

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE.

What Justice Hodgins has to say on the Christian Scientists will be found on pages 38, 72, Section 8, and 147. On page 38 the Commissioner is quite pronounced that no matter what form of treatment be adopted, the public health regulations must be complied with. This means that anyone treating by drugs, manipulation, or prayer must be able to diagnose all the diseases that should be reported. This is a heavy contract, but it is the minimum below which no standard can be permitted to fall. But he goes further and the following is quoted and special attention drawn to it:

“Subject to that and in so far as what they do is solely an exercise or practice in good faith of the tenets of their religion, no satisfactory reason has been alleged for putting them or any church or body in the category of practising physicians. But their rights should be carefully restricted to the *bona fide* exercise of the tenets of their religion, and they should possess no other different right or immunity from that enjoyed by the clergyman or minister who is called in for the spiritual benefit of a member of his communion, and whose ministrations often result beneficially on physical suffering.”

The foregoing would appear to be clear and satisfactory, unless term “tenets” opens the way to act as “healer” under the claim that to heal is an essential tenet of the Christian Science Church. The report further goes on to state: “It should also be provided that when a person claims to be practising the religious tenets of any church, for gain, and the practice is apart from the church building or the home of the person treated, the onus of bringing himself or herself within the exception shall be on the person claiming to be practising such religious tents.”

Now, what is the exception referred to in this quotation? On the same page of the report these words are found: “Whether they see the patient or not, or whether they merely pray for him, if their efforts or doctrine really and in practice result in eliminating the regular practitioner, either because the patient desires it or because his friends do so, then the interests of the public health throw on them the responsibility for any possible mistake in the nature of the disease.”

If, then, anything the Christian Scientist does has the effect of eliminating a qualified practitioner from the case, then the Christian Scientist must be held responsible for any failure to recognize a contagious disease. If in any way a Christian Scientist takes charge of a case and such case should prove to be one that should be reported and he fails to recognize it, he becomes “responsible for any possible mistake.”

It is also recommended that “a penalty by fine or imprisonment,” or both, sufficiently heavy to deter people from incurring it, should be