

THE BRUSH THAT BROUGHT EAST
AND WEST CLOSER TOGETHER -

By I. Agranovsky

There are few Russian names that are as closely connected with India as that of Nicholas Roerich. In the annals of Russo-Indian friendship it stands beside the names of Afanasi Nikitin, Gersim Lebedev and Fyodor Shcherbatsky, Russians who were first to discover the shores of Indostan for their compatriots and then the souls of its peoples.

Roerich's childhood passed near Russia's oldest city - The great Novgorod, in whose burial mounds the nine year old boy launched on his archeological quests. The last 25 years of his life Roerich spent in the Indian Himalayas, mostly in the Kulu Valley where he died in 1947. His body was cremated on a funeralpyre in keeping with the ancient customs of the Slaves and the Hindus. There in full view of the lofty ranges he painted so often in his canvasses, ~~These~~ now lie buried ^a parts of his ashes while ^{The rest of the} ashes together with his canvasses have been brought back to his native land.

Although after the Novgorod burial mounds Roerich travelled a great deal in Italy and France, and lived in England and Amer^{ica} before becoming the bard of the Himalayas, this intermediary period of his life has found little reflection in the artist's creative work. Roerich will go down in the history of world painting as the bard of old Rus and the countries of the Himalayas - India, Tibet and Mongolia.

Roerich's first paintings, which appeared in the nineties of last century, astonished his contemporaries by their originality. He had studied at the Art Academy under the distinguished Russian painter Arkhip Kuinji. He took from Kuinji his bright, colourful palette, the sensation of the world as a majestic struggle of light. But Roerich had also other teachers - the old Russian icon painters. He learned from them restraint, simplicity of form passing into severity. The combination of Kuinji's radiance of light with the laconism of the old Russian masters gave rise to the inimitable style which became associated with Roerich's name but which no one dared to imitate, for it was accessible only to a very powerful brush.

In those years Roerich travelled a great deal all over Russia, admiring the architectural gems of its ancient cities and studying them. He gazed at the picturesque scenes of the North which had charmed him since childhood, glorifying them in his convases, verse and prose. He wrote: "Admittedly our North ^{may} ~~not~~ seem poorer than other lands, and people may know little of the truth about it, but the story of the North

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is deep and enchanting. The Northern winds are vigorous and bracing. The Northern lakes pensive. The Northern streams silvery. The dark forests wise. The green hills are life-wisened. The grey stones full of wonders."

And Roerich revealed to the people these wonders in his canvases. Take a look at the painting Guests from Beyond the Sea. How deep and frigid is the azure of the wide river framed by a green banks. The sharp-proved boats carrying guests, merchants from beyond the seas, lightly cut the transparent water as the sails creak, and the sea-gulls soaring in the sky intensify the impression of the dynamic motion of the purplish yellow boat. There are no special "archeological details" here, and yet how well the feeling of the hoary ages, the events of happy antiquity, ^{are} ~~is~~ transmitted by the painter!

And how about this pagan Slavic dancing and singing in a circle amidst the green hills : maidens with floral wreath on their ^{crowns} ~~heads~~, joyful priests sharing all the happiness of a spring afternoon. This is entitled Sacred Spring and it is a hymn to Nature, the merging of Man with it; it is a hymn to the trusting brotherhood of man not expecting harm from anyone and not contemplating to harm anyone. But Roerich also remembered the tragic pages from the history of his native land. Look at the picture Igor's Campaign. The Slav Prince and his brethren-in-arms set off on a campaign. The dark disc of the eclipsed sun forebodes misfortune. Nature warns and mourns: the trustful tale of Sacred Spring vanishes. But the people go into battle, despite the threat of destruction.

When World War One broke out in 1914, Roerich did not sing its praises. The hardships of war and illness sent him off from St. ^Petersburg in search of health and tranquillity to the quiet corners of Finland. Here is where the Revolution found him. Events cut him off from his native land and Roerich devoted himself wholly to art, which seemed to him the only thing that was real in the inconsistent common world shaken up by catastrophies. He organised a series of exhibitions of his canvases in Scandinavia, England and the United States. He had a tremendous success in New York. But the cruel world ~~of~~ business was not suited to a man of Roerich's heart. He went to the country that had long charmed and becomed to him! India. Way back before World War One, attending the Paris exhibition of Indian art arranged by the Russian Orientalist V. Lebedev, Roerich wrote in an article entitled "India's Path" " We have been thinking for a long time about the origins of Indian art. Inadvertently there comes to mind that the heritage of our old life and culture comes from India". Roerich called to make haste in studying India, ^{for} ~~or~~ it may happen that "English culture may ^{affect} ~~effect~~ a great deal that is ^{so} dear to us".

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Roerich considered that he had discovered ^{in the culture} of India, ~~the culture~~ not only the characteristics that are quite close to the old Slavic art and life that were ^{so} dear to him, but it seemed to him that he found there that world of renunciation of worldly cares for which he had so long and passionately yearned. He settled down on the threshold of heaven itself - the Himalayas. With the fervency of an artist who has finally acquired his ideal, again and again he drew on hundreds of canvases the Himalayan mountain ranges, in whose serene severity he believed lay the key to the secret of life.

He found in India people close to him in spirit. His friendship with Rabindranath Tagore, whom he met in London in 1920, was becoming faster. They called each other "brother in spirit," and exchanged books, photos, articles and ideas.

Jawaharlal Nehru became an admirer not only of Roerich's talent as a painter but also of his knowledge of the East accumulated during his lengthy expeditions into the most inaccessible corners of the area surrounding the Himalayas. Nehru spent two weeks in Kulu, talking to Roerich about art, history and contemporaneity.

But Roerich did not succeed in hiding away in the Himalayas from his times - here too icy winds roared and avalanches rumbled. Roerich saw with alarm from his vantage point above the clouds how troubled was the world in the valleys below, a world he was never indifferent to. War and fascism were threatening everything that the painter held dear - peace, the immortal creations of art and his native land, Russia. Roerich became the founder of the international movement, for the protection of cultural values and he prepared the draft of a convention for the protection of historic and art monuments at the time of war. The Roerich Pact will long remain in the memory of man as an expression of noble alarm for the fate of all the best that was created by human genius. This Pact was revised after the war and the Soviet Union, his native land, was one of the countries that joined it in 1954.

During the Great Patriotic War against fascism, Roerich followed attentively the heroic struggle waged by his own people. When the war ended, Roerich expressed to the Soviet Government his wish to return to his homeland: "It is my sincere desire to work right on the spot for the glory of my Homeland. I can truly say that our work in India was beneficial for both the countries and we were glad to see how the Indian

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people took warmly to heart everything that concerned our country." That was written on October 26, 1947, and on December 13 Roerich left this world of ours. The tombstone placed at the site of his cremation carries the inscription in Sanskrit that here lie the ashes of "a great friend of India". The Indian press widely commented on the death of the Russian painter. ^{an} Exhibition of Roerich's works was opened at Delhi by Jawaharlal Nehru. In his inaugural speech he said " When I think of Nicholas Roerich, I am astounded at the scope and abundance of his activities and creative genius. A great scholar and writer, archeologist and explorer, he touched and lighted up so many aspects of human endeavour. The very quality is stupendous - thousands of paintings and each one of them a great work of art. When you look at these paintings, so many of them of the Himalyas, you seem to catch the spirit of those great mountains ^a which have towered over the Indian plains and been our sentinels for ages past. They remind us of so much in our history, our thought, our cultural and spiritual heritage so much not merely of the India of the past, but of something that is permanent and eternal about India, that we cannot help feeling a great sense of indebtedness to Nicholas Roerich who has enshrined that spirit in these magnificent canvasses."

Eleven years have passed since the painter's death, nevertheless he did ^d return to his native land. His son George, the Oriental Scholar and archeologist, the invariable companion of his father in the latter's travels and expeditions in the East, ^{brought} together ^{an} ^{Roerich's was} brought a large number of his canvasses. ^{an} ^{Roerich's was} On exhibition of paintings (organised in Moscow, after which it was taken to Leningrad and to other centres of the U.S.S.R. At the opening ceremony speeches were delivered by the Charge d' Affaires of the Indian Embassy in Moscow, the Ambassador of Ceylon, and outstanding Soviet artists. They spoke about ^{of} Roerich's spiritual legacy, about his being a great champion of peace, that his brush helped bring the cultures of the East and West closer together. Moscow has not seen for a long time such queues as gathered outside the Exhibition.

The Soviet people pay tribute to the great artist for singing praises to the wisdom of the East and the greatness of India with such poetic power, for having fought against the threat of war both with brush and the written word, for waging a struggle in order that the ^{of} Sacred Spring of Justice, Happiness and Beauty may flourish on Earth.

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Roerich's childhood passed near Russia's oldest city-- the Great Novgorod, in whose burial mounds the nine-year-old boy launched on his archeological quests. The last 25 years of his life Roerich spent in the Indian Himalayas. There, in West Punjab, near his modest dwelling in Kulu, in full view of the ice-capped mountain peaks repeated hundreds of times by the brush of Roerich, has been buried part of the remains of the artist, whose body was burned on a camp fire after his death in keeping with the ancient customs of the Slavs and the Hindoos. The rest of the ashes, together with hundreds of Roerich's canvases, have recently been brought back to the painter's native land, the return to whose bosom was his passionate desire.

Although after the Novgorod burial mounds Roerich travelled a great deal in Italy and France, and lived in England and America before becoming the bard of the Himalayas, this intermediary period of his life has found ^{little} ~~almost no~~ reflection in the artist's

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Events cut him off from his Native Land⁷

-4-

But he did not join its camp. A member of the World of Art Union, which erroneously considered that its world should be separated from the world of everyday life, from the world of politics and struggle. ^{And} Roerich devoted himself wholly to art, which seemed to him the only thing that was real in the inconsistent common world shaken up by catastrophies. He organised a series of ^{Exhibitions} shows of his canvases in Scandinavia, England and the United States. He ^{had} made a tremendous ^{Success} hit in New York. But the cruel world of business was ^{not suited} ~~not suited~~ at all to a man of Roerich's heart. He went to the country that had long charmed ^{and} ~~became~~ ^{became} him! India. Way back before World War One, attending the Paris exhibition of Indian art arranged by the Russian expert on the

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of his father in the latter's ^{travels and} ~~expeditionary~~ travels in the East, ^{together} ~~brought~~ ^{a large number of his canvases.} ~~nearly 500 canvases with him to Moscow.~~ ^{An Exhibition of} ~~Roerich's~~ ^{paintings} ~~art show~~ ^{taken} was opened in Moscow, after which it was moved to

^{organised} ~~and to other centers of the USSR.~~ Leningrad. At the opening ceremony speeches were delivered by the Charge d'Affaires of the Indian Embassy in Moscow, the Ambassador of Ceylon, and outstanding Soviet artists. They spoke about Roerich's spiritual legacy, about his being a great champion of peace, that his brush helped bring the cultures of the East and West closer together. Moscow hasn't seen for a long time such ^{as} ~~gathered~~ ^{Exhibition} queues that ~~arose outside the art show.~~

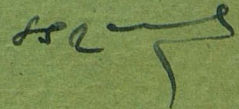
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Nicholas - de Roerich's
life sketch - page - 298

MIRA

Build ye a Bridge of Brotherhood between East & West !

T. L. Vaswani



Vivekananda and Gandhi

T. L. VASWANI

The Bard of the Himalayas

I. AGRANOVSKY

Martyr for Purity

T. F. DOYLE

The Boy who changed his Country

L. F. C.

The Heaven in the Heart

SISTER DAYA

Love and Laugh !

J. P. VASWANI

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THE GREAT MOTHER OF THE BANNER OF PEACE
By Nicholas de Roerich

[See pages 295, 308 and 315



Where should you go to seek your God? Are not all the poor, the miserable, Gods themselves? Worship them! Love them : love is the only law of life. He who is selfish is dying. Go! all of you, wherever there is an outbreak of plague or famine or wherever the people are in distress, go and mitigate their sufferings.

Swami Vivekananda

VIVEKANANDA AND GANDHI

By T. L. VASWANI

The Hindu Faith and love for India were both fused, as in a single flame, in Vivekananda, as after him, in Gandhi.

In the garments of the poor peasant and the poor labourer did both see the Lord walking in the streets and working in the fields and factories of India. The wrongs of the poor filled their hearts with deep sorrow. And both realised that India's urgent need was strength, *shakti*. Both preached a gospel of vitality. Both urged that India must not tread the barren path of imitation.

Yet neither preached narrow political nationalism. Both asked India to beware of narrow nation-cults and sectarianism. Both realised, too, that Europe had been stormed by a wave of social unrest which showed itself in destructive revolutionary movements and class warfare. Both Vivekananda and Gandhi held that the simple and "uneducated" and village-folk had much to teach us. India must be re-born: India's national consciousness must be re-born in the wisdom of the Rishis. India was truly great in the day when she was strong. She must be strong again to save civilisation and fulfil her mission. "Be strong!" was the note sounded by both Gandhi and Vivekananda.

Both Vivekananda and Gandhi had reverence for the Rishis and love for the Hindu Ideal. Many feel shy, alas! today, of the word "Hindu" and of the inspiration of Hindu ideals. There was a "lion's roar" in Vivekananda's call to his countrymen. Vivekananda's great address at the "Parliament of Religions," at

Chicago, was full of love for all religions: but it was, also, a bold challenge to the critics of the Hindu Faith.

Sir John Woodroffe, addressing a meeting held over forty years ago on the anniversary of Swami Vivekananda, said:—"The qualities I most admire in Vivekananda are his activity, manliness and courage. There are still Indians,—though fortunately not so numerous as there were when I first came to India,—who seem to be ashamed of and would apologise for Hindu life, Hindu art and philosophy and religion. Vivekananda was not of this sort. His was the attitude of a man. He spoke up and acted. For this all must honour him who, whatever be their own religious beliefs, value sincerity, truth and courage, which are the badge of every noble character."

Truth and courage were the essential elements of Vivekananda's faith which he boldly spoke of as the "Hindu Faith" and which he urged was the "brother" of all religions. For all religions, he pointed out, were true: all were God's revelations to man. And Gandhi said:—"I believe that all great religions of the world are God-given: and I believe they were necessary for the people to whom those religions were revealed. While I hold by my own, I should hold others as dear as Hinduism." And in the spirit of Vivekananda, Gandhi added:—"Hinduism is a relentless pursuit after truth. Hinduism is the most tolerant of all religions. Hinduism is not an exclusive religion. In Hinduism there is room for the worship of all the prophets in the world. Hinduism tells

every one to worship God according to his own Faith or Dharma, and so the Hindu Faith lives at peace with all religions."

