OPEN GATES—AN ADDRESS
BY NICHOLAS ROERICH

BEFORE us are five cables pertaining to the Conference in Bruges:

"Congress Union Internationale pour Pacte Roerich adresse, salut au Maitre et fervents souhaits pour réalisation noble idée—Beyaert Secrétaire Bruges."

"Splendid article appeared Times from Bruges Correspondent Stop All Bruges hailing America in gratitude to you Stop American flag to hang from every Bruges window, every Flemish matron sewing American flags."

"Bruges Conference opened with four hundred delegates great pomp; mass at Basilica Holy Blood, then procession to bless and crown Roerich Peace Banner with Bruges Coat of Arms Stop Messages received Pope and King Albert endorsing Pact also from ambassadors statesmen ministers United States Senators, educators Stop City Bruges presented Roerich with medal especially struck in his honour as leader world culture and peace Stop Roerich declaration read amid cheers Stop Delegates cities of France Belgium Italy also Governments France Belgium Greece Stop French President's message bestowing Roerich Grand Cross Legion of Honour hailed with cries 'Vive Roerich' Stop All Roerich resolutions accepted Stop Conference tremendous success Stop Great vision hailed as epochal in world peace."

"Unityoledly we send you congratulations on this great day when Banner of Peace is victoriously proclaiming your great Leadership of Culture—Trustees Roerich Museum."

"Meeting held Museum commemorating Bruges Conference passed resolutions endorsing your epochal plan for peace mailing resolutions to you, also to President United States—President Roerich Museum."

I congratulate the Trustees of the Museum. I congratulate our Honorary Advisers, and all co-workers, deans, teachers and students and all our fellow members upon the success of this first Conference in the name of Culture and Peace!

On the 13th of September I wrote from Lahul that the homunculi and the ignorant would still try to obstruct our cultural beginnings. Hypocritically they would whisper that we admit war and are indifferent to human life. But they should understand that our Pact and Banner are not only for times of war, but have a general cultural significance. Culture naturally brings with itself peace—and peace safeguards the creations of human genius as well as human life. But the ignorant and the other servitors of darkness will, of course, continue their whispering and their efforts to undermine. For every ray of Light is displeasing to them, and every measure towards destruction gives them those particles of decomposition upon which they thrive. But the struggle with ignorance is already a spiritual achievement for Light.

It is touching to think that the old City of Van-Eycks and Memlings so vividly responded to our Pact and impelled it towards real activity, which will remain unforgettable in the history of Culture. What glorious names, national and religious leaders, heads of education, were with us during the days of the Conference! The International Union for our Pact has been declared a permanent Institution. This resolution indeed corresponds to our suggestion to make Bruges the Headquarters of the Union, in order that in the noble envoirons of the Palace of Peace and Permanent Court of International Justice in the Hague, there may be concentrated all cultural forces, which realizing clearly the undeferrable need, had decided to unite actively in offering their labors in the name of establishing the traditions of Culture. In this, the members of the International Union respond to the most urgent demand for Culture. They have decided not only to safeguard the past but also to create nobility of striving among the young generation, so that the milestones of the past should not only bear evidence of the glorious past, but should prove the true impulse towards beautiful construction. These noble activities are so undeferrably needed, that in mutually greeting each other with the success of the Conference, we do not thereby presuppose the victory, but regard it as the opening of the Gates through which we are to carry, each according to his whole strength, all that is most precious, remembering that the highest desire of humanity is to live in a world of Culture.

The Banner of Culture and Peace, the world day of Culture, cataloguing of world treasures of human genius, "Oriflamma"—a journal to manifest these creative treasures, cordial meetings and an uninterrupted and enthusiastic exchange of worthy proposals—all this will afford to our International Union not only vivid activity but also an endless growth of possibilities. We ask all our Societies and all Institutions adhering to the Union to unfurl at once the Banner of Culture and Peace; no time must be lost; we must immediately begin the good deed of construction, with the unbreakable enthusiasm with which the best pages of the history of humanity have been built.

It is necessary immediately to include in the programs of all our Societies and Institutions near to us, activities to aid the Union and the Banner. For every Society of ours is already a member of the International Union for our Pact and thus is already responsible for the flourishing of the idea of Culture, which alone can unite the world in a construction for Good. In every country the ideas of culture will be reflected in different ways. Only broad containment and mutual respect can now help to prevent absurd disunity and disparagement.

Thus in the name of unity, in the name of brilliant cooperation, in the name of great world culture, in the name of the foundations of peace, let us unite all our strivings and let us, in friendly collaboration, achieve that which will bring to the coming generations, joy and happiness.

Naggar, Sept. 30, 1931.