

cf

THE Christian Future

p 98 - 110

p 16 missing

#1941

cf p. VII

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"The potential Christians of the future" (cf. The Future of Christianity p 30 and The Christian Future p. 96) is mostly de trite.

At this point, I have been interrupted by impatient friends: Your interpretation sounds to an American reader like Modern apologetics, offering plausible substitutes for what the old formulas seem honestly to mean. Will physical bodies come out of graves or won't they Was Jesus sepulchre empty on the third day or wasn't it?, etc. How can you claim to believe the Nicene Creed literally on points like Last Judgment, resurrection of the Body, Hell, Heaven, etc.?

I believe in the Nicene Creed literally. I admit that modern man cannot understand it since we have a purely apologetic Church and a purely external "scientific" theology. I am convinced that every layman actually believes as I do. And I shall try to give proof of this.

Since our communication, however, is so badly hampered by static, I may begin, perhaps, with two stories.

I. When Friedrich Nietzsche went to the fashionable Engadin in Switzerland and saw the class of people who spend their ~~time~~ lives there, he wrote to a friend: "It is impossible that both ~~man~~ have life, these people and myself." He implied a twofold character of life, one lived by himself, one led by these drones. Now, we find literally the same statement in John 14, 19 and 17: "The world does not see me, you however see me because I am alive and you shall be alive." And: "The world cannot envisualize the spirit nor know it; you know it because it stays with you and shall be in you".

II. When Woodrow Wilson and his first wife talked in their room one day, the youngest daughter overheard her father say: "Hell is a state of mind". She ran down the stairs and told her sisters: "Father has lost his faith". Wilson himself did not think so; he thought his daughter childish.

Now, the Church has always allowed the childish to see things childishly. Wilson's daughter had a right to believe in hell as having a position in space for hell. Anything that a human being has not experienced yet, can only become known to him as a fact in the outside world. The Church has forbidden the clever ones to sneer at the Child's belief. But the Church has with the same energy forbidden the children to dabble with the adult understanding of the Creed. Not only did Jesus say that his kingdom was not of this world and that the kingdom was in our hearts, Origenes in commenting on the Lord's prayer as early as 232 of our era, wrote: "I have commented on this prayer 'Our Father who art in Heaven', in order to

to assume

"ere it is forbidden/that "God in Heavens " means

At no time, is it possible to tell the whole truth

Hence, the Church has operated like an immense

But today, the sponge character of the Church is

appear to the rationalist as condemned by the Christian tradition.

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tion. This idea of the rationalist is nonsense.

(In parenthesis, if Wilson had destroyed the childish faith of his daughter, and if the fact that Nietzsche erected an absolute barrier between his inspired state and the leisurely appearance of the other guests, both, are incompatible with the Christian patience) And

"Well, heaven, life everlasting, are invisible to the "world". And the world is recurrent; World is the ~~repeated~~ simple expression for our abandonment of certain positions already ~~attained~~ attained in the evolution in the race by some but not by all. In relations to these attainments or achievements, anybody who denies them because of lack of experience, is "World".

The first Christians experienced radically new processes which of course were said to be non-existent by Arthur Brishanes of their day. The first Christians knew that the "world" in us, all of us, never would acknowledge them or would forget them, time and again. The only protection for the radical new experience was to invite the nations of this world to "admit" these truths as lying ahead of them. And this was achieved by the baptism of the nations. This conversion of the Gentiles en masse did not open the eyes of the individual - as in the case of Wilson's daughter - but it directed and oriented their search towards these discoveries. Each generation had and has to be introduced to the whole painful process of rediscovery. Meanwhile, the blind of course, would clog the pores of the "Sponge", filling it incessantly with their prejudices, worldliness, blindness. But to this, the Church was quite accustomed.

However, since the days of the Sects in Protestantism something new has happened, the very thing which Jonathan Edwards foresaw and dreaded most of all things: Not the children are blind today, nor the laity. But the theologians and the Church today are the center of "spatial" thinking, and of confusing the world and the Church. Protestant ministers confound the Church and the World completely. Christian theologians criticize the "naive" conceptions of the Creed. The blindness is now represented by the so-called theologians who in fact are historians, philologists and gravediggers, undertakers of the great official funeral held for Christianity among the scientists, progressives, intellectuals.

