FOREWORD

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Knowledge of ancient Central Asia, rich in dormant secrets, will be greatly increased by the establishment under American auspices of Urusvati, base of the Himalayan Research Institute, in Northern Punjab. Representing an advanced method in Central Asian archaeological and natural research, this base promises the most thorough and efficient type of scientific investigation at minimum outlay.

Virtually an expedition continuously in the field, Urusvati will have laboratories, libraries and museum, for exhaustive year-round study of the Himalayan territory nearby,—replete with traces of ancient cultures and with ethnographical and botanical material which may prove of immediate benefit to modern civilization.
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View of Kulu Valley from Urusvati, Base of Himalayan Research Institute
A New Outpost of Science

URUSVATI

To the north, heaped up breathlessly to the limit of vision, lift the glistening Himalayas. To the south, hill after verdant hill lowers away toward India's teeming plains.

High here amid rugged slopes, where an aura of forgotten races emanates from strangely mingled remnants of ancient cultures and ancient wisdom, stands a new outpost of science—a key with which the archaeologist and naturalist, modernly equipped, will unlock doors long sealed upon Central Asian secrets. A new outpost—most advantageously placed.

In this far valley of Kulu blend keen mountain air and warm southern sun. Here, too, wondrously blend races, languages, religions, arts and the natural phenomena of many diverse climes, to create anew a veritable paradise alike for the scientist who looks only to the present and for him who reckons man's and Nature's story in thousand-year units. On this spot, but no less on Asian sites within quick attainment, have the ages left more profound strata of the past than remain uninvestigated elsewhere on the globe.

Such is the location of Urusvati, field headquarters of the Himalayan Research Institute, established by the Roerich Museum of New York, and supported largely by public subscriptions. To the
travelled a sufficient address is Naggar, Kulu, Northern Punjab, India; the untravelled may better picture it as up above Simla, among the deodars in the land of Kipling's "Kim." Yet Urusvati, upon its 6000-foot shelf, should be regarded as not India so much as a high Himalayan threshold to all of Central Asia, that tremendous terrain, so promising to scientific inquiry, in which the archaeologist's spade has made only skin-deep scratches.

Westward lie India's northwestern frontier and wild Afghanistan. Northward, the craggy uplands of Kashmir, through whose passes, higher than most of the world's mountains, native caravans and the explorer venture to the ranges and deserts of Chinese Turkestan. To the east and southeastward for a thousand miles an almost endless sea of glacier-bound peaks which sentinel the borders of India and the Nepal. Here and there a wind-tormented pass, at heights where men grow dizzy and animals perish, which delivers the hardy into the barren fastnesses of Tibet—and thence, if secretive Tibet so wills, into the vast desert of Gobi and far Mongolia.

In any of these directions lie danger and hardship, but also untold and unharvested riches to lure the scientist and to add new chapters to man's knowledge of man.

Time and again have these regions been penetrated, till superficial knowledge of them has become general, but deep and embracing knowledge, systematically arrived at under the governance of true science, is yet to come. This realization of the field that is Central Asia and of the need for such permanent and continuous investigation as is being carried on by Americans and others in the Near East and the Far East led to the establishment of the Himalayan Research Institute, and of the nucleus of its base at Naggar—which has the indorsement of scientists the world around. It was one of
Central Asian Field of Himalayan Research Institute, Showing Location of Headquarters at Naggar. Black Lines Indicate Route of the Roerich Central Asian Expedition, 1923-1928
the direct fruits of the extraordinary 12,000 mile expedition of Professor Nicholas Roerich, artist and scientist, who, accompanied by Mme. Roerich and Dr. George Roerich, archaeologist, circled adventurously throughout these lands, to return after five years to this appropriate base in the Northern Punjab, there to plan development of sites already noted and sallies into realms as yet unexplored by anyone.

A sound and somewhat advanced conception of efficient and economical research method is embodied in this new outpost of science, appropriately called, Urusvati ("Star of the Morning"), significant of a dawning scientific light. It provides, first, equipment and climate for the year-round study of the material which abounds in its immediate neighborhood,—material that implores the attention of archaeology, philology, physiology, botany, bio-chemistry, astronomy and meteorology. It will be, second, the advanced field base for expeditions into regions on every side which thus become accessible by short instead of globe-encircling journeys.