Ramakrishna, the great Inspirer and Builder of Vivekananda, spoke in the same spirit the words which I have loved to meditate upon, again and again :—"Bow thy head and adore where others worship : for in that form in which man hath called on Him, God will assuredly appear!"

To Ramakrishna as to Keshub Chandra Sen,—also, a mystic,—and to Vivekananda and Gandhi, all religions,—Hinduism, Islam, Christianity and the rest,—were true. Ramakrishna tested each in his own way. He asked a friend to read to him the Bible : he gazed with love in his heart at a picture of Isa as a child and Isa's mother,—the Madonna,—and soon Ramakrishna beheld, in a vision of *samadhi*, the beauty and radiance of Isa and was filled with his Love Divine. The Prophet of Islam, Muhammad, too, was seen by Ramakrishna in trance.

To Ramakrishna and Keshub, to Vivekananda and Gandhi, all religions were different paths to the One Eternal God, all religions were sacred as varying expressions of the One Religion of Truth and loving Service and Manliness.

Both Vivekananda and Gandhi called upon India to live practical religion through devotion to men, through service of the poor. "Him I call a Mahatma," said Vivekananda, "whose heart bleeds for the poor." Gandhi is rightly called a "Mahatma" : for Gandhi's heart "bled for the poor."

Both Gandhi and Vivekananda saw that the true genius of the Hindu Faith was reflected not in a "caste" or "creed" but in a perception and

practice of the truth that "all men are equal." And "all," said Gandhi, "are born to serve God's creation." The "untouchables" were dear to Swami Vivekananda as they were to Mahatma Gandhi. He said :—"I would rather be torn to pieces than disown my brothers of the oppressed classes. I do not wish to be re-born : but if I have to be re-born, I should want to be of the 'untouchables,' so that I may share their sorrows and that I may endeavour to free them from their miserable condition."

In his deep humility, Gandhi disclaimed the designation of "Mahatma." "I am called," he said, "Mahatma, but I am an ordinary man. I have blundered and committed mistakes." But people gave both Gandhi and Vivekananda the deepest love of their hearts. How they flocked to both by the thousands to hear them and touch their feet ! Both worshipped Truth as God and spoke the Truth alike to the rich and the poor, for both were men of courage.

A gathering of Maharajas was addressed, one day, by Gandhi. He asked them to be simple and to serve the poor. He earnestly requested them to give up their jewels and use them in the service of the poor,—and the Maharajas melted away, one by one. Only three were left, said Gandhi :—"God, the Chairman and myself." A little later, the Chairman, too, left !

Vivekananda wandered to many towns and villages and realised, for the first time, how poor was India. Gandhi, too, returning from South Africa, travelled through India and was deeply pained to see the state of the village-folk. The peasants who toiled in the fields were almost skeletons and the "untouchables" who did menial work in the towns were no better. Vivekananda and Gandhi

realised that India's most piteous need was "strength, more strength."

Vivekananda asked the people to "serve the poor and the miserable," and regard their "service" as "worship." "The one God to worship," he said, "is the human soul in the human body. Solemnly vow to devote your whole lives to the cause of the redemption of the three hundred millions going down and down, every day. Where should you go to seek your God? Are not all the poor, the miserable, Gods themselves? Worship them! Why go ye to dig a well on the shores of the Ganges? Love them: love is the only law of life. He who is selfish is dying. Go, all of you, wherever there is an outbreak of plague or famine or wherever the people are in distress, go and mitigate their sufferings. At the most you may die in the attempt. What of that? How many like you are taking birth and dying like worms every day? Die you must! But have a great ideal to die for. It is better to die with a great ideal in life. Preach this ideal from door to door. Fill your hearts with the strength of a lion. I love you all, but I would wish you all to die working for others! I bequeath to you, young men! this sympathy, this struggle for the poor, the ignorant, the oppressed!"

In a lecture delivered before the Ethical Society, Brooklyn, America, Vivekananda said:—"We Hindus not only tolerate, we accept every religion, praying in the mosque of the Muslim, worshipping before the fire of the Zoroastrians, and kneeling before the Cross of the Christians,—knowing that all the religions mean many attempts of the human soul to grasp and realise the Infinite, each determined by the conditions of its birth and association,—each marking a step of progress. We gather

these flowers and bind them all with the twine of love, making a wonderful bouquet of worship."

The Truth of all Faiths,—that was the central note in Vivekananda's teaching in India and abroad. Books and scriptures were all a commentary on this Truth: and this Truth was *lived* by Ramakrishna. This Truth, verily, no words can express: this Truth is realised in the *life* of a pure one, a Mahatma, a great soul. The Veda has well said:—"Him the sun cannot express nor the moon nor the stars: the lightning cannot express Him nor what we speak of as Fire. Through Him they all shine."

Mahatma Gandhi bore witness to this Truth in his teaching and his daily life. "The Allah of Islam," he said "is the same as the God of Christians and the Ishwar of the Hindus. Living faith in this God means acceptance of the Brotherhood of Mankind." "The soul of religion is one," said Gandhi; "but it is encased in a multitude of forms. The forms are many but the informing Spirit is one." "If all the *Upanishads* and all other scriptures happened all of a sudden to be reduced to ashes, and if only the first verse in the *Ishopanishad* were left intact in the memory of the Hindus," Gandhi said, "Hinduism would live for ever. The meaning of this verse is:—All that there is in the universe, great or small, including the tiniest atom, is pervaded by God, by Isha the Ruler. The verse says further:—'Do not covet the riches of anybody!' I have in my search of the scriptures of the world found nothing to add to this *mantra*. In this *mantra* I find Universal Brotherhood,—not only Brotherhood of all human beings but of all living beings. This *mantra* tells me that I cannot hold as mine anything that belongs to God

and, if my life has to be a life of perfect dedication, it should be a life of continual service of our fellow creatures."

Not without reason did both Vivekananda and Gandhi pay homage to the *Gita*. Gandhi said :—"I have not been able to see any difference between the *Sermon on the Mount* and the *Bhagavad Gita*. Both the *Gita* and the *Sermon on the Mount* declare the law of love. When doubts haunt me, when disappointments stare me in the face, and when I see not one ray of light on the horizon, I turn to the *Bhagavad Gita* and find a verse to comfort me. Then I begin to smile in the midst of overwhelming sorrow. My life has been full of external tragedies : and if they have not left any visible effect on me, I owe it to the teaching of the *Bhagavad Gita*. Let the *Gita* be to you a mine of diamonds as it has been to me. Let the *Gita* be your constant guide and friend on life's way. Let the *Gita* light your path and dignify your labour."

"I preach the *Upanishads*," said Vivekananda. It has been rightly said that the *Gita* is the essence of the *Upanishads* : and the *Gita* teaches "strength and fearlessness." "My own ideal," said Vivekananda, "is that giant of a saint whom they killed in the mutiny and who broke his silence when stabbed to the heart, only to say :—'And thou, also, art He!'"

"The greatness of little things," said Vivekananda, "that is what the *Gita* teaches : bless the old Scripture!" "Who will set England right?" asks an English poet; and the answer he gives is :—"An English farmer!" In that great poem in English literature, the type of the man who will re-build England is the peasant, "Piers Plowman." He works hard and he is honest : he works at the

plough and he believes in the "greatness of little things." This simple, honest peasant who labours and, in his labour, spiritualises his humble, daily tasks. He is, as the poet says, "truth's pilgrim at the plough for poor men's sake."

Such men are the true economic foundation of society. They teach in their daily work what it is to cultivate the soil and to cultivate the soul. Such men are the pilgrims who, in their poverty, stand nearest to God. One such was Sudama. Such men, with their new plough of simplicity and sacrifice, are the true "communists" who, in the midst of the squalor and injustice of the present order, will despair not but work without losing sight of the spiritual realities that lie behind the *maya* of life. Such men will, Arjuna-like, do battle against Evil, yet abide in the Love of Krishna, the Buddha and the Christ.

Neither Vivekananda nor Gandhi ignored "spiritual values" in their work for a "new nation" in India,—a "new Order," a "new Humanity." Neither separated the "secular" from the "spiritual." To work is to worship : and true service, which is non-egoistic is a *yagna*, an offering to God.

Plato wrote long ago in his *Republic* :—"If God presides not at the establishment of a State, if it have only a human foundation, it cannot escape calamity." This, indeed, is the tragedy of modern schemes, modern theories. God is being relegated to the private life of the individual but is denied a place in education or nation-building. God is ignored! He is regarded as an optional adjunct to society. Many, indeed, regard Him as an "opiate" or an "illusion."

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THE HEAVEN IN THE HEART

By SISTER DAYA

If we read the lives of the very great people of the world we find with what tremendous power they move through life, overcoming the insuperable barriers that are thrown before them. The average person does not have one-tenth of the obstacles that oppose the spiritually great of the world who know that deep within is that power which will carry them over their own pain and agony, their weakness and possible death; and like an arrow they go through to their goal. That is the transcendent spirit that can light up the whole material universe with the great flame of courage and self-forgetful fervor. Realization is a thing of feeling, of becoming aware. We must first imagine ourselves into a different type of consciousness and a different way of thinking.

If we come forth from a great central sun of spirit, then this mind, these feelings of ours are not just little things that are manufactured from our body as a machine would throw out collar buttons. We are descending constantly from that central sun, all our thoughts—everything. Therefore why can we not let go of all but our yearning toward That, lifting up our prayers saying, "Make me Your own; fill me; take possession of me; love through my heart; think through my mind. I am little and insignificant, but in Your great power I change into the likeness of You, my Deity. Therefore I give myself, over and over again."

Lord Buddha said that what is needed most is a loving heart and self forgetfulness and the power of service

for others. There are people who will work their hands to the bone—humble people, who make the very foundation of a country, poor people struggling for their children or their homes or for some ideal—giving their lives without murmur, and feeling within themselves a light and a beauty in that giving.

I am reminded of a story that I will recount here because it made such a deep impression on me. It happened years ago in New York when I was but eighteen years of age and had become interested in social service on my own. I had a cleaning woman who used to give me names of those in want, and on this particular morning she sent me to a mother who was desperately in need of help. This woman had five children and no money, and her husband had vanished from the scene. The family lived in a dark little room without a window where there was scarcely sufficient space for them to move around. Two of the little boys had tuberculosis; there was a baby about six months old and two other children. They were about to be dispossessed and had no food to eat. I did not know just what to do but felt that first of all they should eat, so I offered to go to the store and bring back groceries. The woman who was a courageous little person with a beautiful face spoke up and said, "You had better let me go with you because I think I can probably buy much more reasonably than you can; I am accustomed to buying and saving money." So she went along with me and we talked. She told me that two doctors

in the hospital were interested in the boys and were trying to save the situation too. When I asked her what she would like in the way of groceries, she turned around and looked at me and said, "How good God is!"

I have never forgotten that all these years. Here is something to build on, a faith, a vision like that. She never spared herself. What she must have given to that little family! And God did help her; her boys were taken to the hospital. Provision was made for the others; they did not have to go into the street. I hope I shall always remember this when I come to think that conditions are insurmountable or I am having too much to bear. I shall say to myself, "How good God is!"

Even if we do not have the equipment of a brilliant mind our heart can reach up to the highest, and when our hearts reach up to the highest the whole of us is bound to follow. There are many difficult things that the spirit of man has to meet, yet these things can be met; we can live in our own heaven, the heaven in our heart. We can remember that these things are passing, changing; they come and they go, and the more we fight against them the more we are filled with rebellious and hateful thoughts and the more these conditions will press in upon us because they are there for a reason. We, ourselves, have created the conditions. They are not just something imposed upon us to torture or torment us; they are our problem, our examination, our test. We might try to run away from them, or we might say that through some mental process we can dispose of them. But there is only one way to really dispose of any personal problem, and that is through transcending it, through getting at it

from above, getting the God-view of it and rising up into that greater world where these things do not exist.

We can get deeper into that level of consciousness where the ego does not have a voice, where the pure being of both ourselves and our brother mingles in that God-oneness—as it says in the Upanishads, where the enemy ceases to be an enemy. This may seem difficult and almost impossible and yet, as we dream of these things, as we think of these things, we find they are really not so impossible. We can be like the man who, when he went out into the wind and storm, just wrapped his great cloak about him. We can have that great cloak of a divine Presence, of greater thoughts, of the vision of man's true and final destiny to wrap around us as we go through the trying and heart-breaking conditions of life. I do not mean that we should isolate ourselves selfishly, but there is no other way we can help, for it is only by rising above these things and thinking of our ideal and becoming infused with the light of that ideal that we can come back to the condition and master it.

I remember once going to our Swami Paramananda when I was struggling with a personal problem. I said to him, "Swami, you always tell us that love conquers everything and that we must love everybody. But what am I going to do? I can't love everybody; I really can't. If I said that I did I wouldn't be telling the truth." He said, "My child, in such conditions take your mind off the one who is troubling you. Turn your mind to other things, things that will give you stimulation and inspiration, keep it away from that which drags you down; then

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LOOKING EASTWARD

By THE REV. G. F. TULL

A Christian believes that all who chronologically preceded Jesus Christ and who taught the people of their generation what knowledge they had of God and the things of the spirit, were preparing the way for a fuller and more personal revelation to come. Thus, in various countries of the world, apparently unco-ordinated, yet obviously under Divine inspiration, sacred writings appeared, great philosophers and teachers expounded their truths as far as they had then discovered them. Mighty civilisations, the Greek, Roman, Persian, Indian and Chinese, paved the way, culturally and intellectually, as well as by constructing roads and opening up commercial traffic which brought the peoples into closer contact with each other and so spread ideas and philosophies. Then, "in the fulness of time", when all was prepared, we believe that "God sent forth His Son, born of a woman". This incarnation was the most complete and perfect revelation of God, Who came "not to destroy, but to fulfil" all that had been written before of the Messiah, the Saviour of His people. In His life on earth He fulfilled what had been foretold by the Prophets and seers.

This is even reflected in the folklore of non-Semitic and non-Christian countries, as one can see from reference to Frazer's "Golden Bough"; the primal legend of the dying god and the ancient mythical heroes finding their true fulfilment in the person of Christ.

There is surely no reason why such inspired prophets and sages as Socrates, Buddha and Confucius, (to mention only three out of a whole multitude),

should not be as much honoured by Christians as the Jewish prophets of whom one reads in the Old Testament? That is a purely logical view, since they were just as much heralds and messengers of Divine Truth as those who spoke in Palestine centuries before Christ's coming.

