

THE PROVIDENCE OF GOOD

Articles republished from the Christian Science periodicals
Published as a pamphlet in 1912 by
The Christian Science Publishing Society
and now in the public domain

Published in e-book transcription and presented as a gift of love by
cslectures.org

*"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

THE PROVIDENCE OF GOOD

CONTENTS

Protection in Business	3
"The Household of God"	6
"I Shall Not Want"	8
Healing in Business	11
"Be of Good Cheer"	13
The Providence of Love	17
Here and Hereafter	20

THE PROVIDENCE OF GOOD

PROTECTION IN BUSINESS

ALL persons who are doing the world's work are engaged in enterprises which supply in one way or another the needs of their fellow men, and in return for their labors a just wage is supposed to meet their need. In the business field the belief in evil, however, works such havoc upon the ideals and purposes and plans with which men set out that the most sturdy and the most honest often meet misfortune; trials multiply about the best endeavors, and failures crowd thickly where success should stand. To this unhappy condition Christian Science brings a positive remedy, for it teaches each individual to conquer his own belief in evil, and so begins to set him free from the effects of the general belief in evil.

Many men in the business life have wrought out much of that spirit which is called the golden rule. Hand in hand with this endeavor, however, has gone the fear of calamity and the educated expectation that avarice and greed will prevail where simple goodness fails. Experience points to this as fact, say the worldly-wise. Christian Science reverses this belief, and proves step by step in the life of its followers that right thinking and right doing prevail by divine authority. The main issue lies in this: the well-meaning business man uninstructed by Christian Science believes and fears that his best efforts to do right may be unavailing, for he thinks that evil has power; the same man enlightened by some understanding of Christian Science will learn that evil is not endowed by God with power, and that he himself must not invest it with power, and that he may reasonably expect his righteous endeavors to be blessed. So Christian Science changes the situation.

The Christian Scientist's chiefest concern in his business life is whether or not he is obeying the demands of God in every detail of his work; whether he is choosing that which will bring the greatest good to the greatest number rather than that which brings good only to himself; whether he serves his employer as he himself would like to be

THE PROVIDENCE OF GOOD

served; whether he spares his competitor as he would like to be spared; whether, in short, he loves his neighbor as himself. Being a Christian Scientist is indeed an altruistic business. It calls for the surrender of self-interest, that the welfare of the whole may be considered. It teaches man to find his life, as did the master Christian, by laying it down for others. The business world sorely needs this spirit; for what calls more urgently for purification than politics and business the world over? What is more vital than the relation of capital and labor, producer and consumer, employer and employee? What more important than salvation in the workshop, the factory, the markets, and the fields? Surely, "an angel with a flaming sword" should come among us! And seeing this, the Christian Scientist strives to be, like his Master, about his "Father's business" first, knowing that all will be well with him if he succeeds in serving God.

Having then the demand of his God for his first concern, and discerning through the teaching of Christian Science that God is Principle, and that as Principle He is available in the minutiae of human affairs, the business man thereby insures protection for his business. Christian Science does not promise him that he shall have all he sets his heart upon; that whatever his will outlines shall be accomplished; that he of himself can dominate anything. Such mental methods are of human origin and have nothing in common with Christlikeness; and the Christian Scientist must watch lest he mistake the belief of commercial success or worldly advancement for the evidences of divine protection and supply. The kingdom of God is the thing to seek; the success in human affairs which is "added" to the righteous seeker is far different from the perishing success of selfish plans and policies. The one is the shifting and insecure effect of the human will; the other the multiplication of good, God-blessed.

The very first lessons in Christian Science teach the beginner this distinction, and encourage the activity of good in all his work. The student sees the medieval belief that might is right displaced by a growing righteousness that proves its own might as fast as it is adopted and practised. He sees the doctrine of the "survival of the

THE PROVIDENCE OF GOOD

fittest" newly applied, broadly and universally, in the survival of good everywhere, and in the destruction of evil. He loses pleasure in selfish gain and finds his joy in the business of bringing good to others. Doing this, he places himself under the protection of the divine Mind which he is striving to serve, and his business, whatever outward form it may take, thrives accordingly. If his own mental attitude is right, the law of God becomes a law in his life and in all his affairs, and he may expect help and protection from it to the extent he demonstrates it. In this way Christian Science rescues the business man; fits him for a truer service; perfects him in what he is doing; finds for him better things to do, or makes him content with what he finds to do; gives him, in short, a wiser, happier, sweeter spirit in all his relations with his fellow men. This is itself success, and brings success. The understanding of Truth, as Christian Science teaches it, makes a mortal first worthy of protection, and then protects him.

