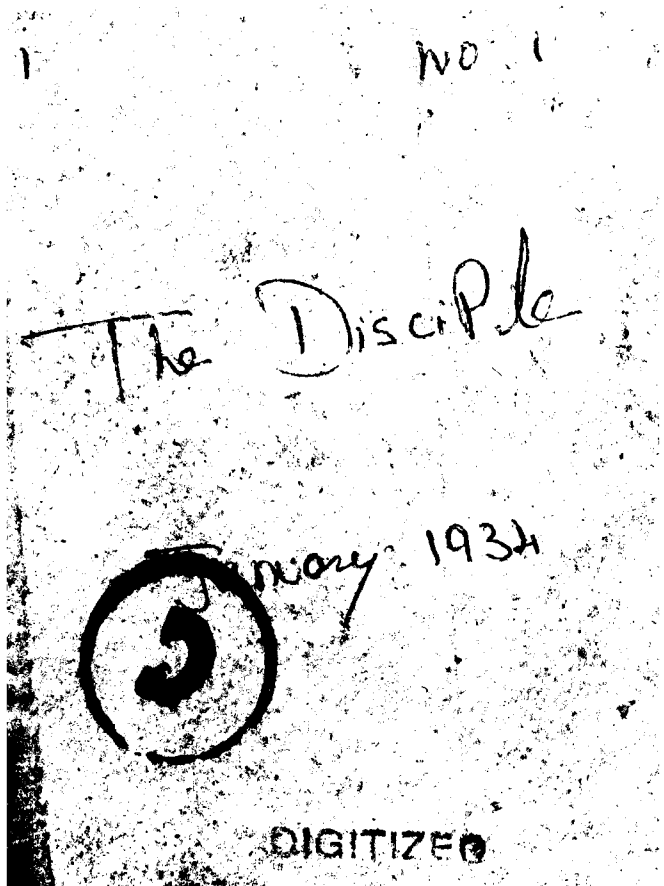
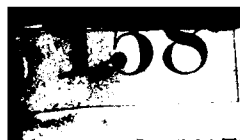




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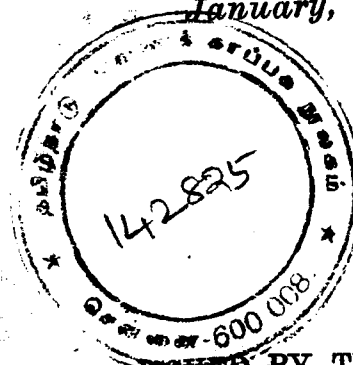
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No. 1
(New Series)

THE DISCIPLE



January, 1934



ISSUED BY THE O. H.

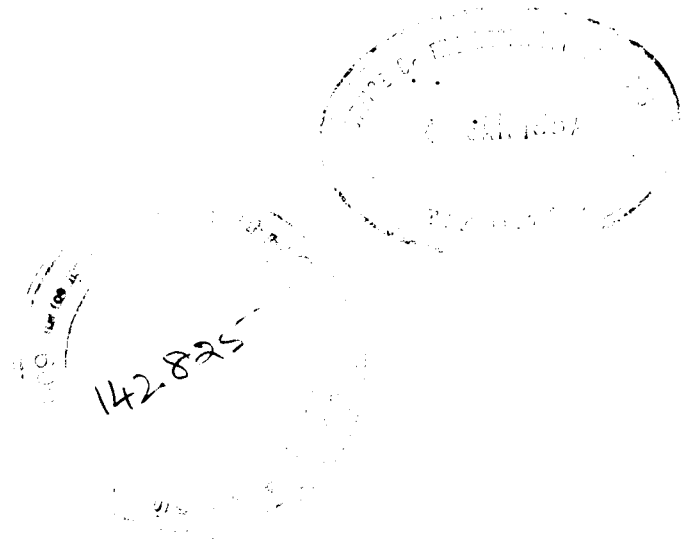
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NOTE

All the articles in this first number of our new series may be read to Shravakas and Candidates, except the Pledge of the First Degree on pages 35 and 36.

O. H.



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THE GOLDEN STAIRS

BY H. P. BLAVATSKY

BEHOLD the truth before you: a clean life, an open mind, a pure heart, an eager intellect, an unveiled spiritual perception, a brotherliness for one's co-disciple, a readiness to give and receive advice and instruction, a loyal sense of duty to the Teacher, a willing obedience to the behests of TRUTH, once we have placed our confidence in, and



HELENA PETROVNA BLAVATSKY
FOUNDER AND FIRST O. H. OCTOBER 1888—MAY 1891

believe that Teacher to be in possession of it; a courageous endurance of personal injustice, a brave declaration of principles, a valiant defence of those who are unjustly attacked, and a constant eye to the ideal of human progression and perfection which the Secret Science (Gupta Vidya) depicts—these are the golden stairs up the steps of which the learner may climb to the Temple of Divine Wisdom.

PRIVATE

Issued by the O. H.

For use in the ESOTERIC SCHOOL only

THE DISCIPLE



VOL. I

JANUARY, 1934

No. 1

FROM THE O. H.

MY first words to you on taking up the duties of this office to which our late Outer Head has appointed me, shall be an expression of gratitude and appreciation for all the affectionate messages and assurances of hearty support and co-operation which I have received from many quarters. I have been deeply touched by the unanimity and cordiality of these messages, coming in many cases from brethren whom I have not yet had the pleasure of meeting on the physical plane; I regard it as a good augury, as a token that, though slightly reduced in numbers by the suspension, the great majority of members of our School will still stand loyally round the old Flag raised for us by our founder, Madame Blavatsky, and help us to bear it triumphantly onward to new and greater victories.

I fully realize what a descent it is from the leadership of our late revered Outer Head to any other

chieftainship whatsoever. There is none in the world who is worthy to succeed her, for she was unique—unequalled not along one line alone, but along all; the keenest intellect, the most eloquent of orators, kindly, gentle, wise and understanding far beyond the level of ordinary humanity. Before her we bow in all humility, yet with the warmest affection; and just because of the depth of these feelings, we must endeavour all the more earnestly to carry on the work in which she has set so noble an example of one-pointed and flawless devotion.