There is another aspect, which we in the West tend to overlook what one might designate as the 'moral' view. Although we find that the 'Minor Prophets'—Amos for instance—were often men of real integrity and uprightness of life, preaching against animal sacrifice, social injustice and evil lusts, some of the popular heroes of early Jewish history were far from being edifying characters! We can hardly wish to imitate the morals of David, the shepherd boy who became King, (and, to the nationalist mind yearning for Israel's independence from foreign domination, a type of the ideal King); because he desired another man's wife, David arranged for her husband to be sent into the very forefront of battle, so that he should be killed, whereupon the covetous King took her to be his own wife, thereby incurring the righteous wrath of God. David's son, Solomon, for all his wisdom, fell short of the high standard one normally expects in a ruler. The callous cruelty of some of the notable leaders towards those who opposed them contrasts sharply with the tranquility of the Greek philosophers and the pure non-violent way of living practised by many Indian rishis and mystics.

Let no one reading these words accuse me of anti-Semitic feeling! In appraising non-Jewish holy ones, I do

not wish to belittle what was unquestionably good and noble in primitive Jewish thought and tradition (which is indeed vindicated in the independent Israel of today).

It has been said that Jesus was an oriental ascetic. Certainly all the 33 years of His earthly life were spent in the Middle East and orientals are therefore well able to appreciate Him in His own setting, as few people living in the West are in a position to do. Christianity in its first purity came from the East and we still have a lot to learn from the East in our way of living, in spiritual contemplation and humility.

Indians who are seriously interested in the study of Comparative Religions can probably appreciate the authentic Christian spirit better in the lives of such ascetics as St. Antony the Hermit and the Fathers of the Egyptian Thebaid, the wonderful Russian 'staretz' (spiritual father) St. Seraphim of Sarov, or the monks of Mount Athos, than in any distinctively Western examples of sanc-

tity. The more Eastern examples I have mentioned are nearer to the Indian type of spirituality, in its detachment from the world. Each nation has developed its own particular heritage of culture, its own ethos and these have played a large part in religion.

Apart from that, however, it is a sad admission to have to make that people professedly Christian, (who *should* have set a fine example), have failed to stop the slaughter of innocent creatures for food, or the wholesale massacre of our fellow humans in the tragic folly of war. If it is said that the progress of Christianity has been drenched in bloodshed and spoiled by corruption, the fact must be faced that such things have come about precisely because Christians have been untrue to their Master and His teaching of tolerance and goodwill. The early Disciples were men of high principles and known to have been vegetarians and pacifists. It is those humane elements which we most need to recover. Where better can we learn than from India?

I was much moved by a little story I read some time ago.

It comes back to me with a strange appeal, today.

A Russian woman is out for a walk, one evening. On the way, she meets a prisoner in iron chains. He is on the public road, breaking stones.

She looks at him : for a moment or two her eyes are filled with light: her face becomes radiant.

She puts her hand in her pocket : then empties it,—and then? She puts the entire amount,—a good bit,—at the prisoner's feet and says :—"Brother ! bless me !"

Her eyes are touched with tears. A moment she gazes, again, at the prisoner's face. She says :—"Brother ! in thee I behold my Master's Face. Brother ! bless me !"

And then,—she vanishes !

T. L. Vaswani

MARTYR FOR PURITY

By T. F. DOYLE

It is July 5, 1902. The place: a farm near Nettuno, in the province of Rome, Italy, operated jointly by the Goretti and Serenelli families. Upstairs in the farmhouse shared by the two families, Maria Goretti and Alessandro Serenelli are alone. The girl is frightened.

"No! No! Don't touch me! It's a sin." Trying to break away from the young man's embrace, Maria sees the passion in his eyes turn to stark rage. Horrified, she watches him pick up a long sharp awl from the table. As she makes a last desperate effort to push him from her, Alessandro, in a frenzy of frustration, plunges the awl into her body...once...twice...eight times.

Pious, gentle 12-year-old Maria Goretti died the next day in the hospital at Nettuno. On her deathbed she pleaded forgiveness for her murderer. Not far away the police had to fight off the crowd that tried to vent its rage on Alessandro Serenelli as he was being taken to prison. Women in the crowd wept, crying: "He has killed a saint."

That Maria Goretti was in truth a saint has been confirmed by the Catholic Church. On Sunday, June 25 next, Holy Year pilgrims will witness her solemn canonization at St. Peter's Basilica in Rome. The process for her canonization began in 1921. On the Feast of the Annunciation in 1945, Pope Pius XII proclaimed her a martyr worthy of veneration. Two years later—on April 27, 1947—Blessed Maria was beatified in the presence of 30,000 faithful.

Still living is Maria's 85-year-old mother, Assunta, who was brought in a wheel chair to witness her beatification. The frail octogenarian was one of the principal witnesses when Blessed Maria's cause was opened. Another was Alessandro Serenelli, now 65, who was released in 1929 after spending 27 years in prison. Employed at present in a Capuchin monastery at Ascoli, the repentant Alessandro

wrote while in prison: "I regret my evil deed because I am conscious of having taken the life of an innocent girl, who, to the very end, struggled for her honor, sacrificing herself rather than yield to my desires."

What was she like, this peasant child who chose to die rather than commit a sin? The picture that emerged from her mother's testimony was that of a golden haired child, tall for her age—almost five feet—and with attractive, if not beautiful features. Although only twelve, her chaste, slim figure bore signs of approaching maturity. Singnora Goretti had five other children—Angelo, Mariano, Alessandro, Teresa and Ersilia—but Maria, her third child, was the angel of the family. Her principal charm was her modesty, both in manner and speech. Once she overheard a woman use coarse language and turned to her mother saying, "I'd rather be killed than talk like that."

Assunta Goretti was an illiterate, hard-working woman who at 19, had married Luigi Goretti, a peasant farmer from La Marche. Luigi died of malaria when the children were still very young, leaving the widow to carry on alone the partnership he had formed with Giovanni

Serenelli and his son, Alessandro. It was not a happy partnership; both Giovanni and his son had faults that often made Assunta wish she could find some other means to support her family.

A devout Catholic, Assunta often rose on weekdays to attend early Mass. There was no school near enough to send her children, but she saw to it that they were trained at least in the rudiments of the faith. Although not deeply versed in religion, she taught them to pray, to recite the Ten Commandments, to repeat the catechism lessons she had memorized in her own childhood. After supper she would gather her flock around her to tell them about the mystery of Bethlehem and the sufferings and death of Christ on Calvary. Especially she sought to instill in them a love for purity and goodness. Every night the family knelt down to recite the Rosary.

The seeds of her mother's teaching and example took deep root in Maria's soul. When she made her first Holy Communion, Assunta said to her: "Now that you have received Jesus, you must be better." "Yes, mother," Maria answered, "I shall always try to be better." She never faltered in her resolution. Going with her daughter to confession in the local rural chapel, the mother would remark to a neighbor: "The older she grows, the more virtuous she becomes." Years later, addressing the sacred tribunal which held hearings on her child's cause, she asserted: "Never did I notice in her a violation of the laws of God."

Intelligence, generosity, modesty, and an understanding beyond her years—all these were Maria's characteristics. She was the mediator in disputes among her brothers and sisters. When Ersilia had to undergo a minor surgical operation, it was Maria who held her hand and

comforted her. At the dinner table she insisted on the others taking the best portions. She was her mother's constant and willing helper. When food was short, she would say: "Don't worry, mother. So long as God gives us health we won't want for anything." She was the first of the children to rise in the morning, kneeling at once to say her prayers, then washing and dressing her smaller brothers and sisters and getting their breakfast ready. Sometimes a neighbor would compliment Signora Goretti, saying, "What an angel-like daughter you have," but Maria would blush and turn away.

The neighbors loved Maria for her chaste and innocent ways. But in one pair of eyes the sight of the young girl fast blossoming into maidenhood had stirred lustful desires that were to bear fruit in sudden and brutal tragedy. Twice Alessandro Serenelli had tried to induce Maria to yield to him. But each time she had torn herself from his arms with such vehemence that he was forced to stop.

For a month after these attempts, Maria carefully avoided Alessandro. She tried always to be in the company of her mother or of her brothers and sisters. She even confided to her mother that she was afraid to be alone with Alessandro. But the unsuspecting mother, thinking the girl was simply imagining things, paid no attention. On the sultry July afternoon when Alessandro made his third and fatal attempt to profane her daughter, Assunta was in the yard threshing beans with Giovanni Serenelli. She never heard the girl's desperate pleas. "Help! Help! Mother! Mother!"

What caused Alessandro Serenelli to commit the crime for which he was condemned to spend his best years

imprisoned? The answer is revealed in his own confession and the statement made by Signora Goretti for Maria's process. The young man had lost his mother when he was a child and had been brought up by a father of "morally doubtful" character. Every time Giovanni Serenelli went to Nettuno he would bring back for his son newspapers replete with obscene illustrations and stories of sex and crime.

Alessandro admitted that he liked to read stories of murders, and said, "I conceived of committing one myself." Alone in his room, the walls of which were covered with pages from the newspapers he had read, he brooded over his failure to besmirch Maria Goretti. "I confess," he declared, "that my only aim was to sully her purity. I was determined that if I failed as I had done the first and second times I would kill her." He had a weapon ready: an awl he had ground to fine sharpness.

Alessandro's third opportunity came when Maria was left alone in the house to prepare the evening meal. Giovanni Serenelli, Signora Goretti and the rest of the Goretti family were working in the yard and the fields outside. Taking advantage of the girl's isolation, Alessandro left his work and re-entered the house. He found Maria upstairs, pushed her into one of the rooms, and kicked the door shut to prevent her protests being heard. Maria kept crying:

"No! No! God does not want it! If you do this you will go to hell. What are you doing, Alessandro? Don't touch me. It's a sin. You will go to hell. Yes, yes, you will go to hell. God does not want it. It's a sin. Help! Help! Mother! Mother!"

When Maria fell bleeding to the floor, Alessandro left her, thinking she

was dead. But the child revived, and dragged herself to the door, which she barely managed to open. Weakly, she called to Giovanni Serenelli, now near the house.

Alessandro had returned to his own room, but hearing Maria's feeble cries, he came back. He stabbed her again six times. Below in the yard, Maria's mother went tranquilly about her chores.

Maria's cries had meanwhile been heard by Giovanni, who came to investigate. "Assunta, come up," he shouted from the top window. Followed by other members of her family, Assunta Goretti rushed upstairs only to collapse when she saw her daughter's blood-covered, motionless body. When she revived she knelt in terrified grief beside her.

"Who was it? How did it happen?"

"It was Alessandro."

"But why—why?"

"Because he wanted me to commit an awful sin, and I wouldn't."

At 3-45 p.m. on Saturday, July 6, the Feast of the Most Precious Blood, Maria Goretti died. She was eleven years, eight months and twenty days old. On her breast rested the crucifix, while around her neck was a medal of the Children of Mary Sodality.

When Maria was taken to the Nettuno hospital it was found that one of the 14 stab wounds had even pierced her heart. Nor was her martyrdom yet over. She had to endure the excruciating torture of a two-hour operation while fully conscious. She was awake and in pain during the entire twenty hours of life that remained. She suffered a burning thirst, but could not be permitted a drop of water.

Maria bore her suffering with a fortitude that wrung the hearts of the

doctor and the nurses. Outside the hospital crowds stood bowed in silent grief. They knew Maria had made her last confession, had received the Viaticum. They knew she had forgiven her murderer and told her mother: "In heaven I will pray for his conversion. I want him to be with me in Paradise." When finally they were told that Maria had died while the Our Father was being recited by those around her, men and women wept openly.

Two days later a great crowd from Nettuno and the surrounding towns attended the funeral to the public cemetery. Stirred by Maria's heroic death, the municipal authorities provided a burial plot free of charge. As she was lowered into the ground Maria's coffin was literally covered with flowers. Her remains rested in the public cemetery until 1928 when the body was taken to the church of our Lady of Grace in Nettuno. It now rests in a gold and glass casket in the church of St. John and Paul in Rome, titular church of Francis Cardinal Spellman, Archbishop of New York.

Maria's prayers for Alessandro Serenelli were answered while he was serving his sentence in the penitentiary of Nato in Sicily. After a visit from the local bishop, he expressed sorrow for his

crime and agreed to appear as a witness at Maria's beatification hearings. Meanwhile, he said, Maria had appeared to him in a dream carrying flowers which turned into bright flames as she handed them to him. When asked at the canonical hearings if he were disposed to tell the truth about his crime, he answered: "It is my duty. Maria was a true martyr." Since his release, Alessandro has been leading an exemplary life and has often declared, "I have a powerful advocate in heaven."

Alessandro went to see Signora Goretti in 1937 to beg her pardon for the crime he committed. He did not attend the beatification rites, nor is he expected to be present when the name of St. Maria Goretti is solemnly enrolled in the catalogue of the saints. Maria's two sisters are now nuns belonging to the Franciscan Sisters of Mary in Rome. They accompanied their mother to Maria's beatification, and all three, as well as Maria's brother Mariano will undoubtedly be on hand when the little girl who shared their lives is proclaimed among the blessed in heaven. Also present may be Maria's brother Angelo, now living in New Village, Philippsburg, N. J., where her brother Alessandro, who died in 1917, lies buried.

—*The Family Digest*, April, 1950

To Our Subscribers

We thank most heartily and gratefully those readers who have renewed, and are renewing, their subscriptions. It is indeed very kind of them and we appreciate it very much.

Those who have not yet renewed their subscriptions, are requested to do so now. Their kind compliance will be very helpful, indeed.

THE BARD OF THE HIMALAYAS

By I. AGRANOVSKY

There are few Russian names that are as closely connected with India as that of Nicholas Roerich. In the annals of Russo-Indian friendship his name stands beside those of Afanasi Nikitin, Gerasim Lebedev and Fyodor Shcherbatskoy, who were the first Russians to discover the shores of Hindustan for their compatriots. Indeed they did more, they discovered also the soul of its peoples.

Roerich spent the years of his childhood near Russia's oldest city—the Great Novgorod. The last 25 years of his life Roerich lived in the Indian Himalayas. There, in West Punjab, near his modest dwelling in Kulu, in full view of the ice-capped mountain peaks, captured hundreds of times by the brush of Roerich, was buried part of the remains of the artist, whose body was burned after his death in keeping with the ancient customs of the Slavs and the Hindus. The rest of the ashes, together with hundreds of Roerich's canvases, have recently been brought back to his native land, the return to whose bosom was his passionate desire.

