

THE TRIAL OF THE CHRISTIAN SCIENTISTS.

In the case of the death of Wallace Goodfellow the grand jury made the following recommendation :

"We believe that the matters involved are of sufficient importance to warrant a recommendation to the Ontario Legislature that an enquiry be made into the whole matter, so that the law may be made explicit as to the rights of all parties concerned."

After a full and thorough trial, the counsel for the defendants presented his arguments to the jury.

Mr. DuVernet, in the course of a vehement reply, laid stress on the danger which would result if Christian Scientists were allowed to practise their doctrines without reference to the law. Christian Scientists held, he said, that a person with smallpox had not a disease. It was a delusion. Suppose that person went out in that condition and mixed with other people. If it were allowed it would lead to sickness and death and plague in the community. Mr. DuVernet commented on the attitude of Mrs. Stewart, who, holding the opinions she did, yet admitted she sent for a doctor when her child was born. Further, that when Mrs. Stewart's husband was in his last illness three doctors were called in. It appeared that these people, when rich, did not take the risk of losing those near and dear to them, but when others less well off were concerned they were not so particular. Mr. DuVernet referred to the fifth chapter of St. Luke and the 31st verse in answer to Mrs. Stewart's contention that there was nothing in the Bible about doctors. This verse reads, "They that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." Christian Science treatment, he said, was not recognized by the law.

Mr. Justice Magee, in his charge to the jury, said the question for them to decide was, did these defendants conspire to deprive Wallace Goodfellow of the necessities of life? And it was for them to decide what the "necessaries" were under the circumstances.

Speaking of Christian Science, his lordship said that, though cures have been brought about by Christian Science, there was no case where the mind had cured actual organic disease, such as smallpox, or cancer. No doubt, the mind had a certain influence over the body, and when the mind was at rest that condition gave nature a chance to throw off disease. He asked the jury to consider the difference in the evidence of Mrs. Stewart and that of Dr. Johnson. He described the ulcers on the intestines and the other symptoms. Did she know anything of these? If not, how could she hope to cure them? "Would you believe," his lordship asked, "that by thinking you could drive away an ulcer? Does that appeal to your common sense? Have these people shown evidence of such or-