

THE CANADIAN THEOSOPHIST

VOL. XL, No. 1

TORONTO, MARCH-APRIL, 1959

Price 35 Cents

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FROM THE PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGE

*To the 83rd International Convention
of the Theosophical Society*

BY N. SRI RAM

According to reports we have received from the various countries in which the Society is functioning—reports which I have read with some care—there are today 42 active National Societies or Sections, three Federations of Lodges not yet amounting to Sections, two Presidential Agencies for areas that are still uncultivated from the standpoint of the Society's work, 1,364 Lodges and 33,749 members. Compared with the populations of the countries in which the Society carries on its work, the numbers are obviously small. But they are not, in my judgment, a true measure of its value. For it is not a very large membership, nor that kind of respectability which consists in large buildings and resources, nor even the approval of persons holding important positions in the intellectual or political world, which can be regarded as proof or guarantee of the success of the Society. None of these characterized it in H.P.B.'s time. Most of those eminent men who associated themselves with it at the beginning, some drawn by her remarkable powers, others curious as to her personality, did not stay long in it.

No one who reads *The Mahatma Letters to Mr. A. P. Sinnett* can be in

any doubt as to what They wanted. It was "a Brotherhood of Humanity, a real universal Fraternity." When the Society was started, those present defined its object as only "to collect and diffuse a knowledge of the laws which govern the universe". Colonel Olcott, the President-Founder, says in his *Old Diary Leaves* that the Brotherhood plank was not then thought of. It was only later that the First Object, as it stands now, came into prominence and became "the corner-stone of the edifice".

One can see now how far-seeing were Those who insisted on Universal Brotherhood, which was to be no lip declaration but a practical regenerating Brotherhood. The success of the Society, from Their standpoint, would depend on the measure in which this spirit is present in its members. It might be asked, What about Theosophy or Occultism? The answer to this lies in the fact that Truth in its highest meaning, the truth which is spiritual and belongs to the fundamental nature of things, is discoverable only by one who is open to it, whose inner state is reflected in his outer life in relations that show the qualities of understanding, co-operation and brotherhood. These are

obviously also the conditions for a real peace throughout the world, fruitful of manifold blessings for all. Again to quote from the aforesaid Letters: "He alone who has the love of humanity at heart . . . is entitled to the possession of our secrets . . . A man who places not the good of mankind above his own good is not worthy of becoming our chela, becoming higher in knowledge than his neighbour." These words clearly express the spirit which should animate a body of students, for the gaining of true occult knowledge.

We have in Theosophy an explanation of the nature of man and the universe, showing how alike they are in constitution and how closely related one to the other. But the truth with regard to the most vital aspect of either, the truth as to their spiritual nature, is a truth to be experienced in oneself rather than learnt or communicated in words. To know Theosophy as a living wisdom, not merely through such concepts as we may form from our experiences at levels where we are disconnected from the source and the true nature of things, we have to become open to the truth and bring about in ourselves a certain polarity between what might be called the spiritual part of ourselves and the rest of our nature, resulting in a relation towards all beings and things very different from what it is now. To see life as one in its purity and that we are all fundamentally alike in our natures, in our basic capacity to feel and experience, despite the conditioning by outer influences and the ideas we absorb, is more important for human progress, especially at the present juncture, than any accretion of knowledge in the material field or advance in technology.

If there is to be a new era, which is the alternative to the destruction with which the whole world is threatened, it cannot be an era merely of abundance of physical goods, although everyone

must have a proper physical basis for his life, but there must be a new relation between man and man, between man and all other forms of life, and a new standpoint freer, more open and more alive to the spiritual values in matters of individual living as well as relationship with others. Brother Jinarajadasa has spoken glowingly of a new humanity of intuition. Instead of postponing it to the future, can we not find a way to become that humanity now? Man is so constituted that he cannot change fundamentally except from within himself, which means a change born out of his understanding. It is such a change that is needed at present.

The Theosophical Society is now so widely spread that the conditions in which its work is carried on and the lines of its activities vary from one Section to another. It is not possible for me to mention here the work in all the Sections, though each Section should be interested in the progress of all the others and at the International Headquarters we feel equally linked with all of them.

One of the Sections which has been for many years rather outside the orbit of inter-Sectional activities and comparatively little visited by lecturers or members from abroad is Iceland. It is all the more pleasing to learn from the Report of its new General Secretary, Mr. Sigvaldi Hjalmarrsson, that the Society is not less vital there than anywhere else. The membership of the Section, now 416, has increased considerably during the past few years, and the trend is expected to continue. Few organizations, if any, says Mr. Hjalmarrsson, have as active a programme in Iceland as the Theosophical Lodges.

The Finnish Section, which has now a membership of 505, celebrated during this year the completion of fifty years of its work. The General Secretary, Miss Signe Rosvall, writes that, in spite

of many difficulties, the work goes on in an atmosphere of peace and optimism. In the Section's summer home at Kreivala members from all parts of the country have an opportunity of meeting during the summer and getting better acquainted with one another.

Mr. A. J. H. van Leeuwen, Acting President of the Netherlands Section (in the absence of the National President, Mr. B. Wouters who with his wife has been at Adyar attending the School of the Wisdom,) records as a notable event the approval of the Dutch Government for the creation by the Theosophical Foundation "Proclus" of a special Chair in the University of Leyden for the study of "Metaphysics in the spirit of Theosophy". Our Brother Dr. J. J. Poortman has been appointed the first professor in this Chair. That such a well-known and long-established University as that of Leyden and the Dutch Government should consider the metaphysics of Theosophy as a subject to be included in University studies is certainly an encouraging sign. Mr. van Leeuwen observes in his Report: "We need a deeper interest in real Theosophy as a philosophy of life, and not so much an increase in pseudo and semi-occult knowledge."

Belgium has always been a country where there has been much resistance to Theosophy, because of the Roman Catholic influence. But the Section has had, says the General Secretary, Mr. Chapellier, "the happiness of receiving into the Theosophical family thirty-five new members". In the circumstances this addition cannot be regarded as inconsiderable.

Switzerland is another Section in Europe with a comparatively small membership, 234 at present. Mme. Claire Wyss, the General Secretary, mentions as particularly promising the enthusiasm of the Young Theosophists group there. The country, being

centrally situated, the members there have the opportunity of attending the Regional Summer Schools for the German-speaking and French-speaking members.

Mr. J. E. van Dissel, the General Secretary of the Federation of European Sections, mentions these Regional Summer Schools, as well as one held at Swanwick in England for the English-speaking members, as notable features of the work in Europe, giving opportunity for close contacts between members and workers in different countries. These summer schools are part of the activities of the regional committees of the Federation. Mr. van Dissel mentions as the most important event of all the meeting of the Council of the Federation, which was held in August at Rendsburg, during the first three days of the German Section's summer school. There were represented at this meeting, besides Germany, seven other Sections—Austria, Denmark, England, France, Holland, Sweden and Switzerland—each by its General Secretary or by an official delegate. There was thus a very representative gathering, with a varied programme of talks and discussions on Theosophical topics, in addition to the transaction of business.

The work in the English Section has gone on much as usual, says Dr. Laurence Bendit, who has succeeded Mrs. Alice Lavender Berry as General Secretary. Dr. Bendit mentions the Tekel's Park estate in Camberley as a centre of increasing activity, with many weekend conferences for different purposes. The Research Centre in England carries on its work through groups, lecture courses and publications, and has held conferences at different places during the year, all well attended.

One of the Sections where there has been a decrease in membership is Sweden, whose General Secretary now is Mrs. Eva Ostelius. There too there is

the difficulty of keeping in touch from Stockholm with the distant Lodges.

Mr. James S. Perkins, National President of the United States Section writes that the membership of that Section is now 4,328, the largest since 1938. There has been an increase of 448 during the year. The work at "Olcott" is so organized, with different departments for correspondence courses, supplying material for Lodge programmes, answering enquiries and so on, that there is constant contact between the headquarters and the Lodges and members in all parts of the country. The Section now comprises 149 Lodges divided into fifteen Federations, in addition to three Summer Camps which are in the States of Washington, New York and California. These Camps, which are all situated in beautiful natural surroundings, attract many members during the summer months, and also some non-members who are sympathetic.

