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NICHOLAS ROERICH

(A MONOGRAPH)

BY

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PREFACE

THE joyful expectation of and the spirited striving towards a Golden Age of Universal Peace and Happiness is common to all faiths. The lofty conception of *Krita Yuga* is magnificently put forth in the *Shanti Parva* of the *Mahabharata*. The Golden Age will be ushered in when humanity casts aside in fear and shame all manmade differences, and becomes perfect through *Ahimsa*, self-knowledge and goodwill to all creation. Efforts of mankind, honest, continued and continuous, will, no doubt, help advent of the New Age. This old remote hope eloquently expressed in our ancient scriptures, has become more definite, and more potent in its urge, at the present day. The New Era as conceived by and devoutly desired for by the modern world will be made possible only through a unifying World State which would eliminate all types of national and racial animosities, wars, armaments and inequality. Both the ancient and modern minds expect help from super-physical forces, acting through Super-Men. What

the ancient world, revealed in its *Bhaviṣhya Purana*, the modern age expresses in Utopian Works, the inherent ideal and hope being the same but reinforced through the Ages. Nicholas de Roerich, through his writings and paintings which convey the inspiring message of the New Era of all-world Peace, is educating and preparing the popular human consciousness for the heartiest reception and cheerful adoption of that transcendent ideal.

“Unveil, O Thou who givest sustenance to the world, that face of the true Sun, which is now hidden by a vase of golden light ! so that we may see the truth and know our whole duty”. So says *Ishopanishad*, 15. Nicholas de Roerich, the Messiah of Culture, and one of the supreme prophets of the world, is helping mankind to “see the truth” and “know our whole duty”.

Nicholas de Roerich is a great Unifier and he belongs to the lineage of the world's God-sent Seers, who age after age have appeared in the arena of history with the inspiring message of Peace on Earth and Good Will among Men. All national and racial divergences notwithstanding, humanity is ever on the alert to offer homage to

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the Divine and hospitality to all that is imperishable in human achievement. From ages past it has been the proud privilege of *Bharatha Varsha* to be hostess to those savants, who have held aloft the effulgent torch of Culture. Artist, Author, Philosopher, Educationist, Explorer, Archaeologist, Pacifist—Roerich has lived a multi-coloured life and has been honoured with an enduring reputation at once unique and well-merited. In a period of history which can boast of a galaxy of portraits, N. de Roerich is indubitably one of the most attractive.

Roerich has given to the world enough in art and literature from which humanity could extract joy and wisdom until the suppression of human sight and speech. He is one of the supreme creators of Beauty and Wisdom. Roerich will stand through all the fluctuations of history as "a supreme rebuke to ignoble and unintelligent and unbeautiful life, and one of the most inspiring and constructive influences in the evolution of the great race that is to come". Any study of such a colossal genius' life and work is sure to bring illumination to the mind, warmth to the heart, and beauty and intelligence to action.

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Professor Nicholas de Roerich, the great spiritual leader of the race who has now settled by the Himalayas, is most dear to us Indians. For a century there has not been a more vigorous and intelligent defence of Peace, Beauty and Culture than that made by this Messiah of Culture. For generations to come thinkers of all schools and shades of opinion will remember his words! Roerich has always held India and her ancient culture in the highest veneration, and has sought with remarkable success ably and truly to interpret her culture through his paintings, writings and expeditions. Some of his immortal labours at the palette lend rare charm to and enhance enormously the prestige of the *Bharat Kala Bhavan*, Benares; the *Municipal Museum*, Allahabad; and the *Adyar Museum*, Madras. *The Urusvathi Himalayan Research Institute*, in itself a great undertaking for the advancement of knowledge, founded and financed by Professor Roerich is a colossal achievement in the sphere of arts and sciences, and India has the unique honour of having on her soil such an institution. India, the land of highest spiritual strivings which has always set the greatest value on Peace, would certainly be the last to relapse into inhuman militaristic swagger, and she would never desire to make the

Cindrella of Peace timidly crouching in utter helplessness under the unrelenting footstool of Mars. Verily, the presence of such a great Master as Nicholas de Roerich is supremely inspiring to Indians.

I have not in the present work endeavoured to enter into details regarding the eventful life of one who, by constructive work, has enormously enhanced the joy and beauty of life on earth. It is true, that I cannot claim the sort of closest intimacy, which arises out of personal contact, with the hero of my book. But I have enjoyed his esteem and affection, and have had the benefit of close and living contact with him through correspondence. I have known the great savant from and through his works and from what others have written of him. This book is the outcome of my honest admiration for Nicholas de Roerich, who, by common consent is recognised by the world as one of its greatest men. I have approached him as an ardent admirer and enthusiastic disciple and I humbly venture to think that I have without prejudice or predelection carried out this labour of love. I have made a study of his life from the factual point of view. Relying on contemporary authorities of unquestioned

scholarship and impeccable integrity and the material given to me by the Roerich Museum, Naggar, I have presented an up-to-date though not very comprehensive account of Roerich who is an inexhaustible theme and one who never rests on his laurels.

I approached Dr. James H. Cousins to lead this book with a Foreword. The great poet and artist-soul with characteristic sincerity and straightforwardness severely discouraged me. Wrote he :—“ It is not necessary: it is really a bad habit! Break it by sending your work out on its own merits...You certainly have a faculty for compilation out of other peoples' work, and writing facilely on matters with which you have had no real contact, such as his paintings. I hope some day we may be able to have at least one of his works in the Travancore Art Gallery and a folder of colour reprints. To see a collection of them is a life-experience.” In obedience to the commands of Dr. Cousins, the true Literary Master, I have pleasure in releasing the book without the usual kind of Foreword. Let me with full tremor of heart and reverence record my gratification at Dr. Cousins' *Instead of a Foreword.*

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My grateful thanks are in large measure due to the active and understanding Secretary of The Roerich Museum, India, Mr. Vladimir A. Shibayev, who most cheerfully placed at my disposal books of reference, photographic and colour reproductions of Professor Roerich's paintings, contributions to the world's press and such material for the preparation of this volume. I have had his counsel from time to time and, thanks to him, he has saved me from many an error of commission and omission.

To my good teacher and understanding friend, Mr. M. Raghava Varma Raja, M. A., (Assistant Professor of English in H. H. The Maharajah's College of Arts, Trivandrum) I am indebted for the great kindness with which he went through the Mss. and gave finishing touches. I owe my thanks to the Travancore Humanitarian Co-operative Society for publishing this book on a truly great Humanitarian of the the world, under their auspices. I have pleasure in expressing my appreciation of the good work done by the Reddiar Press in the get-up of the book.

TRIVANDRUM
25th June 1935.

K. P. PADMANABHAN TAMPY

INSTEAD OF A FOREWORD

YEARS ago I took a vow against writing forewords for other people's books. I had come to look on most of them as useless excrescences, therefore inartistic; also as irrelevant incitements to attention, therefore infringements of literary integrity which should stand on its own legs.

My excuse to myself for breaking my vow in the case of this book on Nicholas de Roerich and his work is that I am *not* providing it with a quite unnecessary *foreword*, but utilising two empty front pages for an *afterword* in which to express my gratification at the recent stupendous advance of almost an entire hemisphere in the cause of Peace through Culture of which Professor de Roerich is the initiator and guiding spirit.

On April 15, 1935, at Washington, the twenty-one republics of the Americas, headed by the United States, signed the Roerich Pact whereby monuments of art and institutions of culture

are placed outside the objectives of warfare, and adopted the Roerich Banner of Peace as their protective symbol. "For the first time in history," said the Minister of Panama, "the neutrality and protection of Culture are incorporated into one single and complete body of conventional international law." And while this gigantic transaction was taking place, its initiator was inaccessible in the Gobi Desert on one of his epic expeditions for the advancement of knowledge.

It is now only a matter of a short time until the rest of the nations of the earth similarly recognise that the world-unifying creations of man's spiritual imagination place them by inherent right beyond the depredations of his periodical outbursts of destructiveness.

I treasure with pride the memory of my year's happy service (1931—1932) as Chairman of the Banner of Peace Committee of the Roerich Museum, New York, in collaboration with Professor de Roerich's fine band of helpers. I am proud that the Banner of Peace flies over Madanapalle College and its treasures of Indian sculpture and painting. But greater far than pride in these transitory personal satisfactions is

my joy in the epoch-making fact that our common humanity has produced a creative artist with the transcendent achievement and the infective power capable of impressing on human affairs the vision of the artist, the sole vision which, I have come to believe, has in it the possibility of human salvation from inhumanity.

India has no belligerent interest in the event. But her resurgent soul must surely rejoice that modern man has ratified her ancient intuition that through the arts the aspiring individual can become a better citizen by being liberated from the inartistic elements in his nature. It is fitting, therefore, that a young Indian should tell to Indians, as in this Volume, (for whose materials and method I have no responsibility), what manner of man is this new spiritual leader of the race who has made his home among the Himalayas.

Principal's Quarters,
MADANPALLE COLLEGE,
June 16 1935.

JAMES H. COUSINS

I

THE VERSATILE GENIUS



PORTRAIT OF H. E. Prof. NICHOLAS DE ROERICH By SVETOSLAV ROERICH.

NICHOLAS ROERICH

CHAPTER I

THE VERSATILE GENIUS

IN every epoch of our history when indulging in some manner of lust, man was heading for disaster there has invariably appeared the inspired prophet, the son of light to cry halt to him in his mad career and place him on the right road.

“God sends his teachers unto every age,
To every clime and every race of men,
With revelations fitted to their growth
And shape of mind.....”

Peace, Beauty and Culture the highest forms of man's spiritual achievement, were at the beginning of our century seriously threatened on all sides. There have been leaders no doubt, in various countries, each holding aloft to his own people the torch of Peace, Beauty and Culture and urging them to a greater spirituality in all walks of life, such as religion, art, science and economics. But

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a world leader who was superior to the narrow national jealousies created by the late war—who was imbued with a really international spirit—was wanting. The Leader of World Culture who has for the field of his activity all the civilised world is none other than Nicholas de Roerich, a true Citizen of the World.

Nicholas Roerich, who at the present day is universally respected as a great savant, was born on October 10, 1874, at Petersburg, as the son of Constantine F. Roerich, a celebrated Barrister and Marie V. Kalashrikoff, a noble lady of an ancient Russian family. Constantine F. Roerich was an attorney who played a prominent part in the liberation of peasants and in the Volno-Economic Society. The family of Roerich originated from the Nordic Vikings and the name Roerich is found in old chronicles of the tenth century. Roerich is a worthy descendant of Iceland and Yutland Vikings. Fredrick Roerich, one of his ancestors was the great Contour head of the Templars. Prof. Nicholas Roerich who has attained the highest eminence as a creative artist of unique excellence, a constructive thinker, an accomplished scholar, a distinguished author, and a great explorer has had a varied and interesting career full of events of vital importance to all the world. To-day he has

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captured the attention and compelled the veneration of the entire civilised world, as the ablest champion and exponent of Culture of his age. The outstanding and baffling feature of the genius of Roerich—Scientist, Philosopher, Artist, Archaeologist, Explorer, Author and Educationist in whom we see a blending of the deep imagination of the Orient with the dynamic of the Occident and whose creations greatly impress by their wide range, catholicity and lofty insistence on Truth—is that it has found multiform expression, at once original and supreme.

Thus Roerich is indeed a transcendent personality who belongs to the glorious galaxy of the noblest and greatest saviours of humanity who have made the world better by their beautiful, inspired and constructive work.

While a boy, Roerich showed remarkable interest and skill in archaeology. When he was but ten, Roerich excavated the ancient mounds dating from the Vikings. The discovered objects were presented by him to the Archaeological Society in a blaze of self-achieved glory. Even from his childhood, he was possessed of the burning desire to get at the beautiful and make it of use to his brethren. He was actuated by the highest of motives. The visage of antiquity fascinated him so much that

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he with great earnestness explored the ancient remains thereby experiencing the thrill of intimacy with the past. In a brilliant article entitled *GRANDFATHER'S TREASURE*, Roerich has paid a glowing tribute to the greatness and immeasurable value of antiquity. He closes the article thus:—"Let Grandfather's study remain the most dear, the most beloved place in the house. Let Grandfather not hinder the young life. Let us strive towards Grandfather in his best moments. Let Grandfather's laws be placed into the foundation. But *only* into the foundation of the structure of the future."

"During the leizure give extra thought to wise antiquity."

Roerich mastered the art of drawing and painting when he was hardly fifteen. He used to contribute excellent articles and beautiful drawings to a number of leading Art Magazines all of which welcomed the gifted writer's works with marked respect and appreciation. "When righteous men rejoice there is great glory." Critics of art and literature, right and righteous rejoiced at Roerich's works which showed unmistakable signs of genius. "The spirit of a youth that means to be of note, begins betimes." Roerich's career as an author and artist began in his fifteenth

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year. This fact has been recognised by the world when in 1915, they celebrated the Silver Jubilee of the artistic activities of Roerich, dating the real beginning of his artistic self-expression from the time he was only fifteen. The progress in Art, which Roerich made during his boyhood, showed that he was destined to take rank with the greatest artists of the world. "This is a future Professor" remarked Karl Ivanovitch May, the well known pedagogue and Director of the College, caressing the head of Roerich when the seven-year-old boy was taken to him. Roerich was a brilliant student and finished two and three classes in one year. Mr. Bruni, the Inspector of the Academy, said with joy and surprise to Roerich who had completed three classes in one year, "Oh, Roerich, Roerich, you are always in a hurry." In the *FIERY STRONGHOLD*, Roerich speaks most touchingly about his teachers, Puvis de Chavannes, Kuindji and Cormon. Here are some excerpts which bear witness to the sincerity and devotion of Roerich.

"Puvis de Chavannes, who was full of benevolent and inexhaustible creativeness always inspired one with profound wisdom towards the self-expression of labour and the joy of the heart. Love for humanity and the joy of creativeness were not

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dead in him, but one will remember that his first steps were not encouraged. For eleven years his paintings were not accepted by the Salon. This was a sufficient testing stone for the greatness of his heart."

"Every recollection of Kuindji, of his teaching both in the art of painting and in the art of life, always recalls unforgettable details. I remember how Kuindji once criticised my painting THE MARCH. But half an hour later he returned, short of breath, having run up the stairs to the studio, and said smilingly, "You must not be grieved. The ways of art are innumerable. The chief thing is that the song comes right from the heart."

"My third teacher, Cormon, always encouraged me to individual, independent work saying, "We become artists when we remain alone."

Says Roerich, "Blessed are the Teachers, who lead one with a benevolent experienced hand towards wide horizons. It is a great happiness to be able to remember one's Teachers with the full tremor of a loving heart."

History, Literature and Classics he liked most. Virgil and Ovid were his favourites in literature. While in the University, he was first imbued with creative strength. He was one among the founders

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of the Society "Taras Shevchenko". He was closely associated with another organisation "Sodrujestwo" and a large number of societies dedicated to Russian and foreign art. His relation with his teachers was exceedingly cordial. He awards the palm to Kuindji, his forceful teacher.