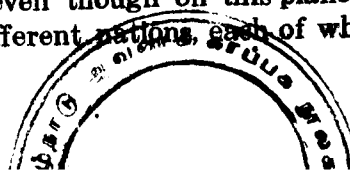
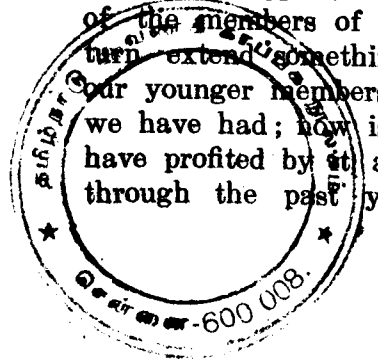
I wish all our officials and members clearly to understand that she is as keenly interested in both the Theosophical Society and her Esoteric School as she ever was, that she is in full and constant communication with us, and that I shall not take any step in connection with her School, nor shall I introduce any modification in its rules or practice, without her concurrence.

Serious though the task certainly is, I need hardly say that I shall do my best with it. *But* every member must help. "How can we help?" some members may ask. Each man must make an earnest effort to bear his part, to keep the rules of the School steadily in his mind. I know very well how difficult it is to do that, with all the pressing urgency of business and of family affairs. Nevertheless a determined effort must be made, for this is a period of testing. For many years we have had her wonderful support, and the help of her constant thought of the members of her School; can we now in our turn extend something of that support to others, to our younger members, to our new recruits? All this aid we have had; now is our opportunity to show that we have profited by it and that as we have freely received through the past years, so now are we prepared

freely to give. A severe test, no doubt, but we must not fail her.

Yet in one way even this is only a *minor* test for us; our whole life as Theosophists is a *major* test in this incarnation. Those of you who have taken the trouble to read *The Lives of Alcyone* will realize that a large number of our more prominent Theosophists have been working together for many previous incarnations. (Members whose names do not appear upon that list must not therefore conclude that they took no part in this work in the ancient days. There were several other more or less self-contained groups of Servers somewhat similar to that which seems to have revolved round Alcyone; they have not been traced in any sort of detail because of the pressure of other work of greater importance; but I think we may take it that all who attain to any prominence in Theosophical work now probably belonged to one or other of them.)

It will be observed that in those earlier lives the people were linked together by physical contacts. In most cases they were related one to the other, and at any rate were usually fellow countrymen. Now, after many lives spent in such association, they are sent back into incarnation no longer in the same country, no longer in physical relationship, but scattered all over the world, and drawn together by their common belief in Theosophy. It is obvious from this that the whole of this life is in reality a test for us—to see whether the purely mental and spiritual relationship of the Society will be strong enough to keep us as friendly and fraternal as did that physical contact. Some of us are obviously passing the test fairly well, for we are drawn into close bonds of sympathy and affection, even though on this plane we may belong to entirely different nations, each of which



has its own ideals and its own methods of life. On the other hand we must regretfully admit that in some cases these purely local circumstances have been allowed to outweigh the higher spiritual unity.

In addition to that, minor tests have been not infrequent in the history of our Society; small crises have arisen at intervals to shake out those who were not brave enough to pass through them unscathed; and it is sad to think that some brethren, for lack of discrimination and clearness of vision, have through momentary personal pique or for a temporary feeling of depression or despair, cast away an opportunity which may not recur for several incarnations. Members, I think, must try to realize that the world is governed not by chance, but by law, and that therefore such an opportunity as that of coming into touch with the Theosophical Society, and still more of being drawn into its Esoteric School, is a privilege which has been won by the cumulative karma of many previous lives. In his long struggle upward, each man presently reaches a point where he deserves such an opportunity; therefore it is presented to him; but there is no guarantee that he will be wise enough to see it and to accept it when first it comes in his way.

Often men make the mistake of approaching such an event in a patronizing kind of way, regarding themselves rather as conferring an obligation upon the Society by accepting membership. One in that attitude naturally cannot hope to make much progress unless he speedily reforms and brings his facts into focus. It is known to all our students that to join even the outer Society is already the beginning of a link with that Great Brotherhood which stands behind it; they also know that to enter this Esoteric School makes yet again a much closer bond. In proportion to the

entire population of our globe, the number who have deserved such an opportunity as that is very small; therefore is it doubly painful when a man to whom it comes flouts it and throws it aside. We at least, I hope, shall never be so foolish as that.

The suspension was a magnificent gesture, but our late Outer Head soon found that the absence of the strong, regular heartbeats of the School was weakening the outer Theosophical Society, and so she had to reconstitute it in a modified form; but even that modified form was found to be less effective, and the Outer Head was considering how the School could be strengthened when her illness intervened, and checked further activity. Now that, by her appointment, I have had to succeed to her office, I am naturally anxious to make any slight improvements which experience has shown to be desirable. For that reason I have recently called together such of the old officials of the School as are within reach, and have asked their advice as to various details. India is unanimous in wishing to return to the previous conditions; and other countries from whose officials I have heard so far agree with this, though some suggest slight modifications, all of which will be taken into careful consideration and allowed full weight.

My first injunction to the School, then, is that broadly speaking we shall restore the organization as it existed before the suspension, with certain minor alterations which will be hereunder set forth; *but* this does not mean that those who were previously Wardens or Sub-Wardens should immediately resume their old work in the old way. They should definitely wait until they receive an intimation from the Corresponding Secretary, as it will be absolutely open to him to choose his own

officers, and it is by no means to be taken for granted that they will be the same as before. I am giving you at present only a general outline, especially of the conditions of membership which will be exacted from all new-comers, for it is always possible that a Warden may receive an inquiry as to those. Wardens should definitely understand that they are not appointed to domineer over their fellow-members, but gently to guide and advise them. They are not to pose as inspired spiritual teachers; they are administrative officers to whom the opportunity is offered to serve our Masters by seeing that the rules of the School are obeyed, and by acting as intermediaries between the Corresponding Secretaries and their fellow-members. Their counsel and help may often be of great value, but it must always be offered with perfect sympathy and tact.

It is necessary to insist most vigorously from the very beginning upon the absolute indispensability of the "clean life" which is the first step of Madame Blavatsky's Golden Stairway. In India this is taken for granted; every Indian knows that if he wishes to lead anything approaching to a spiritual life he must begin by purifying the physical body. Unfortunately in so-called Christian countries this elementary fact is not yet understood, so we have to emphasize it, and we put it now in the forefront of our preliminary conditions. Not long ago I heard one of the greatest Officers of the Hierarchy, in mentioning it, describe it as a clean and SAINTLY life, which struck me very forcibly, as it was the first time I ever heard that word used by a high Adept. It shows very clearly what They expect from us.