The Department of Education of this Section (which is not concerned with the education of boys and girls but with educative material and programmes for use by members and Lodges) has an increasing correspondence with other Sections and shares its material with them. It is constantly adding to its number of tape-recorded lectures (some of these obtained from other Sections) and its slide library which has a number of sets with script which could be read out by a Lodge. A recent study course which has been prepared, correlating Theosophy with modern biological researches, and entitled "The Life Process," has been used by many Lodges.

I have in previous Addresses mentioned the increasing use of the radio in the American Section. At present twenty-four radio stations in different parts of the country are regularly being used for Theosophical broadcasts.

Seeing the success of the Spotlight activity in the United States, which in the words of Mr. Perkins is meant to be "a concentrated employment of the Section's talent and financial and spiritual resources," one cannot but wish it could be extended widely to many other parts of the world. For example, in Canada, which is a huge country, there are very many little towns where Theosophy is not known at all. Also in the countries of South America there is an immense field for Theosophical work, which has so far been only a little cultivated.

The Indian Section continues to be numerically the largest of all. Mr. Rohit Mehta, the General Secretary, reports that the membership now stands at 7,090, the numbers of Lodges and Centres being 408 and 47 respectively. The All-India Federation of Young Theosophists was dissolved during the year, as there was not a sufficient number of Youth Lodges to keep up a separate Youth Federation.

East Africa is a Section where in past years there has been a fairly rapid increase of members, but it now records a drop by about 350 members, due to non-payment of dues. The General Secretary, Mr. Kapadia, thinks that many of them are likely to revive their membership.

Madame Nguyen-thi-Hai, who is now the General Secretary for Viet-Nam, outlines a programme of work for making that Section much more vital than it has been. She mentions, interestingly enough, a Lodge of women members whose "programme of action is the study of Theosophy and the practice of qualities that are specifically feminine such as compassion, gentleness and devotion".

In spite of the unsettled conditions in Indonesia, the membership there has been constantly increasing, and now stands at 1,050.

The work in Australia and New Zealand goes on very steadily. Because of long distances it has not been for very many years possible for the General Secretary in Australia to tour the country and make personal contacts with the members and Lodges, but Miss Helen Zahara has been able this last year to do extensive touring in different States of the country.

Mrs. Mary G. Patterson, who has been for some time a worker at Adyar, is now in South Africa, having been elected National President of that Section which includes the Rhodesias. South Africa is a difficult country for Theosophical work because of the racial attitudes and tensions.

Central America is another Section where, because of lack of sufficient communications and also the fact that it includes a number of different Republics, the Lodges are not much in contact with one another or with the headquarters. In Costa Rica the General Secretary, Señor José Joaquín Ulloa, writes that an attempt is now being made to organize a Convention of the Lodges to be held in February or March 1959 in the city of San Salvador. This Convention would enable the members of the Section to know one another better. The General Secretary speaks of the Young Theosophists in Costa Rica as "enthusiastic and ardent students preparing themselves" for Theosophical work.

It is always a great advantage to a Theosophical Lodge or a Section to have premises of its own where there can be developed an atmosphere favourable to Theosophical work, unmixed with other influences. In Pakistan the Karachi Lodge has now a fine new building with several floors, which has been raised as a memorial to our late Brother Jamshed Nusserwanjee. The building was opened by myself on 17th November 1957. The Presidential Agent, Mrs.

Gool Minwalla, refers in her Report to the difficulties of presenting Theosophy in Islamic countries, due partly to paucity of workers versed in Islamic books. The Hermes Lodge of the Canadian Federation also has been able to raise a fine building for Theosophical work in Vancouver which was opened this year by Miss Clara Codd. The Icelandic Section has secured a plot of ground on which it hopes to build premises which can accommodate the Section headquarters and serve as a suitable centre for Theosophical lectures. The General Secretary for Brazil, Mr. Armando Sales, says in his Report that Lodge "Bhagavat Gautama" at Belo Horizonte in the State of Minas Gervais has now acquired a building for itself; also Lodge "Jesus de Nazareth" at Manaus in the State of Amazonas has now premises of its own. In Cuba, where conditions are very unsettled, the general Secretary Mr. Ledon reports that Lodge "Rafael de Albear" at Morón has now a small but beautiful home for its headquarters, which the members hope to make a centre of peace, harmony and friendliness. Mexico is another Section where a big effort has been started under the direction of Brother de la Peña Gil—unfortunately no more with us—to construct a building which will worthily house the activities of the Section and the different Lodges established in Mexico City.

I was in the United States this year from April 10th to August 27th, along with Srimati Bhagirathi Sri Ram and Miss Elithe Nisewanger, who helps me as Secretary. My itinerary there covered most of the Federation areas, and we took part in the Annual Convention and Summer School held at "Olcott" in July. During the time spent at "Olcott" I had the pleasure of meeting the Vice-President, Mr. Sidney A. Cook, and discussing with him and Mr.

Perkins various matters concerning our work. In the course of my tour I was also at Ojai, California, for a week, during which there were talks and lectures, as in all the other places. This time I could visit only Toronto in Canada. On the way to and from the United States we were for a few weeks in London, and during my stay there in September I made a brief visit to Paris, where I had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Brunel and other workers of the French Section. Before returning to Adyar towards the end of September, Srimati Bhagirathi and I also visited Karachi (Pakistan), Bhavnagar and Bombay.

Mr. and Mrs. James S. Perkins, who do considerable travelling and lecturing in the United States itself, were able to come to Adyar for the 1957 International Convention, and on the way back they visited and lectured in Ceylon and Pakistan, as well as in a number of Sections in Europe.

Mr. Rohit Mehta was requested by the Australian and New Zealand Sections to tour in their countries, and he was able to do so by relieving himself of his duties as General Secretary for India for five months. He was accompanied by Srimati Shridevi Mehta, and their talks were received with much enthusiasm in all the places they visited. They made a special point, while in these countries, of contacting many outside organizations and telling them something of the conditions and culture of India. They also visited Indonesia and Malaya on their way back.

Dr. and Mrs. Laurence Bendit also made a tour of the United States in the latter part of 1957, and they were present at the National Conference which was held in New Orleans in November 1957.

I referred last year to the need for organizing the work of translating Theosophical books into Spanish and publishing them in a systematic

manner. Mrs. Edith Carrol, a member in the United States, who has been translating for Brother Rimini of Argentina certain books which have since been published in that country, suggested to me while I was in the United States that a Council consisting of all the General Secretaries of the Spanish-speaking Sections should be constituted, together with one or two others who might be especially qualified, to take charge of this work. The translation work will be done by a small committee of translators chosen by the Council. I have circulated this scheme amongst the General Secretaries of those Sections and most of their replies have been favorable.

I referred in my address three years ago to the fact that the Theosophical Publishing House at Adyar has taken up the work of bringing out the remaining volumes of the *H. P. B. Collected Writings*, prepared and edited by Mr. Boris de Zirkoff in Los Angeles, California. Volume VII has just been printed by the Vasanta Press and the manuscript for volume VIII is already in our hands, and it will be put through the press as quickly as possible. I am sure that all who prize H. P. B.'s works—they are an increasing number throughout the world—will feel grateful to Mr. de Zirkoff for the work he has undertaken and is carrying out with such devotion and care.