The parents of Roerich intended for him a career in law. The boy was sent to the University of Petersburg as a law student. Roerich paid great attention to the subject but he was destined to master art and not minister law. Soon he entered the Academy of Fine Arts and devotedly studied Art. With high distinction he graduated. Later he proceeded to Paris and underwent training in Art. On his return Roerich was appointed as the Secretary of the "Society for the Encouragement of Arts." From 1896 to 1900 he was a Professor at the Imperial Academy of Archaeology and Editor of the Journal "Art." The Architectural Society of Russia elected Roerich, the genius of the palette as a member in 1903. This was a high distinction which was till then enjoyed only by distinguished engineers and architects. This was occasioned by a singularly interesting circumstance. The Tsar of Russia offered a prize for the best project of a Church. Roerich, though not an archi-

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tect, was persuaded by one of the high officials of the Imperial Court to submit his project. To the great astonishment of the pick of the engineering and architectural professions, the first prize went to Roerich. In Russia as the guiding spirit of the "Society for the Encouragement of Arts" and later the chief of the school of that Society, Roerich organised and co-ordinated that native, new, and powerful impulse which in music, dance, drama and in painting spread throughout the civilised world. Discussing this and cognate matters Claude Bragdon opines:—"It is significant in this connection that Stanislavsky enlisted Roerich's aid in the Moscow Art Theatre, that Stravinsky dedicated to him the *Sacre du Printemps* for which Roerich designed the original *mise-en-scene*, and that Andreyev, Gorky, Mestrovic, Zulaoga, Tagore and others throughout the world who represent the *newness*, have paid him the tribute of their homage and their praise."

At an early age Roerich became the leading personality in the domain of Art in Russia and in 1906 was honoured with the much coveted office of the Director of the Academy for the Encouragement of Fine Arts in Russia. This institution grew up tremendously under the leadership of Roerich. He then went on a tour to Europe and

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returned with a rich harvest. During the Revolution, Roerich in spite of the offer to him of the Ministry of Fine Arts, left for America, where a new phase of his activity commenced. His journey to America closed one epoch of his career and opened another. In 1910, he became the first President of "Mir Iskusstva"—The World of Art—a society of international fame. The New World felt his magic presence and he was unreservedly honoured. Roerich exhibited some of his paintings in London in May 1920 and in December of the same year New-York witnessed his first exhibition. These paintings then went on an exhibition tour throughout America winning laurels everywhere. The cultured and the intelligentsia of U. S. A. heard his glorious call and rallied round him with the steadfast intention of promoting Peace, Beauty and Culture. In 1920 Roerich came to America at the invitation of Dr. Harshe of the Chicago Art Institute. At the termination of his tour, was started *The Master Institute of United Arts and Corona Mundi, (International Art Centre)* at New-York. *The Roerich Museum* at New-York, was founded in 1924. The artistic institutions founded by him were flourishing when in 1924 he left for the Heart of Asia on an Expedition. The Expedition lasted till 1929. That

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year Roerich went on a visit to America. Then he came back to the Himalayas and organised the *Urusvati Himalayan Research Institute*. Ever since, Roerich has been in the Himalayas, for he is convinced of the vitality of the various Institutions founded by him in America. The Institutions in America, within hardly a decade have become not only leading cultural centres of the Continent but have radiated their activities all over the world. In February 1934, after five years of fruitful stay in India, the "Teacher from the White Summits" sailed for America, the country which has responded so readily to his great cultural ideas and dedicated to him a Museum.

After his recent visit to Europe and America, Prof. Nicholas Roerich was invited to Japan and he visited the country just two months ago. Prof. Roerich the Messiah of Culture and his son Dr. Georges de Roerich the eminent Sanskritologist and Tibetologist were greatly honoured by the Land of the Rising Sun. Throughout his tour the valiant leader of Culture was accorded a tremendously enthusiastic welcome and all the artistic, scientific and cultural institutions arranged continuous receptions and celebrations lasting for weeks and Newspapers broadcasted scores of long articles extolling the presence of the Venerated Guests.

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The Insignia First Class of the Roerich Museum—an honorary tribute paid to the Rulers of Countries which have made enduring contributions to world culture—was presented to the Emperor of Manchukuo by Prof. Roerich. Japan rejoiced at his presence. The eminent penman S. Busolin in a flaming article under the title *An Address in Recognition of Roerich* expressed the feelings of the Nation thus:—“We pass at present through a time of great joy. To us, to the people of the valley, there has come from the Himalayan summits, a rare visitor—Nicholas Roerich; rare, because of the inner beauty of his spirit and great achievement in the service to the highest ideals of humanity”.

“.....And we, people of the valley, under his touch become transfigured, we throw off the daily routine shackles and refreshed with the wave of the new experience, and lead by the hand of the sage from afar, we strive towards the high world of ideals.”

The eminent Economist Prof. G. Hinz, a distinguished authority of the country, concludes a calling article on the pilgrim-sage from afar thus :—

“Where is Roerich—there will be success! And now here we experience the proud realisation that

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in our midst is one of our greatest contemporaries who inspires towards Beauty and who is that great spirit, who can raise our hopes and vigilance and strengthen the faith in the victory of Good over Evil."

Wherever he be, Roerich is destined to kindle the hearts of men.

II

THE MASTER ARTIST

CHAPTER II

THE MASTER ARTIST

NICHOLAS Roerich towers as an Artist of rare and unparalleled abilities. He was born an artist and his later life is only the fulfilment of early promises. Roerich studied under such distinguished masters as Puvis de Chavannes and Kuindji. Soon after his graduation at the Imperial Academy of Fine Arts, the Imperial Society for the Encouragement of Fine Arts invited him as the Assistant Editor of its periodical. This was the first step taken by Russia to recognise the talents of Roerich. His colleagues were not in favour of Roerich accepting the office. But Roerich's teacher Kuindji who rose from a humble shepherd boy to the greatest artist of his day in Russia, advised his pupil to accept the appointment. Said the understanding teacher:—"A busy person succeeds in everything but in any case it is impossible for a blind man to paint." Roerich first began by

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painting pictures of Russian prehistoric life and the wanderings of the Vikings. He started with drawing realistic pictures. His art was then influenced by the decorative and monumental style in painting. His wall paintings at the Kazan Railway Station, depicting combats between Russia and Tartars are the best expressions of his realistic art. The murals from his brush won international fame and have been glorified in exhibitions, art monographs and theatres. For the Russian theatre Roerich executed a number of new famous works. After the Revolution in 1917, he went to America where many of his paintings were exhibited. The New World understood and appreciated his art. Zuloaga the Spanish Painter, on seeing some of Roerich's pictures exclaimed, "Great Artist! here is the evidence that from Russia is coming some force to the New World—I cannot measure, cannot impart what it is, but it is here." At the St. Louis Exhibition some of Roerich's pictures won high praise. Seventy-five sketches of Russian antiquity by Roerich, called by S. Ernst as "The Pantheon of Russian Glory" were sold. His stay in America meant a significant change in the nature of his art. Roerich's art grew more sublime and became fully endowed with an all pervading mystic quality.

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To the art of Roerich, a whole sky-scraper museum, twenty-nine stories high, on the River Side of New-York City, has been dedicated. No other artist up to this day, has been honoured with a sky scraper museum to preserve and exhibit his paintings. The great and distinctly original art of Roerich has won universal fame and his place is among the foremost artists of all times. The Roerich Museum at New-York, contains more than a thousand paintings of the great master. Many museums in various countries have extensive galleries set apart for his art.

There are "Roerich Halls" exclusively dedicated to his masterpieces in Paris, Belgrad, Zagreb, Bruges and Riga and over 2000 paintings of the Master Artist are in Museums of pan-world reputation as the Louvre, Luxemburg, Victoria-Albert, Stockholm, Helsingki, Chicago Art Institute, Detroit Museum, Kansas City Museum, Omaha Museum, Tretiakov Gallery, Tripoli Museum, Buenois-Aires-National Museum, Vatican Museum and a host of other Museums which preserve the world's artistic treasures. The Kyoto Museum in Japan has just opened a special Roerich Hall in which the paintings of Roerich who has been called as one "walking on the path of Bodhisattva" will be on exhibition. In India, the Bharat Kala

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Bhavan in Benares, the Municipal Museum at Allahabad and the Adyar Museum in Madras, have special halls which present the inspiring paintings of Roerich. He is a creative artist of the highest excellence. His genius leaps to its fullest flame in his creations with the brush. In his paintings, the rich, varied and firsthand knowledge and experience gained by his versatile spirit ascend to its Olympian heights. The lustre of spiritual sight, the transmission of an ageless spirit into his art, and the live expression of the radiant spirit in all his pictures, are the distinguishing traits of Roerich's art.

Rabindranath Tagore, India's greatest Poet, himself an Artist of recognised merits, says of Roerich's art:—"Your pictures profoundly moved me. They made me realise one thing which is obvious, and yet which one needs to discover for oneself over and over again; it is that Truth is infinite. Your pictures are distinct, and yet are not definable by words. Your art is jealous of its independence because it is great."

Such eminent art critics as Alexander Benois, Dr. Brinton, Serge Ernst, N. C. Mehta, Ganguli and Asit Kumar Haldar, have praised the Art of Roerich. Maxim Gorki paid a tribute to Roerich as "the greatest intuitionist." Leonid Andreyev, the

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great Russian writer, a distinguished connoisseur of art said:— “To see a painting by Roerich means to perceive a new world.” This is quite true for he is the founder of a new school of art. The foremost Indian critics of art have remarked that Roerich’s paintings are teeming with the spirit of *Bharatavarsha*. Indeed the call of the East has never once failed to appeal to him and in fact one of the earliest paintings which caught the searching eye and attracted the close attention and study of Roerich, the boy, was that of mighty, mystic and marvellous Kanchenjunga. Roerich has been acclaimed as the founder of a new and unique school of art. The elucidation of the unconscious, sublime, infinite and aesthetical, in the most suggestive and symbolical manner, nowadays occupies many spheres of knowledge and expression. Such a distinctly original method of presentation has opened up new fields for creative art. Roerich’s paintings are suggestive to the core. His works of art cannot be very easily and at one look comprehended. The interpretation of his symbolic pictures is obviously to be sought in the direction of imagination and intellect.

N. C. Mehta, M. A., I.C.S., the celebrated art critic, says of Roerich:—“His colour harmonies

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are vivid and his compositions are such as can only result from the mind of a Creative Artist." Roerich's colour composition is vivid and striking, intelligent and significant. The paintings represent in concrete form the emanation of the soul of a master artist inspired by God. The school of art founded by Roerich has been named "Cosmic Synthesis" or "Synthesis of Wisdom." There is no other wizard at colours who has so freely, fearlessly and successfully ventured into newer and wider spiritual domains of art as Roerich, who has showed an inimitable universality of theme, supreme harmony and resplendence of colour in his works of art which no doubt compel man to study and respect them. "Roerich Colour" has become a byword. His rocks and mountains, vibrate with feelings of inevitable forces of destiny and his skies reveal the perfect glory of the Heavens.

Roerich has sought to reveal something of the heart, interpret something of the age-long mystery of the Himalayas in his paintings. Mehta says:— "Amidst the wonderful vegetation of the Kulu Valley—far away from the noisy abode of men, Nicholas Roerich goes on painting his wonderful pictures interpreting the life and soul as it were of the Motherland, as she appears in her full radiance and significance to a seer and artist of rare power



"HIMALAYAS"

BY NICHOLAS ROERICH.

(IN THE VATICAN MUSEUM, ROME.)

THE MASTER ARTIST

and sensibility..... ..” The Himalayas assume wonderful forms full of life and grandeur in the hands of the Master.

Jean Duvernois in his *ROERICH—FRAGMENTS OF A BIOGRAPHY* remarks thus:—
“The snowy realm of the Himalayas, the monasteries of Ladak, Mongolia and Tibet, the subtlest purple of the desert, the highest achievements of a millennium have given an uncompassable broadness to the creativeness of the artist.”

Roerich has to his credit over 1000 Paintings, comprising of the glory of the Himalayas. *HIMALAYAS*, a canvas by Roerich which was recently added to the Vatican Museum, is one of the typical works of art by the inspired Artist. The picture is a fine study at once true to life and dominated by high thought. The height, the glory, the grandeur and the supreme significance of the mountain range are clearly brought forth in this most intelligent study on canvas. Gazing at this noble painting which bespeaks the unequalled loftiness of the Himalayas, one feels himself to be in the immediate and vigorous presence of a calm, powerful and sublime spirit.

His paintings—*TIBETAN PATHS*, *BANNER OF THE EAST*, and *HIS COUNTRY*—record in terms of paint the remote, dangerous and seldom

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visited but beautiful and mysterious regions of Asia, the land of highest spiritual strivings. Roerich's paintings of the Himalayas are much more and much richer than a literal transcription of the magnificent scenery of earth. The pictures reveal nature strained through a profound and intelligent mystical consciousness. In the pictures, the light that is on sea and land by some potent magic has been translated into the light that never was on sea or land. Roerich has repeatedly said with full tremor and ecstasy that "nowhere is there such glimmer, such spiritual satiety as amidst the precious snows" of Himalayas. BURNING OF DARKNESS ("His Country Series"), is a fine painting representing the glory of the Everest Regions. Lord Lytton, Colonel Bailey and the entire Everest Expedition recognized to their utter amazement, the exact image of the glacier near Everest, in the painting BURNING OF DARKNESS. They were astonished to find in the painting the characteristic view of the region, seen only by them. In the opinion of Claude Bragdon the well-known art critic, Roerich's Himalayan paintings are "freighted with mystical meanings which, even though unintelligible to all save the initiated, yet act upon the unenlightened consciousness as does perfume upon the senses, or music upon the

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emotions." Roerich is not deliberately cryptic but he is essentially esoteric in his labours at the palette. No wonder, Ivan Narodny called Roerich not only "a towering painter but a profound philosopher and distinguished scientist." Verily did Boris Grigoriev say, "I am proud when I think that Roerich is so able to arouse the human soul." Zuloaga added that Roerich's creation "expresses proud and lofty sentiments". Dhan Gopal Mukherji the distinguished Hindu Novelist and Poet in America, recommended to one of his eminent friends, to see Roerich's paintings if he wanted to know how the Himalayas impressed a beholder, because the pictures along with a true rendering of form and colour communicated the spirit of the regions as well.

The "Roerich Museum" at Allahabad contains an excellent group of ten paintings, all oriental in conception. As Vincent White rightly pronounced "they stand as a multicoloured necklace in their tones, so also in composition and conception." THE MESSAGE OF SHAMBHALA is a very powerful picture characteristically symbolical in theme and in execution. It is sunrise. An unknown messenger sends a sharp shaft right across an abyss to a mountain monastery which is just beautified with the rising sun's brilliant rays. A

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message is attached to the arrow. Such is the conception of "Shambhala the Resplendent." A morning in Tibet is represented in the most powerful manner possible. THE ARHAT is another beautiful picture saturated in ambergolden glow which is profoundly striking alike to the eye, heart and head. An *Arhat* is most seriously pondering over a great creative thought, seated inside a cave dark and serene. Just behind the large rock, the terrible dragon of the threshold is watching in fullest vigilance. The satanic dragon is confident that it could easily lure even the *Arhat*. But the pious and all knowing sage is unmindful of the dragon. His tranquillity of spirit is unaffected. He is deeply absorbed in prayer. His mind and body are after Bliss. The whole picture is radiant with serenity. The endless rising Himalayas, appear in all their sacredness, harmony and grandeur, in Roerich's paintings. The feeling of noblest searching and indefatigable endeavour is most deeply expressed in them. The glorious colour scheme and refreshing originality of conception have rendered the pictures without equals in all their spheres.

Vincent White who has made a close study of Roerich's Paintings writes, "Every student of the manifold creativeness of Roerich will indeed note,



"THE ARHAT"
BY NICHOLAS ROERICH.
IN THE ALLAHABAD MUSEUM.

