



against Nazi ideals has been a waste of time, because the one is no better than the other. Nor can there ever be any real improvement or deterioration: if there is no real goal you can't get either nearer to it or farther from it. In fact, there is no real reason for doing anything at all.

It looks to me, neighbours, as though we shall have to set about becoming true Pagans if only as a preliminary to becoming Christians. I don't mean that we should begin leaving little bits of bread under the tree at the end of the garden as an offering to the Dryad. I don't mean that we should dance to Dionysus across Hampstead Heath (though perhaps a little more solemn or ecstatic gaiety and a little less commercialised "amusement" might make our holidays better than they now are). I don't even mean (though I do very much wish) that we should recover that sympathy with nature, that religious attitude to the family, and that appetite for beauty which the better Pagans had. Perhaps what I do mean is best put like this.

If the modern post-Christian view is wrong — and every day I find it harder to think it right — then there are three kinds of people in the world. (1) Those who

are sick and don't know it (the post-Christians). (2) Those who are sick and know it (Pagans). (3) Those who have found the cure. And if you start in the first class you must go through the second to reach the third. For (in a sense) all that Christianity adds to Paganism is the cure. It confirms the old belief that in this universe we are up against Living Power: that there is a real Right and that we have failed to obey it: that existence is beautiful and terrifying. It adds a wonder of which Paganism had not distinctly heard — that the Mighty One has come down to help us, to remove our guilt, to reconcile us.

All over the world (even in Japan, even in Russia) men and women will meet on December 25th to do what is a very old-fashioned and, if you like, a very Pagan thing — to sing and feast because a God has been born. You are uncertain whether it is more than a myth. Well, if it is, then our last hope is gone. But is the opposite explanation not worth trying?

Who knows but that here, and here alone, lies your way back not only to Heaven, but to Earth too, and to the great human family whose oldest hopes are confirmed by this story that does not die?

