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The woes pronounced against the Scribes and Pharisees are exactly paralleled by Jeremiah XLII, 1 to 4. "See ye unto the pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture! saith the Lord. Therefore thus saith the Lord God of Israel against the pastors that feed my people; Ye have scattered my flock, and driven them away, and have not visited them: Behold, I will gather the remnant of my flock out of all countries whither I have driven them, and will bring them again to their folds; and they shall be fruitful and increase," and innumerable other passages.

The long passage in the twenty fourth chapter of Matthew, and repeated in the other synoptics, is precisely in the style of Daniel XII, 1 to 3. "And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that

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~~Matthew 21, 21. "And in his state shall stand up a vile person, to whom they shall not give the honour of the kingdom: but he shall come in peaceably, and obtain the kingdom by flattery."~~

Jesus even acknowledges Daniel in Matthew 23, 13 as his authority. The return to God, the repentance of the people, and the restoration of the kingdom, are practically the sole theme of Jesus the patriotic Hebrew prophet. Sufficient.

Jesus at the typical age of Asia. (with contributions from Egypt, Greece, and Rome.)

In the opening of this subject, it is desirable to glance for a moment at history. Asia at this time was being thrown open to the western world. Alexander the Great had invaded India, and the wars of Greece and Persia had ceased, just about long enough ago for things to settle down to commerce, and the interchange of ideas. As to Egypt, the fall of the Ptolemies was within the memory of living men. Alexandria was still the storehouse of learning, in spite of the destruction wrought by Caesar.

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Syria was geographically an absolute focus of these three main currents.

Rome was spreading civilization, enforcing the Pax Romana on the nomadic tribes and savage settlers, making the lives of merchants comparatively safe, and their property secure. Men began to travel widely, and new ideas became possible and even inevitable. We see something not dissimilar to-day; the British conquest of India was the means of orientalizing European thought, and the result is now, as it was then, that a synthetic religion has once more become possible.

These three main influences were at work, then, upon Syria. Against them was the invincible prejudice and obstinacy of orthodox Jews, who clung to Moses and the prophets with dogged tenacity. But Judaism had never really taken root in Israel. The 'lost ten tribes', and even Judah and Benjamin, were always 'shoring after strange gods', insisting that Jehovah was best worshipped under his title of King or 'Moloch', by passing their children through the fire to him, building 'groves' and 'high places', with sacred prostitutes complete, both male and female, and even indulging in sheer idolatry, the worship of graven or molten images. One has only to read the prophets to be bored still with their eternal diatribes against all these practices. Most of them talk of nothing else - one cannot quote them; one would have to reprint them.

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He have Sennacherib besieging a tile with the city of Jerusalem portrayed upon it, and building a fort against it, and casting a dart against it, and setting a camp against it, and setting battering rams against it round about, with an iron pan between it and the real city, all on the best principles of sympathetic magic. (Isaiah 37, 1-2.) In chapter 7 he burns hair, and smokes it, and scatters it, with a similar object; and (again in chapter 18) he cooks his food with dung, so as to cause the Jews 'to eat their defiled bread among the Gentiles'.

Heaven is commanded by God to have "a wife of whoredoms" on whom he begets a whole series of illegitimate children, and calls them by 'unlucky' names, in order to make still more trouble for his unhappy countrymen.

Even the records of the Kings show that, beyond a few formal wars, they did nothing but do righteousness in the sight of the Lord by taking away 'abominations', or evil in the sight of the Lord by putting them back again, just as later on the apostles spend half their time reproaching the Christians for all manner of without crimes, to say nothing of their views.

Isaiah. 1. 1. 2. 1. 3. 1. 4. 1. 5. 1. 6. 1. 7. 1. 8. 1. 9. 1. 10. 1. 11. 1. 12. 1. 13. 1. 14. 1. 15. 1. 16. 1. 17. 1. 18. 1. 19. 1. 20. 1. 21. 1. 22. 1. 23. 1. 24. 1. 25. 1. 26. 1. 27. 1. 28. 1. 29. 1. 30. 1. 31. 1. 32. 1. 33. 1. 34. 1. 35. 1. 36. 1. 37. 1. 38. 1. 39. 1. 40. 1. 41. 1. 42. 1. 43. 1. 44. 1. 45. 1. 46. 1. 47. 1. 48. 1. 49. 1. 50. 1. 51. 1. 52. 1. 53. 1. 54. 1. 55. 1. 56. 1. 57. 1. 58. 1. 59. 1. 60. 1. 61. 1. 62. 1. 63. 1. 64. 1. 65. 1. 66. 1. 67. 1. 68. 1. 69. 1. 70. 1. 71. 1. 72. 1. 73. 1. 74. 1. 75. 1. 76. 1. 77. 1. 78. 1. 79. 1. 80. 1. 81. 1. 82. 1. 83. 1. 84. 1. 85. 1. 86. 1. 87. 1. 88. 1. 89. 1. 90. 1. 91. 1. 92. 1. 93. 1. 94. 1. 95. 1. 96. 1. 97. 1. 98. 1. 99. 1. 100. 1. 101. 1. 102. 1. 103. 1. 104. 1. 105. 1. 106. 1. 107. 1. 108. 1. 109. 1. 110. 1. 111. 1. 112. 1. 113. 1. 114. 1. 115. 1. 116. 1. 117. 1. 118. 1. 119. 1. 120. 1. 121. 1. 122. 1. 123. 1. 124. 1. 125. 1. 126. 1. 127. 1. 128. 1. 129. 1. 130. 1. 131. 1. 132. 1. 133. 1. 134. 1. 135. 1. 136. 1. 137. 1. 138. 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Moses is commanded by God to have "a wife of whoredoms" on whom he begets a whole series of illegitimate children, and calls them by 'unlucky' names, in order to make still more trouble for his unhappy countrymen.

Even the records of the Kings show that, beyond a few foreign wars, they did nothing but do righteousness in the sight of the Lord by taking away 'abominations', or evil in the sight of the Lord by putting them back again, just as later on the apostles spend half their time reproaching the Christians for all manner of heinous crimes, to say nothing of mere vices.

