

7

FOR PEACE AND
CULTURE

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“BUDDHA - THE GIVER”

By Nicholas Roerich

(In the Roerich Hall of the Bhârat Kalâ Bhawan in Benares).

ORDAINMENT OF QUALITY

By Professor Nicholas Roerich

"If thou wishes to be ahead of thy shadow, turn thy face to the Sun! Brethren, do everything better and labour ever joyously."

During a certain activity must come of work. Quantitative as a messenger is at times admitted highest Culture; Culture never through quantity

A high quality were always the elements of Culture splendid address Culture, it is made begins where people their leisure. I stand the period work, or as we have period of work called leisure be upon finding a high quantity in our activity How beautiful is the sound of these concentrated strokes of an accumulated energy of high quality, and how their resonance awaken the hearts of nations.

Quality also awakens another characteristic, indispensable to evolutionary processes; it arouses a real sense of responsibility for all that happens, be it even a single affirmation or warning, or even if it appears as a new phase of refinement in something already known. The greatest drama often hides in our presumption that something is common

knowledge. This "known" is entered into the category of the habitual, about which people no longer thinks; in other words, not only do they fail to refine but to create this concept.

will lead us to many must be reverted because they accuracy and striving existence. "Non this wise counsel in periods of activity in the glorification The hermits old for their silence activity, when their thundering spiritual ailments.

concentrated and of the sculptor's crude modeling, the subtlest feature the most minute inexactness of the hand may possible distortion. As long as the sculptor works in the province of the rudimentary forms, his hand is permitted the use of either a deep or shallow curvilinear stroke of the chisel But as soon as he reaches the final interpretation, any distortion would mean a return to chaos, thus his creative enthusiasm becomes more exalted, combined with a great responsibility for each motion of his hand. At such moments the sculptor frequently stands away from his work to view it from various positions in order, when coming closer, to impart to it the inimitable touch. Whereas, during

the early days of his work, the sculptor could express his intentions in words, during the final strokes he is more silent, more deeply penetrative, knowing his responsibility for that which he completes.

The quality built up by the entire complexity of circumstances into the work of construction is an especial spiritual joy. In crossing the mountain stream one cannot afford to make a single false step. Likewise, when crossing an abyss upon a string, we ever seem to lose something of our physical weight; and when we are attached by the heart to the spiritual threads, we almost fly over perilous abysses.

Whether we term it enthusiasm, or spiritual upliftment, or perfection in the quality of movement and thought, or a high solemnity in all our feelings, there is no difference in definitions. For him who does not understand solemnity in love, and the exaltation of quality, all other definitions are like stones rolling in the mountain stream. The judgment of high quality does not consist in the resonance of loud words. In a concentrated solemnity of the heart, this judgment of eternity is resolved. If we dare to pronounce the word Culture, it means we are primarily responsible for quality. The root of the word Culture represents

the highest service towards perfection, and this is also our duty in regard to existence.

In the aggregations of quality, nothing remains unforeseen, nothing remains forgotten, and of course nothing is distorted through reasons of self-interest. Great or petty self-interest is so enrooted in the life of humanity through centuries of perversions and denials, that it has become one of the chief enemies of everything achieved above the personal quality.

There have been discussions in the press as to whether the heroic achievements recognized by humanity were prompted by self-interest. The question has been raised as to whether the deeds of the shepherdess Jeanne D' Arc and the fact that she set herself to the thoughts of the salvation of an entire nation, was impelled by egotism; this question could occur only to the minds of those who are themselves essentially self-centred. In their opinion, not only the achievements, but also the deeds of daily philanthropy are of course called forth only by various degrees of egotism and self-interest.

Such is the canon of the heartless who, judging only by their own nature, suppose that each good act is performed either for a self-interest or for some other material personal benefit, forgetful that

these earthly flowers endure but a single day, like the brilliant blossoms of certain cactus which gives a flower but once in its lifetime. Convicting everything as being self-interested, those who are inherently self-interested themselves begin also to assault Culture. They say "these sanctimonious paths are inaccessible to us", as if the functions of Culture demanded some superhuman achievements.