I have to record with deep regret the passing away of a number of most devoted and eminent brethren during this last year: Professor J. E. van der Stok in the Netherlands; Mr. Sidney Ransom in England; Señor Adolfo de la Peña Gil in Mexico; and Dr. Bhagavan Das in India, among others. Professor van der Stok, who has been living at St. Michael's, Huizen for a number of years, was a deeply erudite man, with an extraordinary devotion to the work of the Society, and an inspirer and

counsellor to many workers and members throughout Europe. Mr. Sidney Ransom has worked in many Sections and also at Adyar at different times. He was known and loved by members very widely, and his passing away is a great loss to the work in England in particular and the Scandinavian countries, of which he was a special friend. Dr. Bhavavan Das was known by his numerous works read and appreciated not only throughout the Theosophical world, but by many other people in India and outside. He was a friend of Dr. Annie Besant and a close co-worker with her for some years. Señor de la Peña Gil was a pillar of the Society in Mexico, who had a strong link with Adyar, where he had been a student in Brahma Vidyā Āshrama. There are others whom I shall not name here, not so well known generally. We honour all these Brethren and tender them our gratitude.

I feel it my duty to bring again to the notice of all members the fact that *The Adyar Besant Commemorative Fund* (A.B.C. Fund), which was established in February 1947 in order to cover with its income the large difference that already existed between the annual income and expenditure at Adyar, at present stands not very much above half the original target of Rs. 2,000,000 (£150,000; \$427,328). The cost of almost everything in India, including of course the wages of employees on the Estate, has gone up very considerably since 1947, due partly to the economic efforts of the Indian Government, and partly to world conditions. We have accordingly to revise our target, and I myself would consider Rs. 4,000,000 (£300,000; \$854,656) not too high a figure for the Fund's original purpose.

Our deficit year by year has been covered by generous donations from members all over the world. While we are deeply grateful to them all, among

whom I must make special mention of the United States Section for its Adyar Day collections, we can count only on a certain amount from members, when their own Sections and Lodges equally need funds for carrying on the work. The fact that donations have been forthcoming is a matter for great thankfulness, not merely because of the fact that they have enabled us to carry on our work on a certain scale, but also and even more, as indicating the degree of devotion and interest which animates members everywhere.

The Theosophical Society as it has spread over the world, has drawn into itself men and women of different temperaments, different backgrounds and cultures. But all are united in a common purpose which is to do all we can in brotherliness of heart to convey such enlightenment as we have to a world in darkness under many illusions. The pursuit of this purpose, its fulfilment, not in the future but to our capacity here and now, demands and permits many lines of activity. In our Society all members and groups of members are free to follow their particular lines of interest, the work for which they have aptitude or which they consider to be most urgently needed. Each can make his own contribution in his own way, and it can be vital and valuable to all. So long as these efforts and activities are basically and essentially Theosophical, it should be possible to find room for them all, harmonize and blend them. The Society is like a river into which flow the currents and activities set going by its members. To enable it to fulfil its mission which it brings from its own sacred source, we should try to keep its waters flowing as fresh and clear and pure as possible. If we do this, we will have done our duty at a time when the world needs these healing and life-giving waters more than ever before.

THEOSOPHY AND MODERN PSYCHOLOGY

BY DR. ALVIN B. KUHN

When in a field of human interest and a science as important as that of psychology an epochal contribution has been made by an outstanding figure, it is of vital concern to Theosophy to scrutinize the development so as to determine what relation it may bear to Theosophy. Such a significant movement confronts us in the great contribution of the eminent and now-aging psychologist, Dr. Carl Gustav Jung, rated widely as the most profound investigator of psychic science in the special department known today as psychoanalysis. There is a supposition of some general prevalence that Jung has swung psychology fairly closely over toward Theosophy and even some idea that he has endorsed Theosophy. It is true that in an earlier work, *Modern Man in Search of a Soul*, he has written appreciatively of Theosophy's approach to the problems of psychism. Much of his writing seems to indicate a commitment to fundamental Theosophical principles underlying the occult constitution of man. In a survey that can not be either thorough or comprehensive it will be of interest to determine how closely his psychoanalytic science falls in line with the principles of occult psychology.

As a Theosophist sees it, the tremendous problem which modern academic psychology faces is to arrive at an understanding of psychic forces, their operation and rationale, without the basic technical knowledge of the mechanics of the psyche and its modes of consciousness which Theosophy has the enormous advantage of possessing. The current psychology knows nothing about the "occult" constitution of man, in which the organization of matter at several grades of atomic structure gives

the psyche the power to function consciously at different levels, as the physical, the vital or pranic, the emotional, mental and spiritual, each implementing its own rate, grade and character of energetic expression. A more detailed knowledge of this structural system of our psychic equipment enables the Theosophist to account for psychic phenomena upon which the conventional systems of current psychology can only blindly speculate.

Yet in spite of this default of the true scientific grounds of psychological competency modern psychology has made a prodigious forward stride in its truly epochal discovery of the "unconscious". It is, however, still miles away from knowing that what it takes to be the simple subsistence of a realm of unconsciousness underlying our conscious awareness is by no means simple, but instead is a complex of a number of differentiated states or modes of unconscious sub-consciousness, so to say. Just as physical science postulated the atom and believed it had the irreducible simple unit of mass structure, but then discovered some fourteen more basic constituent particles to go along with the primary proton and electron, so psychoanalysis has yet to discover the several interrelated sub-elements that enter into the total complex of man's conscious potential. Professional psychology has been the basis of the very apt comparison of the human consciousness with an iceberg: the perceptible consciousness of our waking state, they say, is the small upper visible section of the iceberg, while submerged out of sight beneath it is the immensely larger body of the unconscious. As a broad analogy the comparison well states the case. But con-

consciousness is the product of a far more intricate and complicated structure of parts and elements than the iceberg. And "orthodox" psychology lacks the technical knowledge of these sub- and super-conscious states which the occult science stands ready to give it. Still we can feel that general psychology is progressing in the right direction taking it ever closer to Theosophy, and not away from it. The growing vogue of "parapsychology" and "extra-sensory perception," along with the work of mediums and psychics of reputed fame and status, are likely to push general investigation to the point of closer affinity with Theosophy.

Lacking the full background of esoteric science, Jung has aimed to rationalize and systematize his analysis of the relation of consciousness and the unconscious to each other, on the grounds and in the terms of traditional religionism, when he might have done infinitely better to have used the Theosophical fundamentals. So he deals with such psychic or spiritual entities as the soul, the self, the ego, the psyche, the "libido," and a very wraith-like pair he calls the *anima* (Greek, "soul,"—feminine), and its masculine counterpart, the *animus*, and of course both God and the gods. The ones that figure most prominently in his scheme of elucidation are the psyche, which he uses as a general covering term for the unit of our ordinary consciousness, the self and the ego. And the way in which he correlates the concept of God with these individual elements of the soul's life is very curious and interesting. It all shows that in his study he is mulling around right on the ground of Theosophical spiritual science, and is coming close to Theosophical conclusions at one point or another. We can gain some pretty clear insight into his line of investigation if we consider his analysis of these entities which he has predi-

cated in the life of the psyche, or soul. The scheme of relationship of the self, the ego, the gods and God yields much in the way of fruitful ideas even for esotericists.

Having mainly the two kinds of consciousness to use as the ground for all systematic analysis, the conscious and the unconscious, he finds the latter quite handy for the task of explaining the interaction of the several elements, particularly the one both he and we know least about, God, by the simple ruse of allocating them to the unconscious. He sets them up as the hidden powers of our unconscious, and says that they influence us, rule us, from there. He even says that India is trying to influence us toward its negative and supremely subjective philosophies "by the back door of the unconscious."

It is inevitable, then, that in this nameless and nebulous region from which destiny-shaping influences well up to dominate us, he locates "God".

If this term is not used, in the common anthropomorphic sense as we see is ignorantly employed by religionists, but in the general sense of the ultimate determinative power in our lives and the world, it is indeed intriguing to see how Jung conceives the idea of deity. It might be said that he makes God and the unconscious synonymous. At any rate he locates God in the unconscious.

At once it is seen as a most significant thing that by so doing he brings God from outside man, somewhere at the summit of the universe, right into the area and constitution of man. Thus he makes God the immanent, not the externalized transcendental deity in relation to man. It is to be noted that he does not absolutely negate the transcendence of God. But the transcendence here is that of value and character, not of position; not beyond man, but a higher element potential *in* man. He

simply infers that God is a power ensconced in man's unconscious, a power that is higher than the power man consciously wields. If we could enter consciously into our great unconscious, we would find God there. But he conceals himself from us by keeping himself invisible and beyond the reach and range of our conscious experience.

