

COMPLETE LECTURE ON CHRISTIAN SCIENCE

MISS MARY G. EWING, C.S.B.

Member of Board of Lecturers of the Mother Church, First Church of Christ, Scientist, in Boston

The lecture on Christian Science given in the church edifice last Saturday evening by Miss Mary G. Ewing was largely attended.

The speaker was introduced by her mother, Mrs. Ruth B. Ewing.

THE LECTURE

In my preparation for this lecture I have been wonderfully comforted and encouraged by some verses in the book of Jeremiah. You may remember that there came to Jeremiah a clear distinct revelation of his true origin and parentage, and of his own sanctification and dedication to the work of a prophet. And yet, as he perceived that this imposed upon him the preaching of the truth as to the spiritual origin and nature of man to a people blinded by materialism, he sank from the task with a sense of his own weakness. In writing his simple record he makes a vivid picture of the conflict going on in his thought. He may have been young in years, but I have no sense that it was of this alone that he was thinking when he cried, "Ah, Lord God! behold, I cannot speak; for I am a child." And then the Lord answered him: "Say not, I am a child; for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak. Be not afraid of their voices: for I am with thee to deliver thee." (Jeremiah 1:6-8). And Jeremiah goes on to tell us that then the Lord put forth his hand and touched his mouth, and that the Lord said unto him, "Behold I have put my words in thy mouth." (Jeremiah 1:9).

And now, knowing that to me has been given the same message, at least in essence, and realizing the urgent need of humanity today to be told the truth about life itself, I, in my turn, must trust to God to put in my mouth His words which will touch your hearts and lead you to listen with unprejudiced thought to what I have to say to you; for truly, I come to you tonight with no "enticing words of man's wisdom" but with a message of feeling born of deepest and tenderest experience. To bring to any of you who may feel that he is suffering from sorrow, disease, poverty, or sin, some measure of the knowledge of God which he can begin to use practically at this very moment, to loose him from this burden of suffering—this is my privilege, my hope, my confidence. There is healing—tender, compassionate healing—in the first right idea we gain of the true nature of God, and it is possible for you to gain that right idea here and now.

I, myself, am a Christian Scientist today because many years ago, in a time of sorrow and fear, when my own dear father had been given up by physicians to die, he was quickened to health by Christian Science treatment. At the time that this miracle, this marvel, happened to us we had never heard the words "Christian" and "Science" coupled; indeed, we had more or less the world's sense that in some mysterious and fundamental way Christianity and science were opposite and irreconcilable. At the time of this healing we began to study the textbook, "Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures," by Mary Baker Eddy, and for all these years that book—the inspired revelation to this age of the true Science of Life—has been our comforting, enlightening and healing teacher and friend. It began at once to give us a new and true basis of thought; to educate us out of our petty, limited, and selfish sense of life; to free us from fear and misfortune; it emptied our well-filled medicine chest of all its drugs and tonics and plasters; it began to make us happier and healthier and more active and useful; it healed our sicknesses; in fine, it worked a revolution in our daily living, and the truth that we were learning spread from us to others and began to work the same miracle in other lives. During all the years that have passed since then, Christian Science has been our only physician, and the Christian Science textbook has been our only guide and counsellor. And I rejoice to be able truthfully to declare to you, as one proof of the inspired character of Science and Health, that this great work of Mary Baker Eddy is to me today, after these many years of reading and study, more profoundly interesting and helpful than ever before, and that it constantly reveals new beauties and new treasures of meaning.

When the lawyer from among the group of Pharisees and Sadducees, talking back to the materialistic and mistaken sense of Judaism asked Jesus (Matt. 22:36-40), "Master, which is the greatest commandment in the law?" our Master replied, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it. Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." This is a profound and entirely metaphysical teaching; a setting forth in concise and direct fashion of the fact underlying all manifestation of life; a presentation of the truth about God and man, the absolutely necessary fundamental knowledge upon which, as Jesus says so tersely, hang all the law and the prophets. I accept whole-heartedly the definition of God which Mrs. Eddy gives in Science and Health (p. 465) in the chapter "Recapitulation." I also accept unreservedly her statement on the same page that these seven terms, which she uses to define God, "Mind, Spirit, Soul, Principle, Life, Truth, Love," are synonymous; that is, that

they so literally and absolutely mean the same thing, that they are to be used the one in the place of the other. In order to have any adequate comprehension of this you must remember that Mrs. Eddy does not use these words in the ordinarily accepted, superficial sense, but that their basic meaning has been ascertained and understood and is here terms interchangeably, it gradually dawns upon his thought that each of them conveys to him, in some degree, the meaning associated with the others, and yet that all are necessary to gain a broad and vital knowledge of the creative power—a complete understanding of the profound significance of the word "God." When the individual accepts this definition of God as a basis of thought (and this is the real key to the Scriptures which Mrs. Eddy has fitted to the willing hand), then there follows logically and inevitably a correct idea of the universe, including man, as the creation of God, — a universe and a man expressing the power and might, the beauty and grandeur, of an infinite intelligence which is good.