In rare cases contingencies arise in which special dispensation has been granted. For example, when through a member's sad karma a surgical operation

becomes imperative, an anæsthetic must be administered in the ordinary way, as to perform the operation without it would do far more harm to the astral body than the drug would. Special cases will receive special consideration, but it should be understood that the ordinary silly excuse of "doctor's orders" to eat flesh or to drink wine will NOT be accepted. The remedy in that case is to consult a vegetarian doctor!

It should be remembered that our School has a secondary object. It exists in order to lead men to the Feet of the Master, but also to provide a clean instrument which the Adepts can use for the helping of the world and the distribution of certain forces; and for that again the utmost purity is required.

O. H.

OUR SCHOOL IN OTHER LANDS

BY DR. G. S. ARUNDALE

I WILL try to report briefly about the various countries I have visited. It is perfectly clear that the members feel that they are still suffering from the effects of the suspension; and they are very anxious that the School shall emerge from it as soon as possible. Those who are still members of the School are certainly full of enthusiasm and eagerness to do their duty, and to be effective members. But they desire a lead to be given to them, a lead they feel they have not had during the past few years of illness of the Outer Head.

All have anticipated and hoped for a change. They knew that the charge of the School would be given either

to Mr. Jinarajadasa or to the present Outer Head, or both, and it did not matter which. They love both of them deeply, and they all have a deep loyalty to the present Outer Head, who may be sure of the active co-operation of every member of the School whom I have come across. That is specially true in the United States of America, for a reason I will give you.

The second point is that members are gradually returning who for one reason or another did not rejoin, or who had dropped out; they are slowly beginning to come back, and new members are being admitted, particularly in the United States. Not so much in Europe; very few in England; but in the United States certainly. And in the United States what is interesting is that Miss Poutz reports that many young people are joining. I have been quite astonished when I addressed meetings there to see that there was a greater sprinkling of youth than last year. Miss Poutz does not know why, but they are there. She believes that there is a very definite increase of virility in the School on that account.

The membership is beginning slowly to increase, and young people are becoming attracted to the School. Very much depends upon the Corresponding Secretary. Where you have one who is full of enthusiasm it makes all the difference, because if he travels, as Miss Poutz does, and is obviously full of conviction as to the worth of the School, he communicates the splendid enthusiasm he himself shows. Miss Poutz will not mind my saying that she is seventy-four, yet she travels all over the continent, she is full of fire, and holds the affection of the School.

There are no difficulties, no troublesome controversies, in the United States. Many things which agitate

people in other parts of the world leave them entirely cold. This is largely due to the wisdom, understanding and fire of our greatly devoted friend. Many of you do not understand what an example Miss Poutz is. If I can be like that when I reach her age, I shall ask for nothing more—so wise, so considerate, so full of devotion to the Elder Brethren, holding nothing back from Their service.

Everywhere there is a desire for a real *school*; and it is felt that those who are in charge of it should clearly indicate to those who desire to reach the Feet of the Masters how best and most quickly so to do, utilizing the wider experience these elders surely have. The majority of the members desire the return of the Disciplines, and very definite training. They desire to draw near to the Elder Brethren, but far less for the sake of personal advantage, and far more to be effective agents of those Elder Brethren in the outer world.

I most emphatically feel, when travelling through the world, that a new lease of life is pouring into the School, and therefore into the Theosophical Society. I am immensely thankful for it, and I desire to bear very heartfelt testimony to that sense of a new dawning which in many countries is definitely perceptible, and in others is on the threshold. Everything is favourable to us for an advance; only the lead, the inspiration, is awaited. Generally speaking, there are three heads under which they would like a vivification. Of these heads, the first is meditation. Some desire one form of meditation, others other forms. Some would like meditation to be the major part of the work, others a less prominent part, especially in the West. Meditation of some kind; and then study and activity; the general indication being that study and meditation without

activity will render these ineffective. We can only make really effective that which we share. Freely we receive, freely must we give.

First, members should be doing work in the outer world, rendering some service as a result of their meditation and study. The School has a duty to the outer world, and every member should try to fulfil that duty. If meditation and study are wisely undertaken, then activity ought to follow, along lines which each member must necessarily decide for himself.

In the second place, the School is the heart of the Society, and there must be much more real synchronization between the two. Members individually, and the School collectively, must feel a sense of responsibility for the well-being of the Society. Every member should feel that the School is the heart of the Society—and a very virile and wise heart. Each member must try to be all things to all men, stirring them and giving them inspiration—not necessarily on his own road, but on the roads they happen to be travelling, so that, growing more and more on his own line, he is thereby the better able to help others to grow along their lines. Thus will the Society become stronger and more of a solidarity than it is.

Throughout the world members are anxious to do their duty in this respect, and especially in becoming instruments for the Elder Brethren. There is the need for the School to be, as it were, a kind of weapon in the hands of the Elder Brethren, to be used as They desire. Without suggesting the way in which the instrument is to be used—that is the business of the Elder Brethren—many members desire to have guidance as to how to live the kind of life which must be lived if such an instrument is to be available to Them. For

that reason, members are the more anxious that the rules of conduct for aspirants for Discipleship should be clearly and definitely laid down.

The members of the School mean business, and feel all the more the urge to mean business because one of the greatest Theosophists is no longer available to us on the physical plane. Everywhere, since the passing of our late beloved Outer Head, there is noticeable an intensification of happiness. Time after time, members of the School and the Society have said to me: "I do not know how it is; I do not know whether it is right; but while we all expected to be plunged in grief, the exact opposite has happened. Somehow or other, after a momentary shock, I have felt a sense of radiance, as if she wanted me to be happy in order to give happiness to those around me." That is universal—I have felt it myself.

When the telegram came to us at Hollywood, for a moment we were staggered. There was the sense of loss of the wonderful physical body. But soon there came the sense of the glorious privilege of carrying on for her. We felt she wanted us to be happy and to work all the harder for her.

She will certainly help us, and if we will listen, we certainly shall hear. Theosophy and the Society will ever be precious to her, and she is particularly anxious that both Theosophy and the Society shall grow from strength to strength. It would be terrible were we to dishonour her by failing in unswerving loyalty to those great causes for which she lived and died.