As God must be conceived as the ultimate self-generating, self-moving power in our life, Jung characterizes him as "autonomous", a law unto himself. And he therefore speaks of God as the "autonomous content" of our unconscious. This would be closely equivalent to what Edwin Arnold described as "the power within us, not ourselves, that makes for righteousness". Jung, however, would qualify this by asserting that it is ourselves, or at least an integral portion of ourselves, indeed the most essential portion of ourselves, since he designates it as the very "self" of man, in distinction from the minor term *ego*, the open human unit of consciousness and being. The human ego, he asserts, is an individualized fragment of the higher and more inclusive self, or at least lives its life within the latter's wider and deeper scope.

In passing it is most interesting to note that Jung's allocation of deity to man in the entity he calls the self should go far to conciliate the eternal controversy between the theistic and the humanistic systems, admonishing the theists that divinity is indeed an integral portion of the human endowment, but also challenging the humanists to recognize that this segment of the human nature is not basically human, but divine. And if Jung has correctly characterized these two grades of consciousness and their relationship, both theist and humanist—as well as the rest of us—must face what appears to be the obvious infer-

ence from the situation, which is the somewhat surprising conclusion that the God power is indeed an integral portion and element of our human nature, but — on Jung's premises — buried deep in the unconscious. As to the position of occultism on the matter, it has to be said that Jung's theorization approximates it quite closely, speaking broadly, for surely the occult science identifies the deepest soul of man with the God nature, and it is latent until awakened. A skeptic or scoffer at religious predications of the sort might scurrilously ask us what is the good of our harboring a god in our *unconscious* self. The all-sufficient answer to this question would be: if you know he is there and will pay attention to him, you will become conscious of him and he will bless you in every way. We can let Jung state the case in his own way:

"The conception of God as an autonomous psychic content makes God into a moral problem, and that, admittedly, is very uncomfortable. But if this problem does not exist, God is not real, for nowhere can he touch our lives. He is then either an historical and intellectual bogey or a philosophical sentimentality." (*Two Essays on Analytical Psychology*, p. 237.)

The reflection that if we introduce God into our own lives as closely as in our very unconscious selves the relation generates an uncomfortable moral problem needs some clarification. It seems to say that if we realize that God is as close to us as that, a submerged portion of our own constitution, we are smitten suddenly with the realization that, with such an "honored" guest dwelling in our household of life, it may be incumbent upon us to give him a bit more of our attention and regard! We are reminded here of Tennyson's

(Continued on page 22)

NOTES AND COMMENTS BY THE GENERAL SECRETARY

On behalf of the Canadian Section I sent congratulations and best wishes to the 67th Convention of the Indian Section which was held at Varanasi in December last.

* * * *

I regret that the death of Mr. B. P. Wadia of Bombay, India in August last was not reported earlier. Mr. Wadia visited many of the Canadian Lodges in 1922 and the older Canadian members will remember well his striking appearance, his vitality and the excellence of his lectures and class studies. During his long lifetime, Mr. Wadia made notable contributions to the Theosophical Movement, both during his years as an officer of the Theosophical Society at Adyar, and, after his resignation from that organization, through his work with the United Lodge of Theosophists, a Lodge of which was established by him in Bombay in 1929. His wife, Mrs. Wadia is the editor of *The aryan Path* and to her we offer our commiseration. The magazine which Mr. Wadia founded, *The Theosophical Movement*, grew steadily in influence and reflected his deep wisdom, his humanity and undying devotion to H. P. B. and the teachings she brought.

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ANNUAL ELECTION: For some years now the officials of our General Executive have been returned to office with the regularity of clockwork. I suggest that we put on our thinking caps and decide whether or not it would be a good thing to have a change. Now is the time to do so and I would suggest the members have a good look at the Election Notice that appears in this issue.

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DUES: Quite a number of our members have already sent in their dues for

1960. The Referendum Ballot which took place recently was practically unanimous in its decision that the annual dues be increased to \$3.50 instead of \$2.50 as heretofore. I would therefore ask those members to please remit the extra dollar to their respective lodges without undue delay.

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COST OF MAGAZINE: In regard to the above I may add that the increase in the dues came at an opportune time, for our publisher recently notified us of a considerable increase in price of production.

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OLCOTT CONVENTION: I have just received intimation that this convention will be held on July 11 - 15, and the Summer School July 18 - 23. Reservations for accommodation will be accepted after March 1. Anyone interested should contact me and I will be glad to give the rates, etc.

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EASTERN CANADA CONVENTION: Arrangements for our Convention are well in hand and prospects seem extremely good, but until the main features are definitely fixed I will refrain from giving full details until our next issue. The date however is June 27 - July 5.

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STATISTICS: I regret the demise of two of our older members in the persons of Mr. and Mrs. Young, both of the Toronto Lodge who passed away recently almost at the same time. R.I.P.

Mr. and Mrs. Duguay of the Montreal Lodge have been demitted to the Canadian Federation. Mrs. Nancy Creeth of the Canyon Lodge has been demitted to the American Section.

I welcome the following new members into the Society: Mrs. Hilda Hewitt, Vancouver Lodge, and Mr. Arthur Jones and Mrs. Vivienne Jones both of the Hamilton Lodge.

E. L. T.

THE CANADIAN THEOSOPHIST
THE ORGAN OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY
IN CANADA

Published Bi-monthly.

Authorized as second class mail, Post Office Department, Ottawa.



Subscription: TWO DOLLARS A YEAR

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All Letters to the Editor, Articles and Reports for Publication should be sent to The Acting Editor,

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Letters intended for publication should be restricted to not more than five hundred words.

Printed by The Griffin & Richmond Co., Ltd.,
29 Rebecca Street, Hamilton, Ontario.

THE ANNUAL ELECTION

Nominations for the office of General Secretary and seven members of the General Executive should be made during March and should be received at Headquarters by April 15 *at the latest*. Will the officers of each Lodge kindly have this matter brought before their Lodge and then have the nominations sent *at once* to the General Secretary. According to the Constitution, nominations must be made through a Lodge and the consent of persons nominated should be obtained.

Nominations should be sent in a separate letter to the General Secretary, 52 Isabella St., Toronto 5, Ont.

E. L. Thomson,
General Secretary.

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Editor,

Have read with interest the first part of Mr. Endersby's article on *The Third Eye*. I agree with him about the "phoniness" of the whole book, despite some passages which seem veridical.

Without going into the deeper aspects of the question of *duggas* and of possession (a rare thing: much rarer than people think), I should like, as a psychiatrist, to make one or two observations.

1. Change of personality does not of necessity imply possession by an external entity. It can simply be another aspect of the same one—and perhaps "reflect" a past life. Moreover, the dramatic power of the human psyche can go to almost any length to "prove" what it wishes proven.

2. A certain form of clairvoyance depends, not on the pineal but on the *pituitary* region. This, moreover, is easily accessible from the forehead without touching the cerebral cortex in any way—though other structures would probably be damaged by any "blind" operation from the frontal region. So that aspect of the matter is not quite as far fetched as appears. But heaven help anybody who thought he would become clairvoyant by any such means!

Yours sincerely,

Laurence J. Bendit, M.I. (Cantab.)
(Dr. Bendit is now General Secretary of the Society in England. Editor)

* * * *

ANNIE BESANT

Dear Mr. Editor,

In Mr. Prentice's article in your last issue, three adverse charges are made which will sound astonishing indeed to the many who knew Mrs. Besant well: (1) Lack of humour, (2) No originality, (3) Dependence on others for 'inspiration'.

THE ORIGINAL PROGRAMME

BY T. H. REDFERN

(Cont'd from Page 135, Vol. XXXIX)

For several years in the 1920's I met the President frequently, accompanying her to many Federation and Lodge assemblies, heard her repeatedly in lectures and interviews, in conversations when staying in hotels and while travelling in the car. I can claim, I think, much first-hand experience.

