

110 April-May 1964 "Way's End", Beech Ave., Camberley, Surrey, England

My dear Friends,

I am glad to say that this year we did not have such a terrible winter as last year, when we were almost snowed up. Houses are going up all round us, so presently we shall become a village. Some of the trees have to be cut down which is rather sad from one point of view. I never like to see a great tree cut down. I have a feeling that he does not like it. I remember a poem I used to read when I was a child. It began, "Woodman! spare that tree." Man is such a destructive animal sometimes. He not only destroys trees, but the wild life of the world too, and sometimes calls it sport. I was once sitting in the waiting-room of a dentist and picked up a dull journal called "The Draper's Journal." To my astonishment I read in it: "The greed of man, plus the vanity of woman, has almost completely destroyed the wild life of the world." I shall never forget the day and night I spent in the Paul Kruger Game Reserve in Africa. When I had got about ten miles away from it I found I had a heart-ache. I was missing the élan of being among hordes of wild animals who were not afraid of one. They learn to be afraid from experience. A famous American naturalist wrote that in the unfrequented wilds of America the animals were not afraid. The collective fear is interesting because it is evidence of a "group-soul." Eugene Marais, the South African naturalist, came to the conclusion that there must be a group-soul from watching the ways of the white ants. I can remember the first motor cars and how, at first, the horses and cows got frantic when they went by. Now they are quite indifferent. The group-soul has become accustomed.

And I remember, when lecturing in Leeds, a little terrier who slept peacefully all the time on his master's knees. Then someone asked me if animals had souls. Certainly they have, I replied, and they live for quite a time after death. At this the little dog suddenly lifted his head, pricked up his ears and gave two short barks, as if to say "Hear! Hear!" Of course everyone laughed.

I think you all know that the animal kingdom, the next below man, can, under certain favourable circumstances, gain an "immortal soul," and enter the human ranks. Only with certain animals in the forefront of their evolution can this take place, such as a horse or a cat or a dog. That is why they are brought into contact with man, not for him to kill and eat, or hunt and torture them. Do not think that I am a fanatic about meat eating. As a Master of the Wisdom once wrote, there is all the difference between the savage who hunts for food, and the sportsman who thinks it "sport" to hunt and kill frightened animals. I remember a certain nobleman who had large estates telling me that when he prohibited hunting on his estates he found the foxes kept down the rabbits. We upset what is called the balance of Nature.

An advanced animal gains an immortal soul, which really means the descent of a divine spark into an animal body, thus rendering it human in its next incarnation, by coming into very close touch with an advanced human being. The animal tries to understand and responds with very faithful love to the approaches of his master. The play of the master's splendid aura enormously stimulates the growth of the animal intelligence and love-power. It may reach a point where the waiting Deva hosts can put a divine spark, unconscious as yet on these lower planes of nature, in touch with an aspiring body. In that case the animal does not return to its group-soul. It has become an individual for himself. But he will not now come back in human form on this planet, for there are now no suitable conditions. But the bond between a noble man and a noble animal will never be broken, and what was once the bond between man and horse or dog or cat, becomes, after long, long ages, the unbreakable tie between a man and his Adept teacher. This was the case with Dr. Annie Besant long ages ago.

The great John Wesley glimpsed this truth. He writes: "What if it should please the All Wise, the All-gracious Creator, to raise the animals higher in the scale of being? What if it should please Him, when He makes us 'equal to the angels', to make them what we are now, capable of knowing, loving and enjoying the Author of their being?"

But do not jump to the conclusion that this is happening to your pet bow-wow. He may be approaching it when he looks at you "with human eyes." But it takes someone of quite superior evolution to do this for an animal. I remember, at a Manor meeting in Australia, how a certain Swedish gentleman present asked C.W. Leadbeater whether a hunter friend of his who had a dog he was very devoted to, both of them now dead, had "individualised" his dog companion. C.W.L. then did what he very rarely did -- used his clairvoyant power to see. He did not go into a trance. He merely looked somewhere for about five minutes, and then announced that he had found the hunter friend in the heaven-world and that the dog was there with him. The hunter was not sufficiently evolved to be able to individualise the dog, but the deep affection between the two was sufficiently strong to keep the dog from joining his group-soul until his master returned to incarnation.

It hurts me to see a free bird in a cage. Canaries are bred in them and so do not mind. I once saw an eagle, of all birds the freest and most majestic, cooped up in a little cage where he could not even spread his wings. I used to wonder if I could not steal up sometime and set him free. The Georgian poet wrote, "Where every prospect pleases and only man is vile." I am afraid he is pretty vile. But he does not mean to be. It is just ignorance and lack of development on his part. It was H.P.B. who said that there was no real "sin," but only lack of growth.

This reminds me that I really intended to write in this letter about sin and suffering, which subject I have been working at recently. Someone will be quoting to me that old dictum about the heart of man being desperately wicked, "original Sin" in fact. But the real truth is that the only thing original, enduring and eternal in us is divinity. Light on the Path says it beautifully: "There is a natural melody, an obscure fount, in every human heart. It may be hidden over and utterly concealed and silenced - but it is there. At the very base of your nature you will find faith, hope and love." Every man, no matter how degraded and blind he may be, has that earnest of his future development and bliss. No one can take that heritage from him.

A great psychiatrist, Dr. Macpherson Lawrie, has discovered this. In his book, "The Anatomy and Excellence of Human Nature" he says that goodness is deep in man's nature and that proper psychological and physical nourishment would produce the best in him. He challenges in no uncertain manner the doctrine of original sin. Dr. Hastings in his Dictionary of the Bible, says that the etymology of the word sin does not suggest a person against whom the sin was committed, and does not necessarily imply intentional wrong-doing. In fact, as the Indian scriptures say, we all suffer from A-vidya, being without the true knowledge, not yet being spiritually grown up. Maturity and wisdom come from long experience. I will write about all this next time. Meanwhile, to return to our little friends, the animals. Poets have tender hearts. Oliver Goldsmith was a vegetarian and wrote a poem about the animals running free for him. I remember a heart-rending poem by Humbert Wolff about "tamed and shabby tigers and little hunted hares." And then there is that well-known poem by the poet and seer, William Blake:

"A robin red-breast in a cage,
Puts all heaven in a rage;
A skylark wounded on the wing,
A cherubim doth cease to sing."

Well! Well! as C.W.L. was fond of exclaiming, this will all cease as man develops and evolves, and in the end his spiritual nature comes to the birth. It will do so in large numbers when the Sixth Root Race appears. Then will come true that famous prophecy of Isaiah: "They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea."

Your affectionate friend,

Clara Codd