

sand blown up from the sea, and over the sand was a layer of turf to the depth of nearly a foot.

THE STORY OF CHRIST

BY GIOVANNI PAPINI

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AGAINST NATURE

Nonresistance to evil is profoundly repugnant to our nature, but to obey the teachings of Christ means that our nature will come to feel disgust for what now pleases it, and find happiness in what now fills us with horror.

Jesus does not believe in the perfection of the natural soul, of the original soul. He believes in its future perfection, only to be reached by a complete overturning of its present nature.

Jesus who stands with Jesus is against the old animal nature and working for the higher nature which must conquer it. Everything else is idle talk, dust and ashes.

All men anxiously take thought for the morrow. They are always afraid lest the ground give way under their feet, lest there may not be enough bread to last to the next harvest.

Those who refuse Christ have many easily understandable reasons for not accepting Him; they would need to renounce their old personalities and they cannot see that their renunciation from this as a natural consequence.

After the promulgation of the old Law there was amity between blood kin; and the citizens of the same city bore with each other and did one another no harm; but for strangers, if they were not guests, there was only hatred and extermination.

Every one of us has a hankering to judge his fellows. To sit in judgment makes us feel that we are above those judged, better, more righteous, innocent.

says, "Judge not that ye be not judged, condemn not and ye shall not be condemned, forgive and ye shall be forgiven."

The serious-minded man, the devout, the pure, the Pharisee, avoids if possible the company of sinners, of the fallen, of the defiled, and receives as equals at his table only the righteous.

The avarice of men is so great that every one tries to take as much as he can from others and to give back as little. Every one seeks to possess; praises of generosity are only an attempt to cover professional beggary with a decent mask.

Love for ourselves, the origin of our hatred for others includes all other tendencies and passions. He who conquers self-love, and the hatred toward others, is already entirely transformed; the rest flows from this as a natural consequence.

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whole book, the Kie Siang Ngai, to say that men should love each other. He writes, "The wise man who wants to improve the world can improve it only if he knows with certainty the origin of disorders; if he does not know that, he cannot improve it."

For M-Ti, love or, to translate it more exactly, benevolence composed of respect and indulgence, is the mortar to hold citizens and the State more closely united. It is a remedy against the evils of life-in-common, a social pancea.

"Answer insults with courtesy," suggests timidly the mysterious Lao-Tse; but courtesy is prudence or mildness, not love. His contemporary, old Confucius, according to his disciple Tseng-Tse, taught a doctrine which consisted in upright-ness of heart, and in loving one's neighbor as oneself.

In Egypt every dead body took with it into the tomb a copy of the book of the dead, an anticipatory apology of the soul before the tribunal of Osiris. The dead praises himself: he has been righteous and has given to the needy, "I have saved one life! I have made no weep! I have not killed! I have not commanded treacherous murder! I have defrauded no one! I have given bread to the hungry, water to the thirsty, clothes to the naked, a boat to the traveller halted on his journey, banquets to the dead."

This army went in peace; it laid waste the country of the Hirusaitu. This army went in peace; they cut down all their fig trees and their grape vines. This army went in peace; they set on fire all their houses. This army went in peace; it massacred their soldiers by myriads. This army went in peace; it carried away their men, women and children in great numbers, and for this, more than for any other thing, did his Holiness rejoice.

Zarathustra also leaves a law for the Iranians. This law commands the faithful of Ahura Mazda to be kind to their companions in the faith. They are to give clothes to the naked and they are not to refuse bread to the hungry working man. We are still concerned with material charity towards those who belong to us, who serve us, who are our neighbors. There is no talk of love.

burning, wound for wound, stripe for stripe." Thus speaks Moses in Deuteronomy. "And thou shalt consume all the people which the Lord thy God shall deliver thee; thine eye shall have no pity upon them."

And Philo, the Alexandrian Jew, the Platonizing metaphysician, some twenty years older than Jesus, left a treatise on the love of men; but Philo, with all his talents and with all his mystical and Messianic speculations, is, like Hillel, a theorist, a man of pens and ink-pots, of learning, of books, of systems, of abstractions, of classifications.

This is another step forward. Do no harm to him who offends you, provided that he is of your own nation. We have come, if not to pardon, to generous forgetfulness, although only for neighbors.

This is rather too little: the old Jew has already made a tremendous effort in caring for the animals of his country, but the Psalms, to make up for it, resound at every step with outcries against enemies and with violent demands to the Lord to persecute and destroy them.

In such a world it is natural that Saul should be astounded that he was not killed by his enemy David, and that Job should boast of not having exulted in the misfortunes of an enemy. Only in the later prophets do we find words which forecast Jesus' saying, "Say not thou, I will recompense evil; but wait on the Lord, and he shall save thee."

But there is, they say, Hillel, the Rabbi Hillel, the great Hillel, master of Gamaliel, Hillel Hababli or the Babylonian. This celebrated Pharisee lived a little before Jesus and taught, they say, the same things which Jesus afterwards taught. He was a liberal Jew, a rational Pharisee, an intelligent rabbi; but was he therefore a Christian? It is true that he said these words, "Do not do unto others what is displeasing to you; this is the whole Law, the rest is only explanation of it."

These are fine words for a master of the old law, but how far away they are from those of the over-turner of the ancient law! This is a negative command, "Do not do." He does not say, "Do good to those who wrong you," but "Do not do to others that these others are certainly companions, fellow-citizens, members of the family and friends" what you feel to be evil."

great swamp of casuistry. The descendants of Jesus were the martyrs who blessed their torturers.

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The Priests' Guild appealed directly to the men themselves and warned them against the results of such a policy of internal strife in the ranks of Labor. Almost unanimously the men at once hearkened to the appeal and work has been resumed at Marino, Clontarf, where six hundred houses are being erected.

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