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both in colour and form, the highly unusual expression of the mighty individuality of the Master." This mighty individuality is best expressed in his SANCTA SERIES, MESSIAH PAINTINGS and HIMALAYAN PICTURES. These paintings bear evidence to the prophetic vision of Roerich. "True Art is the expression of the radiant spirit, through Art thou hast the light." Roerich's paintings endorse the truth of the above given lines. An art critic of venerable eminence remarks :—"In these works it is as though there was crystallized the eternal moment when past and present blend and recede before the future. The morning stars pale before the Sun, rising effulgent in victory".

Through his prophetic visions embodied in his works of art, Roerich leads humanity to the gates of Heaven. Albert Einstein stated that more than anything else, he has been moved by Roerich's landscapes. Indeed they are full of vision prophetic and sublime, imagination rich and perfect, intellect fine and strong and inspiration God given. Royal Cortissoz, the renowned art connoisseur in the *New-York Tribune* remarks on Roerich's art, "The essential charm of his art is sprung from the depth of imaginative power and inventive fervour.....Roerich passes from dreams to realities and back again."

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Roerich is pre-eminently a symbolic Painter of superhuman genius. His style in painting is distinctly original and tremendously significant. It has proved highly stimulating throughout the world, particularly in America. Dr. Robert A. Harsche of the Chicago Art Institute affirmed that Roerich's influence on American Art is tremendous and that his art is "imposing and impressive in breadth of vision, marvellous imagination, limitless creativeness." He is not an artist of the times but he is an artist of all ages. Every creation from his inspired brush glows with the lustre of spiritual sight. Earthly beauty, the artist pictures vividly. But something enduring and ennobling is added to it by Roerich. Something immortal and uplifting is incorporated into his paintings. There is an eternal aspect in each one of his pictures. He holds the sesame to unexplored realms in Art. He draws from the full radiance surrounding him. His landscapes make man pay homage to nature. With overwhelming strength of effect, he uses pigments. His religious pictures are signal successes. They show him out at the diadem of his artistic genius. His prophetic paintings are arresting and he attains another summit of artistic excellence with them. A mood of prevision and foreboding enveloped his paintings after 1910. It appeared as though the

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saintly soul looked further and saw the fermenting chaos. HEAVEN'S BATTLE, THE LAST ANGEL, and CRY OF THE SERPENT bespeak a sure prophecy of the impending conflict. His paintings are most interesting and none the less inspiring to all searching minds. All his themes are uplifting. His studies with the brush are essentially modern and in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* his name appears among the extreme Modernists in the realm of Painting. His HEROICA SERIES, SANCTA SERIES and SACRED HIMALAYAS SERIES reveal his modernity, his intensity of colour symphony and widely imaginative scope of conception. His style in painting is grand alike in manner and matter. There is convincingness, originality, synthesis, colour symphony and profundity of thought in every one of his paintings, be they delineations of the snowy mountains or the ruined monasteries or the images of saints, or warriors or heroes, or pictures of the Millennium. "Roerich's Realm" in Art is an accomplished fact, an enviable possession, an immortal production and a source of infinite inspiration. Artists and Art Critics of all nationalities and shades of opinion, pay homage to "Roerich's Cloud", "Roerich's Sky," and such miraculous achievements of the heaven inspired *genfus*

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in the domain of real and creative art. All his paintings give forth a great promise towards the sublime and speak to the soul of man.

Leonardo da Vinci, "the old unfailing friend of all creative searchers" as Roerich calls him, has laid down the following maxims to be attended to by every enterprising artist. Says he, "The painter must be all-embracing. O, Artist, may thy versatility be as infinite as the manifestations of nature! Continuing what God has begun, strive to multiply not the deeds of human hands, but the eternal creations of God. Never imitate. And may every creation of thine be a new manifestation of nature." This sound advice has been literally and spiritually accepted and lived up to by Roerich, the Master Artist. What accounts most for Roerich's wide popularity as an artist is the universal appeal of his paintings which bear in them great spiritual promises. His universal recognition is amply evidenced by the fact that his works are spread in the museums and collections of all the leading countries of the world. Roerich stands as the powerful voice of an important epoch. His creative activity penetrates universal secrets. Man and Nature are both important to him. Each has its own undeniable part to play in the progress of humanity. Nature, to Roerich is the

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eternal witness to the upward progress of Man who has his place in the plan of eternity. "Whether under the ever-varying skies, within the cool forest or under the shade of the mountain, man treads his upward way while within him an eternal voice beckons him onwards." In fine this is the spirit of Roerich's paintings which are scriptures on canvas. He makes use of the earthly as a means to the immortal. His clear eye sees light despite the gaunt shadows which occasionally creep over the world. He is full of robust optimism and he visualises with appreciable ease and clearness, the great dawn of victory and all-world peace. No wonder one of the leading art critics in London, after Roerich's exhibitions of paintings there, exclaimed, "The inspired art of Roerich discloses before us the Eternal Beauty. Through the veil of the temporary, he sees the eternal."

Roerich's symbolism is not bewildering. Directness and universality mark out his symbolism. He unites the East and the West by and through his paintings. Something immortal has been added to his pictures. His artistic works are not subject to fluctuations of earthly beauty. An eternal aspect which dominates his studies with the brush reveals the characteristic greatness of the Master

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Artist whose prophetic vision is apocalyptic. Two of his typical paintings in which is discerned the prophetic vision of Roerich, are **LEGEND** and **MIRACLE** in the brilliant *Messiah Series*. The fulfilment of several ancient legends is represented in these canvases. The first is based on the widespread belief that the Messiah will appear in a cloud and the sword will be as a comet in his hand. A youth walks in the extensive Arizona landscape proclaiming from the old scroll profound messages. Behind him rises the white cloud. **THE MIRACLE** presents the outlines of the Grand Canyon like an ancient temple and in the foreground seven figures are prostrated before an advancing radiance crossing a bridge. This is in fulfilment of the time honoured legend that the Messiah will come across a bridge.

Claude B. Gordon's comments on *The Messiah Series* are well worth careful perusal. He throws much light on Roerich's genius as a symbolic painter of highest perfection.

"It represents a titanic valley, not unlike the Grand Canyon, a world primeval, stark, rock-strewn, without visible flora or fauna. Prominent in the foreground is a natural bridge, and over this bridge passes a road. On the near side of the bridge are a few human figures, prostrate before

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the miracle of a great radiance coming from behind the bridge, the aura of some supernatural presence whose figure is not yet visible. Here is a simple, natural symbology subject perhaps to interpretations, but none of them contradictory. Considered objectively, the picture is simply a dramatization of that expectancy of a Messiah which is so general now a days, and it holds forth the healing promise, that though His presence is not seen, His aura brightens the darkness, His influence is already felt. Considered from the standpoint of subjectivity, the denuded valley might symbolize the condition of the soul after trials and purgations; the road, the "small old path" to freedom and perfections; the bridge, that stage on that path where the transit is effected between the lower and the higher consciousness; the prostrate figures, those "qualities" which must be redeemed and "carried over," awe-struck at the miracle of the felt approach of the "Golden Person" bringing release from bondage through the shining of the inward light. "

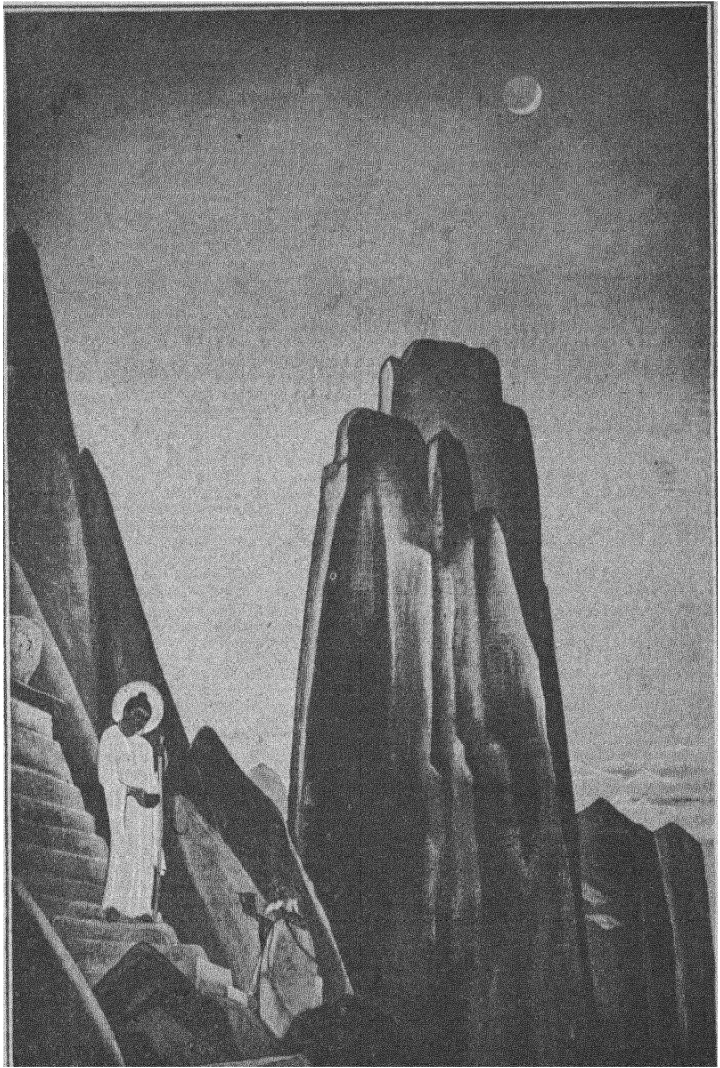
"But the great merit of this picture, freighted as it is with meaning (and that of others of its class), lies in its beauty of colour and composition. The mystic and metaphysician in Roerich never submerge the artist, with the result that when he

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permits the use of symbols he is still lyrical and not literary. His pictures are not sermons, but songs. **THE MIRACLE**, despite the fact that it conveys a message, is not a morality so much as a delight to the visual sense, abounding in spatial rhythms and color harmonies as fine and subtle as those of some priceless old yellow Chinese rugs. The "story" is there, but the final indelible impression is one of beauty, and this is as it should be, for in the hierarchy of trades and talents the creative artist is nearest to the throne of God".

Roerich stands out as the Voice of an Epoch.

Roerich is a prolific painter and his creativeness has baffled many discerning critics of art. He has painted thousands of pictures and no two are alike. Roerich in his inspiring volume of Essays, entitled *FIERY STRONGHOLD*, in the refreshing essay on *Creativeness* says:— In what do the conditions of creativeness be? In genuineness, in the imperative thrill of the heart which calls forth constructiveness. Earthly conditions are of no importance for the creator who feels the call. Neither time, place, nor materials can limit the impulse of creativeness. "Even in prison, an artist will become an artist," was one of the sayings of my teacher Kuindji." The multifarious creativeness of Roerich is indeed superhuman. Claud



"BUDDHA--THE GIVER"

BY NICHOLAS ROERICH

In the Roerich Hall of Bharat Kala Bhavan, Benares.

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Bragdon spoke of it so significantly as "the path of an Initiate." Claude Bragdon's estimate of Roerich it most correct and critical. Says he :—

"In the history of fine arts, certain individuals have appeared from time to time, whose work has a unique, profound and indeed a mystical quality which differentiates them from their contemporaries, making it impossible to classify them in any known category or to ally them with any school, because they resemble themselves only—and one another, like some spaceless and timeless order of initiates. Such were Leonardo, Rembrandt, Durer, Blake and in other fields Beethoven and Balzac. Roerich in his life, in his character and in his art, reveals himself as a member of this fraternity. For thirty-five years he has been going up and down the world—Europe, America and Asia absorbing auras of diverse people, making pilgrimages to remote places and always and everywhere scattering wisdom, planting seeds of beauty, some of which have sprung up, flowered and scattered seeds of their own."

Roerich's paintings never once fail to arouse instantaneous admiration by their colour or form or thought. Their popularity always increases. His art has won such universal esteem and pan-world popularity that many an attempt to copy his art, has

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been made in recent years. Prompted by purpose of profit and by the ever increasing demand for originals and the widespread fame of the artist, Roerich's paintings have been not infrequently copied. Some copies have been found out, one a slavish imitation of his pictures and another releasing paintings of other artists under the forged signature of Roerich. Still another type of forgery—a combination of characteristic themes of Roerich in one picture drawn by some artist—has been noted. But the Great Artist is unaffected by these outrageous instances.

Roerich's paramount contribution has been in the sphere of art. It has been truly said that "Roerich is to Art what Einstein is to Science and Ford to Industry."

An extract from the *SRIMAHAVAJRA-BHAIRAVA TANTRA* translated from the German version of Grunvedel as quoted in *Mythologie Des Buddhismus* runs thus :—

"The painter must be a good man, no sluggard, not given to anger, holy, learned, self-controlled, devout and charitable, free from avarice—such should be his character."

And Roerich is such a Painter.

III

THE LITERARY GIANT

CHAPTER III

THE LITERARY GIANT

BEGINNING his literary career at fifteen, Roerich has been at it all these years and to-day he is hailed as one of the most profound of the world's men of letters. His writings cover a wide ground in different languages. He is the greatest exponent of the meaning of Culture or the Cult of Light in the present age. In the name of Peace, Beauty and Culture, Prof. Roerich is working indefatigably. His works without exception are full of fire, vigour, profundity of thought and literary charm. Besides being the author of several books, Roerich is also a contributor to almost all the foremost periodicals of the world and his occasional articles on a large variety of subjects run to several volumes. Roerich is a prolific writer who has sounded the entire depth of the stream of human knowledge.

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REALM OF LIGHT is one of Roerich's most popular works. This book is a call to Culture, an imperative and powerful affirmation of the need for Culture. Roerich gives his message in this inspiring volume. The message which the wise Professor and veteran Educator addresses to youth is the power of thought. Geoffery Hogson, the well-known critic has observed that *REALM OF LIGHT* can truly be termed "a book of fire and light". *Transfiguration of Life* is one of the brilliant chapters in the book and deals with in a masterly manner, the supreme necessity of establishing a perfect equilibrium between spiritual energies and mechanical appliances. The author emphatically says that an understanding of the beauty of Art shall save humanity from the perils of a mechanical age. Every page in the book proclaims the greatness of Roerich as a literary genius. His remarkable catholic nature of interests as well as the depth of insight into many world problems, is best shown in *REALM OF LIGHT* a powerful book which is worth the name.

THE HEART OF ASIA is another great work of Roerich. The Roerich Expedition into the heart of Asia, was an enormous success and yielded a splendid harvest of rare artistic and scientific materials of immeasurable value materi-

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ally and spiritually. The Roerich Museum of New-York alone has over 1000 Paintings on Asia by Roerich and three books on the Expedition have been written, two by Dr. Georges de Roerich, the son of Nicholas Roerich and one by himself. Prof. Roerich's volume reads like a thrilling Novel. In *THE HEART OF ASIA* the celebrated Explorer speaks of the fruitful but hazardous Expedition into Asia. The Expedition experienced enormous difficulties, starvation, privation and glaring barbarism from the local people. The Expedition was at one time held up by the Tibetan authorities in the snowy mountain pleateau. All animals were lost and the party had a miraculous escape from death. Three brave-souled women were members of the Expedition. The first European woman to join a perilous expedition and suffer repeated hardships for a long period of five years without once failing in endurance or abandoning hope was none other than Prof. de Roerich's partner in life Madame H. de Roerich, the self-sacrificing lady. The success of the Expedition was primarily due to Roerich's invincible optimism, indefatigable energy, organising ability and driving force. In one phrase, Roerich was the lode-star of the expedition. His linguistic proficiency, vast acquaintance of life in the mountains and

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impartial outlook, enabled him to write an excellent book on an expedition of tremendous significance to the civilised world. The book not only touches the heart but sharpens the intellect. As a historical and scientific work *THE HEART OF ASIA* deserves respectful recognition.