G. S. A.

THE HIERARCHY

BY OUR LATE O. H.¹

YOU who have offered yourselves for service to the Masters, I want to tell you something of that great Hierarchy that presides over the destinies of men, of the work placed in Their hands for the guidance of our globe, and of the possibilities that open before all who are willing to co-operate on the lines that They lay down in the carrying out of that work, in the accomplishment of that design. Let me put it to you, not in any sense of harshness, but only of truth, that the conditions laid down by Them cannot be changed by us, that They alone have the right to say with whom They are willing to work, under what conditions They accept workers.

It may well be that in the outer world some consider that these conditions are undesirable and unacceptable, but then you must remember that the conditions being what they are, unchangeable, it is for each person in the outer world to decide whether he will or will not place himself under those conditions. No compulsion is exercised in this matter, none are urged to come into the body of those who are pledged to the service of the Hierarchy. The whole world is open to them with its many ways of service, and each man can choose as he will the path along which he desires to go. There is no coercion here of the human will, no command which is issued; it is only a most gracious offer to be accepted or not as the individual may choose.

So far as the conditions are concerned, with those we have nothing to do except to take them or reject them. If we take them, They condescend to accept our

¹ Reprinted from the report of an address given by her 21 years ago.

humble co-operation. If we reject them, They go on Their way, doing Their mighty work, able to find plenty who are willing to work; and even if helpers in the lower world should fail, They have behind Them that source of Power which is ever with Those who abide in the Eternal and are linked to that eternal Source of life and energy. It is of Their grace that They use us, not of Their necessity. Hence They only offer an opportunity which any who will may accept.

All of you who are here have professed yourselves willing to take the opportunity which is offered. You have all accepted the condition under which alone those Mighty Ones will take Their workers in the lower world, and that is the condition of being willing in your activities to guide yourselves according to the will of the Higher Ones, and the recognition of that great hierarchical order which is the will of the Logos for our globe. I know not whether in other globes the same conditions exist; I know not whether in other systems there may or may not be other ways of carrying out the divine Plan; but what I do know is that for our globe this hierarchical system is the method laid down. Evolution is for us the law of progress, and evolution implies differences in knowledge, differences in growth, differences in wisdom, and therefore differences in authority—for that alone which gives authority is wisdom, and the will of the Logos is done exactly in proportion to the point of evolution reached by the separate individual who is walking along this path of evolution. Now, in our own globe we have been told, and some of us know by our own personal observation, the grades of that Hierarchy, the order of the workers.

Let us begin at the Great HEAD of all. H. P. B., you may remember, in *The Secret Doctrine*, published

for all the world to read, but only understood by those who bring to the reading intuition as well as intellect—H. P. B. spoke in words most beautiful of the One Initiator, the Root Base of our Hierarchy. She told us of the coming of the Lords of the Flame. She told us that They came from a planet older in evolution than our own. She told us when They came, in the middle of the Third Root Race, and she said that that holiest ONE who is the head of these great Beings is as the spreading banyan-tree, for just as the banyan-tree upon earth sends out branches, and from those branches sends out roots which root themselves in the soil, and so carry on the ever-widening shadow of the tree, so is it with this Great One who is the root, the source of all authority in our world. From Him branches spread out, His chosen ones who work under His orders; from them roots descend into our mortal world, the roots which make discipleship, and ever spread over the world and make effective in it the great protection that comes alone from Him.

The Hindu Scriptures speak of this mighty ONE, and with Him three are joined as His most immediate workers. You know Them—all the Hindus among you—as the Kumaras, those wondrous Virgin Youths who stand at the head of our globe's evolution; for beyond Them, as H. P. B. wrote, beyond the Four, she said, is only ONE, and He is not, as one may say, in active work in our globe; He, the Silent Watcher, who has laboured, who has ruled, but who now has withdrawn Himself, sitting, as once she put it, on the circle of the outer darkness, waiting with marvellous patience, lest, if it be possible to conceive that that mighty strength should fail, there should still be One who has gone through the whole in other systems (we know not



ANNIE BESANT

SECOND O. H. MAY 1891—SEPTEMBER 1933

of those), who could step forward with His mighty hands to shield the world if shield were necessary. We cannot speak of Him as one of the Great Hierarchy. He stands beyond, waiting, watching ever, and doing naught else, so far as we know, in relation to our globe.

The Hierarchy itself, then, is headed by the mighty Four, and those Four are the great KING Himself and His three pupils; the Ancient, who is called in Hindu literature, Sanatkumara; and the three are those who are next below Him in this Hierarchical order, whose great functions will pass on to another globe, there to carry on the mighty work which is being carried on by that highest and holiest One today. He is the fount of all authority, all power, in our globe; from Him everything else flows down, by Him all rule is exercised, and hence all Initiations are given by His authority—by some Master or by Those higher than Masters; those faint shadows of Them which we have down here in our School are recognized by the Hierarchy only because they are given by His authority alone. All else is usurpation, all else is unacknowledged; only along this one line, from One Ruler, does all legitimate authority descend.

Sometimes, again, in ancient books the name is given to Him which in higher worlds is also given to the first aspect of the LOGOS Himself. You read sometimes of Shiva Kumara—it is an indication of the same mighty One; for these hints are scattered through the Scriptures so that all, if they are sufficiently intuitive, can find rays of light that illuminate our world, and it is the great function of the Theosophical Society in our days, and especially of its heart, the Esoteric School, to make those rays of light reach many who otherwise would not be able to see them. The rays are always there, but the

open eye alone can profit by them. And so we see that Root of all occult authority.

Side by side with the three Pupils, there stands the mighty ONE who is at the head of the Teaching Ray, as these Four are at the head of the Ruling Ray for our earth; and the same name has been given to the Three on the Ruling Ray and to the One on the Teaching, the name of Buddha, the Wise. Only on the Teaching Ray that holiest and most patient One passes away from manifestation upon our earth when He has finished the life in that last body in which He reveals His law to the world and for the last time passes through the portal of death, which can only strike away that gracious body so far as its physical composition is concerned. The active agent on the Teaching Ray is not the Lord Buddha Himself, although He who is the Buddha of the Fourth Race, who became Buddha in the Fifth, the Lord Gautama, He has not separated Himself from our earth, as it is said that His mighty Predecessors have done; and among the Buddhists there is a phrase that is heard from time to time, "The Shadow of the Buddha," an indication to the outer world that something of Him remains in the world that He loves.

