

THE EDITOR'S PAGE

Christian Science:
The Light of Truth

By George Shaw Cook, C. S. B.

Member of the Board of Lectureship
of The Mother Church, The First
Church of Christ, Scientist,
in Boston, Mass.

A little more than half a century ago an earnest seeker for Truth—one who had long been buffeted by the unsatisfying philosophies of the human mind—was driven to the very borderland of mortal existence by the all but fatal cruelty of an accident. In the last extremity of human need this deeply religious woman turned resolutely and forever away from matter to divine Mind as the one and only savior, and was restored to normal health. Having been healed by the power of God, it was only natural that she should have turned to the Word of God for an explanation of her cure. Patiently and prayerfully studying the Scriptures for the purpose of discovering the Principle and law of her deliverance, this faithful woman—Mary Baker Eddy—continued her search until it was revealed to her that the eternal Christ, which enabled Jesus to heal the sick and raise the dead, is present with and available to mankind now.

This revelation of the truth was put to practical test by Mrs. Eddy and demonstrated beyond a shadow of a doubt, and was then embodied by her in the Christian Science textbook, "Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures," which was first published in 1875. Through the study of this book and the practice of its teachings many were redeemed from sin and healed of inveterate disease, and some were turned back from the very gates of death. In this manner was formed a nucleus for the Christian Science church, which in 1879 was organized to "commemorate the word and works of our Master" and to "renew the primitive Christianity and its lost element of healing" (Church Manual, p. 17). This church was later reorganized as "The First Church of Christ, Scientist, in Boston, Massachusetts," of which all authorized Christian Science churches are branches. The Mother Church and its many branches, together with the denominational activities of Christian Science, now constitute a mighty movement that is literally encircling the globe.

The Christian Science Church, without adaptation to the needs of mankind the Christian Science church as an institution would have no good reason for existence. In order to justify its presence among men, the Church of Christ, Scientist, must be ready to answer, not theoretically but practically, the all-important question, "What is Christian Science able to do for suffering humanity?"

The answer which it makes to this question is, "Christian Science heals of appetite and passion. It lifts the sickness and sin. It breaks the bands of fear and care."

Through the ministry of Christian Science, many thousands have been raised from beds of unspeakable pain. Others have been rescued from lives of immorality and vice. Others, still, have been freed from the bondage of poverty and incompetency. Now, it is possible that some of these persons would have recovered from their sickness under other forms of treatment without any treatment. It is probable that some would have been reformed by different means, and that others would have become prosperous in another way. But it is a fact that many of them were utterly hopeless and apparently helpless in their misery until Christian Science showed them a way out of it.

How were these people healed of diseases which, in many instances, had baffled the physicians? They were healed by the Christ, Truth, which takes away the sin and heals the sickness of the world. They were healed by reason of the knowledge that sickness is not natural to God's man, that it is no part of man's true nature. They have found that the fear of sickness and of other forms of evil is unnecessary because every phase of evil is temporal and destructible. And, best of all, they have gained through Christian Science a more perfect understanding of God. They have learned that God is as the Scriptures declare, Life, Truth, Spirit, Love. God was revealed to Moses as I Am, and surely I Am can be nothing less than the one self-existent and eternal Being of Life. In the thirty-second chapter of Deuteronomy God is referred to as "a God of truth, and without iniquity, just and right is he." Jesus said "God is a Spirit," or, as the

revised version of the New Testament puts it, "God is Spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." John, the beloved disciple of Jesus, said: "He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love."

Christian Science also defines God as infinite, changeless, perfect, good. God, good, being infinite, is limitless in capacity, presence, power, and activity.

Christian Science further declares God to be infinite Mind, or divine Principle. But when using Principle as a name for God, Christian Scientists do not think of something abstract. Mrs. Eddy, in Science and Health, seldom refers to God as Principle unless she combines it with the word Love. She says, for example, "Infinite Principle," or "divine Love," and that Principle which is synonymous with divine Love must be loving, tender, and merciful as well as exact, inviolable, and impartial. So Principle as understood in Christian Science is seen to be the one ever present, ever operative, conscious, living, loving Principle of being—the only source, origin, cause, or creator of all that really exists. The only basis or foundation of all reality.