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But the time of Herod was worse than all others previous. There had been a small revival through the rebuilding of the temple, but a perusal of the Books of Maccabees will show what a very small remnant the Jews really were. Even within a few days' journey of Jerusalem itself was Samaria, with those people the Jews had 'nothing in common', while within the precincts of the temple itself were warring sects of Pharisees and Sadducees and many more.

Conceive now the three currents above referred to clashing at this focus of the temple, under the protection of the Roman government, which was as sensible in the matter of religious toleration as the British Empire of to-day. These currents must be now studied in more detail.

Let us therefore take a cursory survey of various ancient religions; we shall find many essential features practically universal, with no graver differences than unimportant local variations.

I trust that I shall not go too far astray from the teaching of Mr. J. M. Frazer - I am proud to be the humblest member of the college of which he is so honourable a boast - if I try to summarize corn-worships, wine-worships, sun-worships, moon-worships, phallic worships and the rest, by indicating one point in which all agree; namely, in possessing a periodic cycle.

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Nature repeats herself, like history. Whatever in Nature we most cherish, whatever we regard as most necessary to our life and joy, we celebrate; thus, all celebration being lyrical or dramatic, we choose the moment of the triumph of our 'hero' over death, whether that be the renewal of the earth in spring, or the renewal of the sun at dawn.

In all such dramas, then, the central point is the death and resurrection of whatever it is that saves us (from starvation or what not), in a word, of "Our Saviour".^x

It is also to be remembered that these celebrations were not originally merely such; the early peoples of the earth, with their history and geography limited to a few years and a few miles, had not our present certainty that nature would repeat herself, and the approach of winter may have seemed to such as a catastrophe. At first the savage sowed no seed; he simply noticed that things grew again. When some genius grasped the idea of cause and effect deeply enough to induce him to till the earth, it was a sort of magic, a direct conspiracy of man to conquer nature - and so it was. He therefore sowed his seed with all kinds of formalities intended to propitiate the unknown powers that presided over the destinies of the earth.

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Then, therefore, we find the rising of the Nile attributed to the tears of Isis, and when we know that Isis, the great mother of Nature, wept on 'the death of Osiris,' the reaping of the corn, we can understand that corn would be thrown into the Nile, as it were to give her something to weep for ! But Osiris being personified later as a man or man-god, the rite would soon develop into the heaving asunder of a man as the representative of Osiris, and casting his limbs into the Nile, instead of the actual corn. And the king of the country being responsible for the prosperity of the people, what more natural than to sacrifice the king himself ! In hundreds of tribes this was actually done; the king had to suffer in person. This was true even of daily sacrifice in some cases. But the savages more often tried to fool Nature by dressing up a common man as the King, rendering him worship, and then slaying him.

The above is not an actual example in all details, but it will suffice to show part of the general reasoning which led to the custom of a periodical sacrifice of a man dressed as a king. The reader may study the subject in elaborate (and even rather overwhelming) detail in the *Golden Bough*. Associate with this main idea of ritual a few obvious points of ceremonial like preliminary dedication to the powers of Nature by purification by water and consecration by fire, and

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The Lesser Mysteries.

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Practically all heroes of antiquity were said to be born
 of divine fathers, or occasionally of divine mothers.

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deity-gods than these were equally fortunate in their parentage; Rhea, the mother of Attis, conceived miraculously without commerce with the male. But we wish to call very particular attention to the story of Dionysus. Semele became pregnant by Zeus in the form of a lightning flash. Hera (a name curiously like Herod) sought to destroy the child, but Zeus hid it in his 'thigh', to use the Scriptural expression.

Now a flash of lightning is the 'divine fire'; we read in Acts 11. 3.4. "And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost...." This symbolism is no accident. The Hebrew letter Shin is shaped like a triple flame; it means a tooth; its numerical value is 300, which is identical with that of the words Ruach Alhim, the Spirit of God, or of the Gods.^x Now the name Jesus or Jeheshuah in Hebrew is spelt by placing this letter Shin in the midst of the four letters of the name or Jehovah, and represents the mitigation of that terrible deity by the influence of the Spirit. Hence Jesus is also made equivalent to Joshua, 'saviour', "for he shall save his people from their sins."

To put this story in dramatic form it is then only necessary to represent a virgin as impregnated by this flame of fire.

Footnote. In Jewish mysticism this fact makes it possible to use the letter as a hieroglyph of the divine name numerically corresponding to it.

There is here no space to pursue the significance of the name Mary, connected with 'mare' the sea,^X and thus making the nativity result from the mystic wedding of fire with water. Volumes have been written on the subject.

2. The flight into Egypt.

Egypt in Hebrew symbolism nearly always means 'darkness'. We now see the flight as symbolical of the hiding of the seed in the earth, thus saving it from the terrible forces of winter.

3. The Baptism of Jesus.

Omitting any elaborate analysis of the symbolism of the name John, we only point out the marriage of fire and water, the sun and rain that conspire to the growth of corn and wine, for in John 1, 32, we read "And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him." The dove is the common symbol of the creative force, both male and female. This was later symbolized in initiation ceremonies and the like by 'purification by water and consecration by fire' before a man could enter the temple, that is, become the neophyte new-born, or the hero of the mysteries therein celebrated.

^X Footnote. This is a good pun in Hebrew as well as Latin, Miriam, the word for Mary, being *Maim* the Sea, with the letter *h*, the hieroglyph of the Sun, in her *womb*. Similarly *Shamaim*, heaven is formed by putting the *Shin* before the *maim*; "The Spirit of God brooded upon the waters."

4. The hailing.

(John 1. 47-49.) "Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile! Nathanael saith unto him, Whence knowest thou me? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee. Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel."

Here we see the hero proclaimed king and god, just as in Carnival to-day, just as in the rites of Osiris and Saturn and Marduk and Tezcatlipoca three thousand years ago, just as in those of every nature-god, almost without exception. The intended victim must be identified as the king^{god} formally by his being acknowledged as such by some person of importance. John, too, and various disciples, make this acknowledgment, and no one who does not do so is mentioned.