The first of our humanity to reach that supreme place, the flower of our humanity, none save Himself has reached that great position; for the three Kumaras who stand at that same level are Lords of the Flame from Venus and not children of our mortal race. Pressing beyond all His equals, He mounted that last lofty step of the Teaching Ray; hence the profound reverence with which the whole of the great Hierarchy regard the holy One. And still within reach under certain conditions He is, and still on one glad day His shadow, as it is called, falls upon our earth; for on that full-moon day of the

month of Vaisakh, when the Buddhist world rejoices in the birth and in the illumination of the Lord Buddha, all the world and all the heavens are glad; for it is then that in the air above the Himalayas He shines out in all the wondrous beauty of that perfect form which here on earth He wore. North of the Himalayas on a plain that stretches there, the Hierarchy—save its loftiest Lords—assembles to greet that gracious Lord. There comes His successor, the Bodhisattva, who occupies the seat of the Supreme Teacher since His great Brother passed away from earth; there He comes with the Rod of Power that bides in far Shamballa, which symbolizes all authority, and can only be given by the hands of the King of the World Himself.

When all members of the Hierarchy are gathered there together, with all the children of men who are able to reach that spot—even some poor men from Asiatic lands who have heard the tradition of the Coming and who gather there in their physical bodies, waiting the blessing of the Appearing—and others from all parts of our world in their astral bodies—any one of you can leave the physical body asleep and go thither, it is open to all who can and will—gathered there with the great Teacher in their midst; when He raises the Rod of Power and invokes that holiest Name, then He shines out in all His beauty, and sends out His wondrous blessing on the crowd that is bowed before Him in lowliest homage. I know not whether those poor pilgrims see that great form or not. They see the prostration of those who are able to see Him, but I know not whether that radiant form is visible actually to them or not, for I have been there only in my astral body, and in that it would be difficult to judge whether the physical body could see or not.

That is the sacred festival familiar to every one of you, whether Hindu or Buddhist, familiar to large numbers of our members because we have told them of it, those who live here, and because whenever that full moon comes round each year numbers of our members strive to reach that great gathering, for it depends only upon ability to leave the body. There is no bar to prevent anyone from sharing in that gathering; and even if they do not succeed in wholly leaving the body and reaching that spot, even then in that quiet hour with their hearts fixed upon the great Lord, they do come into touch with the streams of blessing that He pours out all over the world, for all the world and all the heavens are glad when thus the shadow of the Lord Buddha covers the world He loves.

Side by side with Him the Three, and then below Him the One who has succeeded to the office of the Teacher and has on a level with him on the Ruling Ray the Manu, who is the next great official of the Hierarchy—the Manu and the Bodhisattva standing side by side. Below Them again those to whom H. P. B. gave the name constantly used for Them, Chohan, a Rajput title, and one of Those, supreme above His brethren, the Mahachohan, whom H. P. B. often called the Mah. Now and again you come across that word in her writings—and she spoke of Him often to those who were living here at the time. Those three, the Manu, the Bodhisattva, the Mahachohan, we may look at as the immediate Rulers and Guides of our world, one guiding the course of seismic, earthly and racial evolution; the next, the source of instruction, of teaching, of the spiritual growth of man; the third, distributing the remaining forces which work in our world, and carry it onwards on its appointed path. See how

perfect is the order, and therefore how perfect the co-operation.

Then, the Chohans come, and among Them the Masters whom we know. There you have the higher ranks of this great Hierarchy; but when you come to the point of the Masters, there is no breach of continuity; below the Masters stand the Arhats who have passed through the fourth of the great Initiations. Theirs the mark in the world of suffering, typified by the crucified Christ in the Christian story. It is the Passion of the Christ that marks the fourth of the great Initiations; for no son of man may pass therethrough without suffering uttermost humiliation and uttermost pain.

Below those again, the disciples who have passed through the third, then those who have passed the second, and those who have passed the first; and there we come to the limit of that which is spoken of as the Great White Brotherhood—those who have passed over the critical point beyond which final failure in this chain is impossible; for it corresponds, so to speak, in human evolution with that great day of judgment that is to take place in the fifth Round, where all who have fallen too far behind to be able to advance through succeeding Rounds with advantage to themselves may for the time drop out, not into unhappiness, but into happiness, a happy, peaceful state, only to wait like younger children until the time when there shall be a class ready to admit them in a future Chain. But when the first of the great Initiations is passed, for the individual that critical point lies behind. They have “entered the stream”. Those who have “entered the stream” must needs pass onwards to the ‘farther shore,’—the name which is given to the fifth of the great Initiations—that of the Master. They are passing

through that great stream bounded on the earthly side by the evolution of the race, on the other by the Masters of humanity.

Thus roughly I have sketched before you the course of this Order, and notice there is no break, one follows upon the other in descending grades. Do we later come to anything that can fairly be called a break? No. For below the Path Proper there is the Probationary Path, the way of those who are preparing themselves to tread the Path of Holiness. Here it is that all of you come in; for by the will of the Hierarchy this Esoteric School of ours represents in Their eyes the Probationary Path. They have appointed it with the Masters at the head; the Masters appoint Their own representative, as They appointed our revered H. P. B.; as, when she passed way, They appointed me. There is never any break, and those who have entered by the pledge which my own Master, the blessed Morya, desired me to re-introduce—all of those are regarded by the Hierarchy as aspirants, and out of those from time to time one or another of the Masters chooses an individual whom He puts under probation with Himself.

All these H. P. B. called probationers, because all at first came in under this pledge of obedience, the old pledge which a few of us still on earth took, "to obey without cavil or delay the order of the head of the School in all that concerns the Theosophical Movement and the Theosophic life". That was the pledge I took. It did not last long then; for complaints soon came from the outer world of ignorant people, and so she watered it down into a promise to "obey without cavil or delay all orders that my conscience approves," making it mean nothing; because all good human beings do that

which their conscience approves, and there is no need to promise to do it. That is not the nature of the occult promise.

