

The Dream and the Awakening.

(By Rev. Francis E. Marston, D.D., in 'American Messenger'.)

What must be the practical outcome of a religion of dreams and a philosophy of delusions? After the dream the awakening. The falsehood and wickedness engendered by the 'Science' have their legitimate result when the disciple of illusion experiences the shock of reality. What bitterness, hatred and despair overwhelm the poor deluded soul, whose very faith in Christ, as a personal Redeemer, these pantheistic and impersonal teachings have torn away!

To merge the vision of the personal God into the image of an impersonal force, principle or tendency that makes for righteousness, has been to take the nerve out of spirituality and devitalize the motive for high thinking and pure living. The higher one climbs the slippery sides of a precipice, the more terrible the fall into the depths. The more exalted one's hopes, the more terrible the awakening when these are proven a delusion and a dream. Put yourself for a moment, reader, in the place of an enthusiast under the spell of this Christian Science. Think of the promise it holds out to its devotee. He says, 'This carnal existence is only a dream, the mind is all; I cannot sin, I cannot be sick. If I only learn the mastery of mind over the material, I may not die.' Through storm and stress and struggle he carries these deceptive hopes. They float him over floods of difficulties and impediments to his lofty dreams. But a cyclone of suffering born of disease bears down upon him. He endures the torture in dumb silence. But there is a limit to human endurance. The bow of hope is shivered. The picture of the mirage that has lured him on vanishes. He comes to himself in the desert of despair. Stern reality looks him in the face and ghastly Death waits to cut him down. How terrible it is to awake from such a dream! A case in point is that of a young and wealthy Ohio woman. Let it illustrate the history of thousands since these pernicious doctrines first fell from the lips of this pseudo-benefactor of the race.

Years ago, this young wife and mother came under the influence of Mrs. Eddy. Because she was wealthy she could visit the 'Mother' in Boston, who made much of her. She had a little son whose spine had been injured by an accident. It resulted in a curvature. Physicians told her that proper medical treatment would restore him to health and strength. Her husband and friends urged the young mother to adopt the necessary treatment, and put the boy under the care of a skilled physician. In what she deemed a moment of weakness, she yielded to the solicitation of friends, and had the little fellow put in a plaster cast. But her Christian Science associates upbraiding her for going back to material methods instead of mental treatment, she had the cast torn off, and told the boy he was perfectly well. She herself was in the early stages of quick consumption. Mrs. Eddy and her ilk told her over and over again that there was nothing the matter with her. She said to herself and others, 'I am perfectly well. I have no pain. I am not sick.' She read and studied the book that was to heal her, but all in vain. The body grew weaker and weaker. We saw her fade away day by day. But never once did she ever acknowledge to herself that she was in anything but good health. Even when she had to take to her

bed, this strange, subtle hope, working with the peculiarities of the disease, sustained her. Her answer to those who asked her how she fared invariably was, 'I am well, only a little tired.' The Hypnotic influence of the Christian Science practitioners sustained her courage. The book was her constant companion. She was sure she would get strong, and that the boy's crooked spine would straighten. Her faith in the mystic principles was unbounded. It was pitiable to watch her. She, however, never once failed to welcome her Presbyterian pastor.

Day by day the hollow cheek, the gleaming, glassy eye, the hectic flush, the hacking cough, all proclaimed the rapidly approaching end. In all this time, she utterly refused to see a physician or take a single remedy such as experience has proved valuable in mitigating a consumptive's lot. At last, she had to be taken, under her earnest protest that she was well, to a sanatorium. It could only be done by yielding to her desire for daily visits from the healer. But it was too late, she grew worse and worse. Suddenly, one evening—it seemed as if it occurred in the twinkle of an eye—it flashed on her, 'I am dying!' A terror seemed to seize her. She demanded that the healer be sent for. To her he was a person of mysterious mental powers holding the key of life and death. She put the question with startling energy, 'Am I getting better? Shall I get well?' This man told her that of course she was getting better, she was not sick, and would soon get up from her bed; disease would yield to health. But she replied, for the first time, apparently, in some sort of doubt, 'I am so weak. Oh, I am so tired!' The man lingered for a long time gazing at the woman, and administering mental treatment, and under it the dying woman felt encouraged. But after he had gone, doubtless giving absent treatment all the while (?), the old fear, terror and doubt came back.