Those who disparage, always consign the reality, which they hate to the clouds of inaccessibility, in order thus to be rid of it more easily. With pleasure they promote boxing matches, bull fights and contests for speed records. They will bring forward the crudest physical manifestations, in order to erase at least partially everything subtly creative. They are ready to resign the Temple into the hands of the money-lenders, confident that, in line with the era in which we live there will be none to expel them from the Sanctuary, and to sustain that by which the human spirit exists.

Happily, the paths to perfection and the highest quality are in their essence outside of the hands of the money-lenders. The minority thinks of quality. The young heart can think of quality as long as it remains unsullied; no matter along what byways humanity wanders, the process of the enchancing of quality proceeds notwithstanding. Because heroism inhabits the heart of a refined spirit. The accumulations of refinement are beyond the recorded laws.

But let us not enter into the spheres that are inexpressible. Now one must reiterate precisely about the concrete concept of quality in all actions and in every day productiveness. Those who do not strive to quality had better not speak of Culture. Culture is not modish, not a fashionable conception.

It is the deepest basis of life attached by the most sensitive silvery threads to the Hierarchy of Evolution. Hence, those who have realized the striving to quality are not afraid of derision and they repeat the words of the Apostle—"when you think us dead, we are nevertheless alive". And not only alive, but each one striving to Culture or, in other words, to quality, finds within himself an inexhaustible source of strength and opposition to everything wrathful and destructive. He can repeat the wise saying, "blessed be the obstacles; through them we grow". For him each manifestation of an abstacle is a possibility of elevating the quality.

Through what else then will be conquered the coarsest forms, if not in the radiation of the spirit which is reflected in the quality of each action, each day, each thought. Thus, striving to the highest forms of civilization, daring to think even about Culture, let us not forget that the vitality of striving is created out of the high quality of all action. Our responsibility for Culture lies not in dreams but is manifested in life. And this responsibility verily extends not only to dreams beyond the clouds of some rare festive days, but must be imprinted in every-day life. Quality, beauty, solemnity in love in all its impetuosity and limitlessness, were the unbreakable wings of spirit. Quality, quality, quality, in everything and everywhere!

Of course there will also be found dark elements who will hiss at everything spiritual and beautiful. "To hell with Culture, cash above all". The sad fate of such depraved men is not enviable. Happily, "Light conquers darkness."

But what hearty expressions of salutation one can send those who disinterestedly and self-sacrificingly fight for Cul-

ture! How, then to greet those who through their noble battle help the State to inscribe unforgettable pages of the best achievements. For this battle, as a battle with the densest darkness, is unusually difficult but at the same time it is that true achievement, which will remain imprinted for ages and which represents the best guiding milestones for the young generation.

A noble battle creates also the inexhaustibility of strength and cultivates that radiant enthusiasm with which the eyes glow and the human heart resounds. In the name of the depthless Beauty of the human heart, let us gather and become strong in the luminous victory of Culture.

Urusvati, Himalayas, 1933.

CULTURAL WORK OF ROERICH INSTITUTION: A WORLD FORCE

(By A Sinhalese who visited the Himalayan Roerich Institute)

During the present time of difficulties and depression, one must rejoice at every affirmation of Culture. In the last issue of *The Buddhist* was published the presidential address of Prof. de Roerich to the World League of Culture, in which this Leader sends out the following imperative call: "Culture is reverence of Light. Culture is Love of Humanity. Culture is fragrance, the Unity of Life and Beauty.....Culture is the moving power". No doubt from this inexhaustible source Prof. de Roerich draws his ever increasing constructive ideas and their application in life. Besides the activities of the Roerich Museum, the Master Institute of United Arts, the Roerich Museum Press and the International Art Center—all in America—as well as the Roerich Peace Pact Union in Bruges, Paris and New-York, it is interesting to describe the latest news about the activities of two other of this remarkable ring of Institutions: of the Urusvati Himalayan Research Institute and of the Roerich Society.

The Urusvati Institute situated in the Himalayas conducts original scientific work in the fields of medical research, philology, archaeology, ethnography etc.