5. The miracle of Cana.

Dionysus reappears; the first miracle done by Jesus was the turning of water into wine, which is exactly what Dionysus does; the ~~vine~~ is the ~~alchemist~~ that transmutes the rain of heaven into the juice of the grape. And Jesus said "I am the vine." John writes (11, 11) "This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him." It is certainly an excellent reason !

Now in John's Gospel, which is in many ways the best for our purpose, save that there is no mention of the virgin birth,^X this miracle is immediately followed by the cleansing of the temple.

6. The cleansing of the temple.

John 11, 13-15. "And the Jews' passover was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem, And found in the temple those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting."

With this we must compare the mysteries of Attis, where the priests in their excitement would dash through the town, lashing everybody with whips, in some cases with the very knives which they had just used to mutilate themselves, none daring to resist them. There may be some connexion with the use of the flail in threshing; or, more likely, the waving of the whip is a symbol of the motion of reaping; but I only offer this as a conjecture. The reader will agree that it is hardly probable that the merchants in the temple, a numerous body ~~of persons~~ ^{of persons} ~~surrounded~~ of persons surrounded by active slaves of great physical strength, would have permitted a single man armed only with a "scourge of small cords" to drive them all out. As a history the story is absurd; as part of a sacred custom it falls into line at once. Just in the same way, one would instantly knock down a man who threw paper at one in the street;

^X Footnote. As will be seen immediately, there is no birth-story in the corresponding mysteries at the end of life. John's 'ritual' lacked this particular feature.

but, at Mardi Gras, one only laughs, and throws a lot more back.X

And we see immediately the close connexion of this rite of scourging the people with the great central mystery of the whole life of the God. The very next verses explain it. Jesus does "these things" for a very good reason.

7. The prophecy of death and resurrection.

John 11, 18-21. "Then answered the Jews and said unto him, What sign shewest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these things? Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days?"

Now there is no connexion at all between the scourging and the 'sign'. No sign is given; no excuse made. But if we take it symbolically as part of a ritual all becomes clear. "Why do you whip these people?" "I am the god who is to die and rise again." It is a sufficient answer. It is all part of the play.

The temple cannot be destroyed and raised again until the other part of the formula has been fulfilled. I cannot go into the whole history of flagellation - that most popular of British

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Footnote. Every carnival has a 'Lord of Misrule', 'Bishop of Fools', or 'Abbot of Unreason', who enjoys just this license. See Frazer, The Scapegoat p. 251, p. 331.sqq etc.

sports - but besides the explanation offered above, there is that of the "nekas nekas Éste Bebeloi", the warning to the profane to depart from the vicinity. In New Guinea a bull-roarer is whirled around the head, and all uninitiate flee from the sound. This seems to me the most probable explanation, if the other be rejected.

A moment's pause. Let us go over these points again. We have

1. A birth.
2. A hiding in 'darkness'.
3. A baptism with water and fire.
4. A healing, thrice repeated.
5. A supper where water becomes wine.
6. A scourging.
7. A death and resurrection foretold.

Now all this occurs on the very first appearance of Jesus; for in John 1 and 2 are missing.

The Baptism takes place, then "the next day after" (John 1, 35) John and the disciples proclaim him King and god; "the day following" (John 1, 43) Phillip and Nathaniel follow suit. "The third day" there is a marriage, and Jesus makes wine; and then, after "not many days" John 11, 12. as soon in fact as "the Jew's passover was at hand" (John 11, 13) comes the final scene.)

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There are therefore seven incidents in John's 'ritual':

1. The baptism.
2. The first hailing.
3. The second hailing.
4. The third and final hailing.
5. The making of the wine.
6. The scourging.
7. The prophecy of death.

To any one acquainted with ritual there is a formal feeling about this. It was usual in the ancient mysteries to have a sort of prologue which played the drama in petto, as it were to prepare the mind of the candidate for the real thing. Or the mysteries were played beneath^X a deeper veil for the postulants to lesser grades.

Now if we were to find these same stage directions, as we must now call them, repeated on a larger scale later on, it would confirm our view mightily.

I particularly beg the reader to observe the crowding of these symbolic incidents together, beginning a few days before the passover and ending at that date; and to note well also that nothing of this kind takes place at all for the whole

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The Greater Mysteries.

(Just as John omits the Virgin Birth, he also omits the Transfiguration which corresponds with it in intention in the end of the matter.)

1. The anointing. (Six days before the Passover)

John XII, 1-3, 7. "Then Jesus six days before the passover came to Bethany, where Lazarus was which had been dead, whom he raised from the dead. There they made him a supper; and Martha served: but Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with him. Then said Jesus, Let her alone: against the day of my burying hath she kept this."

It is the custom to wash the newborn child (neophyte); it is the custom to anoint the dying with oil. It is also the custom to anoint a king with oil before proclaiming and crowning him.

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come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, took branches of palm trees, and went forth to meet him, and cried, Hosanna: Blessed is the king of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord. And Jesus, when he had found a young ass, sat thereon; as it is written."

The reader will observe how closely this corresponds to the 'hailing' in John 1; but it is more ceremonial.

Compare Frazer (Adonis Osiris 3rd edition Vol. I. 266)

"Certainly the Romans were familiar with the Galli, the emasculated priests of Attis, before the close of the Republic. These unsexed beings, in their Oriental costume, with little images suspended on their breasts, appear to have been a familiar sight in the streets of Rome, which they traversed in procession, carrying the image of the goddess and chanting their hymns to the music of cymbals and tambourines, flutes and horns, while the people, impressed by the fantastic show and moved by the wild strains, flung alms to them in abundance, and buried the image and its bearers under showers of roses."

Dionysus, too, came from Syria and India riding upon an ass, attended by satyrs and nymphs in triumphal procession who hailed him Saviour and God.

Now comes a further proclamation. John XII, 28. "Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again."

If Jesus had really made an entry of this sort into Jerusalem, where a small Roman garrison was suppressing a sedition of a fanatical populace. Pilate would have needed no urging to crucify Jesus, and a few scores of the ringleaders as part of an annual carnival, it would be harmless.