Her mother and sister ministered to her. Yet she would not be comforted. She demanded to see the physician of the house. Fixing her eye on him, and clutching his hand, she demanded of the old man, 'Doctor, am I dying?' He was a good man. He knew that deception was useless. Bending over her, he said, soothingly, 'My child, you are a Christian. Summon your Christian faith and courage.'

'Oh, doctor,' she cried, 'but I have have given up my Christian faith; I'm in Science now.'

Gently and tenderly he told her the truth. Her idol was broken, her expectation shattered, and the bitterness of despair held her in its vice-like grip. She knew now she was doomed to die.

The healer tried, but without success, to force himself upon her. She would never see him again.

Some days afterwards her pastor knelt by her bedside. He spoke to her of the great Physician, the true Light of the world. As he pointed her to the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world, she answered, 'Jesus knows best. I trust myself to him in life and death. But oh, my poor little boy!'

Because what her husband deemed a reasonable course in regard to the boy was vehemently opposed by her when under the influence of Christian Scientists, there had grown up a coolness between the two. Now she sent for him, 'John, John,' she cried, 'it is all a mistake!' The dream was over. Out of the land of shadows she passed into the light. Out of the mists of the earth, peopled with dreams, she rose to the cloud-

less day when eye answereth to eye and soul to soul.

This strange cult has surely humbled the vaunted intellectual pride of the twentieth century. Its bald and empty vagaries are drawing thousands to the precipice that hangs over the gulf of despair. What a commentary on the need of humanity, captivated in heart and bewildered in intellect, lost in trespasses and sins, for a divine Saviour who is able to save from sin.

There is one only way by which we may be saved. Yet in all the centuries men have been prone to dream of some other way. The Christian Science is a vague dream of reaching the impossible. It ignores the plain facts of nature, the testimony of the senses, the dictates of reason, the voice of God in revelation, and tries to climb up some other way than God's appointed path of life.

More serious than the loss of bodily life is the danger of losing the soul. If there is no sin, there is no Saviour from sin. Our friends under the spell of this delusion claim the Christian name. But they contradict the apostle, who writes, 'If we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us,' and they make our Saviour talk nonsense when he says, 'I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: fear him which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell. Yea, I say unto you, fear him!'

The Negro Boy's Experience.

A colored Sunday-school scholar was a great annoyance, being full of mischief and very ignorant indeed, and coming of a very bad family. One teacher reported that he was the greatest dunce he had ever known.

There came a great awakening upon the church; many were converted to God. The colored boy after a time became quite serious and thoughtful. He received help and counsel, and soon gave very marked signs of a change of heart.

One form of special service, made necessary by the condition of the church, was an afternoon meeting each Sunday. This was very much crowded. Many of those present offered their voluntary testimony. One afternoon the African arose and said, 'I can give my experience to you.' He had in his hand a book, which he began to read, while the people listened: 'In the beginning God created the heavens and earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved up on the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light; and there was light.' That is it; that is my experience.' He said no more, but closed the book and sat down.

A thrill was sent through the large congregation, while men looked at each other in a sort of wonder. Not the most cultivated soul could have better told the wonderful story of regeneration.—Rev. H. M. Simpson.

'Messenger' Mail Bag

Paisley, Ont., June 7, 1902.

Dear Mr. Dougall,—I wish to donate \$5 to send the 'Messenger' to the lumber camps. Use it as you think best. 'I am a tenth giver,' and do not know of a better way of spending a little of the Lord's money.

With best wishes, J. C. SEYMOUR.

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