Although leaving Novgorod Roerich travelled a great deal in Italy and France, and lived in England and America before becoming the bard of the Himalayas, this intermediary period of his life has found almost no reflection in the artist's creative work. Roerich will go down in the history of world painting as the bard of old Rus and the countries of the Himalayas—India, Tibet and Mongolia.

Roerich's first paintings, which appeared in the nineties of last century,

astonished his contemporaries by their originality. He had studied at the Art Academy under the distinguished Russian painter Arkhip Kuinji. He took from Kuinji his bright, colourful palette, and the artist's view of the world as a majestic struggle with light. But Roerich had also other teachers—the old Russian Icon painters. He learned from them restraint and simplicity of form. The combination of Kuinji's radiance of light with the laconism of the old Russian masters gave rise to the style that was inimitably Roerich's.

In those years Roerich travelled a great deal all over Russia, admiring the architecture of its first cities and studying them. He gazed at the picturesque scenes of the North which had enchanted him since childhood, and glorified them in his canvases, verse and prose. He wrote: "The story of the North is deep and charming. The Northern winds are vigorous and cheerful. The Northern lakes meditative. The Northern streams silvery. The dark forests sagacious. The green hills worldly-wise. The grey stones full of wonders."

And Roerich revealed to the people these wonders in his canvases. How the feeling of the hoary ages, the events of antiquity, are transmitted by the painter in his painting *Guests From Beyond the Sea*. *Sacred Spring* is the creation of an artist who visualised Nature and Man as a harmonious whole. It is a hymn to the trusty brotherhood of man not expecting harm from any one and not preparing to harm any one.

The Revolution found Roerich in Finland. Events cut him off from his native land and Roerich devoted himself wholly to art, which alone seemed to him real in the inconsistent common world shaken up by catastrophies. He held a series of shows of his canvases in Scandinavia, England and the United States. He made a tremendous hit in New York. But the cruel world of business did not at all suit a man of Roerich's temperament. He went to the country that had long charmed him: India.

Roerich considered that he had discovered in Indian culture not only the characteristics that are akin to those of old Slavic art and life which were dear to him. It seemed to him that he found there that world of renunciation of worldly cares for which he had passionately yearned for so long. He settled down on the threshold of heaven itself—the Himalayas. With the fervency of an artist who has finally achieved his ideal, again and again he drew on hundreds of canvases the Himalayan mountain ridges, in whose serene severity he believed lay the key to the secret of life.

He became a fast friend of Rabin-dranath Tagore, whom he had come to know in London in 1920. They called each other "brother in spirit", and exchanged books, photos, articles and ideas.

Jawaharlal Nehru became an admirer not only of Roerich's talent as a painter but also of his knowledge of the East accumulated during his lengthy expeditious into the most inaccessible corners of the area surrounding the Himalayas. Nehru spent two weeks in Kulu, talking to Roerich about art, history and contemporaneity.

But Roerich could not remain aloof. War and fascism were threatening everything that the painter held dear—peace, the immortal creations of art and his native land, Russia. Roerich became the founder of the international movement for saving cultural values and he worked out the draft of a convention on the protection of historic and art memorials at times of war. The Roerich pact will long remain in the memory of man as an expression of noble alarm for the fate of all the best created by human genius. The Pact was revised after the war and the Soviet Union, his nativeland was one of the countries that joined it in 1954.

During the Great Patriotic War against fascism, Roerich followed attentively the heroic struggle waged by his own people. When the war ended, Roerich asked the Soviet Government for permission to return to his homeland: "It is my sincere desire to work right on the spot for the glory of my Homeland. We can truly say that our work in India were beneficial for the USSR and we were glad to see how the Indians took warmly to heart everything that concerned our country." That was written on October 26, 1947, and on December 13 Roerich left this world of ours. On the tombstone placed at the site of his cremation is written in Hindi: Here lies the ashes of "a great friend of India."

The Indian press widely commented on the death of the Russian painter. At the opening of an art show of Roerich's works in Delhi Jawaharlal Nehru said: "When I think of Nicholas Roerich, I am astounded at the scope and abundance of his activities and creative genius.

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THE BOY WHO CHANGED HIS COUNTRY

By L. F. C.

On May 24, 1738, a young man went to a meeting held by some Moravians in a little room in Aldersgate Street, London. Years afterwards a famous historian said that this was a turning-point in English history. What happened then? Was he a prince in disguise and was this a secret conspiracy that began a revolution? It would be true to say that a revolution started from that day, but it began first in the heart of the young man. Till then he had been almost a failure, but from that hour he gradually became the most important influence in England.

John Wesley was born at Epworth, Lincolnshire, on June 17, 1703. His father, Samuel Wesley, was the rector, and young John Benjamin—for that was his full name—was one of a large family. The children were carefully trained by their mother, Susanna, who taught them to be content and cheerful though they were poor and sometimes hungry.

When John was nearly six years old he had his first great adventure and it was almost his last! He waked up suddenly to find the room full of smoke and flame. The old rectory, with its wood and plaster walls, was on fire, and everyone had eacaped but John. Suddenly the crowd saw him peering out of the nursery window, shouting for help. For a moment it looked as though he must perish. There was no ladder and he he could not jump down. One of the villagers climbed on the shoulders of another and managed to clutch the little boy to safety. As we look back, after more than two hundred years, we wonder who the man was. By saving

John Wesley's life he helped to change the history of England!

When the lad was eight years old he nearly died of smallpox. His mother nursed him tenderly back to health again, and wrote: "Jack has borne his disease bravely, like a man, and indeed like a Christian, without complaint."

In 1714 he went to Charterhouse. He was only ten years old and a very small boy dressed in "a broad-cloth gown lined with baize, with breeches of dark-blue stuff, shirt and stockings, and stout shoes known as 'gowsers'". He stayed at school till he was sixteen. The six years were not easy. The bigger boys often took away his meat and left him with nothing but dry bread for his meal. He did not grumble, but kept fit by running a mile—three times round the Charterhouse grounds—every morning. He read his Bible and said his prayers, but religion was not a very real or happy thing to him at school.

On a summer day in June, 1720, he went up to Oxford and became a student at Christ Church College. For five years he worked hard and played hard. He was very fond of tennis, and was an excellent walker and a good horseman. Once he broke a window and had to pay 5s. 6d. to have it mended! It took him some time to save up money for his father could only afford him a small allowance. All the while he was at Oxford he was a good student, and learnt to love the classics.

After he had been five years at Oxford, when he was twenty-two years

old he grew more serious. He began to wonder what was his real purpose in life. One or two friends influenced him, and a little conversation with one of the college porters set him thinking. The man came on an errand to his rooms, late at night. Wesley began to "joke" him.

"Go home and get another coat," he said.

"This is the only coat I have, and I thank God for it." was the answer.

"Go home and get your supper then," said John.

"I have had nothing to-day but a drink of water, and I thank God for that."

"It is late and you will be locked out, and then what will you have to thank God for?"

"I will thank Him that I have the dry stones to lie on."

The man interested the young student, and astounded him.

"Tell me," said Wesley, "you thank God when you have nothing to wear, nothing to eat, and no bed to lie upon; what else do you thank Him for?"

"I thank Him that He has given me my life and being, a heart to love Him and a desire to serve Him."

With this answer the man went out and left the young student wondering what was the secret of his strange, contented joy.

After this he began to read books about religion and presently decided to enter the Church. In 1725, at the age of twenty-two, he was ordained. After being elected a Fellow of Lincoln College, he was curate to his father for a short time. Then he returned to Oxford and joined a few students who had formed themselves into a club. They were trying hard to "live

out" their religion. They read the Bible together; they visited the prisoners and the poor; they went as often as they could to church. Other students were amused and contemptuous. They called the little group the "Holy Club", "Bible Moths," and most famous name of all, "Methodist," because of their "methodical" way of living. The names did not hurt them. They tried hard to be consistent, but they did not seem very happy. They were trying to save themselves by their own efforts and they missed the secret of the old porter!

In 1735 John Wesley and his brother Charles went to the new colony of Georgia in America, to preach to the Indians. On the outward voyage they met German emigrants who belonged to the Moravian Brethren. John Wesley talked with them and felt that they *did* know the secret. Their hearts were at peace and their lives were joyous, even amidst hardship and danger. After two years in America he came back to England, feeling he was a failure. He worked hard amidst great difficulties, but he was bitterly disappointed in himself. He was full of doubts about his faith. He did not feel he was close to God.

In London he met another Moravian called Peter Bahler. They talked things over, and Peter tried to help John Wesley to understand how real was the love of Jesus Christ and how surely it would lift him into a new relationship to God.

On May 24, 1738, he got up early in the morning, read his Bible, went to St. Paul's Cathedral and listened to the anthem, "Out of the depths have I cried unto Thee, O Lord." It seemed

as though the music was the echo of the cry from his own heart. In the evening he went to the little room in Aldersgate Street where the Moravians were holding a meeting. Someone read what Martin Luther had written about the Epistle to the Romans. He listened eagerly and heard what faith is! Something happened! "I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone, for salvation." That was the great moment which was a turning-point in the history of England.

John Wesley was changed. He could not keep the good news of his joyous assurance to himself. He began to preach in the open air. Presently he rode up and down England telling everyone. The people had no living religion. Poverty, cruelty, drunkenness and despair were in their hearts. His words and the words of the friends he gathered round him were words of hope and peace. They began to realise God was their Father, and that He cared for them each one as His children. They dared to believe that their sins might be forgiven. Everywhere men rejoiced to "begin again" with God.

A great revival of religion spread over the land, and little societies of people gathered together to pray and to exchange their experiences of God's goodness to them. So the Methodist Church came into being. It is a wonderful story, which cannot be told in these short pages, but it all began with the "conversion," as we call it, of one man.

Let us try to understand the experience of the boy who was saved from the fire at Epworth to become a great Evaneglist, who brought hope and joy to England, because he

had Christ in his heart. It is not just a lesson we can learn. It is something that can happen to us—the experience of the heart "strangely warmed" by the coming of Christ into our whole life. That was the secret of the old porter; that was what Wesley learned. *We* may know and feel it, too, and experience in this twentieth century what England experienced in that eighteenth century.

The Heaven in the Heart

(Contd. from page 288)

you will find as you continue to give yourself to your Ideal, you will be able to go back to that condition and it will have ceased to exist for you." I believe that this is a very great truth. If we can take our mind away from a condition that is oppressive to us and keep it fixed at a high point, that in itself is one of the greatest practices of yoga or union with God. When we are really able to do that, when we can take our mind instantly from the thing that would ordinarily draw us down into a maelstrom, keeping it fixed on the pure light of our Ideal, we will have gone far toward attaining that transcendent realization of our own true being which is God.

—Condensed from
Message of the East

My Unfailing Friend

(Contd. from page 300)

heart to learn how my best Friend stood by them in good stead.

"I would never feel tired of listening to the great episodes during the lives of my forefathers!" Thus proclaims Janmajya in the *Mahabharata* :

"न हि तृप्यात्रि पूर्वेषां श्रृण्वानश्चरितं पहत ।"

Let me also have the same wish, the same desire and the same yearning. O Great Masters, teach me half your gladness with which you could reciprocate the love of my best Friend!

MY UNFAILING FRIEND

By K. K. KHULLAR

The true definition of a friend is: A friend in need is a friend indeed. In this world, when the purse is full, friends are in plenty. But no sooner does the poverty knock at the door than love flies out of the window. All the companions desert us during our dark hours and they leave us in lurch. When the clouds of grief and sorrow hang overhead, I feel myself desolate, lonely and forlorn. Dejection benumbs my consciousness. That is also a state of great intoxication. At such a critical moment, there is still some one who comes stealthily to share my troubles. His portrait becomes a sweet solution in my tears. He prevails over my mind, heart and soul. Who can that be? Surely, He is no other than the Lord of my heart, and the best Friend of mine.

My Friend is Omnipotent i. e. All-powerful. If He is by my side, can any force in the world ever dream of vanquishing me? He is Omniscient i. e. All-knowing. If He is my Guide, my Teacher, my Guru, can the whole wisdom of the world ever enjoy an upper hand over me? He is Omnipresent i. e. He is present everywhere and there is no corner in the Universe where He does not exist. If He is with me, can all the fears of the world ever dupe me?

There are ups and downs in life. When I have a good time and all is sunshine round me, I seldom remember Him. The world gets too much with me and knowing well that it is all moonshine, I enter into a sordid boon, only to satiate my external and carnal desires. Even at times, I call in question

the very existence of my Friend. Instead of giving Him one and only one name of my Great Saviour, I begin to call Him names. Does it ever annoy my Friend? However faithless and infidel I may become, does He ever retaliate against me? I cleave to my material outlook till all my efforts end in smoke and all my hopes are dashed to the ground. I fall on the thorns of life and I bleed. My eyes are brimful with tears. I shirk calling my Friend to my rescue, since my behaviour towards Him, during my good days, has been most detestable and loathsome. This is the right hour when any friend, who has been despised even for a moment, would like to account for the slips by inflicting insult to the injuries. But the case is totally different with my best Friend. He forgets and forgives. He forgets my insincerity. For Him, love is not love, if it alters, when alterations it finds. He offers me His hand, lifts me up, embraces me and again lays me down on the bed of roses. He forgives all my sins. There flow out the tears of repentance and gratitude in my eyes and my heart is overwhelmed with a divine ecstasy. I bathe in the showers of His Blessings.

He has been the Friend of my great masters, like Guru Nanak, Sant Tulsidas, Christ, Mohammed, Zoaraster, Aristotle, Wordsworth, and others who always appear to be passing through the desert of my knowledge like a great caravan, all singing in chorus, 'Satnam, Satnam!' There is a great craving in my

(Contd. on page 299)

LOVE AND LAUGH!

By J. P. VASWANI

[1]

Many years ago, something happened which threw me out of gear, and I fell into a slough of despond. I became sad, dejected, depressed.

I met Beloved Dadaji (Sri T. L. Vaswaniji). He looked at my wretched face but once : he did not look again. Nor did he speak to me a single word of comfort which was my piteous need in that hour of deep agony. He behaved as though he had not seen me ! And thereafter, for four or five days, he refused to meet me. Living under the same roof, I was denied the privilege of seeing him whom I loved with no earthly love.

I could not understand what I then took to be Dadaji's callous indifference. And the "old man" who resides within everyone whispered to me:—"Now you know how much Dadaji loves you !"