Cause and Effect

Since nothing is more certain than that effect must be like cause, Christian Science shows that God, the only Cause, being Spirit, or Mind, His universe must be spiritual, or mental. God's universe must, then, be a universe of thought. It must consist of thoughts or ideas that are God-like—spiritual, good, harmonious, eternal, divine. This infinite universe of God or divine Mind, existing here and now, and embracing all creation, necessarily includes man as the image or likeness of God, Spirit, Mind. Thus we see that the present reality of man is in his mental or spiritual identity. This does not, however, refer to a finite mind, generally associated with the human brain, nor does it refer to a soul that is supposed to reside elsewhere in the human body, but it refers to man as the individual spiritual image, reflection, or idea of divine Mind, God. Mrs. Eddy says on page 475 of Science and Health, "Man is idea, the image, of Love; he is not physical." A modern dictionary definition of idea is, "That which embodies the essential nature of something." So man as the idea of God, or divine Mind, is that which consciously and perfectly reflects, expresses, manifests, or embodies the divine nature. And this agrees with the Scriptural record of creation contained in the first chapter of Genesis, for there it says that God made man in His own image. But the seventh verse of the second chapter of Genesis says that "The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life." The record of creation contained in the first chapter of Genesis and the account beginning with the seventh verse of the second chapter are so different as to be absolutely irreconcilable.

True and False Creation

The first record of creation declares that "the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them." This finished universe of God is said to have been recognized by Him as being "very good." This very good and complete universe, according to the record included man created "in the image of God." The second and materialistic account of creation in the very opposite of the spiritual record which precedes it. Man, instead of being the image of the eternal God, is said to have been made of temporal matter. In this story it is not even claimed that man is the likeness of God. Man who in the first chapter is recorded as part of God's perfect, finished creation, is here supposed to have been re-created or remodeled from clay. But why a divinely intelligent creator would have need to remodel a perfectly good universe or any part thereof is not explained.

If one accepts the first record of creation he will be obliged to reject the second account if he would be logical. Christian Science accepts the first or Elohist account as a statement of spiritual creation, and explains the second or Jehovistic account as an allegory evidently intended by its author to depict the belief in a material creation. That Christian believers in general and theologians in particular pay much more attention to the mythical account than to the scientific record is to be regretted. Their emphasis in sermons and otherwise is frequently laid upon what they term "fallen man." The tenacious belief in this myth with its "dust man," created by an anthropomorphic God, is responsible for all the ills to which flesh is heir. Mortal history is little more than a recital of the woes, the suffering, the tragedies which result from failure to discriminate be-

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tween the true and the false. The supposed naturalness and inevitability of disease and death are due primarily to a false, material sense of man's origin and nature. Whereas the understanding that man is the spiritually created and immortal likeness of divine Mind makes freedom from these evils certain. According to Christian Science nothing is really natural but good, and nothing is inevitable but the triumph of good.

Putting Off the Old Man

Through understanding the supremacy, the omnipotence of good, Christian Scientists are proving step by step their ability to comply with the injunction of Paul to "put off the old man" (the mortal, material, sinful sense of man), and to "put on the new man" (the immortal, spiritual, sinless manhood), which "is created in righteousness and true holiness." In this endeavor they are finding that their success is in proportion to the faithfulness and persistence with which they return in thought to the fundamental fact which is the basis of all right thinking and living, namely, that when God made all that is and pronounced it "very good," He made man in His likeness; and that nothing has since happened or will ever happen to unmake or undo God's perfect work. The writer of Ecclesiastes said: "I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever: nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it." And on page 557 of Science and Health, Mrs. Eddy says: "Divine Science rolls back the clouds of error with the light of Truth, and lifts the curtain on man as never born and as never dying, but as co-existent with his creator."

According to Christian Science the putting on of immortality is not necessarily deferred until after passing through an experience called death, but may begin now and must continue until the perfect recognition of the immortality and supremacy of Life displaces all belief in the existence of something which is the opposite of Life—in sin, disease, death.