THE PROVIDENCE OF GOOD

"THE HOUSEHOLD OF GOD"

WHAT does it mean to belong to a household? It means to be a member of a family, a participant in all the experiences and daily life of a family. In the second chapter of his epistle to the Ephesians the apostle Paul sums up his discourse on what we were by nature and what we are by grace, with this comforting conclusion: "Therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God." Then we who have been saved by grace are "of the household of God," members of His family.

In Christian Science we learn that God's household is the only real household, and that it is universal, spiritual, perfect, harmonious, and eternal. In this household God is the Father-Mother, and man is His child. God loves, protects, feeds, clothes, instructs, influences, controls, and governs His entire household, in which all is good and the divine law is the only law operating in or affecting it. The divine government is supreme, imperative, absolute, and eternal, and it is never interfered with, cut off, obstructed, or reversed by evil of any name or nature.

In this real household of Spirit, man, all spiritual individualities, live, move, and have their being, now and forever. Fear, worry, discord, lack, sin, sickness, and death, have no place, no presence, no power, no law, no influence, and no manifestation in this household or kingdom of God. Omnipotent Mind is the only Mind ever known, recognized, or acknowledged as power, influence, or control in this perfect household. Matter, mortal mind, sin, disease, and death, were not created by our Father-Mother God, therefore they are not elements or entities in the real household, and they have no relationship whatever with its inmates.

The spiritual and harmonious household was from the beginning, is now, and ever will be: We enter into conscious membership with it and come into possession of our birthright and privileges as we turn

THE PROVIDENCE OF GOOD

from the beliefs of life, substance, and intelligence in matter to the truth of being — from materiality to Spirit, God. There is no other door and no other way.

THE PROVIDENCE OF GOOD

I SHALL NOT WANT

ECONOMIC questions of demand and supply are fundamental to human existence. The problem of "getting a living," in one form or another, confronts every member of the human family. From the materialist who frankly admits that he grubs for dollars, to the idealist who exhibits a fine indifference to petty problems of finance, all mortals, according to the law of belief, are under the necessity of earning their bread in the sweat of their brow. In fact, this was one of the first condemnatory laws formulated in the Adam-allegory. Ever since then it has been true of all who are "in Adam," that they have labored painfully to sustain a material sense of existence.

The struggle of mortals to gain a livelihood presents a composite picture of all the traits of the human mind. Selfishness, greed, injustice, envy, hate, revenge, anxiety, fear — all these play their ignoble part in the daily round of commerce. This struggle has gone on for many hundreds of years, apparently without any change, except that the gradations of belief as to riches and poverty have become more pronounced and more sharply defined. Mortals have sickened and died in their frantic effort to keep alive and to amass a fortune. Every crime on the calendar has been committed because of the lust for possession, until it is no wonder that the apostle said, "The love of money is the root of all evil." Not many, in fact, have shared the lofty views of the poet Shelley, who said: "I desire money, because I think I know the use of it. It commands labor, it gives leisure; and to give leisure to those who will employ it in the forwarding of truth, is the noblest present an individual can make to the whole."

Although, as Mrs. Eddy says, "the Bible contains the recipe for all healing" (Science and Health, p. 406), it had nevertheless not occurred to mortals to seek therein a satisfactory solution of the problem of maintaining an existence, until Mrs. Eddy boldly declared that the Science of Christianity is alone adequate to supply a satisfying answer to every vexing economic question. Christian Science proclaims itself

THE PROVIDENCE OF GOOD

to be the revelation of truth, and as such it must be able to correct every phase of error. It follows, therefore, that "as in Adam all die," — and before they die struggle with varying success to lay up treasure "where moth and rust doth corrupt," — "even so in Christ shall all be made alive;" and at the same time all shall learn that man's being is sustained by Principle, and that amply, bountifully, harmoniously, without friction, without restriction or limitation, without weary effort, without discouragement and disappointment, without possibility of failure or loss.

This is the lesson that Christian Science is teaching today, and it has already had an appreciable effect in modifying the sordid efforts to lay up for wealth's sake, and in ameliorating the sick and sinful conditions which have usually followed such efforts. Sisyphus represents mythology's man, — toiling painfully up the hill, rolling before him the great rock of human accomplishment; seeking to gain the summit, but always failing, and forever beginning again the weary task that is never completed. The prophet aptly summed it up when he inquired, "Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labor for that which satisfieth not?" Christian Science presents the real man, — the only man, as sustained by God, having his being in infinite Mind; in receipt of all that infinity has to bestow; lacking no resource or opportunity; equipped, supplied, maintained, directed, and governed by his cause, his heavenly Father, who loves him well and who has given him "richly all things to enjoy." Paul says, "All things are yours;" and Christian Science bids the world believe this, and make it practical by living as though it were true.