This tempting project of the Himalayan Research Institute, to be headed by Prof. Nicholas Roerich as its founder and by Dr. George Roerich as Director and to be carried out by a staff of specialists and associated scientists and students, will divide into two general activities: First, Archaeology, with related sciences and arts; second, Natural Sciences, with applied research. In support of this well-rounded endeavor a working research library and a museum of Middle East material are to be established. Urusvati will thus become not only an American outpost for research by the seasoned scientist but an unparalleled field school—summer or year-round—for the young student. Through periodic publication of findings and the prospective enrichment of America's store of significant Himalayan objects, its scope will become even broader.
The Himalayas, which for centuries have inspired Hindu and Buddhist thought and art, embrace in their snows some of the most famed sanctuaries of India, worshipped for thousands of years. In the strange and beautiful Kulu Valley alone are structures, groves and nooks sacred to 360 gods.

But beneath the surface in all Himalayan lands lies more, notably in Northern India and Chinese Turkestan, where jungle or sand covers thousands of ruined towns, some verging upon the prehistoric. The few in Turkestan which thus far have been excavated have yielded previously unknown languages and scores of ancient manuscripts. Indian excavations in the northern low-lands have been revelatory of a culture closely akin to that of the Sumerian civilizations of Mesopotamia. The high hills, too, have their buried secrets of many yesterdays.

Ancient Tibetan Monastery and Stupas, from Painting by Nicholas Roerich
Archaeological Projects

The Himalayan Research Institute contemplates archaeological work in Chinese Turkestan, at undeveloped sites already definitely located, and at the same time is mindful of ever-present possibilities nearer at hand in Northern India. Specific itineraries necessarily will depend upon political and other local conditions and cannot be announced in advance of official permission, which is always sought. The Institute enjoys highly satisfactory relations with the Indian Archaeological Survey, and has a working agreement with the Archaeological Institute of America by which the latter will develop its Central Asian activities through Urusvati. With the Indian authorities Urusvati will arrange for the use of facilities at important sites such as Taxila, Mohenjo-Daro, Harappa and Nalanda by members and research students.

Tibet, of all the adjacent Central Asian countries the most amazing storehouse of undisturbed antiquity, is today and may for some time remain closed to the archaeologist. Yet Urusvati holds the possibility of becoming a major center for the study of Tibetan lore. Copiously Tibetan influences overflow into the Kulu Valley and the rest of the Northern Punjab; and there is at Urusvati, collected by Prof. Roerich and Dr. Roerich, a great store of Tibetan art and literature. Study of these will be furthered in the most effective way—through the use of native scholars, who are readily available, for in this unique hill country where mixture is inherent, even the Tibetan lama is more than a transient resident.

Much of this collection will perforce remain in the valley, where the climate is friendly to ancient manuscripts and other objects which suffer quick deterioration when moved abroad.
Ethnographical Opportunities

Where "an incomprehensible conglomerate of ancient hill tribes are massed together," little touched by civilization; where a mingling of races old and new have produced individual types and strange religions; where ancient costume festivals, glowing with ritual and symbol, still are intact; where great deodar groves remain sacred, and where an unrecorded folklore, soon to disappear, awaits the retentive ear—such a place is a veritable promised land for the research scientist in ethnography. All this and much more implores attention in Kulu Valley.

Study of folklore, of comparative languages and dialects, of customs and physical and racial characteristics, all possible within a brief circuit from Urusvati, promise rich yields.

Botany and Ancient Cures

Kulu—"a place of gods and of dancing and flowers," snug-hidden on the border of Lahul and Tibet—is known as the Silver Valley. The name rings true—both when the snows creep down from the Himalayan peaks to cloak every surface, and when, in Spring, myriad fruit trees fling over the same scene a snow-like mantle of petals. For Kulu, with magnificent fecundity nourished by volcanic soil and abundant water, is a thriving plantation into which a wide range of altitudes bring variety of vegetation seldom found in equal acreage. The botanical scope is from the Alpine to the sub-tropic.

Urusvati already has noted in neighboring orchards 60 varieties of apple. Pears and stone fruits flourish. Of scores of European plants, brought in experimentally, none has failed to grow with vigor.
"Pearls of Searching"
Roerich Museum, New York
Nicholas Roerich
It is not surprising therefore to learn that in the seventh century Hsüan-Tsang, renowned Chinese pilgrim to India, mentioned the fame of Kulu’s medicinal plants. That fame persists. Annually native practitioners and collectors visit the higher ravines for curative herbs—and in their traditional technique modern science is interested.

