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How to Deal with Devils

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Very few people know how to deal with devils. I am one who does. Possibly to date the only one!

This article, therefore, is of great importance to the discerning reader, and I conjure him (excuse the language of diabolism!) to read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest it.

There is a false impression abroad that the Christian Churches, and in particular the Roman Catholic Church, have some recondite knowledge of this subject and even some practical skill in dealing with individual devils such as Satan, Beelzebub, Mammon, and not a few other hellish characters whose names escape me for the moment.

I would not seriously dispute this so far as Mammon, the god of gold, is concerned. But though I am too good-tempered and well-mannered to denigrate my competitors, who are somewhat older-established than I as exorcists, I beg to say that these are, in my considered opinion, on the wrong track. Whereas, I (as usual) am on the right one.

The fact is (if the world will excuse my telling the truth, which I rather doubt, for the truth is the last thing anybody, especially a journalist or a politician should tell) that the Princes, the prelates, and priests of the Holy Church, are children in the art of dealing with demons. Their services of Exorcism are ineffective. No sooner do they cast out one devil (if they ever do) than seven others take his place, as Jesus Christ very truthfully said. And, as he also said, the last state of the man is worse than the first.

I very much fear that the earnest inquirer will get little more to the point on devil-dealing from the modern Christian Church than he will get from Paracelsus, or Dr. John Dee of Tudor Days, or the late Joris Karl Huysmans of France in his first phase, or the late Aleister Crowley, of Britain (the last a most admirable, but little recognised, poet, by the way). Besides, it is terribly tedious to have to read books like *The Sacred Magic of Abramelin*, *The Book of Thoth*, or *An Ixiii Sol in Capricornus*,

the literary equivalent of a walk through barbed wire entanglements.

Personally, I eschew such reading.

No! Holy water and prayers, the Church method, are useless. Black Masses, necromancy, Eleusinian Mysteries, and the ritualistic practices of a Crowley, are equally use less, for not by Satan do you cast out Satan, as Jesus again very truthfully said in one of his more pungent remarks.

Of course, I can well understand people thinking that exercises in abracadabra, pentagrams, horoscopes, and all that hocus-pocus might cause devils to flee. When I was a small boy and a perfect little devil myself, such obscenities as Quadratic Equations, and the Binomial Theorem, put *me* to flight. What indeed can be more disgusting than a Logarithm in its native indecency except the square of the Hypotenuse? Algebraic and Euclidean horrors may well raise the dead from their graves and "spirits from the vasty deep" to protest against such unsexual beastliness as they exhibit to the human mind.

Still, although they might, I doubt if they do, in Spite of the late Mr. Crowley's pentagrams, equinoxes, oracles, illuminism, and all that. The *Sunday Express* called Mr. Crowley "The Wickedest Man in the World" (temporarily forgetting the existence of other nefarious men nearer home) when he was nothing more than a depraved child trying to frighten other children. Much better if the *Sunday Express* had printed his better poems and paid well for them, which would have converted this eminent "Satanist" to conventionalism and Western Christianity at the first cheque. (It might even convert *me*, so frail is human nature—especially a poverty-stricken poet's human nature.)

As opposed to the Christian, and the Satanist's different methods of dealing with devils, I prefer my own method. This, perhaps, is natural again, you may say. But am fully persuaded that my method on its merits is the most efficacious.

It is certainly better than Martin Luther's. Luther (you recall) saw the Devil (and instead of asking him a few questions and thereby getting some interesting and novel "copy," as any efficient author should) he threw his inkpot at the Majesty of Hell. As a writer, I do not approve of ink-wasting. Besides, Luther was guilty of the legal offence of attempted common assault as well as atrocious bad manners.

Now for my method of dealing with devils. It is quite simple. Unlike Jesus and the Christian Church, I do not take devils seriously. I merely laugh at the notion of them. I do not believe they exist. Why should an Almighty God a jealous God at that—

tolerate such inane rivalry? I am all for toleration; but tolerance can go too far, as a generation which would not tolerate Hitler and King Edward VIII but had to tolerate Stalin, will agree.

Making mysteries of the Devils or making war against them (as Saint Michael is said to have done) is a ludicrous mistake. Both Christians and Satanists are invited to try my prescription for dealing with devils—which is to disbelieve in them and to laugh at the very idea of them. They dissolve in laughter like bacilli in disinfectants. And devils in dissolution need not be feared as enemies by the Christian nor counted as friends by the Satanists.

Instead of saying "To Hell with them," in the spirit of *Retro me Sathanas*, I say. "To the Dustbin with them," in the spirit of a Vice-Chairman of a Public Health Committee of the local Borough Council.