

OUR MYSTIC FRIEND

*On seeing a painting of Nicholas Roerich,
"the Shadow of the Teacher"*

(By Prof. Mohanlal Kashyap, M. A., Muttra)

A weird mass of idle cliffs and sullen rocks
Laid bare to the rage of the sun and rapid swelling streams
With dull and rugged looks, in coarse, unshapely blocks,
All grim and grey—perhaps forgotten, massive dreams
Concealing Damyanti's cries and Ahalya's gentle tears
And tender Gopis rapt in Krishna's fluted lure;
Buddha's quiet joys denouncing petty, human fears—
These sleeping bards of glory, yet so proud and pure.
Perhaps, the unfulfilled desires of a rustic lad,
Uncouth and coarse, who loved a simple gipsy-maid,
The maid who once illumed his little world and fled
Away—dwell in these rocks that would not die nor fade.

And who will rouse them? Who will cry and call
These poets of passion—passion subdued in stone,
Dark, chill and quiet, who know no rise and fall,
Who will hear their mirth and music, their unrecorded moan?
Amid these *persons* of the great and gloried past
A shadow dark, unmasked, unreal is seen,
Among the rocks it stands a rock of ancient cast,
A figure, proud and pure, a person, firm and lean.
He lifts a finger and the rocks instantly assume
Their human form and nod and stay at his command;
They speak their tale, those sleeping bards of joy and gloom!
The shadow bids, they glow and grow—Our Mystic Friend!

(Rights reserved)