She went on to put other words to soften it all down, "to support the leaders in whom I have confidence". Presumably you support any leader in whom you have confidence; and as H. P. B. said, it turns the whole promise into a farce—obviously so. That is not the way that you chaffer with the Hierarchy. You do not say to a Master: "Yes, I will obey you as long as my conscience approves of you." It is our business to bring our conscience into consonance with that great Will, and not to put it in opposition thereto. Your conscience, if it reflects your higher Self, cannot but bow before that Will, knowing it is good; and if I have sketched this great Order of the Hierarchy and of the Brotherhood and of our own Esoteric School, joined on to that by its pledge, it is that you may see that there is no break therein; it is because any command which is given comes down from grade to grade, and grade to grade, until it reaches the disciple appointed as the earthly representative of that Brotherhood. Those who are willing to come in and work with the disciple give a voluntary, quite absolutely voluntary promise, but a promise binding them when once the words have been spoken.

You realize, of course, that it is not a promise of belief. That would be a promise for which no Master would ask, and no honest human being ought to give—a promise to believe statements made (of which you know nothing) would be impossible, because you cannot believe until you are able to understand—but that you will do what you are told to do; that is within your power, and it is therefore a promise that you have a right to give. It is

like a promise given by a soldier; if the commander-in-chief sends an order in the day of battle, he cannot himself run to each soldier on the battlefield, telling each regiment what it has to do, but he sends his messenger to carry the message; and that message is obeyed by every loyal soldier in the ranks, even if it sends him to a hopeless task; for the doing of that hopeless task, though it mean going to inevitable defeat, may be essential to the success of the whole army to which that regiment belongs, and no soldier would think of saying: "That is a piece of work I do not wish to do, because I myself feel that it must fail." Let him fail, if the whole succeeds; but such a command, which gives the great privilege of failure in order that the cause may triumph, is only given to the beloved of the Masters, whom They know They can trust to the uttermost, though human heart and human flesh would shrink. You need not fear that that offer will be given to any who are newly entering on the path of obedience.

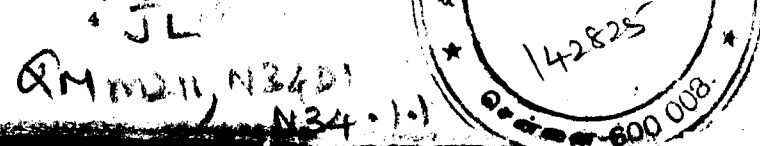
Now, why is all this? There must be a reason for all this elaborate arrangement of graded authority. What is its purpose? Its purpose is that the Plan of the LOGOS for this world may be carried out. Now the LOGOS, Ishvara Himself, GOD, He knows what He means to do with His world; and the part of the plan that He gives to one world is only a part of a vaster plan in which the whole of His system co-operates, each world having its appointed department or part of the plan to carry out. An architect may plan out a building, towers and wings and buttresses, and so on, and each part of the building, each department, as it were, may be given to a special overseer to carry out; and if the overseer does not build his buttress aright, but builds it where there is nothing to

support, if he builds his wing where there is nothing to which to join on, if he builds a castle right in front of the place where the doorway is to come, then on the whole the building would not be a success, and the architect would hardly be pleased to look at the work of his overseers.

And yet some people expect that that is the way in which the world is to be governed. No such folly is possible in the guiding of the world. Each Head of a Hierarchy receives His part of the plan. He is like the overseer of a department. He passes it on, divided into smaller portions, say into races, and each Manu gets His model of a race which it is His business to develop. That is His work. The religions are given over to the Bodhisattva of each race, so that each sub-race may be supplied; and as the Manu through His lieutenants shapes the sub-races and incarnates in them Himself when they are ready, so the Head of the religious department brings out of His treasury some new form in which the Sanatana Dharma is for the time embodied.

And then the younger workers come in, under the Manu, in our case the Lord Vaivasvata Manu. There will be Chohans and Masters, and then the four grades of disciples. Down to that point utter obedience is certain, for I cannot imagine anyone who is a disciple doing anything but obeying "without cavil or delay" any order that comes from his Superior. He does not need to look any farther, although we are permitted to know the channel through which the order comes. Enough for me to know that my Master sends me to do such and such a work.

Now, there is where you come in. You have the opportunity before you of co-operating in this great



work, coming down in graded order from Ishvara Himself, in relation to one of His disciples chosen to carry out this particular work. And inasmuch as it is the rule of the Lodge that disciples shall always work in pairs, imaging in the lower world a faint reflection of those higher ranks; hence it is that we two, my brother and myself, work side by side in this, as we are appointed to work, and you have the opportunity, if you will, to co-operate; to me it seems that the great Master Morya, offering again that opportunity to the Esoteric School, thought to open for it a door through which any of you may gradually press. His grace it was that opened it; I should not have dared to open that door myself, bearing in mind the utter failure when it was opened in 1888.

Such then our position. And it seems to me that if I were in your place, any one of you, I should watch most carefully and alertly for the least hint of service, the least possible chance of doing something in this great work, knowing that no opportunity that comes to you, whether in the Esoteric School or the Theosophical Society at large, is anything less than an offer to you, consecrated to the Master's service, an opportunity to do something in His name. You may make your whole life an act of service if you will. The difficulty is only with yourselves, not with Him. The way is clear for you to tread as rapidly as you choose, and only those whose hearts are free from guile, only those who, having vowed, keep that vow within their hearts without any desire to evade, to prevaricate or to reserve aught from the Master's service—only they will prepare themselves for the next step that lies before you when any one of those great Beings who hold the rank of Master

may call you into His presence and place you in that direct communication with Himself. That is your next step, and that only *you* can make possible.

The Masters are looking over the Esoteric School to find people whom They can bring on, for the need of the world is so great, the time of work to accomplish a certain amount of change in the world is so short, that if it be possible to find people who are ready to take this next step of immediate relationship with the Master, you may be sure that it will not be delayed one moment beyond the time when the man or the woman is ready.

You say: "We all wish to take it." Doubtless, but are you ready to take it from the Master's standpoint, not from yours? He demands a perfect self-surrender, a perfect willingness to serve, the absence of any holding back, a perfect trust in Him; and it is that at which each one of you should be aiming, for it is your next step onwards. During the last year or two several have been chosen. Out of our number we have now quite a respectable little band of people who have been put on probation; some who have taken the next step of being accepted; some who have even passed beyond that through the portal of Initiation, for great is our opportunity now. Everything is going swiftly, not as it went in past centuries.