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Here heaven as well as [~]earth is made to bear witness to the divinity of Jesus (Compare the record of fire and water in the Virgin Birth and in the Baptism. Fire represents heaven, water earth, in ancient symbolism.)

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Jesus himself then gives the cue to Judas to betray him (John XIII, 21, 26, 30. "When Jesus had thus said, he was troubled in spirit, and testified, and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me. Jesus answered, He it is, to whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped it. And when he had dipped the sop, he gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon. He then having received the sop went immediately out: and it was night."

It is an amazing fact that John makes no mention whatsoever of the "institution of the ^Eucharist" as given in the Synoptics, but replaces it by this bewitchment of Judas, and that though he is very minute in detail, filling five of his twenty one chapters with the account of the supper.

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Here we have the Greater Mystery corresponding to the Lesser Mystery told in the supper at Cana.

The story now becomes very confused in many ways; its main points are familiar to all readers, and one may forbear to quote in detail.

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Note that Dionysus was tried, insulted, and scourged by Pentheus. This whole scene in the Bacchae is extraordinarily like the trial of Jesus.

Jesus is also led before the religious and royal authorities - the persons in fact whose godhead and kingship he has taken on himself that he may die in their place - and they condemn him to death. Here we must refer again to the magical reason for the sacrifice, which is to renew the powers of the king, or of the corn. The sham king is therefore condemned, and at the same time the executive officer (in this case Pilate)

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We must now pass to the ceremonial robing and crowning of the mock King, already explained, and to the final scene of crucifixion. In this latter we get the solar symbolism introduced almost for the first time, for previously there has been little to suggest it but the twelve disciples, one of them a traitor and accurst, which recall the twelve signs of the Zodiac which surround the Sun, one of them (Scorpio) being astrologically considered treacherous and fatal. The bar of the crucifix is the equator, which the Sun surmounts at the Vernal Equinox when Jesus is said to have died.

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the devil, who sought to seduce the souls of men from the true faith by a false and insidious imitation of it. So to the Spanish conquerors of Mexico and Peru many of the native heathen rites appeared to be diabolical counterfeits of the Christian sacraments. With more probability the modern student of comparative religion traces such resemblances to the similar and independent workings of the mind of man in his sincere, if crude, attempts to fathom the secret of the universe, and to adjust his little life to its awful mysteries. However that may be, there can be no doubt that the Mithraic religion proved a formidable rival to Christianity, combining as it did a solemn ritual with aspirations after moral purity and a hope of immortality. Indeed the issue of the conflict between the two faiths appears for a time to have hung in the balance. An instructive relic of the long struggle is preserved in our festival of Christmas, which the Church seems to have borrowed directly from its heathen rival. In the Julian calendar the twenty-fifth of December was reckoned the winter solstice, and it was regarded as the Nativity of the Sun, because the day

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begins to lengthen and the power of the sun to increase from that turning-point of the year. The ritual of the nativity, as it appears to have been celebrated in Syria and Egypt, was remarkable. The celebrants retired into certain inner shrines, from which at midnight they issued a loud cry, "The Virgin has brought forth ! The light is waxing !" The Egyptians even represented the new-born sun by the image of an infant which on his birthday, the winter solstice, they brought forth and exhibited to his worshippers. No doubt the Virgin who thus conceived and bore a son on the twenty-fifth of December was the great Oriental goddess whom the Semites called the Heavenly Virgin or simply the Heavenly Goddess; in Semitic lands she was a form of Astarte. Now Mithra was regularly identified by his worshippers with the Sun, the Unconquered Sun, as they called him; hence his nativity also fell on the twenty-fifth of December. The Gospels say nothing as to the day of Christ's birth, and accordingly the early Church did not celebrate it. In time, however, the Christians of Egypt came to regard the sixth of January as the date of the Nativity, and the custom of commemorating the birth of the Saviour on that day gradually spread until by the fourth century the Western Church, which had never recognized the sixth of January as the day of the Nativity, adopted the twenty-fifth of December as the true date, and in time its decision was accepted also by the Eastern Church. At Antioch the change was not introduced till about the year 375 A.D.

What considerations led the ecclesiastical authorities to institute the festival of Christmas? The motives for the innovation are stated with great frankness by a Syrian writer, himself a Christian. "The reason", he tells us, "why the fathers transferred the celebration of the sixth of January to the twenty-fifth of December was this. It was a custom of the heathen to celebrate on the same twenty-fifth of December the birthday of the Sun, at which they kindled lights in token of festivity. In these solemnities and festivities the Christians also took part. Accordingly when the doctors of the Church perceived that the Christians had a leaning to this festival, they took counsel and resolved that the true Nativity should be solemnized on that day and the festival of the Epiphany on the sixth of January. Accordingly, along with this custom, the practice has prevailed of kindling fires till the sixth." The heathen origin of Christmas is plainly hinted at, if not tacitly admitted, by Augustine when he exhorts his Christian brethren not to celebrate that solemn day like the heathen on account of the sun, but on account of him, who made the sun. In like manner Leo the Great rebuked the pestilent belief that Christmas was solemnized because of the birth of the new sun, as it was called, and not because of the nativity of Christ.

Thus it appears that the Christian Church chose to celebrate the birthday of its Founder on the twenty-fifth of December in order to transfer the devotion of the heathen from the Sun to him who was called the Sun of Righteousness. If that was so, there can be no intrinsic improbability in the conjecture that motives of the same sort may have led the ecclesiastical authorities to assimilate the Easter festival of the death and resurrection of their Lord to the festival of the death and resurrection of another Asiatic god which fell at the same season. Now the Easter rites still observed in Greece, Sicily, and Southern Italy bear in some respects a striking resemblance to the rites of Adonis, and I have suggested that the Church may have consciously adapted the new festival to its heathen predecessor for the sake of winning souls to Christ. But this adaptation probably took place in the Greek-speaking rather than in the Latin-speaking parts of the ancient world; for the worship of Adonis, while it flourished among the Greeks, appears to have made little impression on Rome and the West. Certainly it never formed part of the official Roman religion. The place which it might have taken in the affections of the vulgar was already occupied by the similar but more barbarous worship of Attis and the Great Mother. Now the death and resurrection of Attis were officially celebrated at Rome on the twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth of March, the latter being regarded as the

The Great Awakening
of the American People

L. 6(d)

IV

The Gospel According to
St Bernard Shaw.

