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CHRISTIAN SCIENCE.

"In the Vatican palace at Rome, on the 20th of July, 1903, an old man died. For twenty-five years he had dwelt there in self-imposed imprisonment under the assumed name of Leo XIII. For twenty-five years he had posed as the viceregent of Christ, the successor of St. Peter, the visible head of the Church on earth, the infallible teacher of all Christendom, none of which he had really been, nor could have been, for a single hour. For twenty-five years he had grossly defamed and vilely besmirched the greater and better part of all Christendom, condemned and impugned the most cherished liberties of churches and nations as at variance with justice and reason, falsely scored against the wonderful work of God to which we chiefly owe those liberties the most monstrous abominations, and openly and secretly, and not without success, endeavored the restoration of the most outrageous tyranny the world has seen, and of which millions were freed by that same wonderful work of God."

(*In Memoriam Leonis XIII.* THEOL. QUARTERLY VII, 4, 229.
A. Graebner.)

What Dr. A. Graebner wrote in the THEOLOGICAL QUARTERLY in 1903 we can apply to a recent happening:—

In a beautiful residence at Chestnut Hill, a Boston suburb, on December 3, 1910, an old woman died. For some time she had almost entirely withdrawn from any public appearances,

11) *Systematic Theology* III, 611. 648 ff.

save for her daily drives. For thirty-two years she had posed as a prophet directly inspired by God, as a prophet having received revelations from God, as the visible head of the church on earth, the infallible teacher of all Christendom, none of which she had really been, nor could have been for a single hour. For thirty-two years she had condemned the most cherished doctrines of the Christian Church and set up human reason as superior to the wisdom of God, and openly and secretly, and not without success, endeavored the establishment of an absolute tyranny over thousands of people.

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE.

- I. *It makes use of a natural law and builds upon it a religion; this natural law it puts into activity by pantheism and the denial of the existence of matter.*
- II. *This religion is not a Christian religion and therefore not a saving religion.*

I.

The natural law by which Christian Science cures is clearly defined in a book by Ralph Waldo Trine: "In Tune with the Infinite," pp. 42—44.

Let us recognize at the outset that, so far as the physical life is concerned, all life is from within out. There is an immutable law which says: "As within, so without; cause, effect." In other words, the thought forces, the various mental states, and the emotions, all have in time their effects upon the physical body.

Some one says: "I hear a great deal said to-day in regard to the effects of the mind upon the body, but I don't know that I place much confidence in this." Don't you? Some one brings you sudden news. You grow pale, tremble, or perhaps you fall into a faint. It is, however, through the channel of your mind that the news is imparted to you. A friend says something to you, perhaps at the table, something that seems very unkind. You are hurt by it, as we say. You have been

enjoying your dinner, but from this moment your appetite is gone. But what was said entered into and affected you through the channel of your mind.

Look! Yonder goes a young man, dragging his feet, stumbling over the slightest obstruction in the path. Why is it? Simply because he is weak-minded, an idiot. In other words, a falling state of mind is productive of a falling condition of the body. To be sure-minded is to be sure-footed. To be uncertain in mind is to be uncertain in step.

Again, a sudden emergency arises. You stand trembling and weak with fear. Why are you powerless to move? Why do you tremble? And yet you believe that the mind has but little influence upon the body. You are a moment dominated by a fit of anger. For a few hours afterwards you complain of a violent headache. And still you do not seem to realize that the thoughts and emotions have an effect upon the body. Fear and worry have the effect of closing up the channels of the body, so that the life-forces flow in a slow and sluggish manner. Hope and tranquillity open the channels of the body, so that the life-forces go bounding through it in such a way that disease can rarely get a foothold.

Dr. F. A. Kraft, present health commissioner of Milwaukee, writes in a pamphlet entitled "Christian Science and the Medical Profession" (pp. 13. 14):—

"One great trouble lies in the sad fact that so many physicians are the victims of 'Dolarites.' They do not see the noble mission of their profession and are only desirous of making money. Dishonest and unscientific physicians have done a great deal to help the growth of Eddyism. Blindfolded by the desire of making money, they resort to surgery in such cases where it is absolutely unnecessary to use the knife. If one complains of an abdominal ache, the case is immediately called appendicitis, the modern medical fad—if the suffering party has money, he is sent to the hospital to be operated; has he no money—a good cathartic will do the work. The hasty surgeon, the poor diagnostician, the physician who does not

study human nature, or has a very limited and narrow education, the advertising quack and the patent medicine cult, are continually doing their best to discredit the noble 'Art of Healing,' and they contribute the giant share to shake the confidence of the people, who, in turn, will give Christian Science a trial.