I, who speak to you, took my first Initiation hundreds of years ago and have been incarnating ever since; whereas now, people pass on into that after a comparatively brief period, and then onward again to the second, and so onward still. There are those amongst us now who will pass through the four great Initiations in a single life, so great is the change. You say: "How do you know?" Because I was told

by Him to whom all the future lies like an open map stretched before His eyes. So great then your opportunity; O brothers, take advantage of it while you can!

A. B.

THE PASSING OF OUR LATE O. H.

BY DR. G. S. ARUNDALE

WE have lost awhile from the physical plane the great soldier and statesman whom we have known and loved and revered—as Annie Besant. From our limited standpoint the loss is very great, for a physical body is dropped which itself has been of wonderful inspiration. To have looked upon that physical body, to have known that it was vibrantly active, to have contacted its strong yet infinitely tender beauty, has been an experience which can never be forgotten, forever an unquenchable source of courage and devotion to great causes and ideals. And now it is no longer with us; and we may well be excused for sadness, for an exquisite form is broken into pieces.

But the Light which made it exquisite and gave it its compelling power—that shines upon us no less. In truth, we are as near to our beloved President-Mother as ever we have been; and if we love her rightly, that relentless time which breaks all forms which bind shall cause us to draw nearer and nearer to her as form succeeds form, until time shall have finished its work, until we shall have learned its lessons, when parting shall cease to be and comradeship shall be unbroken. In the meantime as life succeeds life we shall over

and over again pick up a precious link which has now become eternal, even as we picked up the link in this very life itself. She will never leave us, and we shall never lose her.

To those who are wise, however, save for the sadness of the loss of the form, there can be naught but happiness—happiness that she has been released from a worn-out body, happiness that she will now be able to serve her Master with even added power and wisdom. She is indeed happy, and she would have us be happy too. Some of us have been feeling her solicitous eagerness that we shall share the happiness she herself enjoys. She will watch over us and guide us. She will be very near to us, is very near to us. She will watch over her beloved Society and her School and those who now may be appointed to lead them. All will be very well. We have no cause for unhappiness. We must be happy, for her sake, for our own sake, for the sake of her and Their work.

She bids us live GREATLY! In no spirit of narrowness, of pettiness, or of antagonism, still less of selfishness. Now is the time, when her unifying power on the physical plane is temporarily withdrawn, for us to establish and maintain solidarity. Her Society and her School shall not suffer because physically she has left us for a time. To allow this would be a poor sign of all we owe her. We who love her, who wish to show our love, who desire to follow in her footsteps, must guard the Society against all disruptive influence, guide it to heights even greater than those it has already reached. She will help us to do this, and with her help we can do this. You, dear friend, who aspire to draw near to her and to the Masters, will surely do this, or your membership of this School would be largely

futile. Wherever you are you must stand strongly for peace and solidarity, so that the Society may weather this period of passing from one period of work to another. Of course it will pass safely through this little trial; but you and I may as well earn the good karma of being among those who help, and not among those who are helpless or who hinder.

We do not yet know who will have the splendid misfortune of taking her place as President. We do not yet know what will be the special work of the Society in this, which will be in some ways a sort of new incarnation for it. In any case, *Magna est Societas Nostra, et prevalebit!* What we have to think about is helping, strengthening, unifying. The Society does not depend upon us for its salvation, but we can make its progress slower and render it an instrument less mobile to Their needs.

To whomsoever is elected President, to those who will surround him as the new officers, to "the new ideal," to the new alignment of the great teachings of Theosophy which the changed personality of the President must needs in some measure produce—to all we shall offer our unstinted support, provided he works for the Elder Brethren, for brotherhood and for Theosophy. Colonel Olcott was the vehicle for an aspect of Theosophy different in no small degree from the aspect for which Dr. Annie Besant was the channel, though both made the proclamation of Theosophical teachings as such their great work. From their successor we shall be privileged to receive in all likelihood yet another aspect of the One Wisdom, but he too will stand first and foremost for the Theosophy of Helena Petrovna Blavatsky. It does indeed matter who is elected, for Their Society must be safe for Them in his hands. But thanks be

to GOD, our Theosophical Society is THEIR Theosophical Society, and through President after President They will illumine the world with the eternal Theosophy.

You and I have but to go on quietly and steadily with our Theosophical work, though perhaps working harder than ever, more enthusiastically than ever, first to help to give the teachings of Theosophy to the world, second to put those teachings into practice both in our own personal lives and in some specific work congenial to our temperaments. Some of us may carry our Theosophy into religion, some into education, some into humanitarianism, some into politics, some into the arts, some into literature, some into motherhood and fatherhood, some into specific professions—as merchants, artisans, clerks, lawyers, doctors, nurses, engineers, soldiers or sailors; all of us thus raising the standard of national and international citizenship. Presidents will come and Presidents will go, facet after facet of the splendid diamond of Theosophy will in turn be presented to the world. But you and I, and the likes of us, must go on forever to hold the Theosophical Society for Those Who gave it birth and to be a responsive channel for those whom They send from time to time to be its spearhead. You and I must do this loyally, strongly, unceasingly! We will do this, will we not?

We will be steady, steady as rocks, just now, when there may come those who seek to bring dissension and uncertainty into our midst, perhaps in the very name of Theosophy itself. We shall know that all who use the evil weapons of vilification, of personality, of disparagement, of forebodings as to the future of the Society, are in truth *dangerous enemies* of our movement, with whatever superficial plausibility they

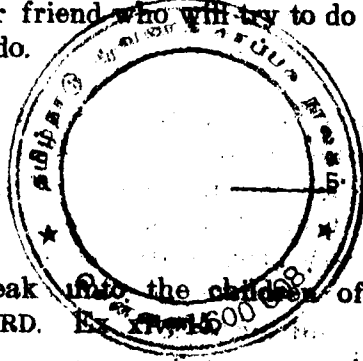
garb themselves for our confusion. We shall know, too, that all who at such a time as this abandon differences, all estrangement caused by clash of opinion or clash of personality, all recrimination, and spread everywhere goodwill and understanding; we shall know that these are the true pillars of the Society, be their personal opinions what they may. Let us be such pillars, against which the forces of disruption shall dash themselves impotently.

Live greatly, and so hold the Society together as it adjusts itself to take its third great step forward. H. P. B. and Colonel Olcott have nobly stood behind Dr. Besant as she took the Society so wonderfully on its second way. All three will no less nobly stand behind their successor as he seeks to be worthy in some degree of his mighty predecessors by helping to guide the Society triumphantly on its third great way.

