

".... I had with me a copy of BERNARD SHAW'S ANDROCLUS AND THE LION and bethought myself that I would criticize the preface. The almost unparalleled knowledge of the text of the Bible which I had acquired in early childhood was shocked by Shaw's outrageously arbitrary selection of the texts that sustained his argument. His ignorance of Asiatic life and thought had led him into the most grotesque misapprehensions. I set out to criticize his essay, section by section; but the work grew under my hand, and in three weeks or so I had produced a formidable treatise of some 45,000 words. I had intended to confine myself to destructive criticism of my author; but as I went on, my analysis of the text of the Gospels revealed the mystery of their composition. It became clear both those who believe in the historicity of "Jesus" and their opponents were at fault. I could not doubt that actual incidents and genuine sayings in the life of a real man formed part of the structure. The truth was that scraps of several such men, distinct from, and incompatible with, each other, had been pitch-forked together and labelled with a single name. It was exactly the case of the students who stuck together various parts of various insects and asked their professor "What kind of bug is this?" "Gentlemen", he replied, this is a hum-bug."

In writing this book, I was much assisted by Frazer's Golden Bough, and, to a less extent, by Jung's 'Psychology of the Unconscious.' But my main assets were my intimate knowledge of the text of the Gospels, of the conditions of life and thought in the East, and the details of magical and mystical Work, and of the literary conventions which old writers employed to convey their ideas.

.... I claim that my book establishes the outline of an entirely final theory of the construction of Christianity."

ALEISTER CROWLEY (quotation from his
Autobiography.)