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At least it is a remarkable coincidence, if it is nothing more, that the Christian and the heathen festivals of the divine death and resurrection should have been solemnized at the same season and in the same places. For the places which celebrated the death of Christ at the spring equinox were Phrygia, Gaul, and apparently Rome, that is, the very regions in which the worship of Attis either originated or struck deepest root. It is difficult to regard the coincidence as purely accidental. If

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their respective deities, and that the coincidence formed a theme of bitter controversy between the adherents of the rival religions, the pagans contending that the resurrection of Christ was a spurious imitation of the resurrection of Attis, and the Christians asserting with equal wrath that the resurrection of Attis was a diabolical counterfeit of the resurrection of Christ. In these unseemly bickerings the heathen took what to a superficial observer might seem strong ground by arguing that their god was the older and therefore presumably the original, not the counterfeit, since as a general rule an original is older than its copy. This feeble argument the Christians easily rebutted. They admitted, indeed, that in point of time Christ was the junior deity, but they triumphantly demonstrated his real seniority by falling back on the subtlety of Satan, who on so important an occasion had surpassed himself by inverting the usual order of nature.

Taken together, the coincidences of the Christian with the heathen festivals are too close and too numerous to be accidental. They mark the compromise which the Church in the hour of its triumph was compelled to make with its vanquished yet still dangerous rival.

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With regard to the eating of the god after his adornment and murder, see again Frazer "The dying god" page 55. "Among the Jaintias or Syntengs, a Khasi tribe of Assam, human sacrifices used to be annually offered on the Sandni day in the month of Ashwin. Persons often came forward voluntarily and presented themselves as victims. This they generally did by appearing before the Rajah on the last day of Shravan and declaring that the goddess had called them to herself. After due enquiry, if the would-be victim were found suitable, it was customary for the Rajah to present him with a golden anklet and to give him permission to live as he chose and to do what he liked, the royal treasury undertaking to pay compensation for any damage he might do in the exercise of his remarkable privileges. But the enjoyment of these privileges was very short. On the day appointed the voluntary victim, after bathing and purifying himself, was dressed in a new attire, daubed with red sandalwood and vermillion, and bedecked with garlands. Thus arrayed, he sat for a time in meditation and prayer on a dais in front of the goddess; then he made a sign with his finger, and the executioner, after uttering the usual formulas, cut off his head, which was thereafter laid before the goddess on a golden plate. The lungs were cooked and eaten by such Randra Yogis as were present, and it is said that the royal family partook of a small quantity of rice cooked in the blood of the victim."

With regard to the reason why it must be that the 'first-begotten son of the father' of all should thus be slain, we refer once more to the same great authority in The Living God, the whole section on the sacrifice of the king's son, of which we take the liberty of quoting a few short passages only. Page 150. "A point to notice about the temporary kings described in the foregoing chapter is that in two places (Cambodia and Siam) they come of a stock which is believed to be akin to the royal family. If the view here taken of the origin of these temporary kingships is correct, we can easily understand why the king's substitute should sometimes be of the same race as the king. When the king first succeeded in getting the life of another accepted as a sacrifice instead of his own, he would have to show that the death of that other would serve the purpose quite as well as his own would have done. Now it was a god or demigod that the king had to die; therefore the substitute who died for him had to be invested, at least for the occasion, with the divine attributes of the king. This, as we have just seen, was certainly the case with the temporary kings of Siam and Cambodia; they were invested with the supernatural functions, which in an earlier stage of society were the special attributes of the king. But no one could so well represent the king in his divine character as his son, who might be supposed to share the divine attributes of his father. No one, therefore, could so appropriately die for the king and, through him, for the whole people as the king's son."

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Page 176-177. "The one thing that looks clear through the haze of this weird tradition is the memory of a great massacre of firstborn. This was the origin, we are told, both of the sanctity of the firstborn and of the feast of the Passover. But when we are further told that the people whose firstborn were slaughtered on that occasion were not the Hebrews but their enemies, we are at once met by serious difficulties. Why, we may ask, should the Israelites kill the firstlings of their cattle for ever because God once killed those of the Egyptians? and why should every Hebrew father have to pay God a ransom for his firstborn child because God once slew all the firstborn children of the Egyptians? In this form the tradition offers no intelligible explanation of the custom. But it at once becomes clear and intelligible when we assume that in the original version of the story it was the Hebrew firstborn that were slain; that in fact the slaughter of the firstborn children was formerly, what the slaughter of the firstborn cattle always continued to be, not an isolated butchery but a regular custom, which with the growth of more humane sentiments was afterwards softened into the vicarious sacrifice of a lamb and the payment of a ransom for each child. Here the reader may be reminded of another Hebrew tradition in which the sacrifice of the firstborn child is indicated still more clearly. Abraham, we are informed, was commanded by God to offer up his firstborn

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when we read that the king of Moab offered his eldest son, who should have reigned after him, as a burnt sacrifice on the wall. For the Phoenicians it comes out less distinctly in the statement of Porphy^{ry} that the Phoenicians used to sacrifice one of their dearest to Baal, and in the legend recorded by Philo of Byblus that Cronus sacrificed his only-begotten son. We may suppose that the custom of sacrificing the firstborn both of men and animals was a very ancient Semitic institution, which many branches of the race kept up within historical times; but that the Hebrews, while they maintained the custom in regard to domestic cattle, were led by their loftier morality to discard it in respect of children, and to replace it by a merciful law that firstborn children should be ransomed instead of sacrificed."

