

The occasional visitor from provincial sections of the country, during his stay at a metropolis senses with amazement the pitch and tempo which make the occurrences of daily life so different from the customary happenings in his home town. If he has time and inclination he will go to a renowned museum, where amongst the numerous treasures from past ages he soon will find himself tired, lost and startled on account of the multitude of diverse objects which have but one thing in common; the right to claim his interest. Unless he has wisely restricted himself to study rather with due and reverent intensity a section or part only of the available display he shall gain for himself not more than distraction and less than superficial instruction.

It occurred to the writer upon a recent journey to New York that a visit to the Roerich Museum proved to be a true revelation. An inspiring lecture last winter by Mrs. S. Lichtmann, Vice-President of the Master Institute of Roerich Museum, had created a longing to see in colors what lantern slides had promised. Color, above composition and subject, being the principal medium of expression for the painter who fulfills a mission as a true artist.

The masterly canvases of Professor Nicholas Roerich comprise the main exhibit of the Museum which is housed in a section of the tall building bearing his name and devoted entirely to the activities of the many cultural institutions created by Roerich.

To describe in words the irresistible power which emanates from these paintings is impossible. their subjects are almost ex-

clusively Tibetan landscapes, their object is a song of praise and a call to devotion. There are in existence so far over 3000 master-Pieces from the hand of Roerich, a tremendous ~~œuvre~~^{oeuvre}! It is the more surprising to find that the obvious speed of production reveals itself perhaps in a strikingly concentrated composition; there is nothing of a hasty technique.

The quality of these paintings alone would give Nicholas Roerich his just place among the foremost masters of not only our time. Considering in addition his achievements^e in various other spheres of cultural endeavor, one cannot help but feel that he belongs to the few outstanding creative personalities of all times.

Some data concerning Roerich's manifold activities may well serve to support this obliging statement. Born in Russia in 1874 he showed in his childhood already a marked interest in archaeological research. The tenacity to strive for the Beautiful ~~is~~ seems to be the keynote of his life, the Beautiful in its highest sense as the synthesis of the True and Chaste. In this pursuance expeditions into the very heart of Asia were undertaken. A score of books from his pen reveals a rare understanding of the eastern world and an unusual capacity as an author to present the abysmal depth of thought contained in the teachings of the east for which our western civilisation still is so much in need and has so little time.

Of the many cultural institutions founded by Roerich or in his name by his followers not more than passing mention can be made here.

A great and unique idea of his has taken shape in the foundation of the "Roerich Peace Pact" for the protection of artistic and scientific achievements of humanity throughout the world. A banner of his design, representing three spheres in a circle, in

magenta, on a white background, similarly to the flag of the "Red Cross", is intended to protect all centers of Art and Science, Religious Monuments and all the world's cultural values. The present year sees the organization of the Roerich Peace Banner- Convention at Washington D. C. on November 17, for the purpose of furthering this noble object.

The writer urges those readers of these lines who feel induced to get into closer contact with the cultural mission of Nicholas Roerich, to visit the "Roerich Museum" , 310 Riverside Drive, New York City and to read his books of which "Altai Himalaya" is available at the Reading Public Library. The assiduous occupation with the creations of this great personality will prove to be an abundant source of food for the soul.

Paul Hessemer.