Mrs. Besant's humour was of that subtle Irish quality very apt to be mistaken as deeply serious by the unwary. The very sentence that Mr. Prentice quotes with such theatrical flare is an interesting case in point! The lady to whom that private letter was addressed would understand it well—or should have done so. I can hear, in imagination, the very tone in which that phrase "don't you think that I did it rather well?" would have been spoken instead of written.

As to 'originality' I wonder what Mr. Prentice means in relation to Theosophy? A synonym is Ancient Wisdom and obviously originality can apply only to its presentation in a new dress suited for the time. In this Mrs. Besant was a most brilliant exponent. Truth is eternal but is necessarily unfolded gradually.

The President's warm and cordial loyalty to all her trusted friends was characteristic. In an extremely busy life that trust in others has sometimes been misplaced. As a matter of fact I know myself of occasions in which it was betrayed—though maybe unintentionally. Who has not suffered from the same cause? It is the certain penalty of all who lead.

Mr. Prentice has done such splendid work for Theosophy and the Society—and this article appears to me to be unworthy of him.

With cordial greetings and every good wish,
Sincerely yours,

E. L. Gardner.

Now why was this work called for? "A crisis had arrived in which it was absolutely necessary to bring within reach of our generation the Esoteric Doctrine of the eternal cycles. . . Nothing but a few fundamental tenets from the Esoteric philosophy sketched in broad outlines. . . could snatch mankind from drowning in the sea of ignorance. . ." (H.P.B.) Or as an Adept Brother put it:

"You can do immense good by helping to give the Western nations a secure basis upon which to reconstruct their crumbling faith. And what they need is the evidence that Asiatic psychology alone supplies. Give this, and you will confer happiness of mind on thousands. The era of blind faith is gone; that of inquiry is here. Inquiry that only unmasks error, without discovering anything upon which the soul can build, will but make iconoclasts. Iconoclasm, from its very destructiveness, can give nothing; it can only raze. But man cannot rest satisfied with bare negation. Agnosticism is but a temporary halt. This is the moment to guide the recurrent impulse which must come, and which will push the age towards extreme atheism, or drag it back to extreme sacerdotalism, if it is not led to the primitive soul-satisfying philosophy of the Aryans."

This sacerdotalism is a major curse of mankind. Letter No. 10 in *The Mahatma Letters* is too well-known to quote at length. Every member would do well to make himself familiar with it. Whether Brahmin, Christian, Moslem or what-have-you, "religion under whatever form and in whatever

nation. . . the sacerdotal caste, the priesthood and the churches", the priestly imposters who deceive men and women "under the false pretence of saving them" and produce selfish bigots and sectarian fanatics—these are "the great curse of humanity. . . that almost overwhelms mankind".

These curse-bearing religions are fruits of Atlantis. "The One Faith of the whole of primitive humanity", worshipping "in spirit and not with rites" the One infinite absolute Principle "Whose immutable laws no words of propitiation can change", was lost "when mankind fell". The natural course of evolution led "into generation", into human procreation. "The subjective process of Nature", carried down "from the plane of spirituality to that of matter—made in its selfish and animal adoration of self a God of the human organism", projecting itself for worship, gradually developing "the idea of a personal God . . . Anthropomorphism in religion is the direct generator of stimulus to the exercise of black, left-hand magic . . . The Prophets of the . . . Left Path . . . inaugurated the birth and evolution of the sacerdotal castes" and "led the world into all those exoteric religions which have been invented to satisfy the depraved taste of the 'hoi polloi' and the ignorant for ritualistic pomp. . . ." (H.P.B.)

Are the Adepts then against religion? They look forward to the day when "the altars of these false gods" are destroyed in the name of "Truth, morality, and universal charity" (M.L. 58), "that longed for day when our religious philosophy becomes universal" and it again becomes possible to put the mysteries "within the reach of the general public" (M.L. 6). The work of the Theosophical Movement in this field is to reveal and restore this original, universal, true One Faith that has been buried by the muddy deposit of the

exoteric religions; "the grotesque and tortured shadows of theosophical realities".

Theosophy is not a religion, but it is Religion itself, cleansed of perversion. "We have no new church but only an old truth to commend to the world . . . we set our faces like flint against any such misuse of our Society . . . Church organizations, Christian and Spiritual sects were shown as the future contrasts to our Society . . . What the Society should never become" (H.P.B.) Whatever The Liberal Catholic Church may be therefore, and with all respect for the religious susceptibilities of its members, is it not basically antithetical to the purpose of the Theosophical Movement?

Since Mme. Blavatsky died much work has been done by scholars outside our Society in the field of comparative religion, and in making Eastern religious and philosophical thought available to the West. A great deal remains to be done to dissipate and banish the delusions that support the world's exoteric ritualistic faiths; and to provide such an insight into religious truth that men are not left with "bare negation" and "extreme atheism" but find, each in his own inner divine self, "the holiest of temples, the divinest of revelations"—"making their Spirit the sole mediator between them and the Universal Spirit, their good actions the only priests, and their sinful intentions the only visible and objective sacrificial victims to the *Presence*".

The task is immense. Should we not all get together to share counsel on the best ways of going about it in the kamamanasic climate of to-day?

"The immediate work, whatever it may be, has the abstract claims of duty, and its relative importance or non-importance is not to be considered at all." *Practical Occultism*, 68.

From THE CHURCHES' FELLOWSHIP FOR PSYCHICAL STUDY,
Quarterly Review, December, 1958
Published at 31A Chapel Road, Worthing, Sussex, England.

"Considerable prominence was given in the national newspapers a short while ago to the remarkable incident in Winchester Cathedral, which has proved so puzzling to those having no knowledge of psychic matters.

"An electrical engineer took a colour photograph of the deserted High Altar at the Cathedral and to his amazement when the photograph was processed it showed 13 people in mediaeval robes around the altar. Friends who were present when the photo was taken all confirmed that the cathedral was empty.

"The figures were of Tudor appearance, and one was bearded like a Biblical patriarch. The hard marble line of the altar steps was clearly visible through the transparent bodies of the figures.

"The photographer says he has no explanation, and has never had a similar experience before. Colour film experts say this was not a double exposure, and, in fact, the camera itself was fitted with a device to prevent double exposures.

"Canon Roger Lloyd, canon in residence at the Cathedral, wrote to the photographer, saying: "If one believes in spiritual presences at all, Winchester Cathedral is exactly the sort of place where one might expect such a thing to happen . . . Personally, I should prefer the 'spiritual presences' theory."

"The only alternative theory put forward is that, by a chance in a million, the photograph was taken at the exact second when a shadow of the figures on the Great Screen were somehow projected on to the lens. This, however, has been ruled out by the fact that a

photographic expert has examined with a magnifying glass the figures in a photo of the Great Screen, and his verdict is that they are nothing like the figures on the engineer's picture. In any case, they would have appeared lying down and not standing up.

"There is no doubt that the Canon's interpretation of spiritual presences is the right one, and that will be borne out by all psychic researchers. This incident is indeed a first rate example of spontaneous unconscious psychic photography. For what purpose the spiritual presences were there we do not know, but it just happened that their visit evidently coincided with the taking of the photograph.

"The only comment we would add to this impressive incident is to repeat the words of one cleric who said: "I believe that God in His wisdom and providence is allowing many remarkable psychical manifestations to take place at a time when the shadows of materialism and unbelief have crept upon the world, in order that He may give His children grounds for belief in survival after death and in the resurrection of Our Lord."

The Objects of The Churches' Fellowship for Psychical Study are:—

(a) To afford an opportunity for Clergy, Ministers and Laymen to study to-day's psychical phenomena to see what relation, if any, they bear to the psychical phenomena in Holy Scripture.

(a) To study all aspects of spiritual healing.

(c) To form Study Groups for Members in cities and towns throughout the country in order that the Churches may become the psychical guides, as well as the spiritual and moral guides of Society.