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Further evidence with regard to the custom of hanging the god upon a tree is given in "Attila, Adonis, Osiris." We again quote: (Page 289-291.) "We may conjecture that in old days the priest who bore the name and played the part of Attila at the spring festival of Cybele was regularly hanged or otherwise slain upon the sacred tree, and that this barbarous custom was afterwards mitigated into the form in which it is known to us in later times, when the priest merely drew blood from his body under the tree and attached an effigy instead of himself to its trunk. In the holy grove at Upsala men and animals were sacrificed by being hanged upon the sacred trees. The human victims dedicated to Odin were regularly put to death by

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hanging or by a combination of hanging and stabbing, the man being strung up to a tree or a gallows and then wounded with a spear. Hence Odin was called the Lord of the Gallows or the God of the Hanged, and he is represented sitting under a gallows tree. Indeed he is said to have been sacrificed to himself in the ordinary way, as we learn from the weird verses of the Havamal, in which the god describes how he acquired his divine power by learning the magic runes:

'I know that I hung on the windy tree
for nine whole nights,

wounded with the spear, dedicated to Odin,
myself to myself.'

The Bagobos of Mindanao, one of the Philippine Islands, used annually to sacrifice human victims for the good of the crops in a similar way. Early in December, when the constellation Orion appeared at seven o'clock in the evening, the people knew that the time had come to clear their fields for sowing and to sacrifice a slave. The sacrifice was presented to certain powerful spirits as payment for the good year which the people had enjoyed, and to ensure the favour of the spirits for the coming season. The victim was led to a great tree in the forest; there he was tied with his back to the tree and his arms stretched high above his head, in the

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attitude in which ancient artists portrayed Marsyas hanging on the fatal tree. While he thus hung by the arms, he was slain by a spear thrust through his body at the level of the armpits."

We need hardly proceed. Every detail of the death of Jesus appears as the essential in some ritual or other of some earlier faith. We need not trouble the reader with similar parallels to the resurrection; we trust that the taste which we have offered him will induce him to make *The Golden Bough* the chief cornerstone of his religious library.

It will be objected that we have proved almost too much, that we have had to mingle the rites of Attis with those of Osiris; we have traced one incident to the worship of Dionysus, another to that of Mithras or the Sun.^X

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Footnote. As an alternative answer to this criticism, may I briefly point out that the story of the Crucifixion is already told in the romance called *The Book of Esther*?

There is a king *Ahasuerus* who has seven chamberlains (? the sun and the planets); his queen *Vashti* (the *Elamite* goddess *Nashti*) refuses to show herself to the people, as any modest woman in the East would do. *Ahasuerus* was 'merry with wine'. There are seven princes who propose to punish *Vashti*, who is accordingly deposed.

The king then chooses a virgin named *Esther* (*Ishtar* or *Ashtoreth* or *Asteria* or *Astarte*, the regular name of the

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(continuation of footnote on page 251)

goddess of those countries) adopted daughter of her cousin
 Mordecai (the local god ²⁵²Marqak) to be queen.

Mordecai, doing a service to the king by revealing a conspiracy against him, on the part of two chamberlains, obtains favour through Esther; but he has a rival in Haman (the Elamite god Humman) who is made 'prince minister'.

Haman tries to destroy all the Jews; Mordecai persuades Esther to come to the rescue. She orders all the Jews to fast and mourn for three days. At the end of this time Esther, pleasing the king, asks him and Haman to a banquet. Meanwhile Haman has prepared a gallows for Mordecai.

The king, sleepless on the night before the banquet, reads history, and remembers that he has neglected to reward Mordecai for the service rendered him.

Now comes the 'comedy'.

The king asks Haman what shall be done to the man whom the king delighteth to honour. Haman, thinking himself to be meant, recommends that the man should be dressed in the royal robes and crown, set on the king's own horse, and led through the city and proclaimed. The king orders Haman to do this to Mordecai; an excellent jest.

Now comes the banquet, and Esther pleads for the Jews to be spared, accusing Haman. The king is angry, and goes into the garden to walk it off. Haman, taking occasion by the hand to make the bounds of freedom wider yet pleads for his life with Esther by attempting to violate her. At this

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he is caught by Anas~~erus~~^{er}, who forthwith orders Haman to be hanged on the gallows that he had built for Mordecai.

The king gives the ring of office to Mordecai; the Jews slay all the regular subjects of Anas~~erus~~^{er}, instead of those subjects slaying them; and they all lived ~~happy~~ ever after.

In commemoration of these events the Jews establish the feast of **Purim**.

This story is evidently a romance in which myth is adapted to, and incorporated in an historical background. We have the same materials as for our own Columbine, Harlequin, and Pantaloon. (Note especially the costume of Harlequin.)

The essential features of it are much older than the romance; they - are derived from the Babylonian Sack.

So Chrystofor describes this festival in the following terms: "They take one of the prisoners condemned to death and seat him upon the king's throne, and give him the king's raiment, and let him lord it and drink and run riot and use the king's concubines during those days, and no man prevents him from doing just what he likes. But afterwards they strip and scourge and crucify him." Compare this with the events of "holy week."

There is in short no doubt that among the Jews themselves there was a festival of the 'slain god', adopted during the Babylonian captivity. For the main features of the crucifixion we have not therefore even to assume the influence of a foreign current. **Purim**, though a month earlier in the year, may have

(continuation of footnote on page 252.)

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become assimilated in this respect with Passover, whose doctrine of the substituted sacrifice of a lamb for the first-born is so similar to that of the substituted king. For those who object to seek any materials for the Gospels outside of Syria, it may then be suggested that the gospel story was an attempt to fortify Judaism by an identification of the Babylonian and Hebrew festivals, just as people in recent years have tried to make 'Empire Days' and such out of Sir John Lubbock's purely humanitarian 'Bank Holidays'.

It may possibly be objected that the important figure of Ishtar is lacking in the Jewish festival; but the revival of monotheism after the return from the captivity explains how this was dropped. The priests would see little harm in acquiescing in a mere 'mock king' ceremony, of which the religious import was obsolescent, or even not only kept alive the memory of a fabled racial glory, but was closely connected with their own old annual festival of the scapegoat.

And the Lord shake unto Moses after the death of the two sons of Aaron, when they offered before the Lord the son of Abiath, the son of Levi, and Nathan and Eliab, the sons of Eliab, and on the son of Phineas, son of Aaron.

