

130 August-September, 1967

"Way's End", Beech Avenue
Camberley, Surrey, England

My dear Friends:

I have something wonderful for you this time. Some time ago I mentioned one or two of the books written by Starr Daily. When I was in America I read two of his books, the first two that he wrote, called "Love Can Open Prison Doors" and "Release." He was a long term prisoner who became a great mystic and saint. Now he is married and gives lectures and preaches all over the U.S.A. In one of my letters I quoted a passage about what love truly is from his book "Release." Someone showed it to him and he wrote me a lovely letter and has now put me on his circular letter list called "The Family Circle", so I returned the compliment by putting him on mine! In the last of his letters I had, he answers a question by someone who has read "Release" asking him to explain further the question of Illumination. I will quote you some of what he says (I hope he will not mind).

"In the book I partially described the visitation in so far as it could be described in words. In the fullness of the invasion of the supreme Light the experience can only be described by the one word, ineffable, or that which can not be expressed in any language of men or of angels.

"In this experience the self-conscious awareness passes into a new dimension of awareness, which is entirely superphysical, in which the self-conscious awareness is totally lost. A new faculty is entered at the moment which is unknown to the life of our five senses. It has nothing to do with a trance state; but everything to do with the state of exalted alertness.

"Illumination, like a physical stroke, is sudden and unexpected. Illumination in its fullness is not entered by a gradual process of mental or spiritual development. It cannot be entered by any devotional or psychological methods or techniques. It comes to no man while he is trying to attain it; but when he has ceased to try. It is the only other-worldly experience which has no respect to persons or religions.

"It may strike a Christian minister in the midst of a prepared sermon. It may come without warning to a farmer at work in his field ... It can invade the educated or the uneducated person. Illumination has no favourites of any kind. The Light is within everybody on earth. It glows in the darkness of the brain, nervous system, and personality. No power can put it out; nor can any power make it shine forth. But every man can let it shine when it chooses to shine.

"When in the Divine Splendour, what are the effects?... There is no darkness at all such as sin provides. Courage is perfected, automatic. Fear has no existence... Death is unknown without effort. In the Light it has no existence. Eternal Life is the abundant life here and now. Faith has become knowing, and joy has become real.

"The Illumination cannot be maintained at the high pitch for very long... usually it fades back gradually into self-conscious identification with the flesh and the world .. In this, pain is accepted in the full awareness that the outer man can be edified by it; but that the inner man cannot be injured by it. Troubles in the outer man are school house lessons which confirm the inner man."

I think that this is a wonderful description of the spiritual consciousness. It reminds one of the words of the Christ that "the kingdom of God cometh not with observation", and that it is within us. Paul Brunton, a well-known writer upon mystical subjects says that it comes suddenly under the most unexpected conditions. I know how true this is for one of the dearest friends I ever had, an Italian gentleman, told me that it came to him quite suddenly when he was in a shop, that it lasted a few days and then gradually faded away.

That it is no respecter of persons pleases me for I have never liked the division of the world into the "good" and the "bad". I think that there is no such distinction in nature. H.P.B. says that to the illuminated man there is no sin only lack of growth. So much wrong comes from poverty and unhappiness. So much wrong need never be. It would disappear tomorrow if only we were, all of us, friends with all the world without any overmastering desires to get things, inner and outer, for ourselves, only thinking of the happiness and welfare of all the others. War and poverty are crimes due to man's ignorance and fear and consequent selfishness. But one day it will all pass away. As St. Augustine said: "We were created for Thee and our souls are restless until they find their rest in Thee." And the Deity where we belong is not a personal deity exacting homage and service, but the fundamental Life of the universe. Let us think of that sometimes. Look at a flower, a tree, a bird, and realize that that Divine fundamental life is living and growing in expression through them. Isn't the world beautiful, though lots of people never realize that? As the poet wrote: "Only man is vile." He makes most of the mischief, poor thing. But that is because he is so young and ignorant. Little children love to smash things. They are often greedy and selfish. "That is my apple. You shan't have it." Grown-up babies are just the same. But one day they will really grow up and then heaven will descend upon earth.

Do try and see the beauty of the world. Some one has given me a lovely little microscope. I love to look at things invisible like that. I once spent a whole twenty minutes looking at snow-flakes through a microscope. I never found two exactly alike though they were all hexagonal. I can see that Nature has no regard for size. A snowflake can be "a thing of beauty and a joy for ever." And I do not believe that the Spirit in man has either. I remember a wonderful occasion many long years ago when I first went to India to stay at our International Headquarters in Adyar, near Madras. We had all gone by train to Benares to attend the world annual convention. Krishnaji was there, just a boy, not yet fully come to manhood. He gave us a simple talk, and something marvellous descended upon us all. I shall never forget it. It was as if we were looking through the eyes of Immortal Love. And I saw one thing, that with Him there was no sense of difference. Everything was equally important, equally beloved. Yes, that memory will never leave me.

Your affectionate friend,

Clara M. Codd