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at stretch, dying of thirst, open to the tender mercy of brigands, who infest these wild open spaces,—such are some of the innumerable trials and tribulations that Kawaguchi underwent. "As I looked up and around I saw the bright moon higher above me. The uncertain shapes of distant lofty peaks forming a most weird background against the vast sea of undulating plain. Alone upon one of the highest places in the world surrounded by mysterious uncertainty made doubtfully so by the paleness of the moonlights, both the scene and the situation would have furnished me with enough matter for my soul's musings, but alas for my bodily pains! there was nothing to guide me but my compass: my tibetan boots had become so worn out that at places my foot came into direct contact with the hard gravel which tore the skin and caused the blood to flow leaving the crimson marks of my footsteps behind."

Taking a most northerly route he crossed from Nepal to Tsrang passing near Simla which was then a small village on to lake Manasarovar and then crossing the Brahmaputra, he followed its course, reached Lahsa after nearly a year of hardship. Every moment of his life bristled with intense suspense and activity, almost every day he was near the portals of death. Death dodged him at every turn in his eventful life at Lahsa. Only the faith in Lord Buddha sustained his spirit. A passionate ardent student as he was, he soon distinguished himself as a good scholar. The one year he spent in Darjeeling stood him in good stead. His object fulfilled he one day heard a divine voice telling him to turn back to the land of his birth. So fortified by good passports, he soon turned his steps towards India and reached Darjeeling after a series of hairbreath escapes in which one can glean the hand of God protecting him.

Here then is the life of an individual which reads like a thrilling romance or a novel more thrilling than a Hollywood Ballyhoo or a Texas scuffle. Can love of learning rise to nobler heights? Indian students will do well to take a lesson in steadfastness of purpose from the life of Shramana Ekai Kawaguchi, who will stand out as the greatest Tibetan explorer for all time.

Nicholas Roerich
A Master of the Mountains
BY BARNETT. D. CONLAN
(Continued from our previous issue)

Roerich does not halt at these historic splendours of the Middle Ages, he goes even further back to the Ancestors, to the mythic past, to the Age of Bronze where his intuition tells him there are even greater marvels.

"Every day brings us some fresh revelation and we begin to discern a multitude of peoples. Behind the Byzantines clad in cloth of gold come the various throngs of Finno-Turks. Still further back the Aryans emerge in their sumptuous attire, and who knows what their predecessors were like?"

"The treasures which these people have bequeathed us will help to build up a new Nationalism and, in studying them, the younger generation must necessarily gain in health and strength. If our modern national art, so uncertain at the moment, is to be transformed into a new nationalism of a highly attractive character, it will have to be based upon the corner stone of this Ancient Art replete with the beauty of Truth and works of genius. In the great Future ahead of us this ancient sense of truth and beauty will be reborn."

In his evocation of the Stone Age and his description of Mediaeval Russia and the vast art treasury buried under Russian soil, or visible in its ancient churches and palaces, Roerich has given us a wonderful succession of word frescoes which by their rich qualities recall the style of Pinder when he paints the splendours of Agrigentum and Syracuse.

After which we are not surprised to hear that an ancestor of the artist, the legendary Prince Rurik, laid the foundations of Russian civilization in the year 862.

What is certain is that Roerich has founded an Empire of Art—the first of its kind, and that he has his ambassadors of Art and Culture in all the civilized countries of the world.
I have dwelt somewhat on the Russian side of Roerich's genius because so much has been said of the cosmopolitan and international character of his work.

He is certainly "universal" but after the manner of some giant tree, rooted in one particular spot and sending its branches out over the whole world.

Of all modern races the Russians have, perhaps, the greatest genius for Art, and if there is to be some great Renaissance of the Arts, in the deep sense of the Parthenon and the Cathedrals, it will be to Russia that the task of promoting it will probably fall.

The Russian element then in Roerich's genius is no mere hazard, but something connected with the onward march of the world.

It is interesting to see how Roerich has always moved with the general current, leading the way, as it were, in the forefront of all Art movements.

Previous to the war we find him as one of the most important elements in the Russian Ballet, creating with Igor Stravinsky the 'Rite of Spring', a masterpiece, which like Spring itself or the music of Bach is something which must remain everlastingly fresh.

At the end of the war he leaves Europe and its atmosphere of depression for America where he builds up a beacon fire against the encroaching darkness.

The Roerich Museum, towering like a lighthouse of Art, above the world's vulgarity and commercial indifference is too well known to be touched on here in detail.

It is sufficient to say that Roerich conquered America and that it would be hardly possible to over-rate the influence of his work on the future of that great country.

