

February-March, 1961

St. Michael's

Huizen, N.H., Holland

My dear Friends,

In a day or two I shall be going to live at St. Michael's, Huizen, N.H., Holland for a month or two. It is one of the three great magical Centres of our work. There are three at present. The first and oldest, and perhaps the most powerful, is our Headquarters at Adyar, India. It was founded by H.P.B. and Colonel Olcott. At first they acquired just a house which has now developed into the main Headquarters and its surrounding grounds. It has been added to again and again, and is now so large that it is one mile from the entrance gates to the sea shore. On the estate are many buildings, houses, and temples of every religion in the world. The estate has its own dairy, laundry and electric plant, and can house quite a large number of our members. When I first went there, more than fifty years ago, it had about one hundred Europeans in residence and about fifty Indian members who mostly lived in a collection of homes in the centre of the compound called "Vasanta Puram" which means Besant Village. The Centre channels mostly the dynamic power of the First Ray. The atmosphere is so powerful and so full of a mighty peace that even other people coming to visit us are nearly always conscious of the wonderful feeling there. I can remember whilst I was there, long years ago, how Dr. Besant was told by the Master to acquire what is now Damodar and Besant Gardens. She had no money to do this. Dr. Besant never did have any money for she always gave it away at once when it came. But she told us that that did not worry her, for if the Master asked her to do something the means would always come. And sure enough the next morning a large sum of money came from a wealthy member in Bombay. The Master also told her that He wanted the estate enlarged so that He could fill it with His magnetism.

The next Centre to come into existence was the Manor in Sydney, Australia. Some of the happiest years of my life were spent there, and I was there when it was first inaugurated. It was originally built by an old gentleman who wanted all his married sons and daughters to come and live with him, so it is a very large house with many rooms. For a short time, so I heard, the families did try living together, but it came to an end and the old gentleman died in it by himself. Outsiders called it "Bakewell's folly". It stood empty for some time. People used to wonder if the Catholics would buy it for a convent. Then Mr. van Gelder got the idea of a Theosophical Community living there and persuaded one or two other families to join in with him and purchase the house. It stands near the great Sydney harbour, one of the most famous natural harbours in the world, not far from the narrow entrance which lies between high cliffs. The families invited Bishop Leadbeater to come and live with them. He gladly consented and I think of all his homes that was the one he loved best of all. I remember him there so well, and the Monday nights when we all gathered round him for talks. His little boys would drape themselves over his chair, etc. whilst the little girls would sit round him on the floor demurely sewing. We older ones would sit in a circle outside them on chairs. Such wonderful Mondays we often had then. He never gave set lectures. We had to set him off with questions. If I could I always got him on to the subject of the Masters and the Path because on that topic he was always so sublime. Sometimes the questions veered on psychic things and I have on more than one occasion seen him exercise his clairvoyant power. One evening a Swedish doctor asked him about a dead friend of his who was a famous hunter. He wished to know whether the hunter's devoted dog was individualized or not? "Well," said C.W.L., "let me see." We all waited whilst, with his eyes wide open, the Bishop looked into the heaven world. The dog was with the hunter, but it was not individualized. C.W.L. thought the hunter was not quite evolved enough to bring about an animal's individualization. But the devotion of the dog was so strong that it would keep him near his master in the heaven world until that master returned to incarnation,

when the dog would regain his Group-soul. Always before the great occult festivals C.W.L. would gather us all together and speak to us about the ancient, immemorial Path. He also told us that the Hierarchy had brought about the acquisition of the Manor as They wished to have a Centre in the Southern Hemisphere. Perhaps because he was the leading figure there, but the Sydney Centre predominantly channels the Second Ray power, that of the World Teacher.

The third Centre is at Huizen in Holland. I was in at the early foundation of that one too. For I used to stay at St. Michael's with Mevrow van Beghan and Bishop James Wedgwood. I shall always remember the tiny Church in the woods, where one sat during the service near the windows and could watch the bees and the butterflies round the flowers outside. That pretty little Church was later destroyed by a fire caused by a lightning stroke. Its place is now taken by a much larger building. J.I.W., as we used to call him, was the soul of the Huizen Centre and being a great exemplar of the Seventh Ray, the Centre became a channel for the forces of the Maha-Chohan, the ruler of the remaining Five Rays. It is also a very important centre for the work of the Deva Kingdom. I can remember all of us following Bishop Wedgwood, singing the Litany as he carried the consecrated Host round the sandy paths between the oak trees that I used to call the "cloisters". Evidently the Nature spirits saw us, and they are very imitative creatures. So the next morning, so Bishop Wedgwood told us, when he looked out of his bedroom window he saw a train of tiny Nature spirits solemnly parading round the pond in imitation of us. They had even created a miniature Host which they bore in front of them!

Sometimes people ask me if there are no other special Centres of our work in the world? I asked Dr. Arundale that and he told me that at present there were only these three. We cannot make a Centre ourselves. We can prepare for it by many devoted people living together with very high aims and ideals and then perhaps one day the Great Brotherhood will signify that They have accepted that Centre and filled it with Their power.

It is lovely to have these three great Centres, but do not let us get a little superstitious about it. I sometimes hear members lamenting that they can never afford to go to Adyar or Sydney, and they talk as if they were missing great chances. I can assure them that is a fallacy. Dr. Besant told us that often a member in some lonely outpost made greater progress than one who lived at a great Centre. I once knew a lady, long passed over, who went to live at Adyar with hopes of occult progress. But others doing the Master's work for love of men surpassed her. But then progress does not matter. Let us all be quite happy to be as we are and where apparently we are. "God knows best," the old people used to say. Of course He does, much better than foolish little you and me!

Your affectionate friend,

Clara Codd

Thank you all so much for all the lovely Christmas cards. I wish I could write to each one. C.C.

From your secretary: One time soon, I should have a detailed accounting to give you all. Meanwhile you should know that our fund for Miss Codd is in wonderful shape -- thanks to all you generous friends of hers! R.L.D.