"More than fifty per cent. of so-called diseases are only due to family trouble, worry, fear, dishonesty, jealousy, and poverty, and all kinds of ridiculous imaginations most frequently found among the rich and the idlers. Physicians must study such cases, and they should use all personal ability and magnetism to show the sufferer his faults as well as his ability to shake off unnecessary worry and such troubles which are created by the influences of the mind upon the body. Christian Scientists are continually fishing for such cases—not with the desire to cure, but to get as much money as possible and bring them under the Eddy banner. They know that if they once have such cases under their mesmerice influence, the subjects will be powerless instruments in the hands of Christian Science healers."

Rev. William Edward Biederwolf, D. D., writes in his tract, "Christian Science Tested by Philosophy, Medicine, and Revelation" (pp. 47—49):—

"Paralysis of energy and disaster to health must necessarily result from profound disturbance caused by fear and anger and undue excitement and even continued anxiety and worry, and, on the other hand, the corresponding beneficial effect of calmness and confidence and trustfulness and expectancy. Now how is expectancy and the accompanying calmness of mind reached? Simply by that form of faith which is an assent of the mind, a firm and earnest belief that mounts up to radiant expectancy, and let the belief be in a person, a thing, or a theory, as in Christian Science, and its physiological effect will be the same. With a high faith that such a remedy will cure, expectancy mounts up, while fear and foreboding flee away, the mind becomes calm and confident, and the consequent quiet and normal operations of the vital processes are

resumed. This is the first step, now what next? Simply that under such conditions the *vis medicatrix*, nature or the curative power of nature, which constantly tends toward health, works toward that end when unhindered and undisturbed, and the patient recovers. Disease is not natural, it is unnatural, and nature is its chief restorer, and, after all, in any disease the best that any surgeon who ever set a broken bone, or any physician who ever administered a healing drug, if he did, the best that either did was simply to assist the recuperative power of nature. It can therefore be said that Christian Science is grounded upon a true and important principle, the principle of mind influencing matter. There is no reason why any person believing that the mind influences the body should not be a member of any Christian Church, but Mrs. Eddy has surrounded this truth of the influence of the mind on the body with vain philosophizing and theological speculations which are destructive of much that is essential to the Christian faith." (pp. 15. 16.)

In her aim to have the mind influence the body Mrs. Eddy wants the people to believe in pantheism, in the philosophy that "all is God." God being good, and all being God, all must be good and cannot be weak and sick. Furthermore, because all is God and God is a spirit, therefore, all that we call matter and the ailments of matter must be an illusion. If a person believes that he is a part of God, his mind will be eased, because God is good, and, therefore, he, being a part of God, must also be good. Such belief, because it eases the mind, will influence the welfare of the body. And again, if a person believes that matter is non-existent and an illusion, then that will again make him think less of his bodily pain or even persuade him that he has no bodily pain; for if there is no material body, there cannot be any bodily pain.

In the same way the "prayers" of Christian Scientists help. God surely does not hear their prayers, for they are not asked in the name of Jesus, His Son, they are not asked in the name of Jesus, the Savior from sin. But people trust in the good

effect of the prayers offered for them by Christian Scientists, and thus the mind is put in a cheerful and hopeful frame, and this influences the welfare of the body. Their prayers are only again one link in the chain of the effort to put the natural law into action, that the mind influences the body.

II.

This leads us to the second part of our lecture: Christian Science is not a Christian religion and, therefore, not a saving religion.

In 1 Tim. 6, 20 the Apostle Paul warns Timothy, his scholar and assistant, against the Gnostics, the Christian Scientists of the second century. The Gnostics did not wish to be looked upon as enemies of Christianity; on the contrary, they demanded recognition from the Christians; they claimed to possess a perfect and refined and by some certain truths enriched Christianity; they used the Bible to prove their doctrines, yet changed truth into error by wrong interpretation and explanation and by fictitious revelations. What was the gain of such as taught these doctrines? They satisfied their ambition to know more than all others, and they enriched themselves with the money of those whom they taught their teachings. The Gnostics of the second century also healed sickness. Thus it is a historical fact that Christian Science is but a rejuvenation of an old-time sect, a digging-out of a glittering, but, as to saving value, worthless bauble from the rubbish pile of the first centuries.