ADAMANT is a beautiful collection of sparkling Essays devoted to Art, Beauty and Culture, from the inspired pen of Roerich the high priest of the beautiful and sublime in life. All the essays in this collection are stimulating and impressive, and are chiefly intended to be studied by the youth of the world. In the *Shield* a powerful essay, Roerich, a veritable saint addresses the youth thus :—

“Beauty and Wisdom ! It is the prayer of the spirit that will raise the countries to the level of majesty. And you, young men and women, can demand the opening of these paths by all means. That is your sacred right.

Iron rusts. Even steel is eaten away and crumbles if not vitally renewed. So does the human brain ossify if not allowed to perfect itself indefatigably. And therefore learn to draw near to art and knowledge.

Art is the heart of the people. Knowledge is the brain of the people. Only through the heart

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and through wisdom can mankind arrive at union and mutual understanding.”

Some of the outstanding essays in this volume of eighteen masterly essays are *The Spiritual Garment, Truth, Activity, The Standard of Beauty, The New Era, The Joy of Art and Adamant*. “Put aside all prejudices—think freely” is the message of the Blessed One. “Peace and Wisdom through Beauty” is the sublime message which is sounded in sweet and appealing tones in this book. As Serge Whitman in his Introduction points out “And truly Roerich is one of those who reads from the scrolls unseen by the neophyte. His spirit has prophesied visions of a new world, where strife and discord are no more, and where the power of Beauty in Action fills mankind with ineffable love and understanding.” All the essays are characterised by a deep feeling of earnestness and by a force of expression which appeal alike to the head and the heart. The volume is a mighty stride in awakening the minds of men to the need and glory of Peace and Culture.

In *SHAMBHALA*, another instructive book, one sees the great synthesis of Roerich’s pen which in its scope and expression is second to none. In this book the author has presented in the most attractive form his full knowledge of the beliefs and

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habits of ancient countries and his insight into the spirit of a people whose religion and philosophy are of much longer standing than those of the West. *SHAMBHALA* is most interesting in its variety. The descriptive chapters in the volume show out Roerich as a master of description graphic and precise, intelligent and imaginative. The legends and stories so beautifully told in its pages, are sure to win over people delighted in folk-lore. The essays dealing with the discussion of religion and philosophy, will afford ample food for thought to intelligent minds. This arresting book gives a new knowledge and appreciation of the peoples in the East. There is such breadth of outlook and such illuminating and balanced treatment of themes in this thought-provoking volume that it is of inestimable value and immeasurable usefulness to all minds attuned to clear and correct thinking. *SHAMBHALA* is a priceless contribution to the distracted world of to-day and counsels it to strive for the solidarity of men through beauty and benevolence. In *SHAMBHALA* Prof. Roerich the Messiah of Culture desires for the spiritual union of the East and West and confidently asserts that the two will be united in understanding.

ALTAI HIMALAYAS by Roerich the

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leader of the Great Central Asian Expedition, is a substantial contribution to the world's literature on Central Asia. The Expedition which was a mighty undertaking started in 1924 from Sikkim, passed through Punjab, Kashmir, Ladak, Karakoram, Khotan, Kashgar, Kandahar, Kavashhar, Urumchi, Irtysh, Altai Mountain, Oyrot region, Mongolia, Central Gobi, Kansu, Tsaidam, Tibet and reached the foot of the Himalayas after an eventful and multicoloured life. In his diary Roerich jotted down short accounts of the days' work besides his impressions, from day to day. For nearly five years Roerich encompassed Central Asia in an unrepeatable circle. Roerich's travel diary, full of those "thoughts upon horseback and in the tent," induced by the contemplation of lofty mountains and boundless deserts wrapped in the inviolable secrecy of the East has been made into a book, a veritable treasure house of knowledge and wisdom, a genuine symphony of Asia.

The Expedition was everywhere warmly greeted save by the Governments of Khotan and Lhasa. Roerich was honoured with confidence and affection by people of the East. Armed robbers of the most fierce type fell upon the party in Tibetan territory. Notwithstanding passports, the Expedition was purposely and with inhuman cruel-

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ty stopped by Tibetan authorities for a period of five months at an altitude of 15000 ft. in winter amidst severe cold and persistent hostility. At Tibet the Expedition suffered untold hardships. Loss of men and animals, told upon the party heavily. Roerich the sage met all sorts of men, from the most erudite and saintly Lamas to the fiercest tribes of confirmed robbers. He for a time stayed at the former palace of the Dalai Lama, visited ancient monasteries, discoursed with pilgrims and monks and discovered signs of a new awakening of old prophecies of ancient manuscripts and traditions, relating to Issa, the Jesus of Christianity who trod the same paths and preached the same religion. Roerich speaks with utter sincerity and ecstasy of heart. Of Confucius and Buddha, Roerich writes with remarkable warmth of heart. Blinding blizzards, pillaging officials, persistent ignorance, hideous sloth, enormous brutality, wanton callousness—these disheartening shocks which befell the Expedition—are made known to the reader most effectively by Roerich who is always true and who does not colour facts. The Expedition was eventful, exciting, beneficial and successful beyond expectations. An entire series of paintings depicting the glory and mystery of Central Asia, which Roerich made on that memorable expedition

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and the various published works of the members of the expedition reflect on its valuable results. *ALTAI HIMALAYAS* is the record of that expedition. The book is at once a scientific treatise, a volume of adventure, an entertaining novel, and a veritable geographical and ethnological document.

“But even in facts, the Sunrise comes from the East.....” So says Roerich who though he represents the summit of European accomplishment and culture is essentially oriental in temperament and in the wide amplitude of his sympathies.

Roerich’s impressions are always vivid, picturesque, sweet and short. They reveal the clever observer, the keen student of life, and the literary genius. The book acquaints us with certain interesting sidelights into the lives of some great men. Here is one which relates to Tagore.

“It is said that when Tagore received the Nobel Prize, a deputation from Calcutta came to him, but the poet severely asked them : “Where were you before ? I remain the same person, and the prize has not added anything to me.” Greetings to Tagore”.

Of Benares, Roerich jotted down :—“With all the dustiness gathered by time, the architecture of Benares still retains its charm. All the mixture

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of form of the old, Hindu, Dravidian and Moslem, can give new solutions to the unprejudiced architect”.

About J. C. Bose the distinguished scientist, Roerich writes :—

“Buddhism is the most scientific and most co-operative teaching, says the Hindu biologist, Bose. It is a joy to hear how this truly great savant who found his way to the mysteries of plant life speaks about Vedanta, Mahabharata, and about the poetry of the legends of the Himalaya. Only true knowledge can find the merited place for all existing things.

And accompanying the voice of the savant, simple and comprehensive, the silvery tones of an electric apparatus tinkle out the pulse of the life of the plants, reopening pages of the world’s knowledge, long since sealed.

Bose’s mother in her day sold all her jewels in order to give her son education. The scientist, in demonstrating “His Kingdom” says, “Here are the children of the rich in luxurious conditions. See how they become puffed and baggy. They need a good storm to bring them back to healthy normalcy”. Knowing the pulse of the plant world, the scientist approaches wholesomely all the manifestations of life. He values highly Temiryaseff’s

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review of his works. One of Bose's best books was written on the heights of the Punjab in Mayavati in the shrine of Vivekananda. Vivekananda departed too soon.

Bose and Tagore—noble images of India!"

Roerich pays the following tribute to the Hindu:—"Hindus regard objects of art with fine understanding. From a Hindu, you naturally expect an interesting approach and unusual remarks, and so it is. Therefore to show paintings to a Hindu is a real joy. How captivatingly they approach art.....It is astonishing how transformed are the people of the East before the creations of art. Indeed it is more difficult for a European to enter into the current of creation and as a rule he is less able to synthesize his impression."

Here are a few of Roerich's beautiful thoughts on India, culled at random.

"In the epic designs of India all can be coordinated.....And no leprosy will turn you away from India."

"The ancient method of Hinduism and Buddhism is to open the doors to him who knocks, but not to call any one and not to coerce any one..... So let the ignorant deniers immerse themselves in the true East to learn and to absorb the power of containment."

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Roerich concludes his beautiful, sympathetic and genuine chapter on India in the following sincere words:—

“India, I know thy sorrow, but I shall remember thee with the same joyous tremor as the first flower on the spring meadow. From thy Brahmin we shall select the greatest who understood the Vedic Wisdom. We shall select the Rajah who strove for the finding of the path of truth. We shall notice Vaishya and Shudra who have exalted their craft and labour for the upliftment of the world. A boiling kettle is the forge of India. The dagger of faith over a white goat. The phantom flame of a bonfire over a widow. Conjurations and sorcery. Complicated are the folds of thy garments. India. Menacing are thy vestures blown by the whirlwind. And deadly burning are thy inclement rocks, India. But we know thy fragrant essences. India, we know the depths and fineness of thy thoughts. We know the great Aum which leads to the inexpressible heights. We know thy great guiding spirit. India, we know thy ancient wisdom! Thy sacred scriptures in which is outlined the past, the present, the future. And we shall remember thee with the same tremor as the most precious first flower on spring meadow.”

The Himalayas are so beloved to Roerich the

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Saint and Seer who has expressed the spirit of the mighty mountain ranges in his paintings and writings. Writes he with full tremor of heart :—

“Two worlds find expression in the Himalayas. One is the world of the soil—full of the enchantment of these parts. Deep ravines and grotesque hills rear up to the cloud-line, into which melts the smoke of villages and monasteries. Upon the heights gleam banners, suburgans or stupas. The ascending mountain passes curve with sharp turns. Eagles vie in their flight with the colourful kites flown by the villagers. In the bamboo-stalks and amid the fern the sleek body of a tiger or leopard adds a glimmer of rich supplementary colour. On the branches skulk the dwarfed bears; and a horde of bearded monkeys often escorts the solitary pilgrim.

An earthly world this, full of diversities! A stately larch stands beside a blooming rhododendron. All is entangled. And all this earthly wealth shades into the blue mist of the rolling distances. A chain of cloud crowns the lowering mist.

Above this synthetic picture, it is strange, unexpectedly startling, to behold new ramparts mounting the clouds. Above the nebulous waves, above the twilight, glimmer the sparkling snows. Erect,

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infinitely beautiful stand these dazzling impassable peaks. Two distinct worlds, intersected by a mist !”

Much new light is thrown on Buddhism, Hinduism, Christianity and Mohammadanism in *ALTAI HIMALAYAS* by the author who is thoroughly catholic in his tastes and who has been awarded the palm as one of the authorities in comparative religion. Both the layman and the theologian will find the book immensely useful. The book opens to all liberal-minded thinkers fresh fields, and new pastures of thought. The Hindu, Muslim and Christian thinkers will find in this arresting volume accounts of their religions on lines which are perhaps not yet familiar to them—liberal, reasonable, discussions and inferences, drawn from legend and folklore, which are in touch with the very ancient and most modern trends of thought.

Roerich acquaints us with the following intelligence, hundred per cent original and thought-provoking :—

“Upon the ikons and ornaments of Tibet often is found, glowing with precious stones, the image of the fish—that happy sign—the same found upon the walls of the Roman Catacombs. In one conception is united the Buddha’s “Wheel of life”, the circle of the “Elements forming the mystery”

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of the Christian Church and the "Wheel of Ezekiel". The many-eyed Seraphim and multiple eyes of the luminous Mother of the world penetrate equally into the recesses of the soul".

* * *

"In the cults of Zoroaster there is represented the chalice with a flame. The same flaming chalice is engraved upon the ancient Hebrew silver shekels of the time of Solomon and of an even remoter antiquity. In the Hindu excavations of the periods from Chandragupta Maurya, we observe the same powerfully stylized image. Sergius of Radonega, laboring over the enlightenment of Russia, administered from the flaming chalice. Upon Tibetan images, the Bodhisattvas are holding the chalice blossoming with tongues of flame. One may also remember the Druid Chalice of life. Aflame, too was the Holy Grail. Not in imagination; verily by deeds are being interwoven the great teachings, the language of pure fire."

* * *

"Are the symbols of the Hindu Trimurti alien to the Trinity? Does the Buddhist Tree of Wishes, hung with the objects of all desires, not respond to our conception of the Christmas Tree? What of the details of the arrangement of the temple altars? What of the ascetics and hermits, who

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buried themselves in their stone coffins? What of the image-lamps and the fires of conjurations; the wreaths and candles of heartfelt prayer, flung upon the bosom of the Ganges? And the birch of Trinity, the musk and incense? And the wrought gem-bedecked vestments? And the stones flung at Buddha by his closest kin—are they not like the stones of Stephen? Verily not by accident have Buddhist legends been carved upon the frescoes of the Campo Santo in Pisa. Profound in its significance too is the Moslem legend telling of the visitation of the mother of Jesus to the mother of Mohammad before the birth of the Prophet. And Ladakian Castles are towering in the very same flight, as the eagles' nests of Faienza or Montefalcone”.

* * *

“In Jeddah, this gateway to Mecca; the Mohammadans especially venerate and guard the so-called Tomb of Eve. And it is the same Archangel Gabriel—he of the Old and New Testaments—who upon Mount Hira bade Mohammad commence his preaching—the same One!”

“Mogul queens bore the revered title of Miriam. Miriam, Mary, Mother of the world. For times immemorial have the most ancient forgotten temples extolled the anticipation of the new epochs.

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In the ancient city, Kish, has recently been discovered the Temple of the Mother of the World".

Roerich who lived and moved with the great Lamas of Tibet for a considerable length of time enlightens us to a great extent on the greatness of those highpriests of religion. "Touching are the gifts of the Lamas," Roerich exclaims. The Lama Tsa-Rinpoche, predicted to Roerich that the attempt to conquer Everest (which was in full swing at that time) "will only end in losses." The Lama proved to be right. The great religious head expressed his astonishment at the desire of foreigners to ascend the summit of Everest despite heavy odds. With subdued contempt the Lama broke forth, "why expend such efforts in the physical body? Is it not simpler to be there in spirit?" Upon this Roerich comments, "For with ease do Lamas project their astral bodies, for which, of course, no height is an obstacle." In reply to Roerich's question "Is it true that the Festival of Unity is approaching"? one of the Lamas answered, "Such are the prophecies".

Roerich, the understanding friend of all creative enterprise, expresses himself with deep concern at how the significant and precious works of art found in Sikkim are almost ruthlessly trampled

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down by the powerful feet of the White Guards. With a heart full of righteous indignation and deep sense of pain, Roerich cries out :—

“ The motley figures of hell are being trampled down by the powerful feet of the White Guards. Red and green “guardians of the entrances” many-armed and with horrible grins, are threatening the violators. In explosive gasps flare up the gold tongues of the primeval flame. The misty aureoles of lights are glowing”.....

“With cold respect or else with a clerical sense of the scientific, do we examine the Tibetan and Nepal banner-paintings in the British Museum, the the Musio Guimet in Paris, or the Field Museum in Chicago. But, with a completely different attitude do we approach the same paintings on this site, and they speak to you quite differently. Every gesture of Buddha’s hand is of vital meaning for the local world. The good and evil entities with their endless symbols are transformed from ornaments into a living epos. The images are enfolded in a stirring harmony of tones. The finest of these are of ancient work although the new paintings are also at times excellent.”

“.....The art of Central Asia is coming to the fore. In the fiery fantasy; in the dignity of the fine form; in the intense and

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complex gradation of tones is manifested this completely unique and striking art. But in its quiescent expression this art responds to the mystery of the cradle of humanity. In itself it forms Asia, to which in time shall be directed inquiries and researches.

