

## CHRISTIAN SCIENCE.\*

BY J. H. RICHARDSON, M.D., M.R.C.S. (ENG.), TORONTO.

WHEN it was suggested that I should read a paper before this Association upon the subject of Christian Science, I willingly consented, not because it was intrinsically worthy of five minutes attention from any rational being, but because it seems to me imperative that the medical profession should have more definite knowledge of its claims and teachings than can be found in the reports of lectures which appear from time to time, which do not give the faintest idea of the real nature of this so-called Christian Science.

The time at my disposal necessitates but a brief synopsis. I can merely quote extracts bearing upon the large majority of its teachings, confining more extended notice to such as seem to me to be of importance.

The quotations I will give will be mainly from the authorized text-book, "Science and Health, with Key to the Scriptures," but some will be from Mrs. Eddy's "Miscellaneous Writings," which, along with all her other published works, profess to be inspired.

"Science and Health" commences with the declaration: "In the year 1866 I *discovered* the science of metaphysical healing, and named it Christian Science. God had been graciously fitting me during many years for the reception of a *final revelation* of the absolute principle of scientific mind-healing."

In what this fitting consisted she does not tell us, but it appears to have been a dabbling in spiritualism, clairvoyance, hydropathy, homoeopathy and mesmerism, and in being a patient and pupil of one, Dr. Guimby, who practised mesmerism and mind curing, and attained a wide reputation in the State of Maine during the first half of the century for his marvellous cures.

In 1862, Mrs. Eddy (then Mrs. Patterson) went to Portland to obtain his valuable services for the relief of an illness which, she says, had made her a hopeless invalid for over six years. The exact nature of this illness is not stated, but any experienced physician will have no difficulty in diagnosing the case as one of common occurrence amongst a certain class of females, from the fact, as stated by herself, that "in less than one week after she visited Dr. Guimby she ascended by a stairway of 180 steps to the dome of the city hall." Mrs. Patterson remained in Portland for some time, and had frequent opportunities of becoming acquainted with Dr. Guimby's method of treatment, which he described as follows, in a circular distributed in Portland about that time: "My practice is unlike all medical practice. I give no medicines and make no outward applications, but simply sit by the patient, tell

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