The medical research embraces healing plant research on ancient Ayurvedic and Tibetan lines. A biochemical research laboratory is under equipment for this purpose, to investigate the pharmacognostical properties of high altitude plants in their living state. A special department for cancer research is also on the programme. The philological department has just completed the publication of the first volume of the Series *Tibetica* on the Tibetan Dialect of Lahul, by the Director Dr. Georges de Roerich who, in the last issue of the Institute's Journal, also began a most significant treatise on the study of the Kalachakra. Again, a monumental work in preparation is the Tibetan-English Dictionary, also compiled by Dr. G. de Roerich in collaboration with a member of the Institute's staff, Lama Lobzang Mingyur Dorje. This new dictionary has long been a great desideratum and will include besides the material found in the already existing Tibetan Dictionaries, the rich material found in numerous lexicographical works issued in Tibet, China and Mongolia up till now unexplored by Western Science. Besides Sanskrit equivalents, loan words, etc. there will be added a vast new material published for

the first time. The Institute further publishes its annual Journal, the latest volume of which is just to hand. It shall be reviewed in some later issue. We would however mention here from its contents, the following highly interesting articles: An account of the Journey to the Gangotri Glaciers by Prof. Shiv Ram Kashyap of Punjab University, The Cosmic Ray Expedition to South Eastern Ladakh by Prof. Benade, Lahore, The Prajñāpāramitāhṛdayasūtra as an Inscription by Prof. Mironov, Tunis. The Journal is headed by a substantial dedicatory article of the Director to Dr. Sven Hedin. The whole appearance of the Journal and its illustrations printed in Calcutta, are of excellent make-up. Thus in the remote Himalayas, the mother of all great teachings and sages, a great humanitarian work is being conducted, which will bring benefit for many generations to come.

In the same place in the Himalayas is also situated the Himalayan Roerich Society, which has recently published a beautiful coloured postcard reproduction of a portrait of Prof. de Roerich, painted by his son Mr. S. Roerich. This Society forms one of the 57 branches of the parental Roerich Society in New-York. "Buddhism in England" recently in an appreciative editorial note called these Societies ubiquitous, and truly this definition is fully justified as they are now already situated in over twenty countries. These Societies came into being quite naturally as a result of the profound admiration impelled by the writings and paintings of Prof. de Roerich. They have found the new revelation of life embodied in the beauty of colour and in the creative conception corresponding, as does nothing else in art and literature to-day, to the highest cultural aspir-

tations. Hence arose the desire to spread the wisdom and influence of Roerich's art and philosophy to the many countries which are eager for the Master's great pan-human message. In 1932 alone, in New-York only, the Roerich Society gave 350 cultural events which included a diversity of subjects covering Art, Literature, Music, Science, Philosophy, Religion, Psychology, Drama, Opera and Folk Song Recitals, National Dances and Evenings, Travelogues, etc. Besides the French, British, German, twelve South-American, Yugoslavian, Latvian, Finnish, Scandinavian Societies and Associations of St. Francis, Maha-Bodhi, Shakespeare, Spinoza, Origenes, such large organizations like the Academy of Creative Arts and Institute for Advanced Adult Education have joined the same programme. Lately there have been formed such varied bodies as the Polish Institute, Japanese Roerich Society, Chinese Roerich Society, the Washington Roerich Society, Bulgarian Roerich Society, San-Francisco Roerich Society, Siberian Roerich Society, Irish Foundation, Esthonian Roerich Societies, and others. Whosoever has participated in the lectures on the Himalayas, or on a Spinoza tri-centennial celebration or at the Pan-American Women's Meetings or at Friendship Dinners, or at the South-African students' reception, knows what uplifting and unifying spirit prevails on all occasions connected with the Roerich Institutions. The beneficial work of the European Centre and French Roerich Association in Paris also greatly helped to promote the artistic, intellectual and spiritual understanding between peoples and nations and to encourage all endeavours in the cause of human progress. M. Paul Chabas, Vice-President of the French Roerich Association, has arranged a meeting in honour of the Roerich Peace

Pact at the Grand Palais des Champs Elysees, at which the world significance of Roerich's art and message was presented. A significant event took place at Riverside Church in New-York, where the Vice-President of Roerich Society, Mrs. B. Kunz-Baker, arranged several programmes on Roerich-Tagore. Thus the great contemporary spirits are jointly affirmed on the vast cultural field.

We heartily wish all cultural creative activities Success and Expansion, especially at this period of unrest because—concluding in Roerich's own words: "Culture is the Armour of Light. Culture is Salvation".

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