If he has decided to remain in India among the Himalayas, there is reason to think that his work there must have an especial meaning for America.

Like Michel Angelo who displayed an untiring and titanic energy until an advanced age, Roerich also shows a multiple activity and, on a wider scale, perhaps, than the Italian for his work draws its inspiration from Europe, Asia and America.

It is one of the great consolations of existence, this great procession of torch bearers who carry the flame of beauty across the most stormy and despondent periods and, at the same time reveal Life's deepest values and, in fact its raison d'être.

If Michel Angelo helped to design and erect churches and decorate them, Roerich in addition to his art has been building up societies for Art and Culture in almost every country.

In proclaiming Art as a way of the Future he has struck a bell whose note must inevitably be heard by all the advancing spirits of the world.

A well known contemporary writer very aptly defines the old world and its beliefs as 'a mass of tradition which has turned sour', and it is these dead beliefs, these outworn husks that have let pass the hordes of Darkness and an ocean of vulgarity which threatens to invade a great part of the world. Against these evil and degrading tendencies Roerich is fighting with all the fire of his remarkable genius — and fighting victoriously.

If he has conquered a good part of the best minds in America, he has also attracted the heart of youth, who, there is every reason to believe, will come, more and more, to look upon him as a guiding light.

In his "Call to Youth" where he lays stress on heroism and the striving towards the Beautiful, there are passages which recall the language of ancient Greece.

"You who are about to begin life will probably wish to know how you can best make your life a happy one. After forty years of labour and experience in twenty five different countries of the world, I do not hesitate to reply:— 'Only through the Beautiful'.

"The important thing is to encourage and develop the innate sense of Beauty which will prove to be a veritable shield against evil and ignorance".

"It is mistake to imagine that the beautiful is beyond the reach of the workers and only a possession of the rich. Such false
conceptions will only lead us to identify the Beautiful with Luxury, whereas one should understand that the vivifying spirit of the beautiful is the very opposite to that of Luxury.'

This might be the voice of Plato speaking to us in other conditions and recalling the ‘kalos-kagathos’, that bright conception which lay at the foundation of the Greek spirit.

There is much in the philosophy of Roerich — in his preoccupation with the general good, in his belief that art and the Beautiful constitute the highest aspects of Life and Morality — that brings him near to the conceptions formulated by Plato.

The universal tendency is towards a better state of things, and it must be evident to a discerning eye that much of what is going on today under the label of conflicting systems is really a general movement towards those aspirations which Plato outlined in his community. Such aspirations, short of some general cataclysm, must be gradually realized, even though they work themselves out under systems which, in appearance, seem directly opposed to one another.

Roerich tells us that every Art creation is a dynamo charged with uplifting energy and a real generator of enthusiasm, and he looks to Art as the most effective instrument for leading us towards a life of “Beauty, Simplicity and Fearlessness” to a “Fearlessness which possesses the sword of courage and which smites down vulgarity in all its forms, even though it be adorned in riches”.

To encourage this sense of Art he has founded centres of Culture in almost every country throughout the world, and in so doing has been impelled to act, I believe, from a deeper source than that which inspires most of the social and religious renovators of to-day.

He looks upon life with the eye of Plato, with the understanding of Goethe, judging things with the rich possibilities of a cultured creative mind, rather than from the standpoint of some narrow conventionalized doctrine.

Like Goethe he is on the side of the living and organic, the realm of Art, and is not satisfied with the purely mechanical, intellectual, and systematic.

And herein lies the deep meaning of his crusade for Culture.

The material and mechanical efforts of the last century have left civilization in the position of a man who has come to create a highly organised body without a soul, and as soul and spirit are not to be manufactured he is in danger of being caught in a gigantic web of soulless organisms whose joyless existence must eventually drive him to self-destruction.

To ward off such an impending catastrophe Roerich in 1930, devised a Banner of Peace on which figured three spheres symbolizing that synthesis of Religion, Art and Science—which is Culture.

The object of this Banner is to protect the world’s Art treasures and monuments, in the same way that the Red Cross Flag protects the wounded.

Most of the leading countries immediately recognized the utility of such an arrangement and twenty five nations came forward to support this convention, while the well known leaders of Culture such as H. M. King Albert of Belgium, Rabindranath Tagore, Maurice Maeterlink, Sir J. C. Bose, and President Roosevelt gave their enthusiastic adhesion.

Dr. George Chklaver, Doctor of Law and Professor of Paris University who drew up the Pact in its legal form, pointed out in his inaugural address why such an arrangement could become effective.