The great French lexicographer, Larousse, defines metaphysics as "knowledge of first causes and of first principles" (connaissance des premieres et des premiers principes), and in this sense Christian Science is exact, accurate, demonstrable metaphysics. Mrs. Eddy gave its keynote when she wrote, "Spiritual causation is the one question to be considered" (Science and Health (p. 170)). Christian Science is the supreme answer to the uttered and unuttered questioning of all time which questioning Pilate voiced when he cried, "What is truth?" Mrs. Eddy gained her knowledge of Principle directly from the Bible, and when, through reason and revelation corroborated by exact and scientific demonstration of proof, she had established her discovery of the system which she called Christian Science, she wrote her great textbook. It may be said of her, as Zacharias said of his son John: "Thou shalt go before the face of the Lord; for to make ready his wayes to show science and helthe to his people" (Luc 11, 76-77 Wycliffe). I am quoting this from the Wycliffe translation, that first English version which, as one writer says, we owe "to a faith that the Bible is a book of emancipation for the mind" (McAfee—The greatest English Classic, p. 12).

Mrs. Eddy named her book through inspiration. It is an interesting fact that she was not familiar with the phrase "science and health" in the quaint and exact English of Wycliffe, and did not become acquainted with it until some six months after she had made her choice of title. Comparing this translation, "to show science and helthe to his people," with the corresponding expression in our King James Version, "to give knowledge of salvation unto his people," we become conscious of the intimate relationship in meaning between "health" and "salvation." The Bible is not one book, but many books, veritably a collection of the masterpieces of a mighty literature; the outpouring of the heart and soul of a great people who, in spite of their lack of perception and through all their wanderings in the maze of mortality and material belief, still clung more closely than any other people to the idea of one God, one universal, ever present and ever potent Mind. Moses, their great leader, saw this so clearly that he tabulated the law and furnished the foundation for all modern law; and he caught beautiful though fleeting views of a more spiritual sense of Life and Love. Centuries later in fulfillment of prophecy and revelation came Jesus, that marvelous genius who understood and demonstrated the truth of being as no one else has yet done.—Jesus, the loving Way-shower to humanity, to you and to me,—by the meekness and might of his transcendent life, earned and won the unique distinction of the title Jesus, the Christ, "Jesus, the God-crowned or the divinely royal man," as Mrs. Eddy says (Science and Health, p. 313).

Now the Bible is valuable to us only in proportion to our recognition of the right idea of God. The Bible was written through inspiration, reflection of intelligence; it can only be understood through inspiration, that same reflection of intelligence. The Bible is not only a history of ages of human experience, of a people, but it is a record and prophecy of each individual human consciousness in its putting off of the old man and its putting on of "the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness" (Ephesians 4:2). It is indeed in this aspect that it is most valuable to you and to me. The merely mortal and material concept of the Bible can do nothing to uplift and heal mankind; but even a glimpse of the spiritual meaning of a single passage, such as the First Commandment, can and does illumine human experience with celestial light and begins at once to destroy the darkness of sin and sickness. If it were possible to have every copy of the Bible wiped out of existence, there would still eventually be rewritten the substance of its message; for it is the outcome of experience, the epitome of the human struggle to find and follow Truth; it is the record of the demonstration of Love. Christian Science destroys cant and superstition and establishes the divine inspiration of Holy Writ through absolute demonstration of its truth.

I am shocked sometimes to realize how careless we still are of this priceless treasure. Do we, who know we love the Bible, read it with even the same attention and interest we would give to a modern history? Take for instance, the book of Deuteronomy, the orations and songs of Moses, his farewell to his people of Israel; sit down quietly and read it from cover to cover at one sitting and the opportunity to reread it before the first fine impress of its wonder and vigor is dulled. Holding in thought constantly, as you should now be doing, this fundamental right idea of God as the only source or origin of life and action, you cannot

fall to be inspired to the point of understanding the treasures of spiritual counsel and comfort which Moses shared with the children of Israel then and which we, as children of Israel (as the offspring of Spirit) share today.

