

133. February-March 1968

"Way's End," Beech Ave., Camberley,  
Surrey, England

My dear Friends,

Christmas has come and gone. My family had a lovely Xmas, for my nephew brought his whole family, two little girls, his wife and her Mother, to spend the day with us here. I always think that Xmas is more a children's festival than a grown-ups'. I can remember when I was a little girl trying to keep awake so that I could see Father Xmas putting gifts in my stocking. Needless to say I never succeeded. I hope you all had just as nice a Christmas time.

I have been thinking about "spiritual slogans" again. As I do not keep copies of my Letters I expect I sometimes repeat myself. I know that I once wrote about this. What made me think of them was that one has been haunting me recently. It comes from the Book of Isaiah, 26, 3: "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee." And there is another one from the Bhagavad Gita that I often think of. It is verse 27 of the ninth discourse: "Whatsoever thou doest, whatsoever thou eatest, whatsoever thou offerest, whatsoever thou givest, whatsoever thou doest of austerity, O Kaunteya, do thou that as an offering unto Me." It reminds me, as I believe I have said before, of little Saint Therese of Lisieux. She says in her Autobiography that she used to offer all she ate to the Saints. If it was very nice she offered it to Our Lady. If it was unpleasant she would say to herself, "This is all for you, Therese."

There is yet another saying from the Gita which often occurs to me. "Abandoning all duties, come unto Me alone for shelter: sorrow not, I will deliver thee from all sins." Does this not remind us of the words of the Lord Christ: "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly of heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls." I think that both Sri Krishna and the Christ spoke as embodiments of the universal Spirit of Life. For the man who has become one in consciousness with all life and all living things, knows perfect peace and perfect joy.

I often read again the book which is my favorite of all I ever wrote, "The Way of the Disciple." And there I describe as far as I am able, the ancient qualifications for Initiation into the Great Brotherhood of the Perfected Men. I like best to call Them the "Perfected Men," for that is just what They are. I think it is better than to call Them Masters or Adepts. It puts Them more in line with ourselves who are all of us not yet perfect in many ways! The imperfections of human nature never upset me, even the worst. The daily papers today showed a picture of the re-captured train robber. They said he smiled and was quite cheerful. I liked his face. He has a devoted wife and three little girls. I remember once quoting in these letters the case I well remember of a brutal murderer who was condemned to death. He had a little daughter who simply adored him and whom he also adored. Poor little girl! I used to wonder what happened to her in the end. People sometimes exclaim to me with horror about some deed or crime. They expect me to be equally horrified. But nothing horrifies me. Perhaps the nearest to that state of mind can be provoked in me by cruelty to a child or an animal, because they are so defenceless. But for me such a thing as "sin" does not exist. As again I have mentioned before, the real definition and meaning of the word "sin", as is explained by Dr. Hasting in his "Dictionary of the Bible," is "missing the point," stepping out of the straight road which is destined to lead us to conscious immortal life.

"Somewhere the weariest river winds safely to the sea," wrote the poet Swinburne. So somewhere, sometime, even the weariest soul which has wandered far, will find its way back to peace and joy.

I remember that one of the Qualifications codified by the Lord Buddha for entrance into the Brotherhood of the Perfected Men was Uparati, a Sanscrit word generally translated as "tolerance." But I call it "Letting people be what they are." That is pretty difficult for the people who have a passion for reforming others. Perhaps to a certain extent we may help a child to develop certain characteristics. But already in their teens they are past moulding. We must let life and life's experiences do that now. Only the other day some one complained to me about an old person whose ways very much annoyed her. I told her that no one could possibly change a person who was over 80. And I remember an elderly husband who had married a giddy young wife, hoping to "mould her character." "My dear man," I said, "you could have tried that when she was six, not when she was sixteen." I expect the best thing to do is to let people be what they are, and to love them all the same. I remember a confirmed drug addict saying just that. He told the reporter who interviewed him that only one thing could save a drug addict, and that was for some one to love them. Where would they be otherwise?

The complementary qualification to Uparati is Titksha, sometimes translated as "endurance," but which I have called "Letting events be what they are." the same attitude of mind to events as to people. The great Indian sage, Sankaracharya, describes it as "Endurance of all pain and sorrow without thought of retaliation, rejection or lamentation." Dear me! Don't we all know the people who are always complaining or moaning about things that annoy us most. Big sorrows have a certain nobility about them which lends dignity to the sufferer. But what did old Job say about it? "Man is born unto sorrow as the sparks fly upwards. (Job 5: 7) The "Sparks" are our immortal selves always seeking to return to that Source from which they came on the great evolutionary journey.

Talking about sin I must quote, as far as I can remember it, the words of that very sweet old Saint, the Lady Julian of Norwich. She was what is called an anchoress, which means that she lived in a little cell built onto the wall of a church. She developed what is called "interior locutions," in which the seer seems to discourse with God. She was very troubled about the sin of the world, so one day, she writes, "I asked God for sin, and God showed me that there was no sin, but that for every pain we suffered here we should in heaven have added glories." And God showed her that in the end all would be well.

I feel sure it will, too, for "God" is Life, and Life is Love.

Your affectionate friend,

Clara M. Codd