(d) To hold meetings in Church Halls, Church Rooms, Public Halls, Drawing Rooms, etc., to enlighten the

Public and to help them with the queries that are bound to arise when studying a complicated subject like psychical science, and to guide and instruct those who have "Gifts of the Spirit".

(e) To circulate literature on the highest level of religious and scientific integrity.

This movement is indicative of a very interesting and remarkable development in the churches, and in some respects it enters upon the field contemplated in the Third Object of the Theosophical Society, the investigation of the powers latent in man and of the unexplained laws of nature. The Fellowship, which is interdenominational, has an im-

pressive list of officers and Council members on which the names of many church dignitaries appear. The *Quarterly Review* reports that in December four more Bishops joined the Fellowship, including the Bishop of London. Dr. Leslie D. Weatherhead of the City Temple, who is a vice-president, preaches reincarnation and has published an excellent booklet, *The Case for Reincarnation*. In the *Review* for December, there is a fine article by Dr. Griffith Evans, F.R.C.S., on some of the spiritual implications of modern science, together with other articles on spiritual healing, automatic writing and apparitions.

THE SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE IN DANTE'S DIVINE COMEDY

BY REV. R. G. KATSUNOFF, B.A., D.D.

In a dedicatory epistle to Can Grande of Verona, a friend of Dante, especially during the latter's exile, Dante calls his heavenly poem "Comedia"—as it ends happily in heaven. In some early editions his "Sacred Song" was known as *The Vision*. By "VISION" Dante himself said, he means "something seen *waking* by the inner eye of the soul".

Are we to understand that the scenes and contents of his *Inferno*, *Purgatorio* and *Paradiso* are to be taken literally; are they a description of what Dante actually saw? We shall answer this question later on, but in the meantime, let us meet the Poet himself.

What kind of a person was he, who was able to unify the philosophy, theology, history and the sciences of centuries into a complete whole—making each verse, nay—each line of his poem reveal truth of eternal value?

Dante is certainly one of the giants of humanity. His voice is that of a wayfarer, of one who fought against

insurmountable obstacles and refused defeat; of one who searched for the truth and found it. His writings reveal the depths of man's being and the heights to which he could ascend. His life is the story of the human soul first lost in matter, then sought by relentless effort, and finally found by redeeming grace. Dante Alighieri's inner biography is the biography of all men: a prodigal son wending his footsteps homeward. It is a pilgrimage for Freedom and for Light.

Dante was born in the little Gothic city of Florence during the end of May 1265 A.D. He loved his native city—"the most beautiful and renowned daughter of Rome" as he called it. He loved it with deep ardor, yet Florence—the bone of contention between Rome and the Empire—finally exiled its most illustrious son, who was never to see his birthplace again. Thus, Dante became, as he puts it, "like a ship without sails and rudder"—a broken man,

yet one, who left the story of his wanderings and "visions" in power unexcelled.

The first characteristic of Dante is his immense all-embracing love. Some writers find in this an explanation of Dante's falling in love with "Beatrice" at the age of nine. But let us observe: both Beatrice and the number nine are symbols. Dante himself tells us in the *Convito* that the compassionate lady Beatrice was no living person, but was the image of Philosophy. His poems of love were addressed to the most beautiful daughter of God—Intuition—who was to lead him on to the true Wisdom of God (Theo-Sophia). As in Goethe's *Faust*, "the eternal womanly (Intuition) draws us on higher and higher". Boccaccio has done a great deal of harm in historizing this phase of Dante's life. He says: "Folco Portinar—a much honoured man—had on the first of May assembled his neighbours for a feast at his own house. Among the company was the Alighieri family, attended by Dante, who had not yet ended his ninth year. Among the crowd of little ones was a daughter of the aforesaid Folco, whose name was Beatrice. She was very gracious and pretty, and very gentle in her manners, and more grace and modest in her demeanour and speech than might have been expected of her few years. She, such as I describe her, or it may be more fair, appeared at this feast, not as I suppose for the first time, but for the first time with the power to waken love, before the eyes of our Dante, who though still a child, received into his heart the beauteous image of her with so great affection that from that day forth, as long as he lived, it never departed from him." In *Vita Nuova* Dante writes that Beatrice's dress on that day was of a most noble colour—a subdued and goodly crimson. Mark here—this took place in May, and both

Dante and Beatrice were nine years of age. That was the first time Dante met Beatrice. The second time he met her, he was 18 years old (9 plus 9) and Beatrice only saluted him from a distance. This time Beatrice was "clothed in purest white", as Dante states in his *Convito* 1283. "Walking between two noble women, she turned her eyes towards me and of her ineffable courtesy (which is today rewarded in the unending world), she saluted me so graciously that I then seemed to behold the uttermost bounds of joy—I was filled with such ecstasy that I departed from thence like one inebriated". We shall consider this statement and Beatrice later on. Let us observe here: the keynote of Dante's being and of his works is Love. Divine love is at the beginning and at the centre and at the end of the Universe, according to him. No one can escape it. "If I go up to Heaven: Love is there; if I take the wings of the morning and start a new life, lo! it is there; if I go down in Hell, love is there also"—is the resumé of the *Divine Comedy*.

Another characteristic is his power of observation. In his travels through dales and hills, mountains and countries, he saw a lot and nothing escaped his attention. The various kinds of insects, birds and animals, features of men and gestures revealing their emotions are recorded in the *Divina Comedia* with amazing exactness. He sees silent eloquence of pride in motionless Farinate and the anxious eyes of Cavalcante in his eager search for his son in the *Inferno*.

Being a painter, Dante points to the tender changes of colour and the manifold beauties of nature. In the *Inferno* the souls of some are driven by winds like the leaves in autumn, and the misers and spendthrifts there clash wildly like opposing waves. As Dante and his guide Virgil leave the dark

regions of hell, you could hardly resist feeling the joy that was his at seeing the sky and the stars once again.

Undoubtedly, Dante observed keenly and everything he saw, he made his own possession. That perhaps is the source of Dante's immense learning.

Dante again is deeply sensitive. The joys as well as the sorrows of others seem to become his joys and sorrows. His emotions were so stirred in sympathy with the sufferers in Inferno, that his guide rebuked him for his weakness. "Only he, whose eyesight is clear, made so by understanding, can visit this region without danger. To feel pity for the wicked is to mistrust God's righteous judgment." "Who is more wicked than he, who feels compassion at the Divine Judgment" (*Inf.* 20:29). However, Karma does not mean punishment but retribution. Dante was objective as to his own inner qualities and conscious of his insufficiency to undertake the arduous task of initiation. "Who am I"? he asks. "Neither I, nor anyone else thinks much of me; I am not Aeneas, who visited hell, neither am I Paul, The Chosen Vessel, who rose to heaven. I fear my going may prove foolish"—to which his guide observed: "Thy soul is smitten with coward fear, which often turns men back from honoured enterprise". Yet due to that sensitiveness, Dante was able to identify himself with environment and imagined facts—real for the moment—and relate them with the vividness of the true poet. Dante as an artist loved music. In *Purg.* 2:103 he writes of Casella—his friend—who on earth wrote music to Dante's poems—how sweetly he sang for him one of his songs—"that the sweetness yet within me sounds". And at the many hymns sung by unseen choirs all through Purgatory and Paradise, Dante felt often lost "in ravishment and wonder".

In his outward bearing Dante

possessed the calmness and gravity of all great souls. He spoke quietly and gently, creating an atmosphere of love. In spite of the failure of most of his earthly plans and undertakings, his face indicated no impatience, no bitterness. Like Sordello, the proud soul of Lombardy, he "moved his eyes with a slow majesty" (*Purg.* 6:63.).

