

L E T T E R from K U L U .

March 8th, 1931.

From morning till night the life throbs with activities at our remote Himalayan outpost of Science and Art. Manifold are the activities. Profiled on the background of the majestically rising Himalayas stands the figure of the Master, Nicholas Roerich, who untiringly creates. Only a spirit who has attained that inner creative harmony, the full attunement with the Highest, can so undisturbedly and continuously create in a perpetual rhythm, and contain in his heart at one time so many a sacred subject for expression. The Master's versatile and synthetic genius immortalized on the canvas since his return to the Himalayas "Madonna laboris" (The labours of the Madonna), dedicated to the Women's Unity, - in deep sapphire tones the Heavenly Mother saves the sinners and only a few ruby-tongued flames indicate the proximity of hell. In a luminously emerald aura stands "Fiat Rex", two radiant rays from his shoulders remind of wings. In process of work are the series of "Chinghiz Khan", a tripticon of "Jeanne d'Arc", "The Master's Orders". However not all of the latest masterpieces shall reach the United States - "Fiat Rex" shall remain at Urusvati; "Terra Slavonica" is destined to adorn the Palace of King Alexander of Yugoslavia; "Guru-Guri-Dhar" (The Path of the Great Teacher) goes to the European Center of the Roerich Museum in Paris.

From this abode of Culture the Master summons also others to creative work and monthly addresses to the various Roerich Societies leave the Himalayas as messengers to all parts of the continents yonder the seas.

Hearty was the welcome Prof. Roerich received at Kulu Valley upon his return. Even the fiercest of the 360 gods of Kulu Valley has sent his representatives to greet the Master. Women of the remote village Malana

2

in their black capuchons came also to pay tribute to him who so subtly understands the human heart. The Brahmin priests of the Temples, the old Gur, who predicted the month of December shall re-unite us with Prof. Roerich and his son, - none have forgotten the benevolent smile and came all, who with a blessing, who with a prediction, who with a garland of flowers - to express their joy.

Dr. Georges de Roerich, besides the supervision of the scientific work of the Himalayan Research Institute of Roerich Museum, is absorbed in intensive Tibetan studies. Great is the admiration of the people here for this profound scholar, who converses freely with them in their tongues, reads their books and whose study room is filled with Oriental manuscripts, tankas and objets d'art.

Dr. Walter Koelz explores now the plains of Punjab, a part of the country where the jackals' howling fills the space and the game is so wild that one can shoot it only from a considerable distance. His trophies of wild game and birds will enrich the collection of Urusvati and his botanical explorations of Kangra and Kulu Valleys will add to his extraordinary rich finds in this field also the spring flora of our district.

Our versatile Mr. V. Shibayev, the Jack of all trades, who holds the honour of being Prof. Roerich's Secretary and Secretary of the Institute, is as handy in inventions as he is in experiments. He has succeeded in making some 50 varieties of extracts from the medicinal plants collected and brought back by Dr. Koelz from Lahul. Our's is a self-sufficient country, far from civilization, where resourcefulness is needed and inventiveness appreciated.

We all abandon our study rooms to meet at meals or for a stroll in the woods, where sometimes we are warned of a leopard hiding in a cave,

lurking for prey. Monkeys watch us from behind the bushes and before retiring for their winter sleep, the bears roamed on our slopes in search of food.

Only a few days ago we were snowbound - the telegraph service out of order and no mail reaching us on account of landslides, which obstructed the roads. The spring however is awakening and the melting snows uncover the yellow and green carpets of the first harvest sprouts.

The evenings find us gathered at the dusk of a petroleum lamp, for we are deprived of the comforts of electricity and our great hope is to be able to utilize soon the nearby waterfall for an electric plant. In an atmosphere of Tibetan tankas, brought back by the Roerich Expedition from Tibet, we commune with the great art of Wagner, Beethoven, Bach and wholeheartedly enjoy the baton of Stokovski in the Brandenburg Concerto or Schubert's Unfinished Symphony.

However, above our versatile activities there hangs a shadow - the anxiety about the health of the Co-Founder and Co-Inspirer of all our works, who selfsacrificingly endured all hardships of the Expedition, the great Companion of our Master, Madame Helena Roerich. Her condition of health is vigilantly watched by Dr.C.Loizina from Paris, who at the same time is also making a study of Tibetan medicinal plants.

Our staff has been lately enlarged by Col.A.E.Mahon, whose distinguished service in India and thorough knowledge of this country are of valuable services to our Institute.

This date marks two years, when I left the shores of New-York for this Abode of Inspiration.

Esther J. Lichtmann.

Ursvati,
Naggar, Kulu,
Punjab.

8403