It took me five days to realise that I must cast off all looks of sadness before I could become worthy of being admitted to Beloved Dadaji's presence. And putting on a forced smile, I went up to him and asked for his blessings. He was loving as ever. And as he enfolded me in a warm embrace, unbidden tears rolled down my cheeks. He spoke to me affectionately, as though nothing had happened. And I realised what a blunder I had committed by appearing before Dadaji with a sullen face.

Many months later, Dadaji spoke to me of St. Francis,—of the sufferings this prince amongst men had to undergo. "And yet," Dadaji said, "St. Francis

never renounced the smile on his lips. He was free from melancholy. He looked cheerful. He retained his sunny serenity and he retained his humour. To his brothers, he said, when laying down for them the rules of discipline:—"Ye shall take care that ye do not behave outwardly like melancholy hypocrites. But ye shall behave in the Lord, fresh and gay and agreeable."

The sweet, serene, bright face of St. Francis has been one of the inspirations of my life. I have meditated on it, again and again,—and on his love-lit eyes. And not unoften, I have recalled to myself one of his wonderful sayings:—"To the devil belongs to be sad, but to us ever to be glad and rejoice in the Lord." St. Francis was an apostle of spiritual cheerfulness. He was never mournful or melancholy. In the depths of sorrow, he would suddenly break forth into a song of praise to his beloved Master, Jesus.

Of St. Francis it is said that, one day, he met a disciple whose face wore a look of sadness. Immediately, St. Francis rebuked him, saying:—"Why this outward grief and sadness? Let it be between you and God. But before me and others strive to be cheerful. Remember, it is not seemly that a servant of God should show a sad and troubled face before his brethren."

[2]

It is popularly believed that sadness is due to certain things which happen outside of us. The cause of sadness is often traced to a misfortune or misadventure, a calamity or catastrophe, an

accident or adversity, a hardship or humiliation. In truth, all sadness is from within. Sadness is the result of our inner attitude towards outer happenings. Persons placed in similar circumstances react in different ways. Some may be joyful as a thrush, others may feel frustrated, unhappy, sad at heart. When Raja Janaka's palace was on fire, he sat serene and calm. His carpets and rugs, his tables and chairs, his settees and sofas, his dais and divans, his couches and cushions were consumed by leaping flames : he was undisturbed. "Fire cannot burn that which is truly mine !" he said. But in the palace was a *sanyasin*,—a man who was supposed to have renounced everything : he was overcome with grief at the loss of an old loin-cloth which was burnt in the flames !

On the day on which the result of an examination was announced, I felt sad : I had missed the first rank. One of my class-mates, who secured the 29th rank, felt very happy. When I expressed surprise that he should feel so happy at having secured a low rank, he quietly answered :—"I am grateful that I have passed!"

There is a touching little story told us of a Buddhist *bhikkhu*. He was the son of a rich nobleman and lived in a palace. Coming under the influence of the Buddha, he renounces his wealth and comfort and accepts the hardships of a mendicant's life. He sleeps on the bare ground underneath trees : he eats what he gets by way of alms. He feels happy. One day, he gets an attack of rheumatic pain. At first, he treats it with indifference. Days pass by : the pain persists. He cannot walk with ease : at times, he cannot even meditate properly.

He feels miserable. Gone is the joy of life. However hard he tries, he cannot recapture his lost peace. His mind becomes sluggish : he feels nerve-tired and weary. One day, as he is out begging alms, he finds a little girl playing with her friends. She is a cripple : she has only one leg and hobbles on crutches. But she is happy as a wave dancing on the sea. She shouts and laughs and makes merry with other children. Seeing her the *bhikkhu* feels ashamed of himself. "This little girl who has only one leg is bright and happy," he says to himself; "and I, a disciple of the Buddha, despair because of a little pain !" He returns a new man. The pain no longer troubles him. He is free !

Sadness is not due to what happens to us : it is due to what happens within us. Significant are the words of Sir Oliver Cromwell, the man who must have faced dangers and difficulties almost everyday :—"I bless God I have been inured to difficulties, and I never found God failing when I trusted in Him." If only we learn to trust in Him, in all situations and circumstances of life, no disappointment can touch us. I recall how, on one occasion, a piece of disconcerting news was communicated to Beloved Dadaji. "You must have felt disappointed to get the news," I said to him. "My child !" he quietly answered, "never forget that disappointments, too, are His appointments !" And he smiled.

The man who has learnt the art of living draws from the trials and tribulations of life the strength he needs to serve God and His suffering creation. Wonderful are the words of advice which St. Francis de Sales gave to his brothers :—"Remember that

bees make the sweetest honey from the flowers of the thyme,—a small and bitter herb.”

[3]

Sadness and “self” go together. The more of “self” there is in us, the more sad we are likely to become, at the slightest mishap. And “self” has many forms. There is the body-self which keeps us imprisoned to the desires and appetites of the body. These desires are as a fire which rages within us, robbing us of the true joy of life. He who attempts to gratify the senses knows how futile it is to do so. To satisfy the appetites is like adding fuel to the fire. The *rishi* of the Upanishad had greater insight into life than many of our modern psychologists, who advocate the cult of sense-satisfaction, when he declared that not all the beautiful women of the world can satisfy the lust of a single man. The man who has surrendered to his carnal self is never happy.

Then there is the mind-self which binds us to ideas and ideals. And there are subtler formless selves of which every earnest seeker on the Path has some experience : they are the selves which we create when we take delight in virtues we have acquired or in the “progress” we have made in spiritual life. And the more subtle a self, the more firmly it binds me to itself, the more miserable it makes me.

The true joy of life is in the Self concerning whom the *Gita* says :—

*The senses, it is said, are great :
Greater than the senses is the mind :
Greater than mind is the intelligence :
But greater than the intelligence is He,
the Self !*

And That thou art ! *Tat twamasi !*
Thou art the Self. And the Self is ever pure, ever free. Established in the Self thou mayst know the joy that is independent of all outer happenings, the joy that nothing, no one, can take away. So Jesus said to his disciples :—
“My joy I give unto you and your joy no man taketh from you !”

The body is not the Self. The senses are not the Self. The intellect, which plays such an important role in modern life, is not the Self. I recall the words of Upali, the barber-disciple of the Buddha :—“The intellect is a clever thing, but it over-reaches itself. Do you see that monkey making a great commotion like an earthquake in yon tree? See! Now he reaches over and springs to another tree, making a great commotion there, also, and nothing does he achieve thereby. Thus it is with the intellect: it over-reaches everything, thinking with its absurdly insignificant brain to accomplish things, when all it can do is to bring them into difficult straits.”

Seek your joy in the Self. And the Self is within you. And the way to the Self is the way of denying yourself. He who forsakes himself abides in the Lord : such an one hath fullness of joy! Most moving are the words of Guru Nanak :—

*Behold! in thine own Heart
Dwelleth He,—thy King!
And the way to Him
Is the way of Love!
Love Him,—not thyself!
Think as He thinketh!
Will as He willeth!
Do as He commandeth!
Renounce thy little self*

(Contd. on page 311)

"CAST THY CARES UPON THE LORD!"

By Mary L. KUPFERLE

In a Moment of quiet, in a time of meditation, in a period of prayer, read and contemplate these words: "I am unburdened. God's love sets me free."

All cares, doubts, and anxieties are released from your conscious mind and subconscious mind. You are unburdened through the wonderful power of God's love. His Spirit, active in you right now, sets you free. You are unburdened; you are free!

Whatever has weighed on your mind is now released. All burdens, problems, and responsibilities that have filled your thoughts are now loosed and lightened. You know that you are unburdened; you know that you are free. Your thoughts soar; you catch a new vision. You understand that the Mind of God, expressing through you, enables you to handle all things wisely, intelligently, and perfectly. You are unburdened; you are free.

If your shoulders have felt laden with cares and obligations, let your prayer be: "I am unburdened. God's love sets me free." As you pray your shoulders will relax; they will straighten; they will be strengthened. You will know that you are spiritually powerful. You will no longer feel limited or cast down. God's love lifts all wordly weight, makes easy all physical demands. Your shoulders are unburdened; you are free.

Every cell, every nerve, every muscle, every atom of your being is energized into easy, harmonious action and reaction as you continue to remember,

"I am unburdened. God's love sets me free." This thought releases all tension, stress, and strain, and lets each organ and gland function normally and perfectly. This thought frees all tightness, loosens every knot of pain. It harmonizes all bodily activities and gives you new strength, and well-being. Your body is unburdened; you are free.

Your heart is released from heaviness. All doubts, all sorrows are cast off. You are filled with the peace that passes understanding. Your heart is unburdened; your heart is set free. In this new-found freedom your heart is set free. In this new-found freedom your heart works in divine order, and its action is perfectly regulated. A well-spring of joy bubbles up within you; you are filled with new faith. Your heart is unburdened; you are free.

All through the day you are unburdened; you are free. You move through every activity, face every challenge, meet every responsibility with ease and with a peaceful mind. You give every burden to your Father God. You understand and you accept the promise: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

You now rest—even in the midst of vital activity you rest—in the peace-giving presence of God. You relax. You rejoice. You are completely unburdened. You are now and forever unburdened; God's love has set you free. Accepting His promise you find perfect rest.

—Daily Word

Our hearts were made for Thee, O Lord and they are restless, until they rest in Thee.

St. Augustine

THE VOICE OF THE VOICELESS

The following is the full text of the "The International Animals Charter" sponsored by the International Cultural Forum, India. We are deeply indebted to the Forum for their remarkable service rendered to brother animals.

The Organisers will be glad to hear from those interested in this cause. All correspondence should be addressed to and copies of the Charter may be obtained from Mr. S. P. Jain Nasim, 2653, Roshanpura, Delhi-6 (India) or Miss F. Barker, B.A., 127, Nevill Avenue, Hove 4, Sussex, (England).

Editor

Throughout the ages, saints, seers, and intellectuals have felt and taught compassion for all creatures and have claimed divine life for all.

Man was given dominion over the animals, but this most certainly does not imply tyranny. The position should be that of trusteeship, i. e., to safeguard the interests of those who are voiceless and helpless.

We have, therefore, been led to accept the following two principles, stated by the Humanitarian League in 1896 :

(1) The recognition of the actual kinship of man with the lower races implies the extension of the sphere of moral duties consequent on this sense of relationship.

(2) It is, therefore, iniquitous to inflict suffering, directly or indirectly, on any sentient being, except when self-defence or absolute necessity can be justly pleaded.

The full application of the following points can only be attained gradually, as man spiritualises his mind, realises the oneness of life in its essential process and ascends to a truly higher civilisation.

1. Animals have a right to live out their own lives and taking the life

of an animal is to be deplored. But in the present immature state of evolution this is inevitable. Meanwhile, all animals, both domesticated and wild, should be protected as far as possible from the cruelty and suffering caused by man's ruthless exploitation.

2. When it is necessary to take the life of an animal (after considering the possible alternatives) it must be done in the most humane way known to science and by licensed persons who have been fully trained in humane techniques. This to apply also to so-called pests, which should be officially exterminated when possible, thus discouraging the public at large, and especially children, from committing acts of cruelty.

3. Transport of animals should be made as humane as possible and in occupations where the use of animals involves suffering, unnatural conditions and incarceration below ground, they should be replaced by mechanical devices.

4. Cruel sports, viz. hunting, coursing, bullfights, etc., the use of animals upon the stage and screen (except for educational purposes where it can be certified by the producer that no fright or pain has been inflicted in

the making) and in circuses; the cruel trapping of animals for zoos, menageries, for fur-bearing and other purposes should be abandoned.

5. Animals should not be made to participate in warfare, nor in those practices which set one animal to make war upon another; nor should they be killed in religious sacrifices.

6. Vivisection and all experiments on animals causing pain and/or suffering, whether atomic, pharmaceutical, psychological or other should be discontinued: pain only to be inflicted for the benefit of the animal concerned, with the maximum use of anaesthetics and methods of natural healing. Hospitals and travelling dispensaries, free for animals of the poor, should be provided in all areas, with arrangements for dealing with strays.

7. All animals should be given the decent necessities of life, namely, good food to maintain them in health, good living quarters and companionship and the maximum amount of freedom practicable to the various owners. Animals suffering from incurable diseases and crippling old age to be humanely destroyed. In healthy old age homes of rest could be provided, when possible, as a gesture of repayment of the debt to the animals for their part in building up our civilisation.

8. The public should be instructed in the advantages to health and evolution of a more humane diet and the dis-use of articles of apparel necessitating great suffering to the animals. Natural methods of healing and humane substitutes for food and clothing are available now in plenty.

9. Study of the life of animals and of their proper treatment should be

included in the curriculum of all schools and youth organisations. Religious and cultural bodies should realise their responsibility for the humane education of adults and children alike.

10. A Ministry of State for Animal Welfare, including persons of known humanitarian sympathies and carrying a record of service, should be set up in every country and kept fully alive to all matters relating to animals.

For the purposes of this Charter the term "animals" shall include all birds, animals, fishes and reptiles.

* * *

In drawing up this Charter, the International Cultural Forum has stated some of the aims which people all over the world, who have the welfare of animals at heart, are striving to attain and hopes in this way to bind all such workers together into a spiritual unity, believing that culture is radioactive and that union is strength.

Without losing sight of the ideal, our aim is also to pursue the possible and bring about piecemeal reforms. To narrow the gap between the actual lives of the animals and the abstract principles we have stated, by bringing some of the clauses of the Charter into effect in everyday life.

The enormous size of the world animal population makes it imperative that a great deal of thought should be given to this subject. We are morally responsible for the welfare of a large number of these creatures, because they have become the helpless victims of the human situation. We have taken from so many of them their birth-right as happy "Children of the Wild," and have substituted the iron chains of a cruel and inexorable exploitation.

We have brought them, in great numbers, into the enslavement of our mechanised world, where their natural instincts can scarcely function. We have made them bear the toil and sweat of building up a large part of our civilisation and they are, therefore, entitled to some of the advantages that have accrued and to what relief and happiness we can give them in this imperfect world.

We recognise that all sentient creatures have natural rights and are children of the same Father. We realise that most of the sufferings of animals stem from our own lives and that it is here that reform must begin. To quote Professor Radhakrishnan: "The knowledge that the Supreme Spirit dwells in the heart of every living creature is the abiding root principle of all *dharma* (righteousness)."