Those, who know Dante only from his first book of the *Divine Comedy*, imagine him as hard, cruel, almost inhuman. This is probably due to the atmosphere of the *Inferno*. There is no light there, no music, no colour: Minos passes in silence his dread sentences, and Cerebrus, the dog, and Pluto, (the chief), utter horrifying shrieks. Because Dante saw the eternal necessity of justice and the majesty of righteousness in the universe, it did not mean that pity and love were banished from his heart. He certainly pitied deeply Franceska and Paolo but he realized the law of Karma that whatever one sows, that also he must reap. He was the true proclaimer of righteous war against evil and wrong—even to the extent of the ancient maxim "Let the earth perish—but justice be done".

Another striking characteristic of Dante was his fearlessness and courage. This was one of the four virtues necessary before one could be initiated into truth. He certainly spoke fearlessly against the many abuses in the church of his day. Some catholic commentators claim that Dante was the best believer the Roman Catholic Church ever had. One of them goes so far as to state, that if the Bible and Christianity were to disappear, but the *Divina Comedia* remained, the Roman Catholic Church could be reconstructed from it. This is hardly so. In the *Divina Comedia* there are principles which can never be tolerated by the Roman Catholic Church. Thus Dante has placed quite a number of Roman Catholic

Bishops and Popes in hell. "The sword is drafted on the crook; the Church of Rome has fallen into the mire" he claims. (*Par.* 16:127). Even while in heaven, Dante remembers the betrayal of the hopes of Italy by the Pope and trusts that he will keep his place in the third Bolgia of the circle of hell, where he will push Boniface VIII down a little deeper. (*Par.* 30:145).

Dante's stand against the papacy as a temporal and political power is quite clear. He writes: "the Pope has a divine duty to perform; let the Emperor (Cesar) look after the things of the earth and let him distribute the wealth, but let the church trust herself to spiritual weapons."

General Albert Pike sees in Dante a daring reformer, "who declared war against the papacy by a bold revelation of the mysteries, by the application of numbers and figures of the Cabala to the Christian teachings, and by repudiating the literal value of the dogmas of the Church." Dante himself tells us, that he escaped from hell (from sinking into materialism and unbelief) by reversing the position of his head and feet, which is, accepting the opposite of the church dogmas, and ascends to light by using the devil himself as a monstrous ladder. ("Daemon est deus inversus").

And lastly, Dante believed in his "stars" (*Par.* 22:112). Latini addresses Dante in hell (*Inf.* 15:55): "Follow thy star—then canst not miss the glorious end". He felt that the world would surely listen to him.

His Mother, who died while Dante was in his teens, dreamt that her son was to be a "Peacock"—a great leader. She must have told him legendary stories of famous cities and fearless heroes, and Dante certainly believed he was to become like one of these heroes. To this end, he worked incessantly, studied and wrote, led on always by the

vision of Beatrice — "The eternal womanly"—until he reached the goal, while yet in his physical body.

The first line of the *Divina Comedia*—"In the midway of this our mortal life" does not refer only to the age of the poet. In the year 1300 when the Vision is said to have taken place at Eastertide, Dante was 35 years old. This was about the middle of his life. It is interesting to note that the 35th year is the average age when most of the great souls attain experiences of Cosmic Consciousness, (See Dr. Buck's book, *Cosmic Consciousness*). Balzak states that Dante was "a specialist"—meaning he was one who had attained Cosmic Consciousness. But the year 1300 has a greater significance. According to the French writer Rene Guenon, the "Midway of Our Life" here refers to the two renovations of the world. In *Par.* 15:56 Dante's thought is described as one derived "from the primal thought" (God), who is known as "Pentad" and "Hexad"—microcosmos and macrosmos, which are cabalistically equal to 65—Adonai, (the Primal Monad). By this Dante indicates that 65 centuries had passed and another 65 centuries are to follow. The Grand Year of the Persians and the Greeks—the whole period—was 2592; the half of it is almost 1300. "The middle of life" of the world would be when at the end of two periods the heavens have finished their complete revolutions and the "Eternal Recurrence" begins. This does not mean that things repeat themselves in exactly the same way as before, but rather that they are analogous. And so, the 13th century marked the beginning of the second half of the "Grand Year". As a consequence a great revival in the history of man began. A real Spring had arrived. The great Renaissance of Europe stirred mightily. Life became intense in all fields of existence.

Humanistic painting, sculpture and architecture appeared; political and social changes took place; the Crusades, Trade and Commerce made things move. The outlining of the first English Parliament occurred. Spiritual (though secret) movements flourished in the Orders of the Templars, the Franciscans, the Dominicans, the Troubadours and the Trouvers—and Dante was made “the solitary spokesman of the ten Silent Centuries”, as Thomas Carlyle expressed it.

According to Rossetti, Aroux and Guenon, the whole of Dante’s *Comedia* is Johanine, gnostic, esoteric in character. The outward sense is just a veil, which could be removed by the *intellecti sani*, by the sane and reborn minds. As Dante says himself: “all scriptures of real worth—not only the directly religious ones—should be explained in a fourfold manner” (*Convito* II, ch. 1) : 1. In the poetic, literal sense; 2. In the philosophic, theological sense; 3. In the political, and social sense and 4. In the Metaphysical sense. The latter is overlooked by most commentators, but it is the most central and most important one.

Was Dante a true Roman Catholic, or a heretic (Albigensian); was he a Christian or a Pagan—it is not important. Truth is neither christian nor pagan: it is universal. Dante was a great mystic. Professor Rossetti claims “Dante was a Troubadour and a seeker of the things hidden”. The ageless wisdom present in all great souls is above all forms and dogmatic expressions of truth. The true Initiates live in perfect harmony, no matter in what garment their teachings appear: their followers only may quarrel. This is why Dante places the saints of all times in paradise—be they christian or pagan. H. P. Blavatsky says of Dante’s *Comedia*: “It is a true occult revelation in verse—a new Johannine Apocalypse”.

Aroux states that in the Museum at Vienna there are two medals, one of which bears the picture of Dante and the other of the painter Pierre de Pise. On the reverse side of both medals there appear the letters F.S.K.I.P.F.T. “*Fidei Sanctae Kadosh* (saint) *Imperialis Principatus, Frater Templarini* (leading officer). Dante must have belonged to some order. The cord he wore indicates that most likely he belonged to the Order of the Templars—and that is why he chose as his highest guide in paradise St. Bernard—the patron of the Templars. In Dante’s opinion, if one desired to make the highest spiritual progress, one should join at that time this order. Thus we see that the holy Empire—the Kingdom of the Grail, the Hidden Empire — of which Dante speaks and of which he was “*Imperialis Principatus*”—a high officer—had a spiritual significance. In *Par.* 32:1 Dante refers to St. Bernard as “*Contemplante Saint*”,—suggesting that he was the chief *Kadosh* of the Templars—the Grand Master—a title which later on was known as “the Prince” or “*Imperator*” with the Rosicrucians and the Masons. In *Par.* 31:1 Dante says: “The sacred soldiery—the Templars—displayed itself to me in form of a white rose—which is the emblem of the Templars: white mantle and a red rose on the breast.” H. P. Blavatsky speaks of the Templars as the last European secret organization which “as a body had in its possession some of the mysteries of the East”. The Johannite Christians of the East claimed to have been in possession of “the inner mystery of Christ” and were probably influenced by the Nazarenes. They believed in the Sovereign Priesthood of Initiates (to whom Dante belonged) as against the Bishops of Rome, in universal civil liberty, the restoration of the esoteric tradition and the unity of mankind. No wonder the Roman Catholic

Church fought them and burned a lot of them at the stake, including their last Grand Master, Jacques de Mollay in 1297. Interesting to note is that they were charged with "Idolatory"—their idol being a monstrous head called "Baphomet", which spelled backward in Cabalistic manner means *Templi Omnium Hominum Pacis Abbas*, the Father of the Temple of Universal Peace among men.

A brief examination of the structure of the *Divina Comedia* will prove further that Dante was one who knew the Ageless Wisdom. The "Golden Chain of Homer"—the one that links the earth (man) to the pinnacle of Olympus (God)—is faithfully reproduced in the poem. The Kabala and some claim Arabic and Persian influences are quite prominent in Dante's *Comedia*. An exact description of the Hierarchical order of the universe, as found in many mystical writings, is employed symbolically by Dante.

