

FLAMMA

July 19, 1937

Dr. Gordon Graves  
Professor of Higher Mathematics  
Purdue University  
Lafayette, Indiana

Dear Gordon:

It seems a very short time since I visited you on my way to Chicago one summer day to have my horn mouthpiece altered. Since it is again summer, I am sure that it must have been at least one year - I refuse to delve further. Sometimes there seems to be a greater relative time difference between seasons than between successive years anyway.

I have one great fear: that during this time you may have visited New York without my knowledge. I remember urging you to come on one of your vacations and to give me an opportunity to introduce you to my friends of the Roerich Museum. I spoke to you about the Roerich Pact and Banner of Peace, and voiced my hope to become more closely allied with these activities. You told me of your own work in varied fields which I know to be of high quality. But the fact which made the greatest impression on me and caused me to record mentally a memorandum still fresh today reading, "I must write Gordon Graves tomorrow", is that you struck the key-note of our own work here - cooperation. You said, more or less seriously, that I ought to get married because people in general must learn to accept their responsibility as citizens, and that one cannot properly cooperate with fellow members of society by remaining a selfish bachelor, - or words to that effect.

You will find this keynote, cooperation, prominently sounded in the new movement, Flamma, which Gene and I have been privileged to inaugurate, together with a few friends including the Director of the Master Institute of United Arts, who has been associated for many years with the Roerich Institutions. I have been striving toward this end, and others as yet unattained, ever since I spoke with you - and simultaneously I have been paying my way in the world with my horn. At present I am with Guy Lombardo at the Waldorf Astoria.

The incorporation of Flamma has just been completed, and we have our first publication in the press. We will send you a copy when it is released.

Gene is in Liberty with his family and will probably write you or drop in to see you.

During the short time we were together, you mentioned another striking point of common interest, Leonardo da Vinci.

I carried away with me that day a feeling that we might work together in some way in the future. I have been taught during the last few years to respect greatly what is commonly called "destiny". You may not share this with me, but I would greatly welcome a letter from you, Gordon, in any case, - about your work at the University, your music, your group of young men, and your family, and any possible new thoughts and activities.

Sincerely yours,

Dudley Fosdick,  
Vice-President