From time to time enactments are made reducing some form of cruelty (often only for another to arise) but the only firm basis for the abolition of this cruelty lies in our own way of living. The International Cultural Forum is working towards this end whilst at the same time urging those of its members who feel so disposed to sign the Charter and work for specific reforms.

The first step, which all can take, is the gradual adoption of a more humane diet. Medical opinion has now definitely stated that flesh foods are not necessary for perfect health, whilst insurance companies, by reducing the premiums for vegetarians, have recog-

nised that such a diet is more conducive to longevity.

Civilisation is the sum total of all our personal lives. None of us can be left out of the calculation and the level of civilisation determines the happiness and freedom of its members, human and sub-human, especially the latter, who cannot speak our languages and tell us of their needs and are therefore dependent for their welfare on our more subtle and refined faculties.

Religious teachings are full of injunctions as to man's duties towards the creatures. Under the Fifth Commandment some Catechisms ask the question: "Have I been kind to animals?" and we specially commend the suggestion from "The Garden of the Soul," that cruelty to animals should be made a point of self-examination, for it certainly is a sin that should not be allowed to slip by unnoticed, whatever one's religion may be.

Let us pray that we may have a new Charter for a new age and a new way of living, a Charter which does something to restore animal life to its proper place in the evolutionary scheme. Let those, who are not steeped in a callous materialism, take heart everywhere. Progress may seem slow, but compassion and justice are on our side. In spite of the apparent barrenness of the soil and the crushing power of the well-entrenched adversaries, right will eventually prevail. For do not the Scriptures say: "They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain, for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea."

All killing is a denial of love. For to kill or to eat what another has killed is to rejoice in cruelty. And cruelty hardens our heart and blinds our vision and we see not that they whom we kill are our brothers and sisters in the one Brotherhood of Life.

—J. P. Vaswani

WOMAN,—THE BEARER OF PEACE

The following beautiful message was received by us, 26 years ago, from H. E. Prof. Nicholas de Roerich, from Kulu (Himalayas).

The message was first published in the weekly MIRA, 26 years ago. The message is reprinted as it will be read with interest along with an article on Prof. Roerich in this issue under the caption "The Bard of the Himalayas".

Editor

Under the radiant name "Mira," in "Simplicity, Service, Purity, and Prayer" you come together. These noble conceptions belong to the Beautiful, which culminates creation. How could humanity express its exaltation without prayer? Without purity and simplicity, mankind would come to ugliness and vulgarity. Without the conception of Great Service, the world would be plunged into darkness.

I have often greeted womanhood as the bearers of Beauty and Peace. But this Peace does not mean inactivity. Even the highest Bliss can be attained but in ardent action. And you, when coming together for your lofty aims, understand the meaning of the discipline of the Spirit. Humanity during the present perturbances, indeed, requires the understanding of the Great Service of every day.

Precisely the woman, from the cradle to the throne, accomplishes and inspires attainment. The very word "Mira", beginning with the most cryptic letter of the alphabet, is already beautiful in its own sound. As heroic is the life of the beautiful Queen Mira. Similar heroic examples should be given to the growing generation from the very childhood. The mother, the wife, and the sister will powerfully remind their near ones of the brilliant epic deeds.

Mothers, wives and sisters—transform the dusky daily life into the festival of Great Service, and show the coming generation that every labour while of spiritual aspect, creates high quality. This sublime quality should enter human life from Dawn to Sunset, and in this constant self-perfectioning we shall find the creative smile of happiness.

Mothers, wives and sisters—create Heroes!

May the blessings of the Mother of the World be with you!

N. de Roerich

Vivekananda and Gandhi*(Contd. from page 286)*

Vivekananda and Gandhi spoke to us with the accent of the authentic voice of the Rishis :—God, the *Atman*, is the Ultimate, the Indispensable, the Alpha and Omega of the individual and the Nation. Vivekananda and Gandhi re-proclaimed the truth that the way to Freedom and Peace is the way the Master announced long, long ago in the *Gita* :—“Whatever thou doest, whatever thou eatest, whatever thou offerest, do it, O Arjuna! unto Me!” There are no departments, no spheres of influence, from which you can exclude God in whom, indeed, is the fulfilment of the life of a nation.

Years ago, I read the words of a great thinker, Vassili Rozanov : the words have clung to my memory. He says :—“Our economic and social crises come from the withering away of spiritual values and the consequent moral vacuum in public life.”

Rishi-souls were Vivekananda and Gandhi. Remember them, I say to you who are young! Remember the Rishis and remember Her, the Mother, in your daily life! A new *shakti*, then, will pass into your words and your deeds. Keep alive the inspiration of those who have served India and borne witness to her great Ideal. Then go to the villages where they wait for you,—men and women with hunger and longing in their hearts! Go to the poor and share with them the food they need. Give them the message of the Greater India that is to be! Go and tell the toiling multitudes to turn from the oppressive imitation and emptiness of these days to the inspiration of the Ideal announced in our days by Ramakrishna, Vivekananda and Gandhi. It made Aryavarta a model nation, in the long ago. It will renew the life of Hindusthan, will rejuvenate Bharata, will make India mighty again,—mighty and young with immortal youth.

The Bard of the Himalayas*(Contd. from page 288)*

A great scholar and writer, archaeologist and explorer, he touched and lighted up so many aspects of human endeavour. The very quality is stupendous—thousands of paintings and each one of them a great work of art. When you look at these paintings, so many of them of the Himalayas, you seem to catch the spirit of those great mountains which have towered over the Indian plains and been our sentinels for ages past. They remind us of so much in our history, our thought, our cultural and spiritual heritage, so much not merely of the India of the past but of something that is permanent and eternal about India, that we cannot help feeling a great sense of indebtedness to Nicholas Roerich who has enshrined that spirit in these magnificent canvases.”

Eleven years have passed since the painter's death. And at last he did return to his native land. His son Yuri, a scholar of the East and an archaeologist, the invariable companion of his father in the latter's expeditionary travels in the East, has brought together a large number of his canvases. A Roerich art show was opened in Moscow, from where it was later moved to Lenin-grad. Moscow has not seen for a long time such queues that waited outside to have a look at the works of Nicholas Roerich.

Soviet people pay tribute to the great artist for singing praises to the wisdom of the East and the greatness of India with immense poetic power, for having brought against the threat of war both with brush and the written word, for waging a struggle so that the Sacred Spring of Justice, Happiness and Beauty may flourish on Earth.

—Soviet Land

Editor's Letter

Dear Readers,

Cordial Greetings !

May the benedictions of the Lord ever shine upon you and your work!

We wonder if you know that the "*Mira*" is being offered at a much less price than its actual cost. Production costs have increased by leaps and bounds. The cost of paper is increasing from day to day; we are now required to pay very much higher rates for printing and binding on account of the introduction of the Minimum Wages Act; rates of postage have also increased. All these factors affect the financial side of the Journal.

Every new subscription to the *Mira* is an added deficit. But it is not our intention to increase the subscription. We wish that the journal may reach even those whose income is average.

Our Budget for the year 1959-60 can only be balanced with the co-operation and assistance and generous support of our kind readers whom God has given abundantly and who can extend their helping-hand to the *Mira*. We shall deeply appreciate your kind response.

This is how you can help:

1. By enrolling yourself as a Life-Member. Life-membership is Rs. 100/- or £ 10 or \$30.00,—payable all at once or in easy instalments. A Life-member will receive a lovely, beautiful bound volume of the 12 issues of the *Mira* complete with an index etc.
2. By sending in a donation or a love-offering.
3. By enrolling new subscribers to the *Mira*.

And may the *Mira*,—a messenger of the Great Ones of Humanity,—under God's grace, continue to bring to you and to many others in many lands the message of Hope and Love, of Joy and Harmony!

All contributions, no matter how small, will be gratefully received and may be sent by money order or postal order or crossed cheques to: The Editor, "*Mira*", 10 Connaught Road, Poona-1 (India).

Yours in the One Service,
Gangaram Sajandas
Editor

Love and Laugh
(Contd. from page 303)

*And find the fullness of joy
At His Lotus-Feet!*

[4]

When a black mood of gloom and despair creeps over you, perhaps, the best and the simplest way to ward it off is to laugh. Laughter is contagious. If some one beside you laughs, you find it difficult to suppress laughter. There is a man who has pinned to his wall pictures of men and women and children laughing heartily. Whenever he feels sad or depressed, he has but to take a look at the pictures on the wall: he cannot help but smile,—and immediately feels better.

I read of a man who rendered immense service to sufferers in a hospital. All he had with himself was an album which cost next to nothing: it was a collection of "laughing" pictures taken from discarded newspapers and magazines. With this album he went to patients many of whom were in the throes of physical agony. They had not known what it was to smile, for weeks together. At the sight of the "laughing" pictures, they burst into laughter: they forgot their physical ailments for a while: they felt so very much better. And this must have helped them in making a speedy recovery.

Laughter is medicine. It helps in building up moral muscles. It is a spiritual tonic. It has a great cleansing power. When you feel sad or downcast, look at your face in a mirror. It looks so tense, so ugly, so unlike the face you would wish others to see. The strain in the face is due to some negative emotion which is playing havoc in the

mind. One way of breaking the force of the negative emotion is to relax. Relax the whole body. And as you do so, you will find that the last part of the body to relax is always the face: and of the face the mouth is the last part to relax. So smile, and laugh! And you will see how quickly the clouds vanish and you are happy again!

The secret of relaxation is in the three words:—"Let it go!" Life is full of incidents, both pleasant and unpleasant. When an unpleasant thing happens, we are apt to lose our balance: this creates a negative emotion which expresses itself in a feeling of sadness or depression. An effective way of dealing with such a situation is to go to the root of the matter and "let go" what is causing the negative emotion. Let it go! Let everything go!

Has my sister failed to understand me? Let it go! Has my brother spoken ill of me? Let it go! Has my best friend turned against me? Let it go! Have I suffered loss in business? Let it go! Have my plans been upset? Let it go! Have I been treated with disrespect? Let it go! Has a dear one passed on? Let it go! Has my health suffered a setback? Let it go! Have I been cheated, robbed, deceived by some one in whom I placed my trust? Let it go!

In this world of transitoriness,—a world in which things come and go, nothing abides,—is there anything worth worrying over? Let it go! The more we let go, the more do we conserve our energies for the constructive and creative tasks of life.

There is a beautiful little incident in the life of Aesop, the great storyteller. One day, Aesop is playing with little children, shouting and laughing with them. An Athenian passes

by: he expresses surprise that such a grown-up person should waste his time thus. In answer, Aesop picks up a bow and, unstringing it, lays it on the ground. To the Athenian, he says:—"O wise one! tell me the meaning of this unstrung bow!" The man is perplexed: he finds no suitable answer. "I cannot solve your riddle," he says; "tell me what it means." And Aesop says to him:—"If you keep a bow always bent, it will lose its elasticity. But if you *let it go* slack, it will be fitter for use when you want it."

Are we not,—many of us,—like the bent bow, always highly strung? We need to unstring ourselves, to relax, from time to time, that we may be "fitter for use" when we are called to action. And to relax we need to learn to "let go."

[5]

True relaxation is resting,—resting in God,—until God's *shakti* flows into us, fills our entire being. So it is necessary to enter into silence from time to time. "The very first word in the Scripture of Life," Beloved Dadaji said, the other day, "is silence!" Sit quietly at the Lotus-feet of the Lord and gaze and gaze at His beauteous Face and, in that gaze, be lost to yourself. This it is to be still. In stillness will God's strength flow into us, rejuvenating us, revitalising us: and we shall feel as new men and women, sons and daughters of God.

The true strength of life is the strength of stillness. The world worships the strength of action, and this is often cruel, aggressive, tainted with sordid selfishness. True strength belongs to him who has learnt to rest in God. Such an one becomes the very picture of peace. He radiates peace to a

world wandering in noise and discord, hate and strife. Out of him flow healing vibrations of peace, as some calm river flowing through the desert of life. He blesses all who come to him and is himself blessed !

Such a man abides in the Lord, and the Lord abides in him: they dwell together in a hidden place known only to them. That hidden place is his true Home: to it he repairs, again and again: and in all the changing vicissitudes of life, he feels safe and secure. Outside, storms may howl and thunders growl and lightnings flash: he is not afraid. Nothing upsets him. The shocks of the world are by him easily absorbed. He is ever calm, assured, at rest. But he is not idle. He is a man of activity, dedicated activity, creative activity. He works offering all his actions at the Lotus-feet of the Lord. He works as an instrument of the Will Divine. His work is worship. He achieves what the *Gita* calls "inaction in action." In his life silence is blended with action: and he arrives at a stage at which, in the words of the great Chinese seer, Laotse, he does "nothing and everything is done" !

We work so strenuously, so hard, and yet achieve nothing. We work for the good of the community, society, nation, humanity. We sacrifice our health, our wealth, our rest and leisure. And yet our work seems to do no good: the world speeds on from confusion to chaos, from danger to destruction. Our work is not in tune with the Divine Will. Our work is tainted with the self,—selfish motives, desire for prominence, thoughts of reward in the life beyond this life. We have not renounced the ego: we have not offered up our lives in the great sacrifice of the universe.

The man who offers his life, his all, at the Lotus-feet of the Lord works with peace in the heart. He works as a servant of God and Man. He sees that men and women suffer in this world of tragedy and tears : he gives to all the service of love. His work does not take him away from God. His work is God-guided work. "Not I but the Father in me works," he says. His work is ever the work of God. In his work there is no hustle, no bustle, no fuss, no noise, no aimless rushing about. In his work is,—love for all ! He loves and he laughs. In his work there is no unrest, but peace,—the peace that passeth understanding. He is free from attachment and hatred,—and from all fear. He fears no one, and he does not fear death. He smiles in the face of death !

[6]

Of one such man I read, the other day. He was an early disciple of Christ. He lived at a time when to become a devotee of Christ was to invite death by torture. But he was not afraid. He was a simple peasant: he lived by the sweat of his brow. As he tilled the land, he sang within his heart the Name of his Master. He tilled for the love of Christ. His land yielded abundant grain. He kept a little for himself, sharing the rest with the poor in whom he beheld the radiant face of his Beloved. His house was open to all who needed food and shelter. And many were the pilgrims and wayfarers with whom he shared his simple meals and the love of his big, beautiful heart.

The Government of his day learns of his deep devotion to Jesus. And

soldiers are sent to kill him. They arrive at his village, a little after sunset. They want food and shelter for the night. They are told that in the village is a man who denies hospitality to none. They go to him, not knowing that it is he whom they have come to kill. He meets them with the warmth of love : he serves them : he gives them food to eat. And when he asks them the purpose of their visit, he learns that they have come to kill him. The soldiers ask for his help in locating the man they have come to kill. He promises to do so the next morning, asking them to spend the night in his cottage. He attends to their needs : he prepares beds for them : he puts them to sleep.