And he shall take of the congregation of the children of Israel two kinds of the goats for a sin offering, & one ram for a burnt offering,..... And he shall take the two goats & present them before the Lord at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. And Aaron shall cast lots upon the two goats, one lot for the Lord & the other lot for the scapegoat. And Aaron shall bring the goat, upon which the lot fell, & offer him for a sin offering. But the goat, on which the lot fell to be the scapegoat, shall be presented alive before the Lord, to make an atonement with him, & to let him go for a scapegoat unto the wilderness.

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And the Lord shake unto Moses after the death of the two sons of Aaron, when they offered before the Lord the son of Eleazar, the son of Levi, and Nathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab, and On, the son of Reuben, sons of Aaron.

And he shall take of the congregation of the children of Israel two kinds of the goats for a sin offering, and one ram for a burnt offering, and he shall take the two goats and present them before the Lord at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. And Aaron shall cast lots upon the two goats, one lot for the scapegoat, and Aaron shall bring the goat, upon which the lot fell, and offer him for a sin offering. But the goat, on which the lot fell to be the scapegoat, shall be presented alive before the Lord, to make an atonement with him, and to let him go for a scapegoat into the wilderness.

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sons of Eliaz, and On, the son of Eleth, sons of Aaron, and he shall take of the congregation of the children of Israel.

took men." These two sons are evidently the two chamberlains

who plotted against him. Now how is 'all' to be expiated?

(Leviticus XVI. 5, 7, 8, 9, 10) "And he shall take two goats, one lot for the Lord

and unto all his congregation, saying, even tomorrow the Lord will

show who are his, and who is holy; and will cause him to come

unto him: even him whom he hath chosen will he cause to come

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unto him: even him whom he hath chosen will he cause to come

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00262

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It may possibly be objected that the important figure of Ishtar is lacking in the Jewish festival; but the revival of monotheism after the return from the captivity explains how this was dropped. The priests would see little harm in acquiescing in a mere 'mock king' ceremony, of which the religious import was obsolescent, or even not only kept alive the memory of a fabled racial glory, but was closely connected with their own old annual festival of the scape goat.

And the Lord spoke unto Moses after the

very quiet death of the two sons of Aaron, when they offered before the Lord the son of Eleazar, the son of Levi, and Ithamar and Abihu, the

sons of Eleazar, and On, the son of Phineas, sons of Aaron.

And he shall take of the congregation of the children of Israel:

two kinds of the goats for a sin offering, and one ram for a burnt offering.

And he shall take the two goats and present them before the Lord at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.

And Aaron shall cast lots upon the two goats, one lot for the Lord

and the other lot for the scapegoat. And Aaron shall bring the goat, upon which the lot fell

for the Lord, and shall offer him for a sin offering. But the goat, upon which the lot fell

to be the scapegoat, shall be presented alive before the Lord, to make an atonement

with him, and to let him go for a scapegoat into the wilderness.

00262

(continuation of footnote on page 253.)

become assimilated in this respect with Passover, whose doctrine of the substituted sacrifice of a lamb for the first-born is so similar to that of the substituted king. For those who object to seek any materials for the Gospels outside of Syria, it may then be suggested that the gospel story was an attempt to fortify Judaism by an identification of the Babylonian and Hebrew festivals, just as people in recent years have tried to make 'Empire Days' and such out of Sir John Lubbock's purely humanitarian 'Bank holidays'.

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(continuation of footnote on page 254.)

*Wrong
note*

~~near unto him. And put fire therein, and put incense in them
before the Lord to morrow: and it shall be that the man whom
the Lord doth choose, he shall be holy: ye take too much upon
you, ye sons of Levi. And Moses said unto Korah, Hear, I pray
you, ye sons of Levi: (in Esther iii, 7, we find that 'Par,
that is, the lot! was cast before Haman. Parim means 'lots',
and the reference is evidently to the expiation here described.)
Seemeth it but a small thing unto you, that the God of Israel
hath separated you from the congregation of Israel, to bring
you near to himself to do the service of the tabernacle of the
Lord, and to stand before the congregation to minister unto
them? And he hath brought thee near to him, and all thy brethren
the sons of Levi with thee: and seek ye the priesthood also.~~

Purim means lots, and the reference is evidently to the expiation here described.
Here one goat is Haman, the other Mordecai; one Jesus, the other
Barabbas.

I am indebted to Dr. J.C. Frazer for the outlines of this
note, and would refer the reader to his full and most able
discussion of the whole subject in the 'Scapegoat' volume of
The Golden Bough; but I have been ^{so} told enough to make several
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of the difficulties of the subject.)

The point is excellent; but it proves our contention. Recall now what was said at the beginning of this section with regard to the political condition of the period. The local gods did very well while travel was rare; but as their devotees began to wander upon the face of the earth a clash was imminent.

The priests took counsel together, in the 'way they have in the' priesthood! They decided upon the only possible course, to devise a composite rite, with a composite story to suit it. Each priest, by the slightest modification of his own ritual, could join the 'trust', and keep or even increase his revenues. *Quod erat faciendum.*

It may be observed that a precisely similar process was carried out in ancient Egypt in circumstances of a like kind. The corn-nymph was identified with the Moon-goddess and the Nile goddess and the Mother-goddess, and labelled Isis, all to her advantage. "Not only does Isis ripen your wheat", the priest would explain, "it is her tears that swell the Nile; it is her light that guides you in the night; it is she that gives you children." Hence the formation of groups of 'thirty three superior gods', presently 'enneads', then 'triads', and finally the resolution of the three into one, while yet keeping them separate, by the doctrine of the Trinity.

We now see, then, Jesus as a harmonizer between all these conflicting cults.

The reader will naturally remark that all this is very fine, but it is only an hypothesis, and he would like some evidence that it was actually carried out. Fortunately we have something of the sort to offer.

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In the first place the silence of John and Mark with regard to the birth of Jesus is explained in the simplest manner. We have only to suppose that these were the earlier gospels and failed to satisfy certain sects, whose central celebration involved the legend of a mysterious birth. In order to secure the adhesion of these people, it would only be necessary to incorporate their rites, and instructions would immediately be given to insert these into the gospels, or into some subsidiary religious documents such as the calendar.