Today, as in all the ages of history, the cry of men is for life, for love, for health, for freedom from the bondage of evil, for the coming of that day, which St. John so wonderfully describes, when "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying" (Rev. 21:4). It is the sweet and simple demonstration of knowledge of God which brings to human consciousness the dawning light of this great day. Since we have had revealed to us some measure of this knowledge, can you wonder that we long to share with the world the treasure that has brought peace and joy into our own lives?

The fundamental truth of Christian Science is the fact about causation, that good, Mind, Spirit, is the only active, operative intelligence, or creative energy. From this it follows logically and inevitably that the universe, including man, the product of this intelligence, is spiritual. Once accept this basic teaching and you are compelled to admit its correlative,—the unreality, the impotence, the falsity and entire mortality of evil and matter. The creative power of Mind, of good,—the Fatherhood and Motherhood of God,—is the primal fact of existence; the relationship between the creator and his creation, between parent and child, is unchanging and indissoluble.

Now, do not misunderstand me, I in no way wish to minimize or ignore what the world calls evil; I have no disposition to spread any mantle of charity over ignorance, inertia, discord, sickness, strife, or to cry, "Peace, peace, when there is no peace." It is undoubtedly necessary today to understand what is called evil, to deal with it radically and unflinchingly, but I earnestly maintain that no material method has ever been or ever will be devised which will so deal with the woes of the world. Christian Science does heal sickness and sin in all their myriad phases, and it does this by destroying the mistaken ideas which give rise to sin and sickness; it heals by giving the individual this right idea of causation, this true concept of God and man which, when established, in turn makes perfectly clear the baselessness and unreality of the appearance of evil. To go back to our definition of God: if these seven terms which Mrs. Eddy uses in defining God are synonymous, then, on the other hand, the exact opposites of these terms are synonymous, and in grouping them together one finds himself in possession of an accurate and comprehensive definition of evil. As one accustoms himself to think along these lines he will soon perceive that since Spirit, Truth, Love God, mean exactly here the same things and signify that "substance of things hoped for" about which St. Paul tells us; no matter, falsity, hate, devil, mean exactly the same thing and their fundamental unreality is revealed. You cannot logically avoid the conclusion that there is indeed no truth outside of Love and no love save the mighty Truth, which is the infinite Father-Mother God. Nothing truthful can be unloving or unlovely; nothing loving can be lacking in veracity, integrity, or spirituality.

The truth is tender and gentle, full of compassion and protection, but through its very presence and existence falsity is inevitably uncovered and destroyed. Love is the all-powerful, animating source of all the good we know, and by being Love destroys hate; it is not possible to conceive, for a moment, of Love as recognizing, knowing, or being touched by hate. So Spirit, by existing, precludes the existence of matter. Here again, as I have said before, we are not using the word spirit in its commonly accepted, vague, illusory, and superficial sense, but in its true and fundamental meaning, as practically identical with substance. Our false theories about life and its origin have led us to accept material beliefs above all things, and we have named our mistaken sense of substance, matter, and accepted as real and inevitable its phenomena. Having accepted a false premise, it is impossible to make any correct or reliable deduction, and so it is absolutely necessary to get back to the truth about life itself, in order to have any basis for right reasoning.

Truly the teaching of Christian Science—this teaching of spiritual causation so revolutionary to the material sense of things—is absolute and radical, but it comes as Jesus its demonstrator said he came, not to destroy one jot or tittle of the law but to fulfill that law in love. Our present sense of individual capacity and power, of the meaning of health and happiness, of life and love—our present sense of country and of our love and devotion to it—all this may be poor and meagre, and yet Christian Science, the right idea, comes not to destroy it but to uplift, to purify, to enlarge and deepen our knowledge of its source, and to exalt and beautify our expression of it. It comes to make us happy and well, joyous, honest, loving and lovable, intelligent and beautiful; no good gift is denied us as God's children.

The great mission of Christian Science is to teach us to think accurately, independently, spontaneously, and to reason honestly from the standpoint of understanding of true causation. This ability to think clearly and correctly, which is ours as a God-given capacity, enables us to understand the law of divine Principle and so to detect and uncover the falsity of the phenomena which are contrary to divine Principle; it also arms us with power to dispose of such phenomena in proportion to understanding of their ephemeral and unreal character. Now disease is one of these phenomena which lays great claims upon our daily experience and holds the human race in bondage, and I know that I am right in saying that what I will never be gained nor will it ever be maintained by any system of medicine or surgery. It is unquestionably true that the very foundation of all discordant human

conditions lies in a mistaken sense of the source of life itself. Jesus meant this when he said, "It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing," and today in the accurate and systematic teaching of our Christian Science textbook, we have the explanation of the rule Jesus laid down and the necessary guidance for its proper application to our every need.