In correcting the errors which accompany the human sense of supply, Christian Science gives a new idea of substance entirely different from that which mortals have been accustomed to entertain. It also tells the truth about the source of man's supply. Thus it appears that, according to belief, what a man possesses — the substance of his supply — is perverted and misconceived, and is called material. Christian Science declares that inasmuch as man is the creation of Mind, and is endowed by Mind, he is in reality supplied with an

THE PROVIDENCE OF GOOD

abundance of right ideas. Mrs. Eddy says in "Miscellaneous Writings" (p. 307), "God gives you His spiritual ideas, and in turn, they give you daily supplies."

It must be evident that nothing but lack of spiritual perception prevents us from seeing our supply as it really is, viz., as substantial ideas. As our thought, through the study of Christian Science, becomes exalted above the limited sense of supply, we shall understand the Science of Jesus' statement: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." In other words, we are not expected to make a god of material supply or wealth; we are not expected to allow the accumulation of material substance to become the primary object in life. Discerning by the aid of Christian Science the true nature of substance, we learn to set our affections on things above; and then "all these things" are added unto us, because we have learned the truth about substance and supply.

THE PROVIDENCE OF GOOD

HEALING IN BUSINESS

JESUS said, by way of emphasizing a point in his teaching, "They that are whole need not a physician; but they that are sick," and no man before or since the time of our Master has been so well qualified to speak from the standpoint of successful practice concerning the sphere of the physician and the needs of his patient. He indeed was the healer who gave to sin no more power or legitimacy than he did to sickness, and he healed both with equal readiness and certainty. We have no record of his ever losing a case. His cures were instantaneous. Many of them were made in the absence of his patient, and all of them were undertaken regardless of the nature of the disease. He drew no line of distinction between functional and organic ailments, and in his presence the word incurable dropped out of the language of men. Nor were his cures confined to diseases of the body alone. He truly ministered to the mind diseased, as when, with a word, he restored to sanity and decency the escaped lunatic who had long terrorized the countryside, and when he healed the various other cases of mental disorders mentioned in the Scriptures.

Nor was he neglectful of the material wants of those in need. When a wedding of his friends to which he was invited lacked an essential to the proper entertainment of the guests, he readily supplied it. When the business of certain of his associates was dull because they had none of their usual commodity to sell, he showed them how to cast their nets on the right side, and thereupon they received a bigger stock of goods than they could conveniently handle. When he was traveling overland with a great throng of people in a country where provisions were scarce, he provided a substantial repast that not only satisfied every one's hunger, but had enough left over to feed many more. And when his companions on another occasion were short of ready money to pay taxes due, he told them exactly how to raise the sum required without delay or embarrassment.

These familiar instances show us that the great Physician and

THE PROVIDENCE OF GOOD

Metaphysician, Jesus of Nazareth, regarded man's mind, body, or estate, when disordered or deficient, alike the legitimate subjects for the employment of his healing powers. A slight understanding of Christian Science reveals that he used one and the same curative Principle in restoring them all.

The availability of infinite Mind to heal "all manner of disease," bodily, mental, and material, is the same today as it was in Jesus' time. He used it then in all the affairs of men that needed adjustment, and Christian Science is today following his example. It is as available and effective for healing a sick business as it is for healing a sick body, and he has shown us that it is rightly to be employed in healing both.

Christian Science in healing a sick business really heals those mental disorders that lead to failure. The business man in distress who turns to Christian Science for relief finds his worry replaced by confidence, doubt by assurance, discouragement by good cheer, and greed by kindness. Good things begin to come his way; obstacles and difficulties that seemed mountain high dwindle into mole-hills that he can easily step over, and he again plans with sagacity and executes with vigor. Mrs. Eddy on page 128 of "Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures" says: "Business men and cultured scholars have found that Christian Science enhances their endurance and mental powers, enlarges their perception of character, gives them acuteness and comprehensiveness and an ability to exceed their ordinary capacity."

The condition of a man's business and the condition of his thought are apparently interdependent and homogeneous, but in reality his thinking is causative and his business the effect. Christian Science inculcates right thinking about all the essentials of living, including occupation, profession, business. This thinking being measurably in accord with the laws of God — the source of all real power — is dynamic, efficient, influential, and its effects are noticeable in whatever direction it may be turned. As it is potential for good only, its results are never selfish, subversive, or depressing, but always constructive, buoyant, beneficent.