The two doctrines of the Bible which the Gnostics especially distorted and changed were: that Christ is the Son of God and the Savior of the world. They denied that Jesus is the Son of God, and they denied that he is the Savior of the world. In connection with this last doctrine they practically denied the existence of sin, even as Christian Science of to-day teaches: "Jesus is only a human corporeal concept, and man is incapable of sin, sickness, and death." (*Science and Health, with Key to the Scriptures*, by Mrs. Eddy, pp. 334. 475.)

One of our pastors has written a tract entitled, *Christian Science Unchristian*.¹⁾ This tract is reprinted in a parish paper. In this tract first the doctrine of the Bible is stated, and then the opposite or differing teaching of Mrs. Mary Baker Eddy is quoted from her book, *Science and Health, with Key to the Scriptures*. I have compared every quotation with the text of Mrs. Eddy's book and have found them correctly quoted. Certain sections of her book I shall quote at greater length than the tract does. (The following are added quotations.)

The Bible says: "By Adam sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned," Rom. 5, 12. Christian Science says: "Man is deathless, spiritual, he is above mortal frailty, he does not cross the barriers of time, into the vast forever, of life, but coexists with God and the universe." (*Science and Health*, p. 266, 30.)

Question: Is there no sin? *Answer:* All reality is in God and His creation, harmonious and eternal. That which He created was good, and He made all that was made. Therefore, the only reality of sin, sickness, or death is the awful fact that unrealities seem real to human belief, until God strips off their disguise." (*Science and Health*, p. 472, 21—27.)

The Bible teaches, "that whosoever believeth in Christ should not perish, but have everlasting life," John 3, 16. Christian Science says: One sacrifice, however great, is insufficient to pay the debt of sin. The atonement requires constant self-immolation on the sinner's part. That God's wrath should be vented upon His beloved Son is divinely unnatural. Such a theory is man-made." (*Science and Health*, p. 23, 3—9.)

Such a comparison between Scripture and the teachings of Mrs. Eddy proves that her teachings, though according to her claim in accordance with the Bible, are entirely contrary to the Bible; therefore, also no adherers to the teachings of

1) By William Dallmann. Order from Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo. Price, 5 cts.

Mrs. Eddy can be saved, there being salvation only in the Christ whom the Bible teaches. Of Christ the Bible says: "God hath made Him to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him," 2 Cor. 5, 21. Peter having spoken of Christ as the one crucified, and as the one raised from the dead, declares: "Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved," Acts 4, 12. And as to the natural truth upon which Christian Science builds its whole structure, this truth also Bible-Christians should use. With us, also, our mind should influence the body. We, too, should always be cheerful and hopeful. This should be our frame of mind, not because we are God, or because matter and sin is not, but because the sins which we commit in and with our material body are forgiven by God, and we need therefore not fear the punishment of a holy and just God. The Lamb of God has taken away the sin of the world, and thus salvation has become our property by faith. Now, since God is for us, who can be against us? We should have the assurance which Paul had when he said: "I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord," Rom. 8, 38. 39.

Everything which comes to us in our Christian life is guided by God. Why should we not be content, therefore, to have it so? Let us place everything in prayer into the hands of God, and then continue to do our duty and await the developments, knowing beforehand that they will be such as to tend to our temporal and eternal welfare.

But as to the religious teachings of Christian Science, as to basing cheerfulness and hopefulness on the philosophy and teachings of Mrs. Eddy, as to believing her *Science and Health, with Key to the Scriptures*, let us learn from Scripture itself that Christian Science is a falsehood. Let us even, as dear as salvation is to us, stay clean and undefiled of such blas-

phemy. Let us not even dabble in Christian Science. A horse will indeed run faster home than on the way out; but with man it is different. Man, when he leaves the home of his faith, the home of the Bible faith, quickly speeds away, but the going back home is difficult and slow.

Grand Rapids, Mich.

ERNEST ROSS.
