

A NEW CREATION.

CHAPTER 2,

THE EFFORT TO UNDERSTAND.

Men have always wanted to understand life and Nature, so far as they could. In Biblical times, this was so despite the cautionary tale of Adam & Eve, which many people then must have believed literally. In modern times this is still so, despite the fact that Man's inquisitiveness has led to the awful discovery of the atomic bomb, and the power to destroy all life on the earth.

In Biblical times, many people expected an apocalyptic end of the world quite soon; and when the Second Coming of Christ did not take place as soon as he said it would, it was inevitable that the early leaders of the Church should ask themselves "Why not?" And looking around them, and seeing that none of them even approached the grace and majesty of Jesus, it was inevitable that they should conclude that he was unique. Constantine calling the Council of Nicaea, and demanding unanimity, made it urgent to provide an answer; so they opted for saying Jesus was God come into this world. This was essentially a fudge. They simply said that Jesus was both God and Man, without attempting to explain how or why; hence the doctrine of the Trinity. But they did recognise that the Spirit of God had been in the Prophets, thousands of years before Jesus was born; so Jesus can hardly be said to have sent it into the world. Indeed they had before them the opening verses of John's Gospel, in which the author with astonishing prescience conceived the Spirit as being the light in the soul of everyman born into the world. Nowadays we are familiar with the reality of the subconscious; John knew nothing of this, but with astonishingly shrewd instinct or intuition he got near to the truth of modern psychology. In modern times, we simply regard Jesus' promise to come back soon as an understandable mistake, and the idea that his return will be in 'Clouds and glory' as moonshine. The Universe will continue to evolve as hitherto; the Creator could, of course, bring it to an apocalyptic end, but the likelihood is that He will not.

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With the complete triumph of science and technology, and the abject humiliation of the clergy, who have almost always turned their backs on modern knowledge in every age, the problem now is to find the proper boundary, or the proper relationship, between the spiritual world in the broadest sense and the religious world. But in the nature of things, after their humiliation, the clergy are incapable of doing this. It is practical men in the world of affairs, who have the best chance. Perhaps soldiers, who have always rated Morale as supreme? Or perhaps business men, who need to be familiar with the skill of managing men, if society is not to end up with a winter of discontent? Or even a lawyer!

If Jesus was a Man, and not a god walking around in human clothes, then I firmly believe that his access to God was limited to the access that ordinary men and women enjoy; and that is through prayer to respond to the archetypes in the subconscious. These can come alive; but there is never any proof that they are telling you the truth. Yet you have in the end to act in the belief that the images in your mind or consciousness are true, and not wild fantasy. When Jesus found he could heal sickness (as I am sure he could), that would have given him confirmation that his mental intimations were true; but not proof that they were. I can understand his hesitation at the wedding in Cana-in-Galilee.

Even in Biblical language, it is natural to credit Jesus with wanting his Incarnation to be repeated in anyone who believed in him. This I am sure was why he used the gruesome symbolism of the need to eat his flesh and drink his blood, to have any part in him. It is a horrible symbolism, and disgusted many of his followers. It is not credible that he would have used it, unless he thought it was crucially necessary to get his message across to us. But which would give the Creator, overflowing with generosity, more pleasure: to have one solitary, lonely, only-begotten son, or countless numbers of them? Even in these terms, the Doctrine of the Trinity is seen to be a man-made formula, maybe an appropriate compromise at the time, but which cut the common man off from God until the Reformation. But in modern thought, when any suggestion that a

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man or woman might be God-incarnate in this world, would be met with derision; it is safer to use the language of modern psychology. This permits the common man to think he believes in Jesus, without his actions having to be comparable with his. He no longer has to decide whether that uncomfortable saying of Jesus, that anyone who believed in him would do all he had done and greater things still when society had made away with him, was true, or only wonderful make-belief. He can begin in small ways, and then be more daring.

After all, is it not true that, "He who dares, wins"? Or is it most foolhardy advice? Is it safer to say, "No advance, without security"! We need look no further back than the French revolutionary wars that began in 1793; who triumphed at the Battle of Valmy? Who triumphed at the battles of Lodi, Rivoli, and later at Austerlitz? In more modern times, who triumphed at the Battle of Dunkirk, which General Montgomery, as he was then, considered the most shameful defeat the British Army had ever experienced? And what is the likely fate of the dear-old C.of E. when the mildest criticism of the timid gospel she preaches, is simply ignored? In the last hundred years the whole world of the subconscious has been opened up; and the theories advanced probably contain much truth, and even more error. But the C.of E. has not got as far as accepting Evolution & Darwin; and the names of Freud, Jung and Adler are unknown in the C.of E. What view will the Creator himself take of such ignorance and timidity? Or will He simply leave the C.of E. to its well-deserved fate?

Long ago, legend says Abraham had his celebrated argument with the Almighty, when he urged that if even ten righteous men were found in Sodom, that might be enough to avert its destruction? Does there not come a time, when even the Almighty loses his patience? What will happen if He does?

In the maintenance of Law and Order, in the war against Hitler's tyranny, in the conflict with Islamic extremism, the compassion of Jesus is useless. You need the mailed fist inside the thick velvet glove, to begin with. The love of Jesus is essential to the eventual survival of society; but not in the short term