Back of all manifestation of evil lies the false supposition of an evil intelligence, of a mind opposed to God, and this false supposition, utterly untrue and inactive as it really is, is still the only source for that which seems to be malicious, destructive, hateful, and hating, and from this supposititious source spring all the principalities and powers of materialism,—the tyranny and domination of sensual and selfish aims and purposes. I urge upon you the persistent refutation of this calumny of error from the standpoint of the utter falsity of its origin,—from the standpoint of the absolute, scientific knowledge of Life. In this process of acknowledging Truth and denying and correcting error we discover that knowing of the truth which is to make us free, and through this educational process which Christian Science demands we are led to reject promptly and positively the suggestions of disease, of poverty and sin and fear of death. We accomplish this work not by begging a personal God to do us an unmerited favor and certainly not by formula or the mechanical repetition of statements in fine phrases, even though these statements in themselves be true; no, in this way, but by the willingness to submit our false sense of personal good to the will of Intelligence,—by humble, loving, heartfelt prayer. Jesus once said, "If two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven" (Matt. 18:19); but how sadly has this meaning been perverted when it is possible for men to believe that there is virtue in the concerted repetition of certain phrases at given hours, or that the so-called concentration of thought and desire can be used to bring to pass results in accord with limited, selfish, human purposes. Much that is purely mesmeric in its character has been called prayer, and today one of the greatest reasons for gratitude to the clear teaching of Mrs. Eddy is the enlightenment on this very subject. The kingdom of God can only come on earth, as she points out, through an enriching and governing of man's affections by Principle.

Christian Science has not come to bring peace to material beliefs; to a sword; it has come to give us such a sense of the majesty and might of Principle as will endow us with the courage to battle manfully against the false domination of the carnal mind. Our daily and unceasing prayer should be for that cleansing of ourselves from secret faults, for that fidelity and virtue which marks the man after God's own heart. Prayer in its best sense is truly a com-

munion with God, with intelligence, a quiet and deep recognition of Love's presence and protecting care,—the desire and the effort to use the gifts which good bestows and the consequent denial and rejection of every mortal fault and weakness. Its potency is expressed in right activity. Salvation from evil can only come through a knowledge of good,—a knowledge of God so clear and certain that one applies it unhesitatingly to human affairs and proves its efficacy in destroying the appearance of evil. "Pray" is the Christian's vital breath. He enters heaven with prayer. —James Montgomery. Never, I believe, in all human history was there spread before the assembled nations—as in an open book—such an explanation and astounding revelation of the false nature of evil as is presented in the present crisis in the world's affairs. Nor has there ever been such a rallying to the standard upheld by a more spiritual idea of life and government. We are living in a time of marvelous opportunity, when, as Mrs. Eddy says (Science and Health p. 83) "Science only can explain the incredible good and evil elements now coming to the surface." We are involved in the greatest struggle for liberty that humanity has ever known,—called upon to stand in the very front rank of battle by the side of our splendid allies, to represent a more spiritual sense of good, of life and government, in opposing the aggregate of the mortal belief in a power apart from God. We are under orders. Let us arise in the might of the right idea and stand, each in his own place, filled with faith and courage born of divine Love, and with the wish and will to sacrifice our sense of self for the good of all, let us uphold the standard of freedom. Right alone makes might; there is no love without intelligence and no intelligence except that infinite, all-wise Love, that ever-present divine basis of government to which belongs all honor and justice, integrity and liberty. Behold, here is the parting of the ways, and we who have named the name of Christ,—that is, have acknowledged the nature, the character of Truth—are left no choice in the matter; we must walk the straight and narrow path of loyalty and duty. Today we are, indeed, being weighed in the great balance of wisdom and Love. May we as a nation not be found wanting, but, on the contrary, be found with a deep and rich and growing affection for the things of the Spirit, with the capacity and power and will to uphold Principle in every department of life. Do not forget that your "eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord," and that today and here, "He is sounding forth the trumpet that shall never call retreat; He is sifting out the hearts of men before his judgment seat; (Continued on Page Ten)



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