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Mr. Kirsop Lake who is the outstanding American specimen of this otherwise mostly German malady, forgets that John 14 knew that this was bound to happen from the very beginning. The only interesting feature of our times is that the meaning of "Heaven, Hell, Life Everlasting, has to be vindicated today ~~by~~ against a completely worldly theology and an intellectually slothful ministry who prefer "the Social Gospel", or Pacifism to the Gospel. They have forgotten John, and Origenes, and their Lord himself. The whole ~~relativ~~ reality created by the free act of trust in God, in its proof of the creativity, the liberty, the trust of the image of God for the Glory of the creator, the liberator, the inspirer, has vanished.

The conditions under which you may recuperate this reality today, have been changed by the fact that the center of the tradition, denies the truth of this reality in a two-fold manner. The orthodox stress the steps that lead to its understanding so that the adult who has experienced them feels dwarfed. The rationalists deny the whole reality and live on the lower level of some kind of Greek ~~practical~~ philosophy.

A simple consideration of historical logic may beat a trail into the jungle of values, perhaps. When the United States went to war in 1917, some people called it a Crusade. And I myself tried my hand at an essay called, "the Crusade of the Starspangled Banner". Obviously, to most of you this is nothing but a figure of speech, a wonderful opportunity for the modern Semantists to hunt for blanks.

But to me, it was no figure of speech, it was a discovery to see a great nation trying to save the homeland of its civilisation, to save Europe. This had been exactly the motive of the First Crusade to recuperate the Holy Land from which the Cross had come to Western Europe. The First Crusade for the recuperation of the ancient and now lost territories of the faith, burst upon the Occident as a new conception. It set off this war as the only "Christian" war, and put all feuds in the West into the category of internecine, unchristian disturbances of the Peace of God and the Land. It drew a distinction, for centuries between twofolds of wars and of worlds in which man lived.

From this example of the first Crusade we learn that all occurrences of "a" crusade here and "a" crusade there depend on one name giving and meaning giving First Crusade.

of the Body, and the Last Judgment, in the first place, as fountainheads of my many experienced of a last judgment and a resurrection. My first reaction to our tradition, is that of gratitude to the source of my own frame of reference in every day life. The Crucifixion marks the great divide from which the stream of consciousness which illuminates my inner life, has received its sign posts. The founding of the Church is the Crusade which created the terms resurrection, heaven, hell, rebirth, terms which had not existed before, and which we have included into our lives as necessities.

In the same manner, it seems to me, ~~ANXIOUSLY~~ 'Jesus' divinity has to be sustained.

Just as the word life in the mouth of the leisure class has not the inspired meaning of everlasting life and yet is called "life", and just as hell had two meanings, 'Jesus the man' would simply mean one man among many, a kind, a likeable man perhaps, but "a" man only. But he is the yardstick, his life gives meaning to my life, he is the first man who was neither Greek nor Jew, but the Son of Man and in order to sustain this new stage of human perfection, the word "man" would not have made sense, in a world in which any Caesar was God.

If we judge, criticize, assess 'Jesus', then he was a man, and since we do so, he must bear this cross now as then. But in as far as he is the norm, the way, the truth, and the life to be developed by us, beyond the state in which we find ourselves as particles of this world, in so far it is impossible to call him "a" man. He is the man, and you and I, if we are not simply jealous like Nietzsche, must be satisfied with being a man. To modern semanticists, logicians, rationalists speech has lost its creative, vital, costly character. They do not see the blood of the millions that must be shed to lift certain values on the throne of life. They find words use them, defile them, advertise with them, and do not even say thank you, to the martyrs who lifted these words as sacred values above the crowd, and allowed them to sell their "Liberty Bonds", or their "American" sweaters, through the exploitation of man's respect for liberty and America.

Any layman knows that Mount Renier or Mount Washington mere geological agglomerations of so many cubic feet as scientist may try to tell him. They have a name which evoke emotions and loyalties and dislikes, in the hearer of the name and this is as it should be. No lover of Mt. McKinley will be satisfied with having it ~~skinned~~ reduced to mere quantity. But usually, this common sense layman does not know how to voice his protest against the unhistorical mob which the semanticists lead.

