

OUR REFUGE

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*"The 'still, small voice' of scientific thought reaches
over continent and ocean to the globe's remotest bound.
The inaudible voice of Truth is, to the human mind,
'as when a lion roareth.'"*
— Mary Baker Eddy

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SAFETY

THE ninety-first psalm has been for centuries the refuge of the Christian in the hour of trouble. If you were to ask him the reason for this, he would probably founder in his analysis. He might tell you that it was God's message to humanity in their affliction, that it was instinct with divine protection, and a hundred other things. Yet, being at sea in the midst of a submarine zone, or on shore, amidst the shell craters of "No-man's land," he would probably rather trust to the protection of a destroyer, in the first instance, or to a covering barrage, in the second. He would explain this, quite naturally and quite genuinely, by saying that God has given the race its intelligence with which to safeguard itself, and that the destroyer and the barrage constitute the manifestation of this intelligence. Nevertheless he knows such reasoning to be faulty, and, if pressed, will retire to a frank declaration of faith in something he can neither explain nor understand. For, indeed, the writer of the psalm never advised his readers to rely on material ingenuity, but, on the contrary, to dwell in the secret place of the Most High, with the result that, "a thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee."

It is tolerably obvious, then, that if the protection of the secret place is to be made practically available to-day to those who go down to the sea in ships, or who jeopard their lives in battle, it must be through some surer protection than the blind faith urged on humanity by St. Gregory, as the only faith which is faith. The writer of the psalm certainly meant something by his words, and that something was translated by Jesus the Christ and his immediate followers into language less archaic than the cadences of the poet, and more scientific than the imagery of the prophet, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free;" and again, "Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works." Such language, surely, puts an end to vain argument. Knowledge is not guesswork or even a blind acceptance of other people's experience. It is the outcome of personally demonstrated experience.

A man may have faith in the acceptance of a premise which he has assured himself is theoretically sound, but he has most certainly no

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knowledge of the truth of his theory until he has demonstrated that truth, or, as James says, proved his faith in it by works. Then his faith has passed into knowledge, and, as the proofs of the truth of his theory accumulate, this knowledge becomes exact or scientific. This is the full, exact, and so scientific knowledge of God, of the Christ, and of Truth, which the writers of the New Testament are repeatedly urging upon their readers, a knowledge so scientific and so exacting that, as Paul plainly warned the church in Rome, sensuality and materiality revolt against it, finding a positive relief in animality, and accepting as true those physical phenomena whose sole claim to recognition is that they are counterfeits of or lies about the true creations of Spirit, since, as Paul writes, "the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made," which is as much as to say that the only true thing that can be said about a lie is the fact that there is a truth to lie about.

Paul, indeed, put the same colossal truth even more simply and directly to the Hebrews than to the Romans, for, as he wrote in that famous letter, "through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear." The man, then, standing on the deck of a steamer watching the wake of a torpedo, or almost stunned by the roar of the guns tearing craters in "No-man's-land," has not got to find safety in the guns of a destroyer or the cavity of a dugout. He has only to realize exactly what Paul meant, namely, that the torpedo and the shell, although things that are seen by the human vision, did not originate in things apparent to the human senses, but are simply misconceptions, formed by the human mind of spiritual realities. When this is done, the thinker finds that he has taken refuge in the secret place of the Most High, in that knowledge, in other words, of the absolute truth, which, Jesus declared, frees men from the ignorance of their material beliefs.

What this all amounts to is the gospel teaching of the unreality of matter. This, of course, is a vast subject in itself. But it may be understood or rather comprehensively stated in these declarations of Jesus himself, of Peter, of James, and of Paul. Mrs. Eddy accepted them as the basis, in Science and Health, of her teaching of the healing of sickness. Paul had explained that things were not what they seemed, that the evidence of the senses was untrustworthy, since physical phenomena did not, in the least,

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originate in matter, that is, in "the things which do appear." In precisely the same way, Mrs. Eddy, writing on pages 476 and 477 of Science and Health of what are termed the miracles of Jesus, says, "Jesus beheld in Science the perfect man, who appeared to him where sinning mortal man appears to mortals. In this perfect man the Saviour saw God's own likeness, and this correct view of man healed the sick."

