

But ancient terror still reigns. People fear to know. For them science is just sorcery. Humanity is not far from mediaeval superstitions when for every desire to know people were burnt at the stake or beheaded. The fire only destroyed the body but the modern forms of inquisition torture the spirit !



F E A R

By

Nicholas Roerich

THE sun set. Forest murmurs began. The crowns of old oaks appeared as monstrous silhouettes. The gigantic pines turned red. Flowers glimmered like horrible eyes. The ravines became pitch black and the boulders protruded like huge skulls. Look, what a terrible face the forest shows !

The crane hurried into the meadow and gabbled : "Beware, beware" and disappeared behind the trees.

And above, in the foliage, the raven croaked : "Finis, Finis".

The oriole whistled : "Oh you poor fellow."

From the top of the tree appeared a starling and took pity : "A good lad is lost—pity, pity."

And the wood-pecker persisted : "Let him, let him."

The magpie gossiped as if in the bazar : "Let us rush to tell them ; let us rush to tell them".

And even the peaceful bullfinch squeaked : "It is bad, very bad."

* * *

HOW many fears from the earth, from the trees, from the sky ! They whistled, cackled and hissed. It seemed as if all snakes rose from the grass : 'no help' 'no escape'. And on the path there was standing the bear himself. What else if not a bear could that black spot be ? And these flashing lights are not fireflies, but also something horrible.

Under the enchanted rock an unknown wizard had settled and he caught birds with ingenious traps. And he taught every bird one word.

And the wanderers became frightened and pale hearing this horrible judgment of the birds. And the wizard smiled ; he listened to the birds and had no fear from them. Only he was aware that they knew no more and could say nothing else.

Are not words like this horrible ? And is not the terrible bear but a rotten tree-stem ? And are not the ghostly snakes but twigs in the grass ? And who are these mysterious wizards, who teach the gospel of fear ?

Who was the primogenous being who in an unknown language for the first time uttered the cursed word, 'fear' ? And was this first fright a real horror, or was it a ghastly mirage ? Millennium and cruel atavism embodied this first cry of horror into generations.

The inexperienced youth and grey wiseacres in a sinister unison began to sing the hymn of fear. There was created an entire cult of fear.

All lightning and thunders of the universe teach us that there is nothing to fear—one has but to know. The wise heart convinces the brain that fear is the most absurd invention. The highest ordainments proclaim that the human spirit is eternal and cannot be harmed. People

read this truth and yet the habit of atavism for fear grips them and crushes them to the earth. They do not listen to the voice of the heart. Science itself comes to aid the heart. All the latest strivings of science prove that knowledge frees man from fear. How many wonderful basic energies are unveiled by science? And human life can be absolutely transmuted.

But ancient terror still reigns. People fear to know. For them science is just sorcery. Humanity is not far from mediaeval superstitions, when, for every desire to know, people were burnt at the stake or beheaded. It makes no difference that the inquisition of today applies, instead of fire, still more cruel methods. The fire destroyed the body, but many other methods torture the spirit and in their evil inventiveness, they subject the world to convulsions of horror. Under various pretexts, by various forms of scarecrows, someone tries to prohibit and deny. We all know these deniers. And what is at the bottom of this crass ignorance? Open the crude-coloured feathers of the bloated ignoramus, and you will discover the grey feathers of fear, and as hair stands on end, so does this feather rise, not from a noble indignation but from ugly fear alone.

Every cognizance is already fearless. And liberated science is also fearless. Everyone ascending the summit at the moment of having

made this decision already rejects fear. There is deep significance in the advice that one should apply medicinal help against fear. So much is said about suggestion. Research of psychic energy becomes a science, and should not all sciences be turned first of all towards the annihilation of fear?

Fear is the attribute of ignorance. Fear is poison. Fear is paralysis. Fear is defeat. Fear is decay. Fear is destruction. Fear is annihilation.

Be a Hero

IN the "*Nibelungen Ring*", the sorcerer, Mime, tests Siegfried, because a hero is needed who does not know fear. Mime tries to frighten young Siegfried with abominable horrors, but the hero simply does not know what fear means. Mime tries to explain that when one shudders in darkness, this is fear. But Siegfried has never experienced this sensation. Mime describes to him the terrible Dragon, but Siegfried only asks where he can find the monster. The spirit of the hero does not know the shackles of fear.

Every hero, seeking attainment, is free from fear. All ordainments preach fearlessness as the motive power of evolution. From the East resounded the great ordainment: '*Ma bhayi: Fear not*'.