"Seldom are all the 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”.

In discovering a point on which all nations are spontaneously agreed Roerich has stirred up a world-wide
attention to Peace and a wave of enthusiasm on behalf of Culture.

To Roerich the word Culture signifies much more than its current meaning of 'learning' or 'refinement'. He uses it in a deeply religious sense, in its original druidic and oriental meaning of the 'Cult of Light' - Cult-Ur.

All the aspects of Roerich's activity in this direction have been ably set out in 'Culture', a booklet published by Flamma Inc., New York, and written by the Latvian writer and poet Richard Rudzitis. He tells us:

"In the development of culture, Nicholas Roerich distinguishes the following steps: ignorance, civilization, organization, then intellection, spiritual refinement, and only after this does man secure means for synthesis and a higher state of culture."

In founding centres of Culture throughout the world and designing a Banner of Peace and a Pact based upon those mutual interests which link together the different cultures Roerich has done something which is not only highly desirable but urgent and necessary.

The founding of this universal movement inspired by Culture is an act of Destiny, it is a decision which corresponds with the world's destiny and one which has been taken at the most critical moments of the world's history.

The ideal of 'making money' which has helped to hold together our materialistic world since the early nineteenth century is, for many reasons, gradually passing away and, as a well known saying has it, 'Where there is no ideal the people perish.'

They perish because every ideal, even the lowest, is a rallying point, a focus of construction, and when this goes then the Destructive Powers get their innings.

That the Destinies who watch over this world's evolution should have selected an Artist to undertake the immense work of canalizing the world's highest thought currents, is very significant.

It points to the Power of Art, the profound nature of Art, the all-importance of Art. Shelley made a great statement when he said "Poets are the trumpets that sing to battle; Poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the world."

Had he been born to-day to realize the wonderful influence that Music and Painting have had during the last hundred years, he must have said Art instead of Poetry, since Poetry is one of the Arts.

Shelly's statement has a double interest for us today, for it is far more appropriate to our age than to his. It proclaims the power of Art and shows that all high effort and genuine spirituality is a condition of lofty warfare.

There are many reasons, then, to believe that Roerich — a profound artist, possesses a wider and deeper insight into life than the majority of our politicians, social reformers and philosophers.

I was inspired many years ago to write a poem entitled 'High War' which opened with the lines:

"May God again let loose great wars Wherein is search and strife for ever To meet some spirit from the stars"

A few weeks after the Great War broke out, and I came to dislike the sound of these lines when, re-reading the piece, I found that it referred to a Sacred War, a spiritual war, of which the Great War was a perversion.

More than twenty years had elapsed when, one day, I came across a sentence from Roerich.

"There exists no such terror which cannot be transformed into a luminous solution by evoking into life a still greater tension of energy."

The heroic conviction of these lines recalled to my mind the phrase High War and, for the moment I seemed to be upon the brink of some revelation.

What if the one way out of War was through High War! just as the only way up from the basest instincts of human nature is through the higher mind?

In the last resort it is all a matter of potentiality, voltage, electricity, or, rather of those higher phases of electricity which constitute psychic energy.
Today it means that it is not enough to be peacefully minded, it is not enough to vote for the idea of Peace, when the adverse party is in a state of greater tension and activity. War which is a state of intense and destructive activity can only be overcome by High War which will be a condition of even greater intensity and activity—but of constructive activity.

That, it seems to me, is the heroic meaning of Roe-rich's message. He summons the world to a higher, nobler and more constructive type of warfare, a war of Culture whose object is to secure spiritual wealth, the only wealth in the long run, worth attention, since it is that from which all the lower types of wealth take their reflection.

The big majority of people would probably conclude that such lofty ideals can never really have any lasting effect on a world governed by the power of Money and given over to warring materialisms.

It is futile however to judge the spiritual in terms of the temporal, for a visible failure may prove to be an invisible success.

This was the case of Confucius. Possessing the liveliest sense of order and justice that has ever been known, he found himself, during a great part of his lifetime, surrounded by a society of gangsters and ruthless politicians, so that at eighty years of age we find him declaring that, despite his long life of tireless effort, he had failed.

But what was the nature of this failure? Nothing less than the almost absolute moral control over four hundred millions of men for well nigh two thousand years.

It is the most stupendous warning that could be imagined. It is a warning to all cynical, shallow, worldly scoffers of the Ideal, to remember that their little world of the here and the now is anything but powerful and that all their attempts to deny and extinguish the Light of the Spirit must inevitably be defeated.

(To be continued)