I however, feel that my real explanation of my faith has been given. I am satisfied that the processes most real to my inner man, must have proceeded from the fountainhead and the Great Divide represented by the crucifixion and that they have not proceeded before. Hence, my chronology of A. D. makes sense to me. Something new came into being, then, not man as part of the world, but "the" man who gives meaning to the world, to heaven and hell, to bodies and spirits. *I speak his language and I cannot do without it.*

Beyond this point, my insight is not apt to be of universal value. First of all, I am not too curious myself to investigate how empty the grave was etc. I am not a theologian. It forms no part of my salvation to describe to unbelievers in an apologetic way perhaps the process of resurrection. I feel that I am quite capable of doing so. But I feel that is of secondary importance because many people may offer their opinion in this matter, and if they differed in their interpretations, it would not make the slightest difference for my conviction that the fountainhead of all my values was created by one life which ~~gave~~ gave me direction and orientation, and that this is the reasonable manner in which man has no progress in his evolution on earth.

Now, it would confuse the reader if after giving him my evolutionary logic that any "a" must have been preceded by a creative "the", I would waste too much oratory on these detailed arguments about Resurrection of the flesh etc.

However, I will say that much, as a personal confession. One time, twenty years ago, I have thought to go through a real crucifixion. I was deprived of all my powers, paralyzed, and I came to life again, a changed man. It then has saved me that I could look to the bigger event, recognize my little suffering in the bigger and total event and wait from the crucifixion to the resurrection, in complete faith.

Ever since, it would have seemed foolish to me to doubt

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the historical reality of the crucifixion and resurrection. Jesus' surviving the crucifixion to me is a simple fact. But it is a fact so simple that I do not think that its importance should be singled out in the stream of extraordinary events on which our way of life rests. It has always struck me as strange that the gospels report the resurrection and then make so little of it that it is hard to understand why it is to them of so paramount importance. If the crucifixion did not end the career of the Founder of Church, why did he pass on after only forty days. Why did the second founding of the Church left to the apostles, at Pentecost, that is on the fiftieth day, ten days after the ascension? Obviously the coming to life after the crucifixion though a simple fact, was only necessary to ~~xxx~~ convert the apostles, whereas the Church could only be founded on men who still were parts of the world.

I only mention this question because I wish to show that a man who believes in the Nicene Creed has his own puzzles just the same, and I think much more interesting puzzles.

Then, I may draw attention to the remarks in the "Soul on the Highway" as to the "Titanic" forces of pre-Christian individuals. We are so "communized", the spirit is so diluted among us, we are civilized, and so we need a Hitler to be reminded of the power of pre-Christian obsessions and demons. Schelling has said of Jesus that he was the last Titan. Physical processes then were much more directly connected with the spiritual life of the individual. We have lost all conception of these bodily powers. And the resurrection cannot be understood as little as the other miracles as long as we take a New Yorker as yardstick for humanity in those days.

Finally, I wish to be allowed to enlarge on the topic of the resurrection of the flesh. This seems the most absurd topic in the third article of the Nicene Creed to all enlightened minds of the scientific age. I hold that all evolutionary theory about the human race has its origin and foundation in this sentence. ~~Xi~~. Darwin is unthinkable without it. Why?

Well, I look around in a big city and I meet in the street doctors, nuns, priests, Franciscans, engineers, artists; I hear of martyrs of research, saints of social work.

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All of these people have come from innumerable races into their calling, under the impact of the spirit which universalized these professions, in our era.

~~XXXXXX~~ Then I turn to India or to the records of any pagan society and I find the ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ hereditary principle and the casts spelling doom and enslavement. And I begin to wonder about the evolution of man in history, and the right principles to be observed in making men.

I now once more look into the process within my own world and study the Benedictine type for example or the Franciscan. Saint Francis dies without offspring. But the Franciscan humanity flourishes ever since. First in the members of his order so that they carry the very name: Franciscans. Then the "third order", spreads over all Europe. And the typical Franciscan way of life, the "imitation of Christ" becomes the daily Bible of men and women through all Christian denominations. Even the most radical Protestant who detested the Middle Ages, would give himself up to the formative forces of the *De Imitatione Christi*. ~~XXXXXX~~ This Franciscan type dominated the political life, in the Italian cities. But after many centuries, the same way of life re-occurs in a mysterious renaissance in America. When Abram Lincoln, ~~chief~~ commander in chief of a victorious army, and President, walked into Richmond in 1865, on foot, without escort, St. Francis had conquered the powers of this earth. In Siberia, in Egypt, people would whisper that old Abe, a new type of man

