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Tarnhelm's — M. Roerich

E. H. PARAMESWARAN, M.A., L.T., Editor.

E. N. SUBRAHMANYAM, M.A., B.L., } Associate Editors.

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Tarnhelms.

(DIARY LEAVES)

BY NICHOLAS ROERICH



EVERYONE will remember the tarnhelm of Siegfried which made him invisible, and this helmet of invisibility was always considered as one of the most precious treasures of the hero.

Many tarnhelms may be found as in ancient folklore, so also nowadays.

Someone was puzzled, why in a volume of letters, a certain thinker continuously reverted to one and the same subject. The reader did not realize that the letters were written at different dates, and were addressed to different persons in various parts of the world. For this reader, the invisible correspondents molted into one person. For him they remained for ever invisible. And the reader apparently imagined that the letters had only him personally in view, not taking into consideration any outside circumstances. Invisible friends, invisible listeners, invisible co-workers they are all as if they belong to the domain of tarnhelms in fairy-tales.

Even till recently, invisibility was either denied altogether, or it was considered charlatanism or something nebulous just as people considered telepathy. It is most difficult for the average man in the street to become accustomed to the fact that he is surrounded by anything invisible. When stories about Angel-Guardians were told, this also was left to old ayahs. Yet since antiquity iron birds were foreseen, as well as words from space, audible across seas, and iron fiery serpents were predicted.

In the same manner in many folklores, there lived and lives the persistent idea of tarnhelms. In the best fairy tales and epical legends, the idea of invisibleness was continuously expressed in most picturesque symbols. And in the lowest reality, during wars, was practised a smoke screen for invisibility. That was the coarsest solution of all legends and fairy tales.

And now the newspapers report, without any sensational headlines the following:

"Rays that make invisible":—"A young Hungarian scientist has apparently succeeded in bringing to reality the fairy-tale of the tarnhelm. The demonstration of such rays took place on a square in front of a statue. As soon as the apparatus was switched on, the statue suddenly disappeared from sight, and one

could only prove that it was still there, by touching it. After a few minutes, the statue again became visible, as if emerging from a fog."

Thus the predictions or recollections of folklore have again entered into life. In the same manner, iron birds cross the skies, iron serpents carry people and the word thunders out from space and the tarnhelm has again materialized. One can realize how everyday life shall be transformed by these recent discoveries.

There is a story of a person who made fun of his lady acquaintance. Having moved to a new house, he saw from his window in an opposite flat, how his friend was just getting up from bed. In the same room was a telephone. The joker rang her up and during the conversation, mentioned of the successes of television. His friend expressed doubt. But when he began describing her night gown and various other details, the lady in horror dropped the receiver.

A similar joke recently appeared in the papers, about certain residents of London, who having heard about the successes of television, became seriously worried about the inviolability of their homes. The Directors of the Television Company had to explain that no such danger existed. In other words, at the moment there is no such danger, but once having entered the field of invisibleness, one may expect many new developments. It is important to establish the principle.

Let us compare the primitive daguerreo type with the splendid results of modern photography. In some countries, up to now, people do not know the application of photostats, instead of the easily forged copies of documents. But in the courts of other countries, photostats are already accepted as documents. By the way, I cannot help remembering a curious episode of how a lady, pretending to be cultured, refused to permit to make a photostat of a rare book from her library, for fear that this procedure may destroy the book. Let us also remember the primitive railway, a prototype of which is exhibited at the Grand Central in New York. It has nothing at all in common with modern railways. Thus, if the principle of invisibleness is discovered, then also from it may result the most tremendous surprises.

One cannot bar such mechanical achievements, for by one way or another they will penetrate into life. Hence one should study by what other natural means the real equilibrium may be established. And let us again remember the blissful properties of the human spirit. If a dog senses non-physical things, ergo, how many times more can a vigilant human spirit conceive all these

subtle matters? And how naturally can such knowledge be attained! At first, it will be an unconscious sense, then it will develop into straight-knowledge which will lead to a fully conscious realization. At this stage, all mechanical tarnhelms will be conceived. And the whole daily life shall be transformed in a better and spiritual direction.

When one reads of the achievements of Rishis and other holy hermits with what subtle fiery knowledge are they imbued! They generously gave out in their enlightened ordainments the fundamental principles of life. Ages pass, the methods of expression are changed, but the truth remains immutable. The great Rishis and hermits knew unfailingly what the heart represents and how to evoke it to blissful action.

What a beautiful word is Bliss!

In the face of these highly natural beautiful ways all mechanical rays become poor and limited. Yet for those who do not want to grasp the higher, even these lesser paths will have already formed the elementary trail. In different languages, in varying expressions of thought, people yet strive for the basic signs of the epoch. This means that all who have heard of this resounding thought, are obliged to create from it a real harmony. It is instructive to witness how very important mental processes take place not only amidst one nation, not only in one country, but often in most unexpected combinations.

Thoughts strive along some universal outlines. There, where due to ignorance and mediocrity people deny the higher spiritual paths, there still remain some lesser possibilities—the mechanical ways. And these ways, nevertheless, lead in the direction of achievement. But the spiritual gates remain above all. The entire existence reminds us of these unavoidable paths. Even the most unusual diseases also remind us of new conditions of life. Many so-called heart and nervous diseases, unusual inflammations, cancer epidemics, all poisoning by gasoline and narcotics and other carelessly evoked energies—all this knocks upon the human consciousness, as Fate in Beethoven's Symphony. We read:

“A hundred years ago, in June of 1835, Baron de Morog, a member of the Supreme Agricultural Council, read in the French Academy a report on unemployment and social sufferings, which threatened France and the whole world, owing to the introduction into industry of an influx of new machineries. The Paris papers have now extracted from the archives of the Academy this prophetic report and printed the following excerpts which are truly significant:

“Every machine!,—de Morog wrote in his paper,—replaces human labour and, therefore, every new mechanical invention makes in industry superfluous the work of a certain number of people. Taking into consideration that workmen are accustomed freely to earn their means of existence and that they in most cases have no savings, it is easy to imagine the irritation, which will gradually be caused amidst the working masses through the mechanization of industry.”

“The member of the Academy foresaw that ‘despite the improvement of technical output the material conditions of labourers would become worse’, from what arises ‘moral, social and political danger’. The report of de Morog made such a great impression upon the academy, that it sent to the King—in 1835—a special memorandum about the necessity to regulate the mechanization of production. This memorandum, however, received no further attention”.

Thus by other ways, people arrived at the consideration of regulating mechanical achievement. This is already not a wailing against machines, nor an ignorant grumbling against improvements, but a call for a proper comeasurement. During the centuries so many tarnhelms have become visible, but, on the other hand, many realized visions of the past have now been lost.

Whatever may be the calculations, but without a spiritual equilibrium no real progress can be achieved. A rough handling of invisible energies may lead to innumerable repercussions. How much true knowledge is needed in order that all the millions of unemployed may find a useful and joyful labour—as Life preordained.

If tarnhelms could conceal something, then the Spirit can reveal Truth in its full splendour.