. Also a large literature will be ready and a numerous and united body ready to welcome the new torch-bearer of Truth. But she also warns us that the other attempts failed because they degenerated into a sect and set up hard and fast dogmas, thus losing by degrees the vitality which the living truth alone can impart. We must all watch and avoid this happening. Then, if all goes well, she says this earth will be a heaven in the twenty-first century in comparison with what it is now.

I feel that Theosophy is not a set of ideas in a book, but is synonymous with life itself. The great teacher is life, and the great work is Humanity's welfare and happiness.

Your affectionate friend,

Clara Codd