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had appeared on earth. Benjamin Franklin may be an American, but Abraham Lincoln is much more. "Now, he belongs to the ages". In Lincoln, Francis of Assisi celebrated his secular resurrection. These men, then, are epoch making in the history of the species man. Here was blended into one the ruler and the servant. Here was not a new technique as our psychologists would make us believe but a new originality of the human heart that what old fashioned people call a new soul and the succession from Francis to Lincoln was absolutely unconscious, not an imitation but a succession. This soul had or craved cried/to come into the flesh, to be incarnated ever since Francis set the example. Even the emperors of the old world, the Habsburg emperors, had imitated Francis by becoming members of the third order and by deposing their titles humbly whenever meeting* the majesty of the Franciscan spirit. So, in man's evolution, there are definite new phases never lived before which come into existence as a new birth, and

* For details, see Out Of Revolution

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which when this birth is incorrupt, forces itself upon the
'm/neme", the impressionability of man, his plasticity, with
such major momentum, that from then on, this birth is repeated
regularly, through a spiritual succession of typical
representatives, through the ages. The Puritan in this country
is, of course, the best known type of this spiritual origin.
Ground out under Elisabeth, by her executioners and handmen
who killed the Non-Conformists, thrown into Holland for four-
teen years or more and running there a secret Pilgrim Press,
the Pilgrims set themselves up as a new order of man, in their
first report, in 1621, to the homeland. And they have sur-
vived for 300 years.

Anybody who says "the Last Puritan", or "Catholic",
admits the physical, bodily resurrection of a soul who had
a definite historical birthdate and continued to incarnate,
after that birth, generation after generation. Now, our ideal-
ists and materialists, in their -isms, never care to ask what
makes man reach the higher stages of mankind. They do not ask
how these men are born and reproduced. But the Fathers of the
Church did care for the making of new men. They called it
with a good name: anthropourgia. this like metallurgy, means

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the refining process of winning truer man, working out the real "stuff" out of the coarse grain of the physical substances man, just as metallurgy refines metals out of the ore.

And they called the Christian ambition and goal "anthropourgia" because God had said in the beginning "Let us make Man"; and now, we, his children and images, were allowed to participate in this "man-making" process.

Hence, biology was the Christian vision and dream, the re-creation of man in a constant succession.

~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ This much had to be said about the daily life of Christianity to understand the term in the Creed as their guiding star through the ages. The first Crusade, we said, was an overwhelming experience as is borne out by the fact that we have so many run-of-the-mill 'crusaders' today. And I know of the Last Judgment as a reality because I have seen Last Judgments passed on Proust's France, on Rasputin's Russia, on Wilhelm II.' Germany, President Harding's America.

7) Genesis I, 26 with Origenes' profound Commentary.

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Similarly, I believe in the resurrection of the body because I see resurrections of the body, all through history, on earth. Any ~~hitherto~~ genuine soul will be incarnated time and again.

"The daughter in Europe, Nausicaa-Austria, destroyed by the World War, will find her resurrection in the world."

Now, the abstractionists of our days, of course, say that is a figure of speech. But after all, ~~hitherto~~ William James who denied the existence of the soul, said in the same breath: 'Some day, indeed, souls may get their innings again in philosophy. But if the belief in the soul ever does come to life after the many funeral discourses preached over it, it will be only when some have found in the term a pragmatic significance that has hitherto eluded observation. When that champion speaks as he well may some day, it will be time to consider souls more seriously*)' Now, I cannot see anything more pragmatic in the very task of education, politics, production, than the term "soul", as used in the incarnating processes of 1900 years. I defy the philosophers to show me that.

*William James, A Pluralistic Universe 1928 p. 210f.

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their minds have ever been able to create anything but mechanical bodies, locomotion, artificial hearts, planetariums, utopias futuramas and the like. The mind can make bodies. But only souls can give life to them. My belief that the soul of Austria is an eternal category inside the human family since she, Austria, once had been created, is a pragmatic principle which shall guide my steps in teaching, politics, actions. Just as much as the principles of free teaching as represented by St. Paul, and represented for four hundred years by the German Universities like Heidelberg and Jena, are eternal categories of the good society which must come to life again in other forms, in our days after they have been destroyed in Germany. Beyond the physical appearance of Homo sapiens, his soul has grown into new and higher stages, in every millennium, and has donned the bodies of living men and women and shaped them, into new types and specimens.