Now, in destroying an unreal mental phenomenon, there is no difference whether it be a torpedo in the Atlantic a shell in "No-man's-land," a wound in a dressing station, or a fever in a base hospital. You do not turn aside a torpedo or a shell in flight, or a bayonet thrust, any more than you will away fever. What you do is to realize that these things are "not made of things which do appear." You endeavor to grasp the fact that inasmuch as a lie cannot be about nothing, your torpedo, shell, bayonet, or fever must be lies about some truth, which, when you know it, frees you from the effect of the ignorance bred of the material concept. You see, as Mrs. Eddy says, the perfect Truth, and the lie disappears. It is not, necessarily, that the torpedo twists away from your ship, that the shell fails to explode, that the bayonet strikes another object, or that the fever epidemic suddenly abates. It is that in gaining a true concept of substance these things necessarily cease to be. You do not discover a spiritual torpedo, a heavenly shell, a godlike bayonet, or a Christly fever, but you do discover that these material phenomena are all counterfeits of spiritual reflections of Principle or lies about ideas in divine Mind. It is not that there is any spiritual object corresponding exactly to a torpedo, a shell, a bayonet, or a fever: it is that divine Mind contains no idea, and Principle casts no reflection, that is not spiritual and harmonious. For as Mrs. Eddy writes on page 310 of Science and Health, "Thought will finally be understood and seen in all form, substance, and color, but without material accompaniments." When once you have grasped that metaphysically, and attuned your life to your precept, you will find how utterly impossible it is that the false concept or lie, whether in the shape of torpedo, shell, bayonet, or fever, should ever come nigh thee.

Frederick Dixon.

THE EFFECT OF COURAGE

NEVER, perhaps, in the history of the world has there been a greater demand upon moral courage than at the present day. In the midst of peaceable avocations the call has come to many in almost every part of the world to prepare to do battle with the forces of arrogance, self-righteousness, and pride; and to respond calmly, even exultantly, as many have done, requires a serene courage begotten of a knowledge of fundamental Principle.

As courage is necessary in the fight for right, it is indispensable in the utterance of truth. Mary Baker Eddy knew this as few have known it. Her life was a long and victorious battle with the forces of evil, fought in an age when materialism might be said to be reaching its zenith. Her experience was, therefore, of the ripest, and her words convey the wisdom of that experience. "It requires courage," Mrs. Eddy wrote, "to utter truth; for the higher Truth lifts her voice, the louder will error scream, until its inarticulate sound is forever silenced in oblivion" (*Science and Health*, p. 97).

Courage increases as fear diminishes. Fear paralyzes effort in the exact proportion in which the human mind entertains it. Fear, if unchecked, binds a man as completely as if he were tied with cables of steel. It robs him of the power of initiative, making him liable to every danger, and at the same time causing him to become a positive burden to all with whom he may be associated. Everybody knows this, for there is not a single human being who has not experienced the effects of fear upon himself and observed its action on others. Similarly, everybody knows the effect of moral courage. It is literally life to a man. It is the comrade of strength and endurance. It is necessary to all valiant effort directed by the consciousness of right against the false beliefs of men in the reality and power of evil.

The psalmist wrote, "Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day." He was conscious of the truth which Christian Science reveals that a man is protected from disease and material weapon alike when he is abiding "under the shadow of the Almighty." What is it to "abide under the shadow of the Almighty"? It is to have an understanding of Principle, God, and of God's actual and continuous

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relationship to His spiritual creation, man. God is not a being who lives aloof from His creation, taking no intelligent part in its government, and leaving it to go on anyhow, like a machine out of control. That is a very common false belief about God, even if it be not openly expressed by mankind. But it is utterly wrong, and is based on ignorance of God.

What, then, is the truth? It is that God is perfect Mind, infinite or unlimited, and that creation, in which individual man is included, is forever embraced in perfect Mind. Thus man is recognized or known, through Christian Science, to be constantly safe, one with the Father or omnipotent Mind. It is perfectly evident, therefore, that man cannot fear and that fear can tempt only the man who, deceived by mortal, material sense, believes himself to be apart from God. That there is no real cause for fear is what Christian Science is teaching the world now, and it is showing how men can know the truth about man and God and bring true courage into their own experience.

Writing on page 423 of Science and Health, Mrs. Eddy, while alluding to the Christian Science practice of healing, throws a great light on the metaphysics of courage. Her words are: "The metaphysician, making Mind his basis of operation irrespective of matter and regarding the truth and harmony of being as superior to error and discord, has rendered himself strong, instead of weak, to cope with the case; and he proportionately strengthens his patient with the stimulus of courage and conscious power." These words practically unmask the hidden illusory causes of fear which produce loss of courage.

If the human mind be analyzed, it will be found that human beings are beset by the constant dread that life can be destroyed, health injured, and strength impaired, because they believe that life, health, and strength are directly dependent upon the human body. But Christian Science declares the fact that man's life cannot be destroyed, man's health and strength cannot be depleted, because God is man's life and health and strength, and God is eternal. To hold fast to spiritual truth is to hold to an unfailing life buoy on the ocean, and to be incased in impervious armor on the battle field. The man who fears is never safe, even if he be ten thousand miles from the firing line.

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What an intensely interesting question is this of courage when metaphysically considered. It becomes ultimately a choice between "the truth and harmony of being" and the false belief in error, discord, or matter; and the choice is presented to all. Paul urged upon his hearers the necessity of making the choice. It was to the Ephesians he addressed the command: "Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand." The whole armor of God is the truth about God. As a man puts his armor on, that is, as he understands the truth, he is equipping himself with the moral courage which will enable him to resist the assaults of error, whether they seem to come at him as sins of the flesh or in any other apparently materialized form. Evil at all times is error of belief, because God is infinite good. It is as counterfeit consciousness, therefore, that evil must be combated; and if defeated as such, it will not present itself in any concrete form. That is why true courage must be secured along purely metaphysical lines.