What does he do then ? He does not run away from the village : but he goes out and digs a grave for himself. He is not afraid of death. He is happy as a bride on her wedding-day. He is eager to meet the Eternal Bridegroom, the Spouse of the soul. He keeps awake the whole night, communing with his Lord and Master.

At the dawning of the next day, he says to the soldiers :— "I am he whom you seek. My head is before you : do your duty ! " The soldiers are taken aback. They are loath to take the life of this most marvellous man and fain would have given him a chance to escape. But he says to them :—"Fear not, brothers ! You have come to lay on my poor, undeserving head the crown of martyrdom. I die for the love of my Master,—Jesus Christ !" And as they chop off his head, there are tears in the eyes of the soldiers : but his face is filled with an unearthly light. He is not

afraid of death. He smiles in the face of death. And when they ask him the secret of his life, he says :—"There is no secret. I simply love and I laugh. Each moment I delight in the Lord ! I try to live: the teachings of my Master in my daily life: and I have the fullness of joy which no man may take away from me !"

"I love and I laugh !" In these five simple words is summed up the secret of this remarkable man. How many of us can truthfully say that we love and we laugh ? Do we love all,—men and birds and animals ? It is easy to love our friends : do we love them that bear ill-will towards us ? It is easy to love our kith and kin, our dear and near ones : do we love strangers ? It is easy to love those that praise us : do we love those that condemn and speak ill of us ? It is easy to love them that help us : do we love them that spitefully use us or exploit us to selfish ends ? It is easy to love the rich, the wealthy, and those that are in authority dressed : do we love the poor and lonely, the forsaken and forlorn ? It is easy to love the "good" and "virtuous" : do we love the sinner, the criminal, the thief and the robber ? Do we love those that have gone astray and those whom our laws,—just and unjust,—have made prisoners ? Do we love

birds and animals who, alas ! each day are driven to the slaughter-house to satisfy our crapulence and edacity ? Do we love trees and plants, leaves and flowers and blades of grass ? Do we love rivers and seas, hills and mountains, stones and stars ? Do we love each grain of sand, each drop of water, each ray of light ? Do we love God and do we love His creatures for the sake of God ?

And do we laugh,—in all conditions and circumstances of life ? It is easy to laugh when fortune favours us : do we laugh when misfortune dogs our footsteps ? Do we laugh in the face of suffering and sorrow, of danger and difficulty, of trial and tribulation, of disease and death ? Do we laugh when our dear ones desert us, when our friends forsake us and we are left alone in this wide, wonderful world ? Do we laugh when all around us is darkness and not a star doth shine ?

Until we have learnt to love and laugh, we are not ready to be led into the Kingdom of God. Our hearts are hard: they need to become soft and supple. Our soil is not fertile: it needs to be ploughed with love and laughter. If the ground is hard, the seed will not grow. Prepare the ground ! Prepare it with love and laughter !

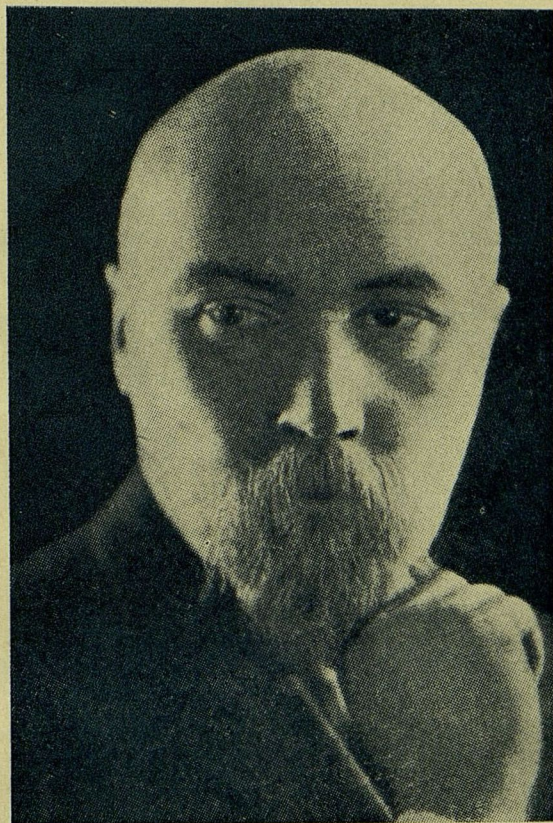
He who says, "What is mine is mine and what is yours is mine," is wicked.

He who says, "What is mine is mine and what is yours is yours," has a neutral character.

He who says, "What is mine is yours and what is yours is mine," is called a boor.

He who says, "What is mine is yours and what is yours is yours," is a saint.

—Contributed



NICHOLAS de ROERICH

St. Mira's High School is, indeed, a living School.... The School is radiating spirituality. There, where the blessed hand of the venerable Sri Vaswaniji is guiding, there are expressed tolerance, benevolence and ardent striving towards the Highest.

—Nicholas de Roerich
[In a message]



Sadhu Hiranand

As a young college student in Calcutta, Hiranand opened the "Eagle's Nest",—a centre of communion and contemplation, of self-examination and self-introspection, of study and selfless, silent service. Around him was a band of youngmen,—all Brothers in the Spirit.

In this "Nest" Hiranand kept a "Diary", which contains uplifting thoughts and aspirations. Here is one reproduced from that "Diary".

The whole universe carries to us the message of love and forbearance.

The stars above and the grass below, they all tell us of peace, of love, of gentle dealing, of patient charity, of good will. The transcendental star and ignoble lowly grass work in harmony in the scheme of nature.

And so should we. The high and the low, the great and the small, the idle and the industrious, should work in this peaceful Nest in blessed union and love, helping and directing one another. Meekly bearing with each other's faults, we should shun all manner of personal treatment which may burden on or smack of indifference or silent anger of the heart.

Dear brothers, merging all differences and distinctions in our common love, we should work conjointly for one another in affectionate union.

WATCH-TOWER

By GANGARAM SAJANDAS

From America

Dr. R. M. Good, President Emeritus, the School of Ozarks, Point Lookout, Missouri, U. S. A., writes in the course of his kind letter on the occasion of our 26th Foundation Day:—

We wish to send our kindest regards and best of good wishes to the Mira Movement on the celebration of the 26th Anniversary of your Foundation.

You are doing wonderful work and your magazine is very very fine, indeed, and I really enjoy it more than you can know.

We send you our blessings and our good wishes and we hope the Society will have many many more wonderful years ahead.

I am sure Mr. T. L. Vaswani must have been truly a wonderful man and he founded a great organization.

Bharat Ratna Dr. Karve

Beloved revered Maharishi D. K. Karve has been admitted to Dr. Gharpure's Nursing Home. He suffers from enlargement of the prostate gland.

It was a blessing to have his *darshan* in the Nursing Home. A sweet, calm smile played on his lips. How fondly and affectionately he greeted me when I entered his room and bowed before him! Light of patience and poise shone on his face.

Maharishi Karve is a rich treasure not only of the Maharashtra but of India and Humanity. His presence is a benediction and a blessing. The Healing Angels of God are guarding him! Our reverent salutations to this great one of India!

Sadhu Hiranand

July 14 returns! The day is associated with the revered and fragrant memory of beloved Sadhu Hiranand,—a sage, a savant, a servant of the people. His was a life rooted in God and dedicated to His service. Sadhu Hiranand's life was a sweet, sacred song of sacrifice. He passed away at the age of 30. But during this short span of life, he radiated a new light, a new fragrance. He was a child of God's grace and he freely shared with those, who came in contact with him, the treasures of his rich heart. Blessed be his memory!

July 14 will be fittingly celebrated at St. Mira's.

Rishi Roerich

Elsewhere, in this issue, we have pleasure in publishing an article on H. E. Prof. Nicholas de Roerich, under the caption "The Bard of the Himalayas," by an eminent Russian writer, Mr. I. Agranovsky. Nicholas Roerich was a Rishi of modern Russia: he was a beloved brother and friend of Sri T. L. Vaswaniji. Both held each other in great esteem and veneration. Rishi Roerich was a great admirer of Sri Vaswaniji and St. Mira's Movement in Education. Time and again he sent his inspiring messages of good-will and appreciation for St. Mira's School which he called "the living School".

Elsewhere in this issue we have pleasure to publish his inspiring message which he sent us 26 years ago,—in June, 1933.

Rishi Roerich was, also, a great champion of the cause of womanhood. In his heart was great reverence for woman. He believed that without the reverence for woman, no civilization could be built. He foresaw that woman would be the builder of peace; and among the many paintings which he very graciously presented to St. Mira's from time to time was "The Great Mother of the Banner of the Peace" which is the frontispiece to this issue.

Rishi Roerich's radiant and fragrant memory is still alive in our grateful hearts and we believe his immortal spirit doth still bless St. Mira's.

Homage to him!

Parting

A "Social" was organised by the staff of St. Mira's High School in honour of Shri C. B. Advani, the out-going Headmaster, St. Mira's High School and the in-coming Principal, Kumari H. P. Vaswani.

Shrimati Vinduri Hiranandani, B.A., B.Sc., S.T.C., B.T., Shri K. N. Malkani, M.A., S.T.C., and Kumari I. T. Jotwani, M.A., S.T.C.,—three of the members of the staff, in their brief speeches, paid respectful tributes to the retiring Headmaster, "to whom they looked up as their revered elder and loving father". They felt happy to express that God had sent them in Shri Advani's place one whose rich, radiant heart over-flowed with love for all the members of the staff and students of St. Mira's Schools.

Shri C. B. Advani, in his response, heartily congratulated the members of the staff on being associated with St. Mira's. He exhorted them to hold fast to the anchor of faith,—faith in God

and His Saints. Referring to Kumari H. P. Vaswani, the new Principal, Shri Advani said that God had endowed her with rare gifts and talents and radiant qualities of character. St. Mira's High School was, indeed, fortunate to have her as its Principal, said Shri Advani.

Kumari Vaswani who was deeply touched, could speak only a few words. She said she was fortunate in having the beautiful co-operation and willing assistance of a band of devoted, earnest and active members of the staff.

Shri Gangaram, the Secretary, in his few words deeply appreciated the noble life of Shri C. B. Advani and his successor. Both, said he, were models worthy to be emulated.

Sri T. L. Vaswaniji, who was present, kindly wrote the following message for the occasion:—

Write me a servant of the little ones and of all who, in purity and love, dedicate their lives to the service of the little ones.

Light refreshments were served.

The entire function breathed out benedictions on all who attended it.

In the Mira Hall

Addressing a Sunday evening Fellowship meeting held in the Mira Hall, Sri Vaswaniji said that education in St. Mira's Schools should be such as would enable the students to become servants of their community and beloved Bharat and Humanity. He congratulated the Headmaster and the staff of St. Mira's High School on achieving 96 percent pass results at the S. S. C. Examination. But he reminded them that more than academic achievement was the spirit of service that must grow from to more in the lives of St. Mira's students,

Sri Vaswaniji said that the students and staff were fortunate in having Kumari Hari Vaswani as their Principal. Her life, said Sri Vaswaniji was rich and radiant in the spirit of sacrifice. When he thought of Kumari Hari, he was reminded of Sadhu Hiranand whose picture he saw in her. Sadhu Hiranand dedicated his life to the service of the little ones. He was a man of great sacrifice; and sacrifice was a great power, a great *shakti*. In Sadhu Hiranand's heart was beautiful love for the little ones. Kumari Vaswani, too, was filled with love for the little ones. This spirit of love for the little ones would build St. Mira's School.

Sri Vaswaniji related a moving story of a Western educationist whose life, too, was devoted to the service of the little ones. On his tomb were written the following significant words:—"Every thing for others; nothing for myself!" This, said Sri Vaswaniji, should be the motto of every teacher and student of St. Mira's. "Serve ye the little ones," said Sri Vaswaniji in conclusion, "with love in your heart and a smile on your face! Serve and be blessed! Build the Mira School in the teachings of the Great Ones, the Rishis and Saints,—in the inspiration of the *Gita* and the *Gurbani* and *Santbani*. Build the School in the power of love."

The New World Union

In an interesting talk in the Mira Hall, Poona, Mr. Jay Holmes Smith, one of the conveners of the New World Union,—a movement for World Peace on a Spiritual Foundation,—related the history of the Union. Mr. Smith emphasised that there would be no peace in the world without building a world brotherhood on spiritual basis.

He rightly affirmed that "there is an ultimate unity of all beings, rooted in the divine life." Creation, he said, is one family. In the bond of spiritual Fellowship and Comradeship was the solution to the problems that were facing the world today.

Mr. Smith, an American, is a disciple of Rishi Aurobindo Ghosh. He has stayed for several years in the Pondichery Ashram. He and his co-worker, Shri Anil Kumar Mukherjee are the founders of the New World Union. Both are inspired by the great ideal of spiritual brotherhood and both are earnestly working for building up an edifice of brotherhood and love and peace on a spiritual foundation.

We wish God-speed to this noble movement. Those interested will please write direct to the conveners at 1, Commercial Bldgs., Calcutta-1 (India).

Social Activities

In the month of June, St. Mira's students had several social activities including a debate, a drama, an inter-school match and a film show. Students also have evening games. A wave of new enthusiasm is visible in St. Mira's High School.

The staff, too, hold their weekly meetings at which they discuss matters relating to the progress of the School and plan for the future.

We are also glad to note that Principal Vaswani has given her immediate attention to students' amenities.

The Brotherhood Association in response to her proposals, has spent over Rs. 8,000/—and provided for additional sanitary arrangements, more classrooms, drinking water facilities, etc.

Every care is taken to see that St. Mira's students are given opportunities to grow not only academically, but also, physically and spiritually.

Scholarships

Last month we announced a donation of Rs. 10,000/— from a generous-hearted brother for creating a scholarship endowment for the service of girl students of St. Mira's High School. We are glad to inform our readers that a kind sister from Bermuda has contributed a further donation of Rs. 5,000/— for the same purpose.

The annual interest on this amount will be utilized in granting scholarships to deserving girls of St. Mira's High School.

Kalyan Nari Shalla

This department of work, dedicated to the service of women and girls, is gradually developing. It is a joy to inform our readers that Shri C. B. Advani, who retired on the 1st of June, 1959, as the Headmaster of St. Mira's High School, was appointed that very day as Superintendent of the Kalyan Nari Shalla.