I have written on Austria and on St. Paul as the model teacher who conquered the pagan Platonic ideal of a fixed school terminology, by his liberty from the mere words of Jesus, not by figures of speech but with the utmost precision of which I felt capable. Why should I not accept my radical

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and nothing but the pure metal will show in the resurrection.
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I may then say that history of human metallurgy, that the Christian anthropourgia, has gone on and does go on before our eyes. Now, these visible processes before our eyes are the reflection and projection of our faith on this earth. They anticipate and foreshadow the ultimates of our Creed. Because we believed in the son, we found ourselves growing up in a Christian World, because we believed in the Father, we invested all things in heaven and earth which we had made. The communion around us in the name of the son, we called Church, the communion around us in the name of the Father, we called Nature.

Because we believe in the Last Judgment, we can interpret the fall of France as one Last Judgment. Because we believe in the end of the world, it makes sense to sing of the end of the Roman Empire: "And the end of the world was long ago and all we dwell today like children of some second birth like as strange people left on earth after a judgment day."

The Christian astronomers, chemists, doctors, monks, preachers, missionaries, painters, masons, have populated the earth, in anticipation of the Last Judgment over our corruptible flesh. Taking the end of this world seriously, they all

have come into the flesh, out of the spirit, in a tempestuous resurrection from the dead. The astrologists of antiquity, the Chaldeans, came to life as modern astronomers, the Hippocratean doctor in whose tradition Socrates sacrificed a cog at his death, came to life as the modern doctor*.)

In the light of the central dogma of a final resurrection, we have seen many partial resurrections accomplished, and this - and nothing else, in the Christian Great Economy of our salvation.

The story of Man for 1900 years is the application of the Nicene Creed to every day life. It shows that the Creed was never meant to be statement of external facts but a command originating in the command at baptism, and describing three things: One, God's trust in man, two, God's liberty, three, God's creativity, and assuring us that we may share these three attributes, if under certain conditions.

* on this complete transformation see Victor von Weizsaecker, Hippokrates and Paracelsus, Schildgenossen 1927.

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The people who have destroyed Christianity , by degrading Jesus into a nice man saying niceties in Palestine and being a good boy, do not use their five senses. "either do they use common sense. "otherwise they would discover that under certain conditions , they have trustworthiness, liberty and creativity and that under others, they have not. This , however, is the whole content of the Nicene Creed. Now, my friends go to doctors, ride on trolley cars and send their children to schools. Hence , they live by trust in street car conductors, by faith in the science of medicine , a new creation, and by belief in the liberty of educators to influence their children in a way they would not be affected automatically. In all three actions, they represent the faith in the three qualities or aspects of the divine life, first that it is trustworthy and this is the most correct translation of the Greek word 'pistis" which we translate by the term "faith", second that it is free, and third that it is creative.

When we speak of God as trustworthy , we turn to him as ^{the Spirit of truth} ~~the Spirit of truth~~, when we call him free, then we turn to him as the Son, and when we call him creative, we turn to him as our maker and father. Man has the powers of trustworthin-

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Wherever men try to live without these three qualities, they can't have peace, vitality, or progress. They are killed in wars, hurt in the jungle of society, disintegrated by mechanistic repetition. The opposite of trust is suspicion, of creativity mechanisation ~~mechanism~~, of liberty fatalism. And we live in a society at this moment which rapidly seems to slip into fatalism, mistrust, ~~mechanism~~ mechanisation. But in looking around, I perceive immediately that my whole environment has been created by men in the image of the trinity, by people who believed that they were capable of creating trustworthiness who trusted in their creative powers, and who acted as free men. They worshipped, then the father as the guarantor of their trust, the Son as the Guarantor of their liberty, the Spirit as the guarantor of their creativity. They said our father and our firstborn brother and "Veni Creator Spiritus", come Spirit the Creator, repeating the three qualities given to God in the very first verse of the Bible when God creates heaven and earth, as our trust for order and unity, where his spirit is ahead of creation, directing it to new ends, above the void, and in which he speaks, as ~~speaking~~ allowing us to hear and to listen to him as our brother.

And I should find fault with the Nicene Creed which

sums up the trust liberty creativity which every important contributor to the life which we lead has enacted and believed in? Why, it would be ridiculous to contradict everything that I see with my eyes and that I understand of life around me.

In fact, if the Nicene Creed did not speak of the trinity of the last Judgment, the resurrection of the bodies, the communion of the Saints, the descent to hell and the ascent to heaven, I would have to invent such a statement, however haltingly myself. If it were not there, in its perfection, I would have to stammer it, in my imperfection.