Only, it is necessary to knock upon the doors of this beauty without threats, without weapons, without pillage. With full readiness must we gather the pearls of profound and anonymous achievements; without superficial scientific hypocrisy and without bribed treachery.

To study the life of the nightingale by first killing it—is it not barbaric?"

Roerich who passionately loves and adores the Himalayas reveals the inexpressible beauty—earthly and divine—and grandeur of the mountains. He says:—"Majestic is Karakorum and the icy kingdom of Sasser. Beautiful is Kwen-Lun. Fantastic is Tian Shan celestial mountains. Broad in sweep is Altai. Decorative is Nan Shang. Austere is Angar Dakchin. But all these are only the preface to the unutterable grandeur of the Himalayas."

"In the Himalayas was crystallized the great Vedanta. In the Himalayas Buddha became exalted in spirit. The very air of the Himalayas is

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penetrated with spiritual tension—the true Maitreya Sanga.”

The style of the book possesses a melody and a movement that unite to justify the title of beauty. The impressions of Roerich the master mind are without exception sincere, striking and delightfully expressed. The book bristles with several exciting episodes, intelligent inferences and prophetic utterances. *ALTAI HIMALAYAS* a bulky volume of over four hundred pages, introduces the readers to atmospheres of trouble and anxiety and terror from which the sensitive reader must sometimes recoil by reason of their very reality. The book is the work of a passionate lover of knowledge. Written after genuine personal experience, the book works in fullest measure sustained interest and continued instruction. The glamour and romance of the vast areas, the mystery and beauty of the rugged lands, the wisdom and spiritual perfection of the Lamas, the essence of all religions of man, the natural graces of the heights and depths and the inhuman cruelty of confirmed robbers and the imperious-looking half-educated men in authority are all pictured with astounding vividness, direct immediacy and dashing force in *ALTAI HIMALAYAS*. The author's deep knowledge of his subject and his

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wide and unique experience of expedition are the paramount features of this book but so are the rare literary qualities of his writing and the power of word painting. The one, two and three-word sentences often employed in flashing across the mind of the reader, great thoughts and memorable scenes are profoundly impressive. The narrative is personal and proceeds at an entertaining pace and the author possesses in full measure the high faculty of making the reader feel that he is on the spot sharing the thrills of the expedition in its various activities.

The book is illustrated with excellent reproductions of a score of paintings by Nicholas Roerich—the mystic and metaphysician artist and they render in true form and striking colour the hauntingly beautiful and the mysteriously great spirit of the regions through which the expedition passed.

Roerich concludes his brilliant and thought-inspiring book thus:—

“The new era of enlightenment is awaited. Each reaches in his own way. One nearer, one further; one beautifully, one distortedly; but all are concerned with the same predestined. It is especially striking to see such consciousness at a time when not the printed page, but sound itself

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—the human word—directs the loft expectation. It is so precious to hear and to repeat. The Motherland of Gessar Khan, Ladak, knows that the time of the regeneration has come. Khotan remembers the signs of Maitreya over the ancient stupa. The Kalmuchs in Karashar are awaiting the coming manifestation of the Chalice of Buddha. On Altai the Oyrots renounce Shamanism and are singing new chants to the awaited White Burkhan. The Messenger of the White Burkhan, Oyrot, already rides throughout the world. The Mongols await the appearance of the Ruler of the World and prepare the Dukang of Shambhala. On Chang-thang they extoll Gessar Khan and whisper about the hallowed borders of Shambhala. On the Brahmaputra they know about the Ashrams of Mahatmas and remember the wonderful Azaras. The jews await the Messiah at the Bridge. The Moslems await Muntazar. In Isfahan the White Horse is already saddled. The Christians of Saint Thomas await the great Advent and wear hidden signs. The Hindus know the Kalki Avatar. And the Chinese at a New Year light the fires before the image of Gessar Khan, ruler of the world. Rigden Jeypo, the Ruler, is fleeing over the desert, achieving his predestined path. A blind one may ask, "Is it so? Is there no exaggeration

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in it? Perhaps some fragments of survivals are taken as beliefs of the future."

"It means that he who questions has never been in the East. If you once were upon these sites; if you traversed many thousands of miles; if you yourself have spoken to many people, then you know the reality of what is related. You shall understand why, of these sacred matters, one speaks only in the stillness of the evening, in quite penetrating tones. Why, if some one enters do all become silent? But if you say to them that they may continue the conversation in the presence of the guest your words will be met with a reverent bow. And it is not you who receives the silent significant bow but the Great Maitreya Himself."

ALTAI HIMALAYAS is a monumental work. The impression of a master mind moving with a complete freedom from any literary convention is well stamped in this *magnum opus*, a volume which is definitely to be read and reread. The author is verily a giant of thoughts !

Roerich's latest book is *FIERY STRONGHOLD*. This is the eighth volume of his inspirational writings entirely devoted to Culture in all its paramount aspects. The book is a charming and illuminating prose epic of Culture. With

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great depth of understanding, felicity of expression, and directness of appeal, the gifted author has extolled the glorious concepts of Culture. *FIERY STRONGHOLD* is a collection of extremely well-written essays on various themes bearing on Culture in its manifold aspects. There is nothing in the least superficial in the exposition of Roerich. All the essays are clear, concise, sparkling and vigorous. Their keynote is the conquering of materialism through Beauty and Knowledge. The essays have a particularly well sustained freshness about them almost on every page and their most eminent quality is that they are throughout stimulating thought and in the first order of literary excellence. Many passages in the essays are sure to find a place in the reader's heart for they are so striking and full of sincerity. The book has assembled within its inviting covers, the acme of the philosophy of Roerich. The function and importance of Culture, the great effect of Culture, and the highest mission of Culture as the most potent uniting and creative force among the Nations, are most ably described in the *FIERY STRONGHOLD*. Roerich's philosophy which is clear and convincing, easy to grasp, interesting to appreciate and beneficial to be put into practice, is explained in this veritable

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Gospel of Culture. The book bears the immortal stamp of Roerich's extensive reading and astonishingly abundant study. *FIERY STRONGHOLD* gives the assurance to the world, that Culture is "the great synthesis which can refine and sensitize all human relations."

FIERY STRONGHOLD demands close study. The magic of Roerich's expression and the logic of his thought, convince the reader that Culture is the greatest need of humanity and without it mankind, however proficient in Arts and Sciences, would easily fall into the depths of barbarism. Roerich solemnly preaches that Culture is a sure and effective panacea for most of the defects and diseases of modern life. One cannot but admire and respect the lively-minded persistence with which Roerich sounds the glorious call of Culture in every one of the Essays. The greatest adulation must be paid to the literary genius of Roerich. Modestly yet miraculously he stands out as the ablest interpreter of Culture. His radiant mind, fruitful scholarship, aesthetic sense and comprehensiveness have rendered *FIERY STRONGHOLD* one of the greatest books of all ages. He is a brilliant and convincing logician who writes in the most persuasive lines. He is no fiery propagand-

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dist and his art does not suffer by an overdrawn propaganda. Appreciative of art, cosmopolitan in interests and attitudes, gifted with a rich and cosmic sense of humour, always brief and forcible and with supreme sincerity of purpose, Roerich has written the *FIERY STRONGHOLD*. The wisdom of the book certainly belongs to the high-dawn of Eastern and Western philosophical thought. The esoteric light which *FIERY STRONGHOLD* sheds is brilliant and never fading. The fiery illumination of mighty truths, is grand and unforgettably impressive. Hence the book seizes the heart with the warmth of intimate truth, that sweet and poignant sublimity which would make life on earth most noble. Roerich has employed an original and distinctly successful method of elucidation which is far from abstract but exquisitely suggestive and vivid. He does not chisel to cold perfection his theories and arguments but his method is poetic and picturesque and never speculatively statesque. The visionary fervour and saintly knowledge of the author do not make him hold up the dry light of reason but he reveals spiritual superiority in the most exemplary manner. The frequent home thrusts, allegories and the fine turn of thought and phrase charged with a lively acute imagination are

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eminently impressive. The book is a profound study of Culture, an informative volume which surveys with competence and comprehensiveness and daring originality, an enormous field of human thought. *FIERY STRONGHOLD* is an extraordinary book and the best interpretation of Culture. Hence it is an epoch-making volume, a Bible of Culture, an enduring contribution to the intellectual capital of the world.

The book takes its name from the caption of the opening essay *Fiery Stronghold* which is a perfect literary achievement. Writes Roerich :—

“Not for despair and tears, but for joy of spirit, have all universal evidences of beauty been created. But joy must be perceived. And how can joy set up its light-spreading haven, if bereft of the language of the heart? Where else if not in the heart, is the stronghold of joy?”

He who has become conscious of the realm of the heart, invariably reaches the shore of creativeness. In whatever way the pilgrim of the spirit expresses his creativeness, in essence it will be the same precious gem of which all the best legends of humanity speak.....

Our meetings are destined somewhere and somehow. Some day we must cast aside all our brute habits. The heart yearns for the Beautiful

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Temple, for the Celestial Jerusalem, for the Radiant City of Kitej and for all mountain abodes of the Realm of Spirit.

So long as Culture is a luxury and a Sunday repast, it cannot reconstruct our life. Can the Consciousness in the turmoil of daily life, exist without books, without the creations of beauty, without the entire Multiform Museum—the Home of the Muses ?

Culture should become part of daily life, in huts as well as palaces. This clarified thinking will determine what is most necessary, inevitable and what is only the alluvia of passing waves. How benevolent is the touch of the wings of Culture, blessing the cradle to attainment and carrying the passing pilgrim to enlightened consciousness. In undescribable, unutterable ways is the spirit ennobled through the touch of Culture. Not a confused hazy occultism and mysticism, but the Light of the Great Reality shines there, where the enlightenment of Culture has taken roots."

And *FIERY STRONGHOLD* leads to the Great Reality.

Roerich is a poet as well. His poetry is distinguished by symbolism of form and triumphant rhythm of language. *FLAME IN CHALICE*, his book of poems, presents Roerich as a poet

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worthy of the burden of song. A deep vein of Indian mysticism runs throughout the book.

In one of the poems, Roerich beautifully expresses an Upanishadic thought:

Before Thine Image

The Sun does not shine. The moon does not
Shine. Nor the Stars nor the flame;

Nor the lightning. The Rainbow does not shine.

The light of the North does not glimmer.

There shines Thine Image.

Everything gleams through Thy light,

In the darkness are shining

Particles of Thy glory.

And in my closed eyes

Dawns Thy wondrous light.

This mystic poet not only feels that the universe is full of "Sacred Signs" but is always most hopeful about the future of humanity. Some of the lines are saturated with profound meaning as for example:

Always, the King walks alone,

And the forest is over-flowing with trails.

It must be said that Roerich's genius is essentially that of a prose writer, much more than that of a poet. Critics of the foot-rule and mechanical order of mind are sure to decry Roerich's poems. There is no doubt that Roerich's poetry is inspired.

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His poems are characterised by abundance of moods, visions and imageries all of which are lovely, striking and intelligent, and surcharged with a mystic glow and poetic fervour. The rich snatches of high reflection, luminous word pictures, bright and pretty phrases, happy movements of rich colour and fancy are all distinguished by passionate vigour and profundity of thought. Though Roerich always rides "sublime upon the seraph wings of ecstasy," through "inviting fields of abundant imagination", always his lines do not come to us wind-carried, butterfly-borne, or, as softly a sail as a rose petal on a stream's surface.

Nicholas Roerich the custodian of the winged word is not pessimistic. He is full of hope for the great future of humanity. He sings :

Dost thou not see
The path to that
Which to-morrow we shall find ?
The East is aflame
For us
Is the hour.

He does not shut his senses against the seamy side of Nature. To him evil is imperfection :

Thou art mistaken, boy; there is no evil,
The great One could not create evil.
There is imperfection.

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But it is just as dangerous as that
Which thou callest evil.

The way to conquer evil:

My boy, remember the command;
Not to fear life and to believe,
To remain free and strong;
And then thou wilt attain to love.
The dark creatures do not thrive under
All this. They wither and perish.

Here is another poem full of hidden meaning. The mystic poet Roerich finds the world abounding in "Sacred Signs" of which all get occasional glimpses. A seal of secrecy is laid on the signs to lure humanity on, but the seal gets broken the moment when man has proved his mettle.

And one last enjoinder, O my hunter,
If on the first day of hunting
Thou shouldst not come upon the quarry;
Grieve not.

To thee is already destined the quarry;
He who knows—searches
He who wins knowledge—achieves.

The following characteristically short but profoundly significant poem has a great moral for the modern world.

The boy killed a beetle,
He wanted to examine it.

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But Ruler, whence shall I
Take so many tears and to which
Of the wounds of the world shall I give
My first torrent ?

Messenger,
O, my Messenger, thou standest
And smilest. Dost thou not have
A command to heal sorrow
Through smile ?

Dr. Edgar L. Hewett, Director of the School of American Research, observed, "To me Roerich is the fulfilment of Browning's ideal—Sordello—all-containing, all-imparting." Indeed this is true with Roerich the Poet too.

Roerich must be counted as one of the Prophets not only in art, but literature as well. Whatever he touches is transformed by his supreme creative ardour, and the piercing vision of the artist probes to the depths of every department of knowledge to which his mind has been applied. He, like every great writer, has a style of expression all his own. Every word of his is radiant with the lustre of a spiritual light and there is the undefinable touch of the immortal in all his work.

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Roerich inaugurated the **NEW ERA LIBRARY** of the Roerich Museum Press in 1929. On that occasion the Great Thinker chose this as the Library's Creative Credo:

"The evolution of the New Era rests on the cornerstone of Knowledge and Beauty."

The New Era Library—a popular-priced series of splendidly edited books devoted to the heroic deeds and thoughts of ages past and present—acts as a messenger through the winged word in spreading international friendship and understanding through culture, in carrying heroic thoughts and deeds of the centuries to an intimate place at the human hearth and in aiding contemporary humanity to regain its most precious heritage—the Fires of Heaven.

And truly all his works are full of knowledge and beauty. His messages through the winged word, broadcasted in the farthest corners of the earth are tending to promote knowledge and beauty and create among the nations the bond of Peace, Beauty and Culture.

IV

THE MESSIAH OF CULTURE

CHAPTER IV

THE MESSIAH OF CULTURE

TO-DAY the name of the illustrious artist, Nicholas Roerich, has become the symbol of unity and creativeness, of Peace, Beauty and Culture, throughout the world. ROERICH and CULTURE these words have been inseparably linked together for the past few years. Roerich has been acclaimed as the Supreme President of the WORLD LEAGUE OF CULTURE with which are affiliated over eighty Societies dedicated to Culture and scattered all over the globe. At the present day Roerich is looked up to as a helper on the path of light and highest Culture, and this has won for him the boundless love, admiration and gratitude of humanity. Prof. Roerich whose vision and understanding are of a cosmic grandeur is universally revered as the greatest living Apostle of Culture. Considering the bulk, variety and tremendous

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forcefulness of his work, he stands foremost in the first rank of humanity's Great Interpreters of Culture.

Prof. Dr. Paul Radosavlevietch the distinguished educationist of the New-York University describes Roerich's character thus :—

“ The man who states so simply and yet beautifully the real meaning of Culture hails physically from dark Russia; mentally he is a real cosmopolitan like Goethe, Shakespeare or Peter Petrovich Nyegosh; spiritually he belongs to the ages like our Benjamin Franklin, Abraham Lincoln, or Ralph Waldo Emerson. His earthly name is Nicholas Roerich.”