Christian Scientists admit that to human, or mortal sense, evil and matter appear real, but Christian Science agrees exactly with the prophet Habakkuk, that God is "of purer eyes than to behold evil." It explains that man as the perfect likeness of God cannot know something which God does not know. And Christian Science shows that the Mind which is God, infinite good, cannot embrace a knowledge of evil any more than light can include darkness. It explains that evil is contrary to the will of God, who is always good in purpose and in manifestation. Thus it induces the sinner to abandon his belief of satisfaction in sin and enables him to win forgiveness by forsaking sin. It is, therefore, a mistake to suppose that in teaching the unreal nature of sin, Christian Science encourages the indulgence of sin. The fact is that it awakens its students to the absolute necessity of gaining a love for goodness that will enable them to abandon, willingly and gladly, not only the more flagrant forms of immorality and vice, but also the more subtle phases of evil. And Christian Scientists realize the need of recognizing sin or evil as a claim, or false belief, of the carnal mind in order that it may be demonstrated in human experience to be powerless and, in the absolute sense, unreal. For one is not likely to correct a moral error without first seeing it, for what is or what it claims to be, any more than he would correct a mathematical mistake without first recognizing it. And just as mathematical error is not disposed of by ignoring it, so one cannot free himself from sin by ignoring it. Christian Science, therefore, shows the need of handling sin, or evil, as error, as a mistake, and of correcting it with Truth. Furthermore, it shows that true forgiveness of sin consists in its destruction, in the proof of its unreality. On page

497 of Science and Health Mrs. Eddy says, "We acknowledge God's forgiveness of sin in the destruction of sin and the spiritual understanding that casts out evil as unreal. But the belief in sin is punished so long as the belief lasts."

Matter viewed in the light of Christian Science is seen not to be substantial, for it is not the manifestation of that Mind whose creation alone is incapable of decay. It is contended by some that matter is, directly or indirectly, the creation of God, who is admitted by them to be Spirit. But it should be plain that God, who is Spirit and Life, could not possibly create that which is capable of disease, decay and dissolution.

To the physical senses matter seems real and substantial. But Christian Science shows that these senses cannot be depended upon to testify to the existence of that which is, in the best sense, real. Paul said "the natural man" cannot know the things of God, for they are "spiritually discerned." And he also said: "The things which are seen (cognized by the senses) are temporal; but the things which are not seen (by the senses) are eternal." So Christian Science shows that matter is in fact temporal, destructible, illusory, while the things of Spirit—the ideas of God, or divine Mind—alone are really substantial and enduring.

The teaching of Christian Science that matter exists only as belief, as a concept of the human or carnal mind, enables one to deal more intelligently, hence more successfully, with disease than was possible without such knowledge. For it enables one to see, more clearly than he was formerly able to see, that pain and suffering are not material but mental. Ordinary experience shows that pain is difficult to locate. The senses often make pain appear to be where it is not. Christian Science says that pain is never in the body but always in thought or belief. So the Christian Scientist in his treatment of sickness goes directly to the seat of the trouble. His endeavor is to correct or remove through righteous prayer, or right thinking, the mental cause of the disease.

Cause and Cure of Disease

The teaching of Christian Science relative to the mental nature of disease has to a very great extent changed the world's thought on this subject. Many observing physicians are willing to admit much in this direction, more indeed than some laymen. Physicians of standing have agreed that rage and fear will immediately produce a radical chemical change in the blood. Daily experience shows that acute fear will often be directly expressed in a pale, and angry in a flushed, face. Grief brings tears to the eyes and worry causes insomnia and indigestion. Since we are convinced of the mental causes of these physical effects, does it not seem entirely reasonable to agree with the statement of Christian Science that, primarily, all disease has a mental cause? But Christian Scientists do not understand that all sickness is the result of conscious fear or of willful wrongdoing on the part of the victim of disease. They merely claim that somewhere back of all bodily diseases there are erroneous conditions of thought which must be discovered and corrected before there can be a permanent cure. May not this explain why Christian Science has been so many chronic cases that medicine had failed to cure? Is it not plain that physicians in their treatment of these cases were not getting at the root of the difficulty, because the drugs and medicines which they prescribed could not reach, nor have any effect upon, the mental cause of disease? Can non-intelligent drugs reasonably be expected to influence thought? Could one well expect medicines to have power over such emotions as anger, jealousy, worry, fear, and grief? And yet, even from the medical point of view, these erroneous thoughts are