THE PROVIDENCE OF GOOD

"BE OF GOOD CHEER"

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE maintains that good is the heritage of man, that it is the only legitimate legacy to which he is heir. Christian Science teaches that man's unity with God, divine Principle, has always been established, and shows the connection to be so intimate that he is even the "express image" of God. Loose reasoning on the part of mankind has to a great extent deprived them of the direct aid of this Principle in the daily affairs of life, for divine Principle is ever available in the solution of every problem, as the laws of numbers are always operative to rectify mistakes in matters of accounting. But the Principle must be understood before it can be applied. It is not a question of mysticism; for mysticism which is based on ignorance and superstition is as dust in the eyes to spiritual understanding, a spurious substitute for knowledge which is at once available, absolute, and real.

But, the question may be asked, if man can reflect good alone, why the glumness of his countenance at times? While spiritual man, known of God, reflects good alone, mortals believe that evil exists as a genuine power in opposition to good and that a man is under the dominion of both good and evil. When a man so believes in the power or influence or activity of evil in any form, fear seizes upon him, showing itself in his demeanor, depressing him, throwing over him a sense of sadness, driving from him the cheerfulness which should be the constant partner of those who are living under the providence of God, good, the only power. Cheerfulness is the outcome of an entirely scientific attitude of mind.

Perhaps we may remember that before Christ Jesus healed the paralytic man by forgiving his sins (that is, destroying his belief in the power of evil), he spoke these words: "Be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee." When he approached his anxious disciples on the storm-tossed sea, his glad hail to them was, "Be of good cheer: it is I; be not afraid." And again, when he comforted his faithful followers, gradually being educated in spiritual law out of the materialism in

THE PROVIDENCE OF GOOD

which he had found them, with the days of stress before him when he was to prove life to be indestructible, his encouraging words were, "Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." No one could have contemplated the tribulations which he had to face and have given such encouragement, had he not known that of which the world was profoundly ignorant, — the all-powerfulness of good. In the original Greek text, of which the authorized version of the New Testament is a translation, the word rendered "cheer" in the above passage conveys something more than the common meaning attached to the word; it is much more emphatic, for it means cheer resulting from confidence or assurance.

It will be noticed that Jesus, when he invited them to be of good cheer, gave the reason, — because "I have overcome the world." He did not mean that he had destroyed the power of imperial Rome in Palestine, or that he had overthrown the philosophies of Greece in their midst. The Jews had looked for a king who should overthrow Rome and preserve to them their religious traditions; but while Jesus, from their point of view, did nothing toward their emancipation, he actually showed them how to be relieved of both. The Roman yoke was the burden of materialism on a people who were basely materialistic, whose traditions were the counterpart of the same materialism. What, was the cause of their degradation? It was undoubtedly their ignorance of God. To them God was still the tribal deity, specially looking after their miserable interests to the exclusion of the rest of mankind! Jesus broke up their shadowy beliefs by revealing God as Spirit and Truth, as the Father of all, the divine Principle, Love. The man who knew God as Jesus did, who could put his knowledge into practice in healing the sick, destroying sin, and raising the dead, had surely "overcome the world," for the world here simply means materialism.

To mortals, earthly existence is a fairly rough passage over a fairly rough sea, not infrequently in storm. It is not easy, one may say, to be cheerful in the trough of the wave when the land is far off and the thunders crash around. But we remember that Christ Jesus, by spiritual understanding, stilled the storm, and "there was a great

THE PROVIDENCE OF GOOD

calm." The flickering beliefs of mortals must give place to enlightened spiritual knowledge. Mrs. Eddy, the Discoverer and Founder of Christian Science, writes on page 297 of the Christian Science text-book, "Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures," "Until belief becomes faith, and faith becomes spiritual understanding, human thought has little relation to the actual or divine." It is this spiritual understanding that clears the countenance, makes man the victor over conditions seemingly the most depressing, and brings the smile to the lips and the luster to the eyes.

The world has unbounded faith in almost anything material, from the homeopathic pellet to the latest radium emanation. It is always waiting, Micawber-like, for something fresh to turn up in the domain of physical discovery to cure it of its latest or oldest pain. And so it has dreamed from the remotest days, while all the time God's presence was and is at hand. Almighty power is always available for every conceivable emergency, whether it be a den of lions, as in Daniel's experience, a flood, as in Noah's, or a sea in storm, as in the disciples' case. The heart of cheer was ever in Daniel's bosom because he had an intimate knowledge of God's law; Moses' face shone with glorified brightness because he also knew God's law; Jesus was transfigured on the mount because he reflected so perfectly his Father's countenance.

