

Naggar,

Jan. 26th, 1931

To The Spinoza Center
of Roerich Museum.

One of the most precious for me impressions shall forever remain the Spinoza Center of the Roerich Museum. In our times of unrest and commotions, in these days of crumbling of the mechanical civilization, each sign of spiritual upliftment is especially valuable.

I always remember with what eagerness and perseverance Dr. Kettner came to me and what ardour I felt in his approach in the name of the great philosopher Spinoza. Not less precious was for me to see the group of striving young workers united in the great ideas of Spinoza and the ardent spirit of Dr. Kettner. I do not exaggerate but wish to express that which I witnessed.

Is it possible that a great spiritual joy shall not be created by the following: the working youth without great means, striving and self-supporting, religiously gathers around a great name and uses all its leisure time for the study of high philosophy. And not for abstract purposes do they study. Nay, they transform through it their lives and within their hearts high ideals begin to live. These self-sacrificing torches illumine the surrounding darkness and form one more stronghold against ignorance. And we know how militant is ignorance and how contagious is darkness.

The leader of the group, Dr. Kettner, is a true teacher, for he not only guides the meetings and offers the lectures, but he is consulted in vital matters of life. He arms with the most unfailing armor the young warriors. He tells them how practical is the Good and how shameful and self-destructive is evil. And the good is there, where

is creation, constructiveness and spiritualization. The Good is there where is containment, devotion and love. The highest is in the light of sacrifice and the basest is in the darkness of treason. The abstract for the average brains, the conceptions of evolution and attainment become the vital cornerstones of every day life. Such foundations are affirmed there, where life is so difficult. There where the struggle withers out often the best forces. Is it not remarkable to see that a numerous group of youth has chosen as its weapon the high philosophy. They evoked and surrounded themselves by the name of a sage, who so fearlessly and self-sacrificingly brought into life the renovated conception of Be-ness. Under his perspicacious understanding matter occupied the befitting place and was uplifted. To uplift is a noble action. In uplifting we unavoidably uplift ourselves, because creating the energy upwards - from beginning to the end everything will move in this direction. With this noble uplifting comes also the so much needed quality of tolerance. If we shall introduce tolerance only conventionally and superficially, nothing but hypocrisy shall be created. Only through noble upliftment of the spirit, through incessantly realized labor comes this wonderful guest - tolerance. Precisely this quality when introduced naturally, creates the smile of Wisdom. I am speaking of that smile of Wisdom with which listens the sage to the seeker. In his caressing eyes and the silent nodding is expressed - "try, my son! Nevermind if thou walkest now by the side road. Only walk not looking back, not fearing the stones, nor the thorns. Remember, if the steep ascent would be too polished, the ascent would be for thee still more difficult. The stones not only not hinder thee, but support thee. Do not forget it and bless these stones, for the stones can be used as steps!".

I recollect how once in the East a learned Rabbi said: "You also are Israel, for each one in the quest of light is Israel. Thus was expressed the wisdom of the immemorable ages. In it resounds the upliftment as well as tolerance.

When you, the participants of our Spinoza Center gather for a meeting, you garb yourselves in the festive cloth, because as I know it, this meeting for you is a festival. Such attitude is already a pledge for real upliftment and the consequence is tolerance and containment. You know how the great Spinoza suffered in his life only because he selflessly expressed true knowledge. But we know that martyrdom is but the tension of energies. In this tension you receive the right to knock at all gates whence the useful construction can be strengthened. I repeat, you have transferred the philosophy from abstraction into life. In this you follow the beginnings of true evolution, for all Teachings and all philosophies are given for life. After all there is no high Teaching which would not be also practical in the highest sense of the word. We can solve numberless problems of the contemporary commotions only by the beautiful and highest consciousness. Only the beautiful bridge will be strong enough for the crossing from the bank of darkness to the side of light. You know what great significance is allotted in the sacred Teachings to the symbol of the bridge. Upon this bridge will come the Highest in glory!

I know that the Spinoza center will grow, because it began upon sane principles, vital in tangible reality. Not mist, but light lies at the foundation of evolution. If we are capable to understand that light is color and sound, we shall also realize that everything beautiful is also needed for the construction of the Temple of evolution. The Girs helped King Solomon build the Temple. Invoking the light and

the beautiful, we shall force even the Gins help in the great construction. In the name of great Knowledge and beautiful Achievement I welcome you!

Nicholas de Roerich.