Prof. Roerich who has earned everlasting reputation as an indefatigable worker for the welfare and enlightenment of mankind, in one of his inspiring essays about Culture remarks thus :—

“ Culture is reverence of Light. Culture is love of humanity. Culture is fragrance, the unity of life and beauty. Culture is the synthesis of uplifting and sensitive attainments. Culture is the armour of light. Culture is Salvation. Culture is the motivating power. Culture is the Heart.”

“ If we gather all the definitions of Culture, we find the synthesis of active Bliss, the altar of enlightened and constructive Beauty.”

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Nicholas de Roerich, the founder of a host of Cultural Institutions conceived the salutary idea of the protection of artistic and scientific treasures and achievements of humanity, as early as in 1904, when he first advanced his significant proposals. The idea of the protection of the cultural treasures of the world, was strongly rooted in Roerich's sensitive heart even from his early days. His extensive travels to monasteries and historical cities of great antiquity as well as his excavations and explorations—all associated with traditions ancient and glorious—convinced Roerich of the undeferrable necessity for making arrangements to protect cultural treasures. In 1904, Roerich addressed the Society of Architects in St. Petersburg calling attention to the deplorable and frightfully tragic condition of architectural monuments and urging the assembly to take urgent measures to protect the edifices. In 1914, Roerich suggested to H. M. Tzar Nicholas II and the Grand Duke Nicholas the importance and immediate need of protecting the architectural monuments which were fast perishing. In both cases it was received with highest interest but delayed owing to wars. The late Emperor heartily appreciated Roerich's intelligent proposals. During the beginning of the Great War,

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Roerich the Prophet of Universal Beauty reiterated and emphasised repeatedly the urgent need for protecting artistic and scientific treasures. But the war-crazy world did not hear the prophet's call. The grand idea of protection of cultural treasures was most ably and convincingly propounded by the gifted and persuasive speaker in his spirited address at the Exhibition of Allied Nations. Roerich was the President of that Exhibition which was most representative and greatly appreciated. The Nations which participated in the Meeting went with the burning thought that the protection of cultural treasures was a "sacred reality in the world." The elite of humanity which attended the Exhibition heard Roerich's impassionate call and realised that no real evolution is ever possible without the accumulation of Culture.

In 1930, Roerich proposed to the nations to establish a Pact for the preservation of all Art and Science Treasures of humanity, through the *New York Times*. The article was a trumpet call to the intellegentsia of the world to realize that "constructive work is a true prophecy of a new era, and to make them feel the imperative necessity and undeferrable desirability for a great peace that will tame the belligerent instincts of humanity

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by the resplendent and joyous creations of the spirit." The same year, Dr. Georges Chklaver, Doctor of Laws and Professor of the Paris University was commissioned by Roerich to draft the legal form of the Pact. In 1930, the Pact won the wholehearted approval of the League of Nations and that year the founding of the *Committe of the Roerich Banner of Peace* in New-York and the *Comite Pour le Pacte Roerich* in Paris took place. In 1931, was established the Union headed by Mr. Camille Tulpinck, with its seat at Bruges. Prof. Roerich the originator of the Pact was honoured with the permanent Presidentship of the Institutions.

THE ROERICH PACT is a summons to the appreciation and cataloguing of religious, artistic and scientific treasures and to the establishment of a mutual cultural understanding and appreciation. Under the Roerich Pact, the agreeing countries pledge themselves to guard, esteem and sponsor all the immeasurable and irreplaceable treasures of the achievement of the human spirit which otherwise as has unfortunately been proved only too often, are with supreme disregard neglected and mercilessly destroyed, either by vandalism, lack of care and understanding, alike in times of war and so-called peace. The Roerich

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Pact provides, in the realm of humanity's cultural achievements the same guardianship as the Red Cross provides in pity for the physical sufferings of man. Convinced of the inestimable mission of the Pact, twentyfive countries expressed their loyal support to the Pact the very year it was announced. The same year, the Roerich Pact was endorsed by the Governments of China, New Zealand, Panama, Japan, Persia, New Foundland, Poland, Turkey, Indo-China and San Salvador. All the leading Museums endorsed the Pact and encouraged its immediate adoption. Two international conferences for the promulgation of the Roerich Pact, were held in the heroic city of Bruges, which towers immortally as the inspiring symbol of a rich multitude of beautiful names and events, in 1931 and 1932 in which delegates from over twentyfive countries actively participated. The Roerich Pact has been most enthusiastically welcomed by men of light and leading in all walks of life throughout the world. *ROERICH PACT BOOK* gives the appreciations recorded by eminent people. Such highpriests of Culture, as Rabindranath Tagore, H. M. King Albert of Belgium, Maurice Maeterlinck, Mrs. Franklin Roosevelt, President Roosevelt, Sir C. V. Raman, Upton Sinclair, Sir J. C. Bose, Sir S. Radhakrishnan—

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to mention but a few of the outstanding thinkers who have endorsed the Pact—have all expressed their enthusiasm for the Roerich Pact.

It is indeed stimulating to review some of the opinions beautifully expressed by distinguished savants.

Maurice Maeterlinck writes.—“With all my heart am I with the advocators of the Roerich Pact.....Let us group all the moral forces which we are able to gather around this noble Vision.”

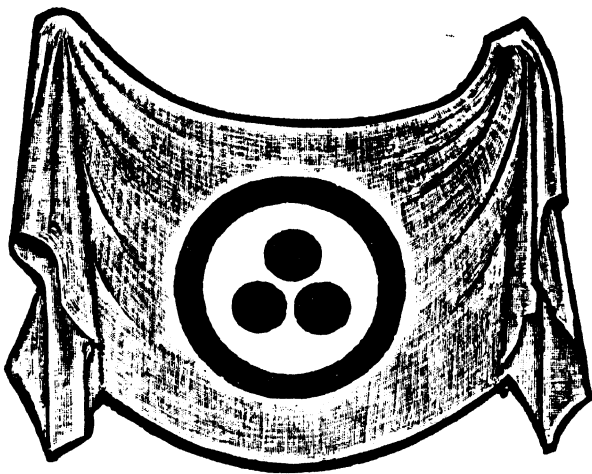
Rabindranath Tagore says:—“I have keenly followed your most remarkable achievements in the realm of Arts and also your great humanitarian work for the welfare of the nations of which your Peace Pact idea with a special banner for protection of Cultural treasures is a singularly effective symbol.”

It is most interesting and refreshing to learn that the Pact has been definitely favoured by military authorities who have endorsed the entire practicability of Roerich's altruistic proposal. Hubert Lyautey the former Marshall of France vigorously supported the Pact and Baron de Theun the great military authority has introduced lively lectures on the Pact in military schools.

In his untiring effort to promote and safeguard the progress of mankind, Roerich has

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created the triune **BANNER OF PEACE** for the protection of the cultural treasures of the world. The Banner is emblematic of the spirit of the Roerich Pact. The Banner is intended to be hoisted over all cultural institutions in every country. The idea has been welcomed in the highest quarters as a very practical and intelligent one. The Banner of Peace, represents a trio of spheres within a circle, in majenta colour, on a pure white background. The Banner is a symbol of unity, eternity, culture and humanity past, present and future. Of the many national and individual interpretations of this symbol, beautiful in its simplicity and profound in its conception, the most usual are perhaps those of Religion, Art and Science as aspects of Culture—the surrounding circle; or that of the Past, Present and Future achievements of mankind guarded within the circle of Eternity. Prof. Roerich, the creator of the Pact and Banner says, “both these interpretations are just as good, for they represent a synthesis of life and that is my ruling precept.” The artist of the Banner holds that it is “imperative to take immediate measures to preserve the noble heritage of our past for a glorious posterity” and adds that “the creation of culture.....belongs to no one but to the world.” The Banner with an inscription is



THE ROERICH BANNER OF PEACE SIGN.

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indicative of a great idea. The Roerich Banner of Peace has been unfurled over a large number of institutions throughout the globe. By this and other equally powerful means Prof. Roerich the great Apostle of Peace has awakened in the hearts and heads of the people of the world a reverence for Cultural Treasures which are the noblest heritages of humanity.

Referring to the Pact and Banner, Dr. Georges Chklaver opines :—

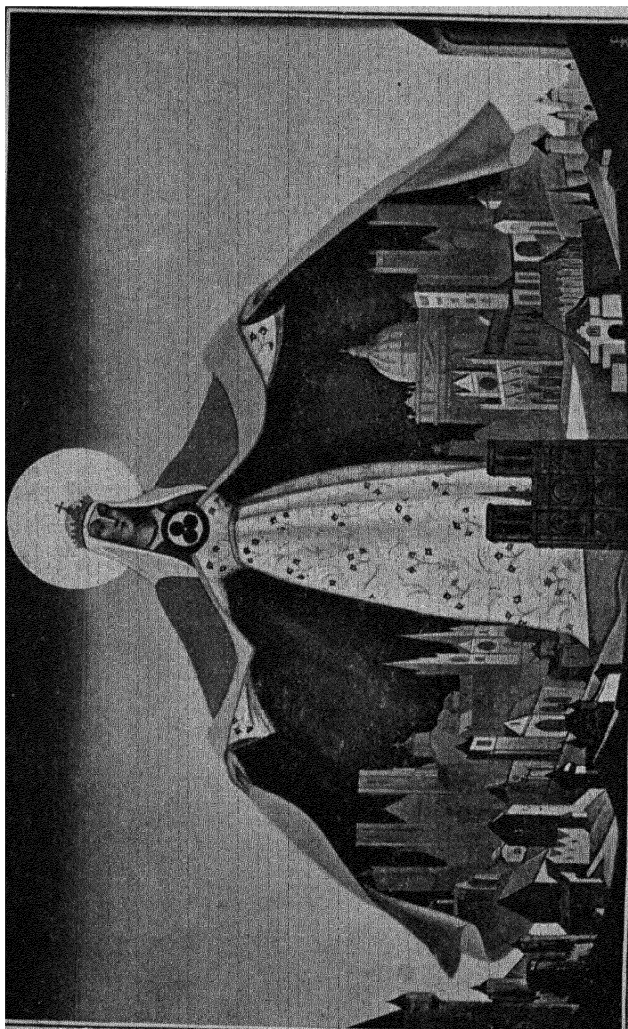
“Seldom are all nations of the World stirred by the same thought, seldom are they united by the same endeavour. It was given to Nicholas Roerich to create a Movement which has won the enthusiastic support of Governments and peoples alike; thus it was proved once more that Beauty, Knowledge and Culture are the best means to bring together the *Membra disjecta* of humanity”.

Leon Dabo the renowned Artist expressed his appreciation thus :—

“ If we can have this Banner accepted by all nations to protect the beautiful, the precious, the exuberance of the human soul as expressed by brain and hand of man, it will be the greatest contribution of the spirit of humanity and the spirit of Culture which man has introduced into the world in the last thousand years.....”

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November of 1933 marked an important milestone in the progress of the Roerich Banner of Peace. The Third Convention of the Roerich Pact and Banner of Peace, at Washington which took place on the 17th & 18th November 1933 was a mighty achievement. No less than thirty-six nations took active part in the Convention and all unanimously accepted the Pact and Banner and passed the resolution to "recommend the adoption of this humanitarian measure to the Governments of all Nations for adoption or adhesion by unilateral action through proclamation of the executive, by bilateral action through international agreements and by multilateral action through declaration of international conferences". Dr. James Brown Scott, a world renowned authority on International Law, and the Director of Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, made a powerful speech at the Convention vigorously supporting the Pact, and urging its prompt and immediate adoption. Following the encouraging and unanimous adoption of the Roerich Pact and Peace Banner by the Third International Convention, the Plenary session of the Pan-American Congress definitely took the lead in supporting the noble cause by adopting the Pact. The year 1934 saw the establishment of a *Roerich Pact and Banner*



"SANCTA PROTECTRIX"

By NICHOLAS ROERICH.

(Banner of Peace Convention, Washington, Nov. 1933)

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of Peace Committee in the Far East in Harbin, Manchukuo and another similar Committee in Bruxalles. The current year—1935—finds another feather added to the cap of Roerich the Apostle of Peace. The members of the Pan-American Union, have either subscribed their signatures of adherence or appointed plenipotentiary delegates to do so, at the next Pan American Conference to be held on Pan American Day, April 14th 1935. Thus the Roerich Pact is becoming increasingly popular. The Roerich Banner of Peace is an epoch-making symbol of Culture and when it comes to be accepted by the whole world it will be for ever more a guarantee against the vagaries and vandalisms that have been the bane of Art and Culture in the past. Under shelter of the Banner, as the sponsor of the Pact confidently hopes, humanity will march to "Culture and Peace—the most sacred goals of man". Positive creativeness which is the fundamental quality of the human spirit, has been largely and richly manifested by Roerich in the Banner of Peace. The Peace Banner marks a most luminous role in the creativeness, progress and unity of Prof. Roerich's strenuous endeavours in establishing peace and goodwill among men and rendering their lives sweet, happy and noble.

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The late Rev. Dr. Norwood, the inspired spiritual Messenger of America on the *Roerich Banner of Peace Day* consecrated the Banner thus;—

“We shall have peace, Beautiful Flag, and it will come to us one day. We send you thus forth on your mission at this moment. We send you forth and we pledge ourselves that we who touch your folds, that we who look upon your whiteness, shall consecrate ourselves, our souls and our bodies, to the adoration of God, in the Highest, the height of human hearts. And so it shall come to pass that Peace shall come at last to humanity through the victorious folds of your whiteness, the challenge of your colour, and the completeness of your symmetry. Go forth and conquer in the name of love.....”

Dr. James H. Cousins—the understanding friend of all creative strivings who is full of appreciation for beauty—has written a poem *BANNER OF PEACE* which is well worthy of reproduction here.

Banner of Peace! We raise
Your triune circled spheres,
Out of the world's bewildered rays
To lead the coming years.

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Floating on tower and fane
Where Truth and Art abide,
Destruction's threat you shall restrain,
And turn its rage aside,

But not alone your seal
Shall stay the hand of strife;
To searching hearts you shall reveal
The way to worthier life.

Truth, Beauty, Righteousness
Wrought out in Unity,
Shall change our deserts of distress,
To wonderlands to be.

Flag of our faith! go forth!
Affirm to every wind
Beauty's regenerating worth:
The joy of kindled mind:

High deeds that liberate
Wisdom and loveliness,
Transforming ignorance and hate
Into the will to bliss.

Banner of Peace ! march on !
Halt not your pilgrimage

NICHOLAS ROERICH

Till to the world's glad warless dawn
You lead the coming age !

Roerich's infinite faith in his noble mission of World Peace is strengthening as days roll on, as will be best seen from the following concluding passage extracted from his solemn message to the Washington Convention.

“Verily humanity is tired of destructions, vandalism and negations. Postive creativeness is the fundamental quality of the human spirit. In our life, everything that uplifts and ennobles the spirit most holds the dormant place.....Be assured it is not a truism to speak about the undeferable and urgent strivings of culture.....Let there resound once again the mighty prayer for peace of the entire world. As the Red Cross affirms physical health, so may the Banner of Peace establish and affirm the spiritual health of mankind.”

Nicholas Roerich, “one of the most amazing of our contemporary geniuses, one who by versatility, by universality of his works joins the processional of such men as Leonardo, Pythagoras, Blake, Goethe and numerous others” and a genius who stands for constructiveness and spirituality, has made a permanent contribution to the values of life and to the enrichment of human society by and

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through his enlightening Pact and appealing Peace Banner, which as Miss. Frances R. Grant observes are "the latest superb expressions of his genius." The fiery chalice of Roerich's superhuman creativeness summons humanity to be "afame in heart and create in love".