The numbers Dante used steadily with exact symbolic meaning were: 3, 7, 9, 10, 11, 22—(22/7 the circumference to the diameter) 33, 99. Under 515 he describes the mysterious Veltro and under 666—the Beast, (the lower mind as in the *Book of Revelation*). With number 515—Dux, Lux, Khan (cane dog) Dante meant the Reign of the Holy Empire—Chakravarti—the Universal Monarch of Peace.

No. 3. There are 3 divisions of the poem—each containing 33 Cantos, each verse consisting of 3 lines (11 syllables in each line) so each verse has 33 syllables. Three animals are mentioned, 3 holy women, 3 guides. The 3 divisions of the book are:

Hell:—representing the body (death to the soul)—the Church militant.

Purgatory—representing the Soul (Resurrection of the Soul)—the Church suffering.

Paradise—representing the Spirit

(Ascension of the Soul)—the Church triumphant.

This reminds us of the 3 Gunas: *Tamas*, *Rajas*, *Sattva*. Brahma commanded change, and "*Tamas* assumed the nature of *Rajas*"; the primordial chaos of possibilities (ignorance) proceeded through cycles and rounds of unfoldment and slowly attained the Goal (perfection—luminosity) the aim of creation: to transmute the temporal into the eternal.

No. 7. With the holy number 7 Dante refers to the 7 planets (degrees of initiation) here corresponding to the 7 "liberal arts", which Dante studied studiously, to the 7 circles of capital sins, and also to the 7 steps of the ladder of the *Kadosh*.

No. 9. Nine is the number of Beatrice (*Vita Nuova*), which is the number of the Angelic Hierarchy, representing those who have attained the second birth. Dante and Beatrice meet at 9 o'clock, 9 years of age; Dante's illness and vision occur on the 9th day, Beatrice dies on the 9th day of the month.

No. 10. No. 10 is the number of perfection—multiplied by 10—we get the number of the 100 cantos in the poem. Hell contains one chamber called Limbo and 9 circles. Purgatory has 3 fore-purgatory circles and 7 purgatory circles. Paradise contains 9 Heavens and the Empyrean.

No. 11. In Hell all scenes and episodes consist of 11 or 22 lines. The place "Bolgie" in Hell measures 11 x 22 miles.

No. 22. The Hebrew alphabet has 22 letters and Jesus' life on earth 33 years (the Scottish Masonry has 33 degrees).

Consider also the invocations Dante uses. In Hell—he addresses himself to the Muses only. In Purgatory—they are called "the holy muses"—the helpers and mediators of men. In Heaven

he addresses "the good Apollo" (the Sun) Himself, which means direct approach to God is to be attained.

The way Dante ends each book of his *Divina Comedia* is also striking. It seems as though he points to the significance of true astrology. The first book (Hell) he ends with the words: "And thence we issued out again to see to the stars." The second book (Purgatory) he ends with the words: "Pure and prepared to mount unto the stars". The third book he ends: "*One with the power* (Love) which moves the sun and all the other stars".

Some tenets in Dante's philosophy, which we shall illustrate as we study the *Divine Comedy* later on, are as follows:—

1. There is only one Power and one Law in the Universe: that of Love. (Unity of Creation).
2. Humanity is one, and a holy Divine Purpose is guiding it. (Evolution towards Eternal Bliss).
3. Man's Free Will—can impede the process of Evolution, but not defeat it. (Universal Salvation).
4. The Law of iron necessity—Karma —(Operative in the whole Universe).
5. Salvation based on Love and Grace. (the New Jerusalem coming from above.).

THEOSOPHY AND MODERN PSYCHOLOGY

(Continued from page 10)

estimate of the nearness of God to us in the aphorism: "Closer is he than breathing, nearer than hands and feet."

Then Jung draws the tremendously pertinent deduction that if God is not as close to us as that, he virtually sustains no relation to us at all. He stands too far away from us to mean anything vital to us. Only if God is a factor in-

fluencing us directly from deep within us can he touch us efficaciously. Jung has given forthright expression to this most crucial judgment in his earlier work, *Modern Man in Search of a Soul*. He is rebutting the Christian claim that the effort to *imitate* Christ will work the redeeming grace of salvation:

"The *Imitatio Christi* will forever have this disadvantage: we worship a man as a divine model embodying the perfect meaning of life, and then out of sheer imitation we forget to make real the profound meaning present in ourselves. If I accept the fact that a god is absolute and beyond all human experience, he leaves me cold. I do not affect him, nor does he affect me. But if I know, on the other hand, that God is a mighty power within my own soul, at once I *must* concern myself with him."

These words, the utterance of which in the face of dominant conventional Christianity called for some courage, may become crucial for the continued existence of Western Christianity. For the statement spells out in the boldest letters the inescapable inference that by the very sincerity and intensity of the devotee's effort to pour out his psychic forces of worship upon a historical man of two thousand years ago he will, to the exact degree of his consecration to this end neglect the living presence of the god power slumbering deeply within his own nature, needing to be awakened and called forth. The psychologist drives home the ineluctable logic of the situation in the assertion that if one's relation to one's God goes no deeper than an effort at outward imitation, it remains superficial and does not engage one deeply enough to stir one to the depths. But if, on the contrary, I know that my God is a power whose release and beneficent activity awaits my own

mastery of a science deep and complex as life itself, then indeed my religion becomes a matter of infinite concern to me. The future of Western religion—the East is more specifically oriented to that attitude—almost certainly will hinge upon this cardinal recognition.

In a more recent work, *Psychology and Alchemy*, (p. 7) the psychologist expands this theme and gives a sharper thrust to its inexorable logic:

“I am speaking, therefore, not of the deepest and best understanding of Christianity, but of the superficialities and disastrous misunderstandings that are plain for all to see. The demand made by the *Imitatio Christi* — that we should value the ideal and seek to become like it — ought logically to have the result of developing and exalting the inner man. In actual fact, however, the ideal has been turned by superficial and formalistically-minded believers into an *external* object of worship, and it is precisely this veneration for the object that prevents it from reaching down into the depths of the soul and transforming it into a wholeness in keeping with the ideal. Accordingly the divine mediator stands as an image, while man remains fragmentary and untouched in the deepest part of him. Christ can indeed be imitated even to the point of stigmatization [the reproduction of his bleeding wounds on hands and feet] without the imitator coming anywhere near the ideal of its meaning. For it is not a question of an imitation that leaves a man unchanged and makes him into a mere artifact, but of realizing the ideal *on one's own account—Deo concedente*—in one's own individual life . . . But with the Western man the value of the

Self sinks to zero. Hence the universal depreciation of the soul in the West . . . *Christian civilization has proved hollow to a terrifying degree*: it is all veneer, but the inner man has remained untouched and therefore unchanged. His soul is out of key with his external beliefs; . . . Yes, everything is to be found outside—in image and in word, in Church and Bible—but never inside. Inside reign the archaic gods, supreme as of old; that is to say, the inner correspondence with the outer God-image is undeveloped for lack of psychological culture and has therefore got stuck in heathenism. Christian education has done all that is humanly possible, but it has not been enough. Too few people have experienced the divine image as the innermost possession of their own souls. Christ only meets them from without, never from within the soul. Paganism, in a form so blatant that it can no longer be denied, is swamping the world of so-called Christian culture.”

Since this cancer of heathenism—the lawlessness, juvenile criminality, sensuality and viciousness of all sorts now threatening even personal security in our cities—involves us in all its actual perils, and the psychologist traces its cause to Christian theology, it is of vital concern to all of us. We have got to try to have Christianity cure the disastrous canker eating at its heart. This canker springs from the worship of a divine ideal embodied in a human personage of ancient times, when the only healing power able to eradicate it is the ultimate knowledge that man, to exalt and deify himself, must exalt and deify the Christ child still lying asleep in the cradle of his own soul.

(To be concluded)

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