Now we have actual examples that this was done. Frazer says, in the first volume of *The Golden Bough*, "we can hardly doubt that the Saint Hippolytus of the Roman calendar who was dragged by horses to death on the thirteenth of August, Diana's own day, is no other than the Greek hero of the same name, who after dying twice over as a heathen sinner had been happily resuscitated as a Christian saint."

This is by no means the only example. We find in the same volume: "perhaps then the images of cattle found in Diana's precinct at Ardea were offered to her by herdsmen to ensure her blessing on their herds. In Catholic Germany at the present time the great patron of cattle, horses, and pigs is St. Leonhard, and models of cattle, horses, and pigs are dedicated to him, sometimes in order to ensure the health and increase of the flocks and herds through the coming year, sometimes in order to

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obtain the recovery of sick animals. And curiously enough, like Diana of Aricia, St. Leonard is also expected to help women in travail and to bless barren wives with offspring. Nor do these points exhaust the analogy between St. Leonard and Diana of Aricia; for like the goddess the saint heals the sick; he is the patron of prisoners, as she was of runaway slaves; and his shrines, like hers, enjoyed the rights of asylum."

These are only two of very many cases. Even gods like Bacchus and Priapus were turned into saints. Not only do we find identity or similarity of name, but also of legend. If the god was accompanied by twenty-four nymphs, there would be twenty-four virgins to minister to the saint. If he had a company of fauns the saint would have a corresponding number of martyrs. If he was represented as the patron of some particular fish the saint would do some miracle, with regard to that fish, which would suggest the pagan story.

When therefore we see in quite a historical way, despite the obvious interests of the church in concealing or masking the transmutation, that the lesser religions were deliberately incorporated in Christianity by slightly editing their legends and their rites, it is quite a reasonable corollary that this was merely an extension of the original process.

But why Jesus? the reader still queries. Because the Jesus whom Paul preached was popular with the democracy. Christianity

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These are only two of very many cases. Even gods like Bacchus and Ariapus were turned into saints. Not only do we find identity or similarity of name, but also of legend. If the god was accompanied by twenty-four nymphs, there would be twenty-four virgins to minister to the saint. If he had a company of fauns the saint would have a corresponding number of martyrs. If he was represented as the patron of some particular fish the saint would do some miracle, with regard to that fish, which would suggest the pagan story.

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When therefore we see in quite a historical way, despite the obvious interests of the church in concealing or marring the tradition, that the lesser religions were deliberately incorporated in Christianity by slightly editing their legends and their rites, it is a very reasonable corollary that this was done by an extension of the original process.

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These are only two of very many cases. Even gods like Bacchus and Iriapus were turned into saints. Not only do we find identity or similarity of name, but also of legend. If the god was accompanied by twenty-four nymphs, there would be twenty-four virgins to minister to the saint. If he had a company of fauns the saint would have a corresponding number of martyrs. If he was represented as the patron of some particular fish the saint would do some miracle, with regard to that fish, which would suggest the pagan story.

Then therefore we see in quite a historical way, despite the obvious interests of the church in concealing or modifying the tradition, that the lesser religions were deliberately incorporated in Christianity by slightly editing their legends and their rites. It is ~~easy~~ to see how carefully this was done as an extension of the original process.

At this point the reader will query, because the Jesus whom Paul preached was popular with the democracy. Christianity

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When therefore we see in quite a historical way, despite the obvious interests of the church in concealing or making the transition, that the lesser religions were deliberately incorporated in Christianity by slightly editing their legends and their rites, it is quite a reasonable corollary that this was really an extension of the original process.

But why, Jesus? the reader still queries, because the Jesus whom Paul preached was popular with the democracy. Christianity

was at first the religion of criminals and slaves. Its salvation was dirt cheap. With the gradual decay of the Roman Empire the scarce priesthood had no choice but to attach the name and tradition of Jesus to their already modified rites. Only by this means could they refill their emptying temples, replenish their depleted soldiers, and re-establish their waning power and influence. As Mr. May says, Faith Without Works, in the sense of payment to the priests, did the trick.

It was the people, not the clergy, whom Constantine feared; it was them that he converted 'in this sign'. Even so it was long before the new Empire of the Papacy built up its power. The arts, the sciences, learning, literature, all fell into darkness; men knew no longer whence Jesus had arisen; they became so ignorant that they accepted the fantastic miracle story, with all its absurdities and contradictions, literally; and even the Renaissance, with its return to Pagan light and learning, the recognition of all that is good in modern civilization, left the Teutonic savages of Prussia and England still in the gloom, lit only by rare flashes of those who *loved* the Greeks, of that enamel where the mass of the people calcinate - unto this day.

The Fabrication of the Final Canon of the Gospel.

In this (I fear) somewhat over lengthy discussion the reader may have lost the sense of the proportions of the argument. It will now be convenient to reweave the threads more closely, summarizing the positions taken, and surveying the field of battle as a whole.

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Chs 22 23

If the reader will take his Testament *in hand*, and make a synopsis of the statements recorded, he will find a very striking circumstance. There are three main sections, and *three only*, of the life of Jesus. First comes the birth-story, *we have already* discarded this as an evident interpolation, which even Paul (and probably Peter and John) were either totally ignorant of the existence of any such fable, or utterly incredulous of, and hostile to, it. Next comes the life of the wandering preacher, and finally, like a thunderclap, the tragedy, from "Palm Sunday" to the Resurrection. These two do not dovetail at all well, and a study of their sources will explain why. Also we shall see how they came to be placed together. We may call them the life, and the death, of Jesus; and we will analyze them *seriatim*.

The Life of Jesus.

The whole misunderstanding of the Bible is due to the fact that it is an Eastern vine planted in a Western garden. If Mr. Chow (with all his ability and learning) is in the same quagmire as the most ignorant peasant in Lincolnshire, it is due to the fact that he has never seen to the East to live. The incidents - the simplest incidents - of any Gospel are as strange to him as fairy tales.

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June 22 '90

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