seen to be frequent causes of disease. Perhaps the most prolific cause of disease is fear. Fear is in fact the greatest enemy of mankind. If one doubts this somewhat radical statement, let him pause long enough to consider some of the things of which people are afraid. They are afraid of weather, food, germs, criticism, failure, and poverty. And the Bible tells us of those who "through fear of death" are all their lifetime subject to bondage. The complete removal of fear from the consciousness of humanity would unquestionably be a wonderful blessing. Christian Science shows that fear is needless. It explains why it is needless. Thus it removes fear. Take the fear of criticism as an example. Christian Science helps one to see that he need not fear criticism, if criticism is just it should be welcomed, because just criticism helps one to correct mistakes. But even when criticism is unjust it need not be feared, because in the last analysis it cannot make much difference what other people think. It is only what we think that should seriously concern us. If what others think is not true it may injure them, but it cannot harm us if what we think is true. Hence we should be sure that our thoughts are honest, just, pure, loving, considerate, and if they are we need not be in the least afraid of what others are thinking about us or about anything.

Healing Fear of Failure

Then there is the fear of failure, which seems to follow many persons almost continuously, from the "cradle to the grave." Christian Science shows that in the realm of reality, in the universe of Divine Mind, there can be no such thing as failure. Failure resulting from absolute Principle or from the intelligent reflection of Principle is inconceivable. It is, even in daily business experience, lack of Principle that causes failure. On the other hand, those qualities which insure true success are intelligent activity, energy, health, persistence, faithfulness, honesty, etc.

Christian Science shows that these qualities, if enduring, are not personal possessions; they do not originate with the individual and can not be monopolized by him. They are the manifestations of divine Principle, the ideas of infinite Mind. They are, therefore, universal and available to all alike. Every business man and woman knows that next to honesty the quality most needed in the business life is wisdom. "Wisdom," the Proverbs tell us, "is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom; and with all thy getting get understanding."

So after all it is not prestige or power or money or any material thing that insures real success. It is wisdom and understanding. And what the business man needs, first and last, is the understanding of Principle, of Truth, of Love. This understanding shows us that man's real business as the son of God, as the exact image—the conscious reflection—of divine Mind, is to express eternally, without interruption and without limit, the might, majesty, dominion, abundance, activity, harmony, goodness and perfection of his creator.

To be thus employed is to be truly "about the Father's business." That is man's real business. That is your real business. It is a success. It cannot fail. God never made man to be a failure. The man of God's creating is the very best kind of a success. Knowledge of these facts constitutes real law and power. This divinely bestowed understanding acts as law in your present human experience to annul fear, to remove limitation, to rightly direct your affairs and adjust your relationships. And, remember that "however things may seem, no good thing is a failure and no evil thing a success."

The fear of criticism and of failure are only two of the many phases of fear from which Christian Science is healing mankind.

In like manner Christian Science enables one to overcome other kinds of wrong thinking, such as envy, hatred, revenge, greed, and avarice through understanding that these evil thoughts do not emanate from Truth, the infinite, divine Mind; hence they are without real cause or existence.

False Laws Annulled

As has been previously indicated, all sickness does not, even from the Christian Science viewpoint, result from willful sin or from conscious fear. Disease is frequently the effect of generally accepted beliefs of the human mind which have mistakenly come to be regarded as laws. Among these will be found the so-called laws that appear to control the effect of food, climate, contagion, and

heredity. Christian Science shows that these asserted laws which claim to hold mortals in bondage and cause them to sicken and die are not real laws. It teaches that these mortal laws may be rendered void and inoperative, through enforcement of the law of divine Truth—which is the law of life and health. And it does not matter how long one of these supposed laws may have been believed in or submitted to, if it can be set aside in its operation in a single instance it is proved not to be law. It is safe to say that Christian Science practice has annulled every so-called "health law"—not one instance only, but in many instances. And Jesus, it will be recalled, healed the sick, raised the dead, fed the multitude, and walked on the water, not in conformity with, but in absolute disregard of so-called material laws.