But we must choose a successor who will carry on the Society's great traditions, and who will live and act in the spirit of his predecessors. If such a successor be chosen, the Society will be safe. If not, the work They might deign to give us may have to wait for many years. As for me, think of me always as your friend who will try to do well all he has advised you to do.

G. S. A.

Speak into the children of Israel that they GO FORWARD. Ex. 17:16



CONDITIONS OF MEMBERSHIP IN THE ESOTERIC SCHOOL

AS inevitable disappointment must await the pupil who comes into this School without accepting the fundamental facts in nature on which the teachings of the School are based, without belief in the Teachers, and without an earnest desire to learn in order that he may become more useful to his fellows, the following conditions are laid down, and unless the candidate fulfils these he cannot be admitted.

The Chohan Who is the Inner Head of the School has said to our late Outer Head:

"One who offers himself as a Candidate for our School must prove himself to be worthy, first by strict purity of life; but this alone is not enough, for purity of thought as well as of action is required. Secondly, he must prove himself worthy by gentleness, by charity and by the avoidance of gossip and evil speech. And thirdly, by a constant eagerness and watchfulness for opportunities to help, and by definite work done for our Society or for some of its subsidiary activities. He need not take up all of them, but he must feel goodwill to all and not oppose any of them.

"Our School is the normal gateway to Discipleship; those who are unwilling to make the trivial sacrifices demanded by its rules are not yet ready to join the army of stalwart workers which we need in these difficult times. In all this there is nothing new; the rules which we have already given through Upasika and through you indicate the line which should be taken by those who wish to help in the Divine Work. They are not of our making or of yours; they are eternal, because they are expressions of the Laws of Nature, of the Will of the King."

PRELIMINARY REQUIREMENTS

1. An applicant must be of at least two years' standing in the Theosophical Society and must have discharged his Sectional obligations.
2. He must be certified by his Lodge President or Secretary as a good, earnest and useful member of the



Society. If unattached, he must be so known to an official of the Section, and certified as such by him.

3. He must, if possible, be recommended by two members of the School of at least three years' pledged membership, as a man of good moral character and a sincere and unselfish worker.

4. Each applicant must show that during at least the year preceding his application he has actively worked for the spread of Theosophical truths, or their application along Religious, Cultural, Educational, Social, or Political lines.

5. The two members of the School who recommend an applicant should be notified that they are expected to guide, if necessary, his studies for the first 12 months, and be generally responsible for the proper performance of his duties as a member of the School during that period.

6. Ordinarily he must be of the age of not less than 18 years.

[Under special circumstances arrangements will be made to train young people below this age along similar lines, but only with the consent of their parents and the permission of the O. H.]

If the applicant fulfils the above conditions he may sign the following paper and return it to the Corresponding Secretary of his Division.

C. W. LEADBEATER

O. H.

DECLARATION OF CANDIDATE

1. I am prepared to work for the Objects of the Theosophical Society, and I desire to enter the Esoteric School in order to purify and spiritualize my life, and render myself more efficient in service.

2. I accept the condition that my physical life must be pure and clean, as evidenced by abstention from flesh-eating, alcohol-drinking, smoking and drug-taking,* and from all sexual intercourse outside the married life.

* Under certain rare conditions (such as those of a surgical operation) a dispensation may be requested from the Corresponding Secretary for the use of the necessary anæsthetic.

3. I accept the truth of the main teachings of the Esoteric Philosophy, i.e.: the One Existence whence all proceeds; the Law of Evolution and the Great Plan; Reincarnation; Karma; the existence of the Great Brotherhood and the Inner Government of the world.

4. I recognize that H. P. Blavatsky was a Messenger of the Great Brotherhood and that this School, which she founded, is under Their protection. I recognize Annie Besant as her successor in the Headship of the School under Them. I accept C. W. Leadbeater as the present Outer Head of the School appointed by Them.

5. I pledge myself to preserve inviolable secrecy as regards the documents and pass-words of the School, and all that passes at its meetings, and to return, at the request of the Outer Head or his appointed agent, all papers that I have received, or may hereafter receive. I expressly agree that should I hereafter be expelled from the School or resign from it, this obligation as to secrecy is binding on me for my whole life.

PROMISE OF A SHRAVAKA

Re-affirming my Declaration as a Candidate, I promise to do my best to observe the Rules of the School and theDiscipline which I now enter.

FIRST DEGREE PLEDGE

(Revised in December, 1933)

Re-affirming my Promise as a Shravaka, I pledge myself to make Theosophy a living power in my life, to support the Theosophical Movement before the world, and to be a centre of peace and harmony among my brethren.

I pledge myself to maintain a constant struggle against my lower nature, to abstain from all untruthful and injurious speech, and to be charitable to the weaknesses of others.

I pledge myself to do all in my power, by meditation, study and service, to fit myself to help and teach others.

I pledge myself to obey the Rules of the Degree, and of the Discipline which I have entered.

I pledge myself to co-operate with the Outer Head for any object which he declares to be the work of the Masters, and to resign from the Esoteric School if I feel such co-operation is impossible to me.

To all this I pledge my Word of Honour, invoking my Higher Self.

NOTE

It is thought well that the conditions of admission to the School and the Pledge printed above should be clearly given in this first number of the new series of our magazine, so that every candidate may understand definitely from the very first what kind of life he must lead if he wishes to join us, and that older members may note the slight modifications which have been introduced. The directions as to meditation, the list of books suggested for study, and in fact the whole literature of the School, will be revised by degrees, and the result of such revision will be announced to those whom it concerns. The general aim will be to simplify matters as far as possible without interfering with absolute efficiency, to give the easier lessons before those which are obviously more difficult, and to offer to the aspirant every assistance in his effort. The old disciplines will be restored, though under their time-honoured names, and the degrees will be reconstituted.

THE DISCIPLE is intended now, as was its earlier issue, for pledged Members of the School, but I hope that it may prove possible to include in each number some material which may be read to Shravakas and candidates, and articles suitable for that purpose will be indicated as before. I should like to make it a quarterly publication, but that can hardly be guaranteed until we see what material is available, and how funds flow in. The re-issue is somewhat of the nature of an experiment, but I trust that it may be found sufficiently useful to justify its continuance.

O. H.

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Editor : G. S. ARUNDALE