THE ROERICH PACT and THE ROERICH BANNER OF PEACE passionately and magnificently plead for stopping the waste of vandalism, for outlawing the destruction of objects of artistic imagination and production, and for casting a lasting ostracism against the wilful, the ignorant, or the vicious, who destroy or who would destroy, "the frozen music of architecture," the magnificent structures of science, the wondrous creations of the sculptor, the painter, the lapidary, the musician, the poet who has translated the ideals and imageries of his exalted mind into something good, something true, something beautiful. Through the centuries humanity has grouped itself around many standards; some have showed themselves as transitory, others as more permanent. In choosing for the first time a standard cent per cent symbolic of man's spiritual expression as revealed in his artistic and scientific attainment, Nicholas Roerich has proclaimed a new cultural covenant of mankind. The call of integration and of world unity pro-

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nounced by Roerich is an invocation to harmony synthesised by a great spirit and it would prove a welding force among nations, and create a New Humanity that would guard and strain to fulfil the divine charge of Brotherhood among men. As a true guardian of high culture, the Roerich Banner of Peace shall warn every assailant: "*Noii me tangere*—here are real values of Humanity."

Nicholas Roerich, the Prophet of Universal Beauty, the Forerunner of Culture and Peace to come, and the great Prophet of our age, is the true Parsifal and bearer of the Holy Grail.

V

THE NEW EDUCATIONIST

CHAPTER V

THE NEW EDUCATIONIST

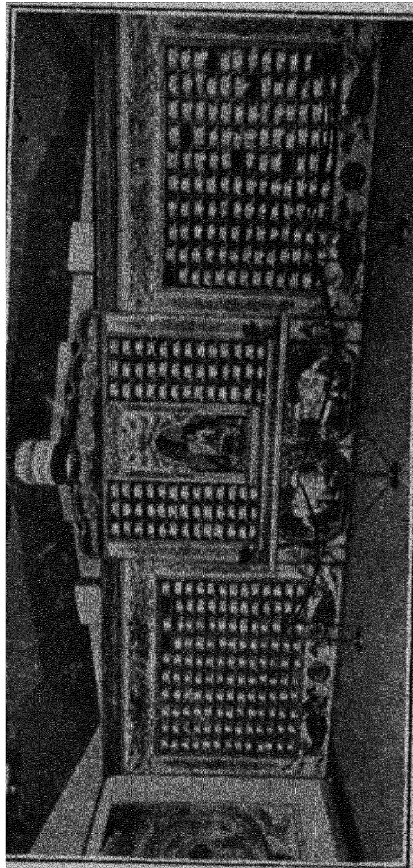
AS an Educationist belonging to a new school of thought and activity Prof. Roerich the valiant and benevolent leader of Culture has been awarded the academic palm. *The Spirit of Culture* or *Veneration of Light* is the cardinal principle underlying Roerich's New Education. The modern Educator in Roerich is the highpriest of an old Truth—the Veneration of Light and the significance of this is crystallized in the paintings and writings of the savant who occupies an exclusive and unusual place among the inspired Educationists and Teachers of the world.

Roerich has founded and organised a number of educational institutions all of which are "Cathedrals of Culture", such as MASTER INSTITUTE, CORONA MUNDI, COR ARDENS, ALATAS, URUSVATI. THE MASTER INSTITUTE OF UNITED ARTS is a mighty

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educational institution where practical and theoretical instruction in Music, Painting, Sculpture and Architecture is imparted by eminent authorities. This splendid organisation established in 1921 provides under one roof a great variety of faculties. Founded by the creative genius, this institution is most thriving and the attention of the educational and artistic world has been for long focussed on it. The Master Institute of United Arts has before it the inspiring ideal "at once to fortify each student with a technical mastery in his own field, and to forge those precepts of spirit and creation which will be the guiding principles in his art and life". Nicholas Roerich, leader of contemporary art and true apostle of beauty, has pronounced as one of the formulae of attainment: "Simplicity, Beauty and Fearlessness". It is with this sublime spirit that the Institute aims to imbue its students that they may endeavour to attain the joy of creation which is immutable. The institution has as its motto the following (which forms part of Roerich's inspiring and masterly Essay, *Path of Blessing*):—

"Art will unify all humanity. Art is one—indivisible. Art is the manifestation of the Coming Synthesis. Art is for all. Every one will enjoy true Art. The Gates of the "Sacred Source"



**TIBETAN LIBRARY
ROERICH MUSEUM, NEW-YORK.**

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must be wide open for everybody, and the Light of Art will influence numerous hearts with a new Love. At first this feeling will be unconscious. But after all it will purify human consciousness and how many young hearts are searching for something real and beautiful! So give it to them. Bring Art to the people where it belongs! We should have not only Museums, Theatres, Universities, Public Libraries, Railway Stations and Hospitals but even prisons decorated and beautified. Then we shall have no more prisons."

The motto expresses the high purpose of art in the scheme of life and the noble aspiration of the artist in his creative labour. Roerich has throughout his busy life been an ardent believer in small beginnings. Asked if it was possible and advantageous to have so vast an enterprise as the Master Institute under the single roof, Prof. Roerich with characteristic smile and earnestness replied: "For the conception of creation one does not need a room larger than the cell of Fra Angelico. Each tree must grow. If the work is vital, it will develop; if it is destined to die, in any case it will have to die, in one room." Time has proved that the Great Master's hopes have not been idle dreams.

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CORONA MUNDI (International Art Centre) founded in 1922, holds Exhibitions, arranges lectures and concerts, encourages exchange of exhibitions between nations and in general sponsors all movements in and for Art. Its motto acquaints us with Roerich's conception of Beauty and its tremendous influence in solving human problems effectively. Upon the shield of the Institution is inscribed the following significant call taken from Roerich's Essay, *Beauty and Wisdom*.

“Humanity is facing the coming events of cosmic greatness. Humanity already realises that all occurrences are not accidental. The time for the construction of future culture is at hand. Before our eyes the revaluation of values is being witnessed. Amidst ruins of valueless bank notes, mankind has found the real value of the world's significance. The values of great art are victoriously traversing all storms of earthly commotions. Even the “earthly” people already understand the vital importance of active beauty. And when we proclaim : Love, Beauty and Action, we know verily, that we pronounce the formula of the international language. And this formula, which now belongs to the Museum and stage must enter everyday life. The sign of beauty and

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action will open all sacred gates. Beneath the sign of beauty we walk joyfully. With beauty and action we conquer. Through beauty we pray. In beauty we are united. And now we affirm these words—not on the snowy heights but amidst the turmoil of the city. And realizing the path of true reality we greet with a happy smile the future.”

These Institutions have been designed and dedicated to the realisation of a New Era in the evolution of humanity and Prof. Roerich builds up the New Era on the solid foundation of *Knowledge* and *Beauty*. The summons to the unity of arts and their apotheosis as a force for human evolution, sounded by Prof. Roerich has been broadcasted by and through these organisations which fulfil and guard the principles and foundations laid by the Master. With each succeeding year in the life of the Institutions the unassailable truth of their mottos becomes more and more apparent. With poignant force the glorious mission of art and culture has been substantially worked out by the Institutions which have accomplished much in consummating their aims of greater human understanding through Beauty.

Roerich's conception of a Teacher is beautifully summed up by him thus in one of his Essays, *Roots of Culture* :

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“ The Teacher is he who reveals, enlightens and encourages. He who will say “Blessed are the obstacles, through them we grow.” He who recalls the beautiful Golgothas of knowledge and art, because therein lies the creative achievement— He who is able to remind, teach the means of achievement—he will not be rejected by the strong spirits. He himself, will realize the value of the Hierarchy of Knowledge ; and in his constant movement will create the ascending researches.”

Verily Roerich is such an ideal Teacher.

Prof. Roerich's views on Education are at once inspiring and salutary. Says the great educationist: “To educate does not mean to give a record of technical information. Education, the forming of the world consciousness, is attained by synthesis; not by the synthesis of misfortunes, but by the synthesis of perfection and creativeness. But, if we shut off all flow of this joyous illumination of life, then what type of educators will we be? What education can the pedagogue offer, who spreads around him sorrow and despair? Not far from despair is also the pretence of joy; hence, it is, that each forced smile, has been called, not without reason, the smile of the skull. It means that we must convince ourselves how necessary and vital is the

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programme of Culture as a salutary beginning, as a life giver."

Prof. Roerich the distinguished educationist believes that beauty is the universal and true solvent whereby racial and national animosities may be dissolved. He spread his educational gospel in America—the rendezvous of conflicting nations and a cross road of all cultures and civilisations. To realize the New Era in the evolution of humanity, Roerich inaugurated new educational institutions. The most striking items in his new education could be summarized in the following.

Cult-ur or Veneration of Light is that most modern *Magisterium mundi* which does not eulogise or belittle the intellectual, emotional and volitional factors in our education but judges all these items with the high standard of universal wisdom.

For a realisation of such a great Cult-ur based on *thought, love, knowledge and beauty*, Roerich wants real teachers, educators and inspirers. According to him, a real educator is a devoted servant of Cult-ur, a sworn seeker of light, who fully values the luminous cumulations of Nations. Such a Teacher distinguishes between accidental transition and real existence, understands the great responsibility of human existence and brings both

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to his thoughts and actions a high enduring quality. That real educator intelligently analyses the miraculous strength of nature and discovers in himself the precious language of the heart a vocabulary which is fuller and more beautiful than any dictionary. The genuine Guru realises that "Wisdom rests in reality which renounces neither spiritual nor physical existence." Roerich as a teacher satisfies the idealist without confronting the realist and he constantly seeks the dormant, latent or hidden truth, the unrevealed beauty, the Lost Word.

A great artist-teacher Roerich no doubt is, he does not believe in any kind of *Methodenreiterei* or panacea for any artificial method of teaching, learning and examination. He valiantly fights against all standards which according to him lead but to tyranny. Roerich is eagerly trying to explain to mankind "the all penetrating understanding of the beauty of art, which shall save us from death-imparting standardisation and from the pernicious debris of life." Prof Roerich emphasises: "The fundamental flame of Culture shall be one but its sparks in life shall be extremely manifold as well as precisely individual. Like a careful gardener, the true culture-bearer will not ruthlessly crush those flowers which enter life outside his



THE ROERICH MUSEUM IN NEW-YORK.

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garden, if they belong to the same precious kind which he safeguards. The manifestations of culture are just as manifold as are the manifestations of the endless varieties of life itself. They are the true branches of the one sacred Tree whose roots sustain the Universe."

Prof. Roerich has very clearly pointed out that the first and most dangerous sign of lack of culture is quarrel, want of sympathy and good will. Says he, "contentment and tolerance are the first adornments of culture."

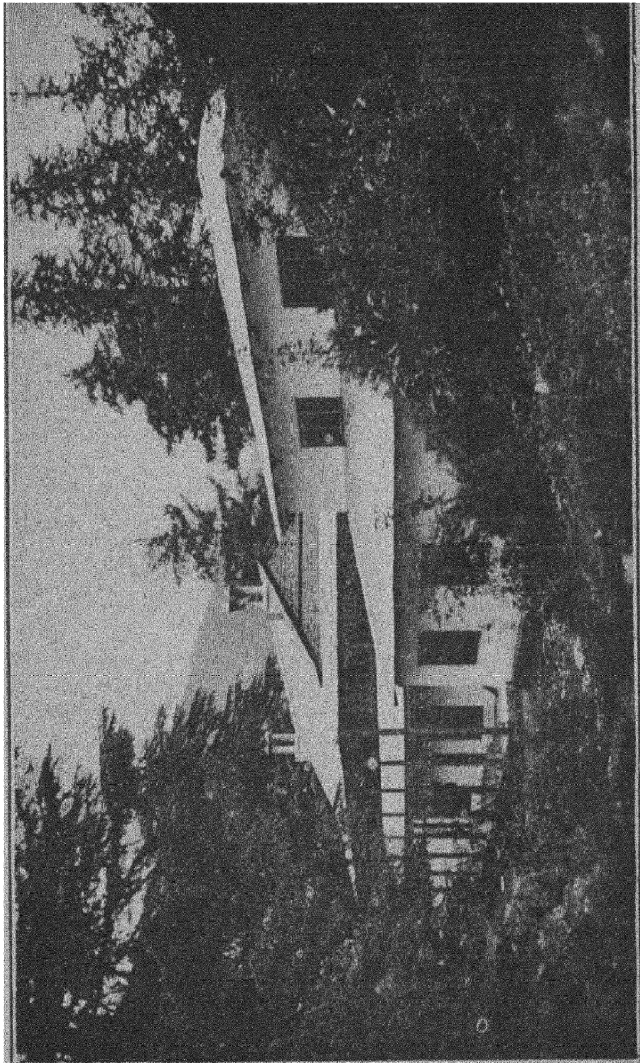
THE ROERICH MUSEUM was founded in 1923. This imposing cultural and artistic mansion is twenty-nine storied. An extraordinary collection of magnificent paintings by the Master Artist, inspired by the varied life and natural scenery of Asia, is housed in this Museum. Under the direct auspices of the Museum a monthly Bulletin was started as well as a host of valuable publications dealing with art, archaeology, natural history and folklore.

In 1928 Prof. and Mme. de Roerich founded THE URUSVATI HIMALAYAN RESEARCH INSTITUTE, at Naggar in the inviting Kulu Valley amidst luxuriant vegetation and charming sylvan surroundings in the Himalayas, with the view of investigating into the extraor-

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dinarily interesting problems of anthropology, bio-chemistry, pharmacology, Tibetan language, Himalayan Botany etc., in short with the laudable intention of studying and making accessible to the public the results of whatever could be learned from and in the great haven of peace and beauty. The Institute was the immediate outcome of the Roerich Central Asia Expedition. The Institute is built on the land donated by Nicholas de Roerich. Roerich has his estate at Naggarr where he lately resided with his wife and gifted sons, Dr. Georges de Roerich who is the Director of the Institute and the outstanding authority in Tibetan languages and Svetoslav Roerich the talented Artist.

THE URUSVATI INSTITUTE is a great centre of Culture. A bio-chemical laboratory is under construction and equipment to investigate into the pharmacognostical properties of high altitude plants in their living state. Mr. Sv. Roerich, Vice-President of the Roerich Museum, has made an extensive collection of the rare indigenous Himalayan drugs with the object of their possible application in Western pharmacopoeia. A number of experimental plantations have been started to make further research in this field. He is experimenting on the cultivation of certain rare medicinal plants under special conditions with the



The Headquarters of
**URUSVATI HIMALAYAN RESEARCH INSTITUTE OF ROERICH MUSEUM,
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view of making them more accesible for the general benefit of humanity. A Cancer Research Department is another item of the programme of the Institute. The Philological Department has published an authoritative work on the Tibetan Dialect of Lahul by the Director. A monumental work of Dr. Georges de Roerich—the preparation of a Tibetan-English Dictionary—has been completed and is now being prepared for publication. The Institute publishes a beautiful voluminous journal which is a treasure house of knowledge and wisdom. Naggar is a centre of great and inspiring beauty where the Rishi Roerich lives broadcasting his sublime messages through paintings and writings to the remotest corners of the civilised globe contributing enormously towards a quicker bringing about of Peace on Earth and Good Will among men.

The Roerich Ashram at Naggar is exclusively devoted to the pursuit of knowledge and is a centre of supreme inspiration to all thinking minds and understanding hearts who realise the greatest mission of life.

N. C. Mehta, M. A., I. C. S., the eminent art critic observes :—

“Naggar is a scene of great beauty where human beings still flit in an atmosphere of simplicity

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and romance, where men and women carry themselves as princes and princesses of a bygone age.”