From the Christian Science point of view the supposed causes of diseases and the diseases themselves exist, or seem to exist, merely in the realm of human belief. They are, so to speak, relatively true, but absolutely false. In absolute Truth, in the realm of divine reality, there is no sickness and no cause for sickness. But through evercoming those beliefs which in human experience seem to ultimate in sickness and death, Christian Science is gradually leading its students away from belief in and fear of death. "For," as Paul wrote in his epistle to the Romans, "to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace." What is meant by being carnally minded but to believe in the reality of those things which are carnal—matter and evil? And that, Paul says, is death. But to be "spiritually minded"—to understand the reality of that which is spiritual and good—is life. This abiding sense of Life is spiritual and comes to us through right thinking. Jesus said, "This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." To know or to be conscious of God through reflecting those ideas that are good and true, is to live, and there is no other real life. Mrs. Eddy understood this when she wrote (Miscellaneous Writings, p. 77): "Thou to whose power our hope we give Free us from human strife. Fed by Thy love divine we live, For Love alone is Life."

Christian Science Practice Not
Mesmerism

Some who are not entirely familiar with the teaching of Christian Science believe that its practice consists in the effort of one person to benefit another person by exerting the influence which one human mentality is supposed to have over another. The fact is that Christian Science regards the so-called human or mortal mind as the cause of all discord, including disease, and regards the immortal or divine Mind as the only effectual healer of mortal discord. There is no recorded utterance of Jesus to indicate that he believed his power to heal the sick and reform the sinner depended upon the exercise of human will. He prayed and taught his followers to pray, "not my will, but thine, be done"; and Jesus said: "I can of mine own self do nothing. The Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works." So Christian Science emphasizes again and again the fact that there is no permanent deliverance from human ills save through the transforming power of divine Love. The action of divine Mind does not depend upon the exercise of the human will, but subjugates and controls it. The truth which Jesus said shall make free, often does and always should touch and transform the consciousness of the sufferer as gently as light dispels darkness. Mrs. Eddy describes this process on page 445 of Science and Health, as "the unlabored motion of the divine energy in healing the sick." Let us make use of the illustration of light passing through the transparency of a window. It is evident that it is the light that destroys darkness, and not the window through which the light passes. So in Christian Science practice it is divine Spirit and not the human mentality which heals sickness and sin. And the Christian Scientist is striving to keep the "window pane" of his thought so clear and clean that it will not obstruct the light.

It should not be supposed that all Christian Science Mind healing is the result of what is known as treatment, either present or absent. Sometimes people are healed in conversation with one who speaks the Word of God with conviction and understanding. Frequently healing has resulted from the reading of the Lesson-Sermons at Christian Science church services, and from public lectures on Christian Science. "He sent His word and healing" (Continued on page seven)

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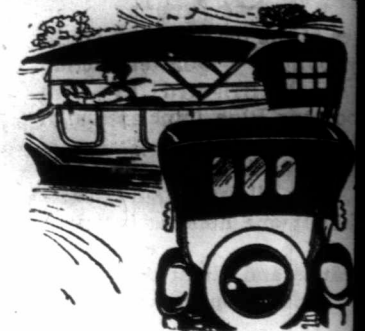
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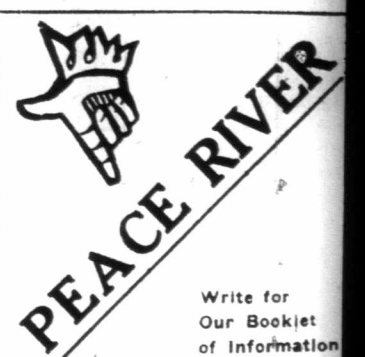
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