



## The Betty Letters

*My Dear Grandchild,*

*I know that I complain a great deal about this and that. Even Bo-Bo, my froglike husband, claims that, because of my advancing age, I am emotionally unstable these days. But, nevertheless, regardless of what I appear to be, my thinking is very logical about most things, when I can remember them, that is, although, as one of my friends commented, recently, I do ramble on from time to time. This week, however, I am not going to complain about anything. Instead, I want you to know how proud I am of my country, China. Oh, I know, I criticise China on occasions, but that is only because I feel strongly about the welfare of the country and its population and, being a Chinese, through and through, I want my country to be the best. Over the past few weeks, I am happy to state that China is fast becoming the best in the world in a number of spheres of activities, from architecture, to sport, to creativity, to the tenacity of determinism, to the humanistic achievement in the field of art. There have been those who have criticised China, too, and, perhaps, for true and valid reasons, but, on the scales of achievement for the sake of the country, the Chinese Government of today takes top drawer for its accomplishments over the past 2 decades or so. Look at what China has done to glorify the achievements of its men and women in sport. Can anybody in the world not look at China without being more than a little envious of its achievements in that social glue called, sport. The magnificent staging of the Beijing Olympics is but one of the exemplifications of the achievements of China because, not only did the country create the infrastructure for the Olympic Games, but, also, the creation of many of the venues will last, architecturally, for decades to come. Personally, I do not appreciate the National Stadium, referred to, lovingly by some people, as The Bird's Nest, but it is considered by some of my friends in the field of architecture, as being a magnificent structure of grace, beauty and functionality. I have little knowledge of the discipline of architecture so I cannot judge The Bird's Nest, but I can fully understand the reasoning behind the high praise that it is receiving, internationally. Aside from the intrinsic attraction of the structure, there is, still, the fact that it functions in accordance with its requirement as a stadium to seat some 90,000 spectators. Then, there was that opening ceremony. Well, what is one to say about that theatre? All I can state is that it was amazing. Other countries will have a very difficult time, following that act. The choreography of those many hundreds of men, women and children, who took part in the opening ceremony, was a delight to behold. For decades to come, people will recall the opening of the 2008 Olympics in Beijing, the People's Republic of China.*

*It is truly a pity that some people tried to take to the opportunity to use the opening of the Olympics in order to put across some political message. I do not doubt that China has been remiss about certain matters of a political nature in the past, but it seems to me that the spirit of the Olympics is supposed to transcend politics and political differences between peoples and nations. Sport for the sake of sport; the coming together of people from all parts of the globe to participate, honestly and sincerely, in displays of physical excellence. A concerto, if you will, based on the form of the fugue where the human body is the instrument that creates the music, and where the theme is recurrent throughout the entire interlude. Just to watch the athletes from many countries, trying to achieve the best possible scores, was a joy. I did not care who won: It was sufficient to be a spectator and watch the magnificence. To me, there were no losers; there were only winners. The tally of gold, silver and bronze medals, as far as I was concerned, was not as important as*

*noting the athletes, trying their best to excel in their chosen sports. Is that not enough? When the athletes return to their respective homes, where-ever they may be, I hope that they are awarded the triumph that they deserve and be able to state to their families, decades later: 'Yes, I participated in the 2008 Olympics at Beijing, China. 'God bless us every one!' in the words of Charles Dickens.*

*Talk to you, next week.*

*Chief Lady*

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