Bio-Chemical Research

Accordingly botany, physiology and bio-chemistry, in the expanding plans of Urusvati, will collaborate in a project that may widely benefit humanity,—the study and analysis of native pharmacopoeia, which lately in less favorable locations have resulted in the rediscovery of valuable drugs.

At some point world-old empiricism and modern medical practise may find a surprising meeting ground. Why not in India or in
Tibet, where for centuries an ancient medical tradition has found repository?

In bio-chemical science rests the hope of isolating the modern values that may exist in the old secrets. So Urusvati proposes to establish a fully equipped bio-chemical laboratory, to which the Kulu Valley will contribute three incomparable aids. A plantation of medicinal herbs, already started, may be indefinitely developed at any required altitude. In the Institute’s library, both at Naggar and in New York, are many Tibetan treatises on the curative arts, study and publication of which are in prospect. And native scholars and practitioners, with their knowledge of languages and of inherited methods of treatment, stand ready to co-operate.

To the medicinal plantations it is hoped to add general botanical plantations, with a botanical research laboratory for systematic study of a plentiful flora.

The botanist of the Institute will be Dr. Walter Koelz, lately of the University of Michigan, who did important field work with the Byrd-Macmillan Arctic Expedition in 1925 and with the National Geographic Expedition to Greenland.

**Astronomy and Meteorology**

The program of the Department of Natural Sciences also will include an astronomical and meteorological observatory, furthering investigations in the field of physics, astro-chemistry and allied research, for which location and atmospheric conditions are favorable. To strengthen the work in all the natural sciences, expeditions, as conditions permit, are to be sent into the various regions of the Middle East.


Additions to Plant

The headquarters of the Himalayan Research Institute at Naggar includes a spacious two-story stone bungalow and several acres of forested and planted land, the gift of Prof. Nicholas Roerich. From its broad verandas there is a constant view, through pines and deodars, of the high Himalayas.

Here are living accommodations for six scientists, as well as ample room for the main Institute library and office. Alterations will provide for the proposed botanical laboratory.

As a first step in the two-year research and exploration program of the Institute, for which $100,000 will be needed, it is proposed to erect a laboratory building, already planned in detail, a short distance from the main building. This structure will be of stone,
a story in height, and will contain seven rooms to house the research laboratory, experimental work, research library, studies and workshop.

For the contemplated research activities electric light and power will be necessary. A mountain stream with a 50-foot fall, a quarter-mile below Urusvati, provides the solution. A small hydro-electric plant on land to be purchased will generate current to be wired to buildings and grounds.

While the Himalayan Research Institute receives an annual grant from the Roerich Museum which insures continuance of its work on a nominal basis, it must rely for development of its larger possibilities upon public understanding and support. As an aid to understanding this brochure comes to your hands, with the hope that in its perusal you will have glimpsed the vision of Urusvati's potential mission, in behalf of science and humanity, in the ancient lands of the Middle East.
Needs of Urusvati Program

The needs of the Himalayan Research Institute for its immediate program of Central Asian exploration and research in archaeology and the natural sciences are in detail as follows:

(1) For purchase of land and erection of Electric Power Plant at Headquarters in Naggar, Kulu, India. This plant will include water turbine and 250-volt generator with accessories and will be used to supply electricity to Headquarters buildings and grounds.................................................. $10,000

(2) For scientific equipment, including equipment for bio-chemical laboratory ................................................................................................................. 10,000

(3) For erection of a laboratory building. This will be a one-story stone house consisting of seven rooms to house the laboratory, several studies, the necessary experimental rooms, research library and workshop........... 7,000

(4) For field equipment including microscopes, additional botanical equipment, theodolite, prismatic compasses, hypsometers, aneroids and other scientific equipment; also additional camp equipment for members of the staff to supplement the existing camp outfits at Headquarters............... 5,000

(5) For archaeological explorations. Out of this sum $30,000 will be used for actual excavations to cover a period of about two years; $10,000 will go toward maintaining a native scholar at the research library of the Institute and toward purchasing and collecting manuscripts, old books and oriental literature................................................................. 40,000

(6) For botanical plantation, hot houses and explorations. Out of this sum $20,000 will go toward maintenance of botanical plantations and the erection of hot houses for the Botanical Department of the Institute; $8,000 will be spent on botanical and other explorations in the adjoining region ................................................................. 28,000

**Total** .......................................................................................................................... $100,000

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