Duncan Sinclair.

HOME

WHOMO has not heard the expression, "Well, he is perfectly at home wherever you find him"? This often refers to the peculiar ability of some person to adapt himself readily to his surroundings, to adjust himself quickly and easily to changes of environment and of circumstances. But there is a higher sense in which one may acquire the ability to be truly "at home" though, perhaps, far removed from all that is humanly dear. This ability is derived from Principle and is not unlike what Paul meant by being "absent from the body" and "present with the Lord." It is based upon spiritual discernment of the fact that man does not exist in or because of matter and is not, therefore, dependent upon material things for happiness and contentment. Neither does man exist in time or space, but he is eternally at one with omnipresent Mind and reflects, spiritually, the qualities or attributes of Mind. Man, therefore, possesses the ability to manifest all those ideas that are in Mind, including the right or true idea of home. Being at home, then, is not a question of environment, circumstances, or association, but is purely a question of knowing. Mrs. Eddy, spiritually interpreting the sixth verse of the twenty-third psalm, renders it thus: "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house [the consciousness] of [LOVE] for ever" (Science and Health, p. 578). So, one who is conscious of the omnipresence of Love and Truth is truly at home, wherever, to human sense, he may seem to be.

Now, the thought of home building may be commendable, and it is generally believed that in the community where a large proportion of citizens own their own homes will be found the best quality of citizenship. It is, however, a fact that the home (house) for which one has labored long to acquire the right and title of exclusive ownership may be lost or destroyed in a day or an hour. And that very community which prides itself upon the quality of its citizenship may in fact, to a great extent, be deluded by the almost unconscious worship of matter in the form of self-ease, self-complacency, and self-righteousness. On the other hand, it is quite possible for the dweller in a rented flat or tenement, if striving to order his life according to Principle, to have a higher and better sense of home than the "representative citizen," who is the proud possessor of his "own home" in

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an "ideal community," but is yet without the true understanding of God.

Home, in the true sense, is not something that can be built or bought or rented. It is not a place within four walls, whether humble or magnificent. It is not even the mental state that creates the condition which is humanly known as home. It is a divine state of Mind. It is the conscious presence of Spirit, of Truth, of Love. It is absolute harmony, or heaven. Mrs. Eddy, on page 587 of Science and Health, gives us the following definition: "HEAVEN. Harmony; the reign of Spirit; government by divine Principle; spirituality; bliss; the atmosphere of Soul." And Jesus said, "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you." So home, or heaven, for they are synonymous, may not be found by going to some place or any place, nor can the real man ever be away from home, if, as has been shown, home is harmony.

When one has gained, through Christian Science, the true sense of home, that it is not a place or thing, but a divine and, therefore, an omnipresent, spiritual idea, he can no longer be "homesick," whether he be to human sense alone in a great city, in a huge camp, on the battle field, or on the high seas. And those who remain "at home" can overcome the sense of separation and help to lift it from the thought of absent loved ones by knowing the truth about home. They can know that because home is idea it cannot be separate from man. For man is not a material body with a mind inside. He is not being transported or transferred from one place to another in time and space. Man is the fixed, permanent reflection of Mind. He is endowed by his divine Principle with the capacity and ability to express that which is in Mind — all true ideas. And this is true of Mind's idea of home, together with the thoughts of safety, comfort, tenderness, and loving-kindness, which are always associated with it.

Perhaps no painting ever had more compelling interest, at least for the layman, than the well-known picture called "Breaking Home Ties." And that is because it depicts an experience through which so many families passed during the days of Armageddon. But what the mother, the father, the friend, was called upon to sacrifice was not that which is real but only that which is relatively true about man. It is only to the false, human sense that separation can take place. One can never be separated from that

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which is true, because all that is true or real about those dear ones who seem to be away from home is in fact ever present in Mind and cannot be absent, even temporarily. Those who are at one in Principle are inseparable in their conscious knowledge of Truth and are always at home in Mind.

Although it was said of Jesus that he had "not where to lay his head," it can hardly be conceived that one with his understanding was without the right idea of home. He daily demonstrated that he dwelt in the liberating, life-bestowing consciousness of divine Principle which enabled him to say, "In my Father's house are many mansions." The understanding of what home really is not only frees its possessor from the sense of loneliness and separation, but also, in proportion to his perception and demonstration of Truth, frees him from the temptation to be envious, jealous, proud, anxious, and fearful. It lessens his disposition to look for security and satisfaction in matter. It brings him daily nearer to a realization of that "house not made with hands," that which has its abiding place in eternal harmony, that which manifests the invisible and indestructible substance of Mind. Thus Christian Science is seen to be the true "home builder" for weary and heavy-laden humanity.

George Shaw Cook.