

In Memory

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Gratitude must be the first word of my contribution to this book. To begin with, I am grateful for this opportunity to share with others some of my thoughts and feelings towards our Beloved Spiritual Mother. In feeling, my gratitude goes out to Mme. Roerich continuously, and in thought it is always extended to reach also Prof. Roerich, ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ and the Hierarchy of Light.

I am also very grateful to my wife, and it was through her that I met Prof. Roerich. That was in 1934, and upon his departure for India soon afterward I began a correspondence with Prof. and Mme. Roerich together, Guru and Tara, which I shall always treasure as sacred.

When Prof. Roerich left our earth in 1947, Mme. Roerich continued this correspondence so precious to me, the guidance and sustenance my heart and spirit needed so much, my indispensable bridge to the future; and before the earthly contact was severed I had reached a firm realization of inalienable spiritual contact in a limitless future. This is the great boon, the real security. This is more than peace of mind; it is the harbor sought by the soul. The searcher who has found a person or a book answering for him both the queries of the mind and the quest of the heart must naturally feel very grateful.

In Mme. Roerich, as in Prof. Roerich earlier, I found someone both wise and good. Here was confirmation of the rightness of every higher thought and worthy impulse I had ever had. Here was practical idealism. Here was someone without the usual human faults and failings and selfish schemes, and one who brought answers to the important questions about life. Facing disillusionment, almost despair, I was suddenly given hope. Childhood's best dreams were revived. Once again I knew that beauty and knowledge should be continuously sought and could be continuously gained - into Infinity. I was glad to learn that cooperation was to replace competition as the correct foundation for life. I could help the great work for peace through culture. No longer doomed along with everyone else to a race for no goal at all, in slavery and obeisance to Mammon, I was free to serve in the construction toward Shamballa. These breath-

taking vistas were suddenly opened before me by Prof. Roerich, and when he left us the gates were held open for me by Mme. Roerich.

For the sake of others, let me now give, perhaps in more prosaic terms, some reasons why we who knew her feel the urge to attempt poetic flights when contemplating Mme. Roerich.

Ever since I became able to identify myself as a thinking individual, I have been a non-conformist. This brought me into increasing difficulties in daily life, in the church, in social affairs, in college, in business life. By the time I found Prof. and Mme. Roerich, I was out of step with all facets of earthly existence, my material prospects were nil, and my health was beginning to break. To me the world was all wrong and I was apparently the only one who knew it. But when I found Prof. and Mme. Roerich and the Teaching I became reassured and then rehabilitated. They brought me human and superhuman help. I soon realized that I was not alone and that, although I had been correct from the beginning about right being right and wrong being wrong, I could play my destined role in this world on valid grounds and should participate without surrendering ideals.

After a brief period of rest and study, an opportunity suddenly came swimming to me "from out of the blue" to resume a professional career which had been half-heartedly followed and finally abandoned with no intention of return. But this new opportunity was one rather enviable by the usual standards, and I accepted it and successfully continued for many years.

In the meantime I was privileged to participate more and more in the work of the Institutions under Prof. and Mme. Roerich. The guidance was continuous throughout this period, coming from Mme. Roerich alone after December 1917, and I began to understand that my professional activity was taking too much of my time and my health. At last I was definitely instructed to abandon it, which I did with a suddenness that I am sure was somewhat mysterious to my associates. This time I was given specific instructions as to the recovery of my health, and I am glad to testify that this help was very real, very concrete.

The most precious help is not towards material welfare and physical health but towards knowledge and growth of the spirit. During the process, the receiving of spiritual aid may be not so immediately evident; it is more subtle and eludes the mind. Yet, as it is said, "The heart knows".

A truth often repeated, to which I can testify also in acknowledging our great debt to Mme. Roerich, is that spiritual progress is usually made through experiences that seem painful at the time, and only long afterward is there any awareness that the progress was made. Even then the analysis in retrospect, at least in my case, is often not satisfactorily clear and complete. But the acquirement of knowledge is more apparent, and the broad recognition that I am beginning at least to lose some traits of my former self that now seem much less attractive than when I more fully possessed them has led me to turn toward the one who helped me in it and to acknowledge the help and seek its continuance.

It is said, "The Teaching is not sugar-coated nuts". Mme. Roerich knew this and applied it in her guidance of all of us. It was not all mere coddling. Only infants are nursed, but soon afterward the child is led. Instead of his being forbidden to walk, or sometimes to take a particular road, the bruises that follow his awkward falls are soothed, and his bewilderment is met with reassurances.

Everyone who studies the Teaching of Living Ethics has the necessary truths before him, and questions and answers and experiences and growth can proceed on the subtle plane without direct material contact with the Source, but we who were blessed with such contact can give assurance to our fellow human beings that the age of miracles is not yet past and that great spirits still do walk the earth.

I know that I was given the help of the Lord not as a sentimental reward or a haphazard gift. I knew that I was accepting along with the restored health the responsibility of more and better work in the Lord's service. But this is no payment, no sacrifice; this is further privilege, greater joy.

I hope that these few reminiscent fragments will be of some help to other seekers on the same path. This has been another happy moment of communion in heart and spirit with Prof. and Mme. Roerich, and I shall close with the same words I always used in ending my letters to my revered Guru and Tara - with love and gratitude.

Dudley Fosdick