We feel confident that under his fostering care coupled with his beautiful devotion, this Department will render much greater service to many in the coming days.

St. Mira's English Medium School

It is a joy to learn of the rapid progress of St. Mira's English Medium School, started last year. Principal Vaswani's beautiful devotion coupled with her indefatigable labours are abundantly blessed. Smilingly she serves the little ones. And is not the reward of service more service?

This year was added standard 2nd.

Because of many new admissions, we had to open three divisions of standard 1st. and also three divisions of the Kindergarten Class. We feel happy to serve the dear little ones of all communities. Does not our revered Dadaji say:

"An infinite power lies hidden in the heart of the child. Educate! Educate! The little ones will lead us out of chaos into Light!"

Correction

We regret we wrongly published on page 281 of the last issue of the *Mira* the name of Shri Srikrishindas H. Lulla instead of Shri Balkrishindas Lulla who departed to the Great Beyond. May his soul rest in peace !

Life-Members

We feel happy to greet the following new Life-Members to the *Mira*:—

1. Mrs. Irne Connyberre, London;
2. Mr. K. H. Gadhvi, Pemba,
(East Africa);
3. Shri D. P. Nagdev, Bundi,
(India);
4. Shri J. J. Choolani, Bombay;
5. Rao Bahadur M. A. Asrani,
Coonoor.

Every Life-member is a Donor-Member. The Life-member will receive *free* the *Mira* as long as the Journal is issued. He will also, receive other literature that may be published by the "*Mira*" from time to time. In addition, the Life-member will receive in the beginning a lovely gift of a bound volume of the "*Mira*" containing 376 pages of reading matter plus 14 art plates and tri-coloured pictures of the Great Ones of Humanity.

Life-membership is Rs. 100/—(Foreign £ 10/ or \$30),—payable all at once or in easy instalments.

This morn, I meditated on a Russian saying :—

“Every Day is a messenger of God !”

And I asked, —of this day :—

“What is thy message for me ?”

And this I heard :—

“ Bless a poor man,—the orphan, the widow, the bird, the cow, the dog ! Bless one with a broken body or a broken heart !

“ To serve is to bless.

“ To wipe a tear, to speak a word of sympathy, to give of your bread a fragment, to comfort another in sorrow wrapped,—this it is to serve, to bless and be blessed !”

T. L. Vaswani

*Nicholas - de Roerich
Life Sketch - page - 295*

MIRA

Build ye a Bridge of Brotherhood between East & West !

T. L. Vaswani

for

Vivekananda and Gandhi

T. L. VASWANI

The Bard of the Himalayas

I. AGRANOVSKY

Martyr for Purity

T. F. DOYLE

The Boy who changed his Country

L. F. C.

The Heaven in the Heart

SISTER DAYA

Love and Laugh !

J. P. VASWANI

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THE GREAT MOTHER OF THE BANNER OF PEACE
By Nicholas de Roerich

[See pages 295, 308 and 315

THE BARD OF THE HIMALAYAS

By AGRANOVSKY

There are few Russian names that are as closely connected with India as that of Nicholas Roerich. In the annals of Russo-Indian friendship his name stands beside those of Afanasi Nikitin, Gerasim Lebedev and Fyodor Shcherbatskoy, who were the first Russians to discover the shores of Hindustan for their compatriots. Indeed they did more, they discovered also the soul of its peoples.

Roerich spent the years of his childhood near Russia's oldest city—the Great Novgorod. The last 25 years of his life Roerich lived in the Indian Himalayas. There, in West Punjab, near his modest dwelling in Kulu, in full view of the ice-capped mountain peaks, captured hundreds of times by the brush of Roerich, was buried part of the remains of the artist, whose body was burned after his death in keeping with the ancient customs of the Slavs and the Hindus. The rest of the ashes, together with hundreds of Roerich's canvases, have recently been brought back to his native land, the return to whose bosom was his passionate desire.

Although leaving Novgorod Roerich travelled a great deal in Italy and France, and lived in England and America before becoming the bard of the Himalayas, this intermediary period of his life has found almost no reflection in the artist's creative work. Roerich will go down in the history of world painting as the bard of old Rus and the countries of the Himalayas—India, Tibet and Mongolia.

Roerich's first paintings, which appeared in the nineties of last century,

astonished his contemporaries by their originality. He had studied at the Art Academy under the distinguished Russian painter Arkhip Kuinji. He took from Kuinji his bright, colourful palette, and the artist's view of the world as a majestic struggle with light. But Roerich had also other teachers—the old Russian Icon painters. He learned from them restraint and simplicity of form. The combination of Kuinji's radiance of light with the laconism of the old Russian masters gave rise to the style that was inimitably Roerich's.

In those years Roerich travelled a great deal all over Russia, admiring the architecture of its first cities and studying them. He gazed at the picturesque scenes of the North which had enchanted him since childhood, and glorified them in his canvases, verse and prose. He wrote: "The story of the North is deep and charming. The Northern winds are vigorous and cheerful. The Northern lakes meditative. The Northern streams silvery. The dark forests sagacious. The green hills worldly-wise. The grey stones full of wonders."

And Roerich revealed to the people these wonders in his canvases. How the feeling of the hoary ages, the events of antiquity, are transmitted by the painter in his painting *Guests From Beyond the Sea*. *Sacred Spring* is the creation of an artist who visualised Nature and Man as a harmonious whole. It is a hymn to the trusty brotherhood of man not expecting harm from any one and not preparing to harm any one.

The Revolution found Roerich in Finland. Events cut him off from his native land and Roerich devoted himself wholly to art, which alone seemed to him real in the inconsistent common world shaken up by catastrophes. He held a series of shows of his canvases in Scandinavia, England and the United States. He made a tremendous hit in New York. But the cruel world of business did not at all suit a man of Roerich's temperament. He went to the country that had long charmed him: India.

Roerich considered that he had discovered in Indian culture not only the characteristics that are akin to those of old Slavic art and life which were dear to him. It seemed to him that he found there that world of renunciation of worldly cares for which he had passionately yearned for so long. He settled down on the threshold of heaven itself—the Himalayas. With the fervency of an artist who has finally achieved his ideal, again and again he drew on hundreds of canvases the Himalayan mountain ridges, in whose serene severity he believed lay the key to the secret of life.

He became a fast friend of Rabindranath Tagore, whom he had come to know in London in 1920. They called each other "brother in spirit", and exchanged books, photos, articles and ideas.

Jawaharlal Nehru became an admirer not only of Roerich's talent as a painter but also of his knowledge of the East accumulated during his lengthy expeditious into the most inaccessible corners of the area surrounding the Himalayas. Nehru spent two weeks in Kulu, talking to Roerich about art, history and contemporaneity.

But Roerich could not remain aloof. War and fascism were threatening everything that the painter held dear—peace, the immortal creations of art and his native land, Russia. Roerich became the founder of the international movement for saving cultural values and he worked out the draft of a convention on the protection of historic and art memorials at times of war. The Roerich pact will long remain in the memory of man as an expression of noble alarm for the fate of all the best created by human genius. The Pact was revised after the war and the Soviet Union, his nativeland was one of the countries that joined it in 1954.

During the Great Patriotic War against fascism, Roerich followed attentively the heroic struggle waged by his own people. When the war ended, Roerich asked the Soviet Government for permission to return to his homeland: "It is my sincere desire to work right on the spot for the glory of my Homeland. We can truly say that our work in India were beneficial for the USSR and we were glad to see how the Indians took warmly to heart everything that concerned our country." That was written on October 26, 1947, and on December 13 Roerich left this world of ours. On the tombstone placed at the site of his cremation is written in Hindi: Here lies the ashes of "a great friend of India."

The Indian press widely commented on the death of the Russian painter. At the opening of an art show of Roerich's works in Delhi Jawaharlal Nehru said: "When I think of Nicholas Roerich, I am astounded at the scope and abundance of his activities and creative genius.

(Contd. on page 309)

WOMAN,—THE BEARER OF PEACE

The following beautiful message was received by us, 26 years ago, from H. E. Prof. Nicholas de Roerich, from Kulu (Himalayas).

The message was first published in the weekly MIRA, 26 years ago. The message is reprinted as it will be read with interest along with an article on Prof. Roerich in this issue under the caption "The Bard of the Himalayas".

Editor

Under the radiant name "Mira," in "Simplicity, Service, Purity, and Prayer" you come together. These noble conceptions belong to the Beautiful, which culminates creation. How could humanity express its exaltation without prayer? Without purity and simplicity, mankind would come to ugliness and vulgarity. Without the conception of Great Service, the world would be plunged into darkness.

I have often greeted womanhood as the bearers of Beauty and Peace. But this Peace does not mean inactivity. Even the highest Bliss can be attained but in ardent action. And you, when coming together for your lofty aims, understand the meaning of the discipline of the Spirit. Humanity during the present perturbances, indeed, requires the understanding of the Great Service of every day.

Precisely the woman, from the cradle to the throne, accomplishes and inspires attainment. The very word "Mira", beginning with the most cryptic letter of the alphabet, is already beautiful in its own sound. As heroic is the life of the beautiful Queen Mira. Similar heroic examples should be given to the growing generation from the very childhood. The mother, the wife, and the sister will powerfully remind their near ones of the brilliant epic deeds.

Mothers, wives and sisters—transform the dusky daily life into the festival of Great Service, and show the coming generation that every labour while of spiritual aspect, creates high quality. This sublime quality should enter human life from Dawn to Sunset, and in this constant self-perfectioning we shall find the creative smile of happiness.

Mothers, wives and sisters—create Heroes!

May the blessings of the Mother of the World be with you!

N. de Roerich

MIRA

The Bard of the Himalayas

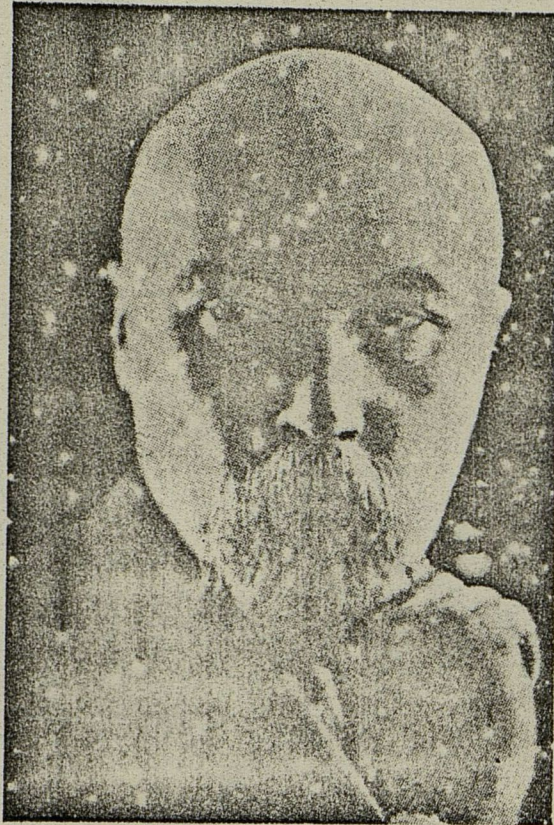
(Contd. from page 288)

A great scholar and writer, archaeologist and explorer, he touched and lighted up so many aspects of human endeavour. The very quality is stupendous—thousands of paintings and each one of them a great work of art. When you look at these paintings, so many of them of the Himalayas, you seem to catch the spirit of those great mountains which have towered over the Indian plains and been our sentinels for ages past. They remind us of so much in our history, our thought, our cultural and spiritual heritage, so much not merely of the India of the past but of something that is permanent and eternal about India, that we cannot help feeling a great sense of indebtedness to Nicholas Roerich who has enshrined that spirit in these magnificent canvases."

Eleven years have passed since the painter's death. And at last he did return to his native land. His son Yuri, a scholar of the East and an archaeologist, the invariable companion of his father in the latter's expeditionary travels in the East, has brought together a large number of his canvases. A Roerich art show was opened in Moscow, from where it was later moved to Leningrad. Moscow has not seen for a long time such queues that waited outside to have a look at the works of Nicholas Roerich.

Soviet people pay tribute to the great artist for singing praises to the wisdom of the East and the greatness of India with immense poetic power, for having brought against the threat of war both with brush and the written word, for waging a struggle so that the Sacred Spring of Justice, Happiness and Beauty may flourish on Earth.

—Soviet Land



NICHOLAS de ROERICH

St. Mira's High School is, indeed, a living School.... The School is radiating spirituality. There, where the blessed hand of the venerable Sri Vaswaniji is guiding, there are expressed tolerance, benevolence and ardent striving towards the Highest.

—Nicholas de Roerich
[In a message]

Bharat Ratna Dr. Karve

Beloved revered Maharishi D. K. Karve has been admitted to Dr. Gharpure's Nursing Home. He suffers from enlargement of the prostate gland.

It was a blessing to have his *darshan* in the Nursing Home. A sweet, calm smile played on his lips. How fondly and affectionately he greeted me when I entered his room and bowed before him! Light of patience and poise shone on his face.

Maharishi Karve is a rich treasure not only of the Maharashtra but of India and Humanity. His presence is a benediction and a blessing. The Healing Angels of God are guarding him! Our reverent salutations to this great one of India!

Rishi Roerich

Elsewhere, in this issue, we have pleasure in publishing an article on H. E. Prof. Nicholas de Roerich, under the caption "The Bard of the Himalayas," by an eminent Russian writer, Mr. I. Agronovsky. Nicholas Roerich was a Rishi of modern Russia: he was a beloved brother and friend of Sri T. L. Vaswaniji. Both held each other in great esteem and veneration. Rishi Roerich was a great admirer of Sri Vaswaniji and St. Mira's Movement in Education. Time and again he sent his inspiring messages of good-will and appreciation for St. Mira's School which he called "the living School".

Elsewhere in this issue we have pleasure to publish his inspiring message which he sent us 26 years ago,—in June, 1933.

MIR

Rishi Roerich was, also, a great champion of the cause of womanhood. In his heart was great reverence for woman. He believed that without the reverence for woman, no civilization could be built. He foresaw that woman would be the builder of peace; and among the many paintings which he very graciously presented to St. Mira's from time to time was "The Great Mother of the Banner of the Peace" which is the frontispiece to this issue.

Rishi Roerich's radiant and fragrant memory is still alive in our grateful hearts and we believe his immortal spirit doth still bless St. Mira's.

Homage to him!

Parting