“His Ashram should be a place for pilgrimage to all those who want to drink in the beauty of nature.”

Roerich the new educationist dins into our ears: “The great tree of Culture is nourished by an unlimited knowledge, by enlightened labour, incessant creativeness and noble attainment.” He wants humanity to realise that the glorious field of Culture is no doubt a joyous one and that all should cheerfully participate in “the Festival of Labour and Constructiveness” and that all should with courageous hearts “stand vigil on the parapet of Bliss, Knowledge and Beauty”. Roerich pleads for educating mankind along these lines.

Verily Roerich has been hailed as the Great Teacher from the White Summits.

VI

BEHOLD THE MAN



Photo Portrait of

Nicholas de Ricciolo

CHAPTER VI

BEHOLD THE MAN

NICHOLAS Roerich's personality is absolutely selfless and finds an easy passport into the hearts of all. His serene face with the thin, pointed and pure white beard has a glorious and saintly touch of the archaic; his large blue eyes with a searching, intelligent, calm and soothing look express candour and clarity. A Caballist on seeing a portrait of Roerich stressed the power of his eyes as "those windows of the spirit." His eyes have an enthralling magnetic power and his bearing is dignified and commanding.

Sulamith Ish-Kishor in the leading article in a standard American Monthly writes of Roerich:—"Here is a living being who might have stepped out of an old fairy-tale book—too honest for a Merlin, too spiritual and beneficent for a Klingsor Simplicity, Beauty and Fearlessness expresses his artistic creed."

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It is no exaggeration to say that Roerich has wholly dedicated his beautiful life to the cause of universal welfare. A striking and significant portrait of Prof. Roerich the Messiah of Culture has been drawn by his gifted son Sviatoslav Roerich representing the Inspired Teacher with a casket in his hands. The leader rises at 7 o'clock and works with deep earnestness throughout the day. Once a Journalist asked Roerich whether it was convenient for him to do so much of creative work from the solitude of the mountains. Roerich with a pleasant smile replied: "When the household is vast it is best seen from the mountain top."

G. Grebenschikoff, a distinguished Siberian writer gives a pen picture of Roerich :—

"With rare joy I was privileged from time to time to see Roerich at work. He rises early in the morning and retires later than all his co-workers, and you will never see any expression of fatigue on his face. There is no question great or small directed to him which he does not consider and solve in the most attentive way. I do not remember him ever arguing with any one saying 'No'. He will listen to everything, he will find a wise reply to everything and each little pebble, despite its grayness and dust, he will set upon its place in the creative panorama of life so that the small pebble

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may be proud and every one who regards it from the side will rejoice at the fate of so small a pebble. Being white himself, N. K. Roerich loves purity and whiteness in everything. The white mountain, the white steed, the white rider and especially the white stone take on an especially beautiful symbolism and sense of legend in the words and images of Roerich. In all this there is a call towards spiritual and physical purity, towards the snow white peaks, towards the pure ways of perfecting. And at the same time, he himself is simple in everything, he has a word for every one, he never condemns any one's opinion and will always give the most illuminating advice, the most consoling word without submissive goodness, without deceptive promise."

Roerich is an Apostle of the Gospel of Beauty and Peace and a Prophet of the New Era, a world illuminated by the radiant light of the strong spirit. He is himself the personification of Universal Art and Universal Culture and he has been truly called by Dr. Cousins the Poet and Critic as "Himalayan in Soul". What is most outstanding in Roerich is his astounding creativeness which is almost infinite. He has painted many thousands of pictures, written thousands of essays, delivered hundreds of lectures and undertaken a number of

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expeditions. He is a genius at work as much in intellect as in inspiration. He never rests on his laurels. He believes in the gospel of right work and moves forwards, onwards in mighty gigantic strides capturing success everywhere. Once when a journalist made an inquiry, as to how famous people spend their holidays, Roerich the indefatigable worker replied, "At work. And in what can a better holiday consist if not in work?" No doubt, Nicholas Roerich the inventor of harmonies and the godgifted clarion voice of culture, is a brilliant study in human genius. Roerich is not affected by the surroundings or environments as far as his work is considered. He is quite homely where there is a sky above him and ground under his feet. There is absolutely no disagreement between him and the external world in which he works. His spirit is always harmonious and eminently well disciplined that it transcends the limitations imposed by surroundings. When Roerich was asked "What is the best time to create?" he smiled and answered: "It is not bad on little boat crossing the Neva; it is not bad, in a street-car or train, the movement even gives a sort of rhythm." These two rhythms *maestoso* and *accelerando* are the distinguishing traits of Roerich's spiritual harmony.

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His versatility has baffled many of his contemporaries in Art and Literature, and throughout his numerous works Roerich "invariably expresses a genius which is mellow, mature, illumined." His fertility of creation is a constant source of awe and envy to many. A student of Roerich observes that "multiplicity of creation is dependent on a combination of things—surety of technique, fertility of imagination, continuity of labour." And Roerich's works pronounce unmistakably that he is a part of the Greatest Creator.

In a thought-inspiring article Miss. Frances Grant, an internationally reputed Journalist, explains thus:—

"Roerich has drawn his inspiration from the entire gamut of human experience—folklore, philosophy, nature, religion, epics of yesterday and to-day. This is a tribute to his erudition which has long been recognised, and which one may trace to the unity of art which is part of the gospel of Roerich's life. Having long laid down for himself the credo that Art is one, Roerich never permitted barriers to rise between his explorations into the infinite entrancing trails of all cultural provinces. Thus unconstrained as to his interests, he found that the aeons of existence of gods and men were his field. The searching light of his

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interest and illumination penetrated into all corners, that passionate spirit for knowledge led him into invisible realms as it had led him through the expanse of the world, in tireless quests. Hence myriads of themes are within the compass of Roerich because the concentric circles of his interest and passion for knowledge have defined larger and larger spaces into the starry world."

Roerich belongs to that rare and select galaxy of seers whose mission is to be of use, service, weal and inspiration to the world at large and who live to teach mankind to love, understand and appreciate the multicoloured life of Art and Culture and who lead men and women to the Beautiful Realm of Peace, and Beauty. Simple and straightforward his messages go straight to the heart of the teeming millions who revere him as the Apostle of Culture and Prophet of Beauty. The extraordinary force of his thought, the irresistible power of his saintly personality, the great strength of his sincerity, and above all the unfathomable depth of his lofty messages have proclaimed him as the ablest Exponent of Culture. In Roerich the world has found a great leader who always has in him the rare and splendid combination of the glorious vision of the Idealist and the practical wisdom of the Realist.

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With great truth the eminent American Jurist, the Hon. George Gordon Battle pronounced:—

“Nicholas Roerich is unquestionably one of the great leaders of history. Along with his wonderful breadth of mind there goes a sublime sympathy with the opinions of and tolerance for others. He has the marvellous equipment to be the leader of an international movement. He has the power not only to plan but to act. He can translate his dreams into action.”

Always kind and genial, calm and calculating, humble and sincere, noble and loving, intelligent and industrious, liberal and virtuous, Roerich is one of those genuinely supreme souls on earth who know and enjoy the pleasures and rewards of honest work for the betterment of humanity. The most striking feature of his character which unquestionably is the best test of truly great men is that he remains throughout humble notwithstanding his fame having extended all over the civilised world. His fame will be an “echo and light unto eternity.” No man could impose on him, and, modest and unpretentious as he is, he is quite able on occasions to assert his dignity and self respect in the most powerful, gentlemanly and exemplary manner. No one is more daring in

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powerfully ascerting the truths of which he is fully convinced or more positive in his own views when he had deliberately and after mature thinking adopted them. Compromise is characteristic of him and embodies humaneness the essential quality of his great heart. He is a commanding genius who combines in himself in marvellous proportions the highest qualities of the head and heart. He is the supreme highpriest of Truth and is deadly opposed to all sham and hypocrisy. He hates slander downright. In his stimulating Essay *Praise to The Enemies* Roerich emphasises that hindrances from enemies do but create new possibilities. To him slander is entirely anticultural. Says he: "Slander is the measure of consciousness and the testing stone of the power of achievement." He is deeply religious. Did not Swami Vivekananda teach:—"That man cannot be truly religious who has not the faculty of feeling the beauty and grandness of art." Roerich has absolute faith in the following:—

"For love, and beauty and delight,
There is no death nor change; their might
Exceeds our organs."

Roerich's words are saturated with sincerity and sweetness. They are well thoughtout and enchanting and all men are carried away by his

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writings. He is fully aware that scholarship and sincerity should go hand in hand to make an intelligent and emotional appeal. He is one whose external appearance magnificently anticipates and astonishingly reinforces his fullvolumed power of utterance. Roerich is a profound scholar and his reading is always solid, extensive and covers all fields of thought. He has an acute intelligence, an amazing resourcefulness, a searching mind and a retentive memory. He uses quotations from great writers with astonishing aptness and marvellous efficacy for elucidating mighty truths. His intellect is sharp and his penetrative power is quick and live to the core. With compelling and convincing vigour, scholarship and fairness, Roerich tackles all problems successfully however difficult and complex they be. His titanic energy and gifted eloquence have passed over boundaries of the artistic arena and filled many channels of historical, social and literary interest and fertilised diverse fields yielding richest harvests. Whatever subject he touches, is raised at once out of the commonplace to the domain of real art. His works sparkle with intellect, and glow with inspiration and have become part of the intellectual capital of the the whole world. Ever and anon Roerich's prophetic vision arrests close study.

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E. Gil Borges of the Pan American Union has paid a tribute to Roerich thus:—

“There is a fundamental unity in your literary and artistic work. It so seems to me that there is much of the colour of your paintings in the pages of your books, and much of the music of your words in the symphony of colours of your paintings.”

Roerich's work has its own transcendental spiritual beauty and it truly belongs to the creations of the mystic brotherhood. Vividness, immediacy and authenticity of his work mark Roerich as a daringly original genius. Roerich is essentially, constructively and triumphantly a true Citizen of the World whose aim is “to transform the dusty daily existence into a constant Festival of Love and Great Service.” Prof. Roerich was once asked “What is the difference between the East and the West.” He replied, “The best roses of the East and West have the same fragrance.” He is full of infinite faith in the Great Future. He writes: “The future exists, that is why we have come here. Not for defamation nor for terror, but we pass here for mutual labour, for knowledge, for enlightenment.”

Time has accumulated around the great figure of Roerich a vast apocryphal material. Numerous

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are the legends associated with his name. His multi-coloured life is full of striking facts and his synthesis comprises the mastery of so many fields in Art, Archaeology, Architecture, Literature. Endowed with brilliant versatility, Roerich does not inroot himself in any one country. After each new success he changes his sphere of activity. The American Press in 1927 was curious to know whether Roerich was "a Tzar or a disembodied Mahatma." The legends about Roerich attribute superhuman qualities to him. His personality is surrounded with the mystic aureole of unusualness and limitless power. All ascribe great powers to Roerich. To some, his eye "possesses the power of turning one's hair gray," while to others his image appears inspiring, calling them to a higher path. The Tibetans once claimed that they shot at Roerich but that their bullets could not pierce his chest. Roerich has been spoken of as the "White Magi" and some assert that they had seen fires on "the mountain ridges and above the houses where Roerichs were living." Certain Lamas expressed that their spiritual forces commanded them to present a Buddha to Mme. Roerich who was to them a Tara. Wherever Roerich be, he is liked, loved and venerated. His whole life is dominated by intuitive knowledge that he has a mission

NICHOLAS ROERICH

to perform. Condemnation and irritation are entirely apart from Nicholas de Roerich. Intermittent outbursts, whims and caprices of conduct which are often regarded as the *sina qua non* of genius by some, are quite unknown to him. His equanimity and sweetness bespeak his harmonious and disciplined spirit. Roerich possesses in full measure this "completion." From the Hebrew Prophet he has caught the fierce fire of righteousness; from the New Testament and Jesus he has imbibed the spirit of wide humanity; from St. Paul he has received his missionary zeal. His work reminds one of the expression of Renan, that "all the world's reveries nestle around his heart."

Leonid Andreyeff proclaimed :—"The world of Roerich is the World of Truth. His Works link mortal souls with the world of unearthly revelation."

Roerich constantly applies his clear, unclouded intellectual apparatus to the profoundest spiritual interests and always keeps his mind and ears open. As for the continuity of effort, Blake said : "When we cleanse the windows of our perception we shall see all things in their true aspect—infinite." The quality of infinite persistence of effort pertains to Roerich's genius. To know, to know, and evermore to know, is his aim. Through his writings

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and paintings he has made thousands feel how intense and unflinching is the vital need for Culture and how imperative is the necessity of asserting the most stimulating, if not the highest, of human powers, the power to understand the joy and beauty of life.

Nicholas de Roerich—the exponent of the new pathway to brotherhood, the creator of an oriflamme which shall pronounce the need of a united world-vigil for Culture—his first-rate artistic, literary and scientific achievements notwithstanding, must remain finally the spirit-synthesis, the sublime combination of all inalienable and supreme qualities, the cultural and spiritual leader of his age, essentially concerned with the apotheosis of Beauty and Culture. An ardent admirer of his hits off beautifully: “A *rapport* with all the expanses of the infinite is his—he is an eternal stave among men.”

“Blows not the flower for its own fragrance,
Flows not the stream for its own satisfaction,
Spreads not the branch for its own shade,
Stands not the mountain for its own majesty,
But in God’s World every good thing lives
for the benefit of others.”

Such is the gist of an old Persian Poem. This maxim is richly illustrated in the life of

NICHOLAS ROERICH

Roerich whose career has been not for self glorification but for the greatest happiness of the whole humanity. Emerson has said : "The true test of admiration is reproduction", and Roerich will have been really admired if his spirit as best expressed in his writings will be reproduced in the lives of men and women.

There is a suggestive sentence, which was a favourite with Sainte-Beuve and is said to be derived from Virgil: "*On se lasse de tout sauf de comprendre,*" One wearies of everything except to understand. This phrase is well applicable to Roerich. Whether one studies his paintings, or essays, or poems, "*on se lasse de tout sauf de comprendre.*"

"He is a veritable ploughman. His field is immortality"—such is the short and significant definition of a great and genuine Teacher in the ancient scriptures.

And Nicholas Roerich is such an enlightened Teacher—a veritable and tireless ploughman in infinite fields and for all ages who has achieved earthly immortality by having lived, beyond the flesh.

Great things has he done and greater things will he do.

**The Travancore
Humanitarian Co-operative Society
Limited No., 1934.**

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Objects:—The objects of the Society shall be:

1. to promote the economic interest of its members and more particularly,
2. to promote good will among members, and humanity to all sentient beings by removal of cruelty in every form.
3. to remove bad and pernicious customs generally prevalent,
4. to improve the physical, moral and spiritual condition of society in general,
5. generally to prevent waste of money and inculcate habits of thrift, help and co-operation,
6. to teach and practise the rules of hygiene and combat epidemic diseases,
7. to assist in arrangement for propaganda among members and the public by lectures, conferences, dramas, pamphlets etc. on subjects like prohibition, vegetarianism, maternity and child-welfare, poor-houses etc.
8. to promote and conduct institutions calculated to achieve any or all of the above objects,
9. to affiliate other Societies formed with similar or same objects and co-ordinate their activities, as also to affiliate this Society with Societies of like constitution and objects outside Travancore,
10. to take and adopt such other means and measures as may be considered necessary or desirable from time to time for achieving the aforesaid objects.

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Contributions: There shall be two classes of contributions from members other than Hony. Members, payable at 14 chs. & 7 chs. respectively per month.

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