In Science and Health (p. 23) we read, "Faith, advanced to spiritual understanding, is the evidence gained from Spirit, which rebukes sin of every kind and establishes the claims of God." Faith is never substantial or entirely trustworthy until it is based on spiritual understanding. We walk with uncertain steps if guided by a blind faith, but the faith that is grounded on the knowledge of God experiences no abysses.

How then shall cheerfulness be brought to the ignorant world with its false values, its unsatisfying pleasures which end in pain, and its hopeless grief? It must come through the application of the Christ-method. And this method Christian Science has today uncovered to the world. Mrs. Eddy, purified by suffering and spiritually enlightened

THE PROVIDENCE OF GOOD

through earnest study of the Bible, discovered the divine Principle of healing, and was herself instantaneously healed. This Principle is no longer hidden under the letter of men's scrolls or under the robe of ecclesiasticism, but is now openly available to every humble seeker after Truth. "Be of good cheer"!

THE PROVIDENCE OF GOOD

THE PROVIDENCE OF LOVE

ALL Christians accept the statement of Paul that "the gift of God is eternal life," albeit the most devout believers have known the difficulties of "earning a living." If life is a gift, it is not something to be earned, yet we see that a man is not fulfilling the simplest duty of his present existence unless he is useful, doing his share of good work in the world. Christian Scientists are beginning to solve the whole riddle of the painful earth by laying heartily hold of Principle as expressed in Jesus' words: "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." In the light of this scientific truth they are untangling the raveled sleeve of care and beholding the orderly web of use and beauty knit fair and whole.

The scientific process of demonstrating that God sustains man and provides for him begins in many cases with the resolve not to be afraid. Back of our anxieties and efforts in this matter of earning a living is a fear of death, fear lest we shall not be able to earn the living for ourselves or others. Before they have risen to discern the absolute fact as stated by Jesus, "Whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die," Christian Scientists have taken a mental stand against "the slings and arrows" of human experience in the fact that eternal life — the God-given life — is never touched by the vicissitudes of so-called mortal life.

Emerson quotes with approbation a phrase of hardy manhood in an old drama. When threatened by a captor who says, "It is in my power to hang you," the bold one replies, "It is in my power to be hanged to scorn you." When we reach the place where we will not mentally knuckle under to "outrageous fortune" of whatever sort, certain that our spiritual life is superior to the seeming material life, its demands and dangers, we suddenly find that we are demonstrating this as true in our outward experience. The "signs" follow, as Jesus promised. Fear is destroyed, depression vanishes, and normal joy in action begins to flow in. A new pleasure and exhilaration is found even

THE PROVIDENCE OF GOOD

in the commonest tasks. We are now reversing the old order. Instead of working to live, we begin to see that we live to work. Work — useful activity — is the natural expression of our God-given powers, and our pleasure is in their exercise.

Life is not stagnation. Life means activity. How often we hear it said of some strenuous piece of athletic exercise, "If one were forced to do that for a living, it would seem terribly hard work." It is the fact that the exertion is made in the spirit of enjoyment and in the light of a man's desire to prove his powers that makes sport delightful. When we are no longer driven by a selfish sense of need, we rejoice to see that our work is helpful to others. As we work with this double joy in activity and usefulness, what we do improves in quality, and we do it more easily. This in itself naturally leads to so-called worldly advancement. Every employer recognizes as the test of a good workman his readiness to do more than that which the mere letter of his business engagement requires. Some one has said that if a man does not do more than he is paid to do, he will never be paid more for what he does. This recognizes that all good work has joy in it, is done for the love of work, not for the living "earned."

As the man who has taken joy into his work is advanced he finds that various forms of drudgery are eliminated. Higher and more interesting kinds of work come to him to be done. His new idea that he lives joyously by the gift of God, not painfully by his own effort, is proved to be true. He sees embodied in practical experience what may at first have been but an unrealized ideal.

The writer, who began her business experience by addressing soap advertisements on a typewriter, afterward came into some understanding through Christian Science teaching of what it means to be a child of God, possessed of unassailable eternal life, the gift of divine Love. After a few years of patient work in more or less taxing yet always advancing lines, she found herself able to earn a good income simply by the exercise of an artistic talent. Never until Christian Science showed her that her life was the reflection of infinite

THE PROVIDENCE OF GOOD

Life had she even dreamed of turning this small gift to account. When she began to understand this, she found that without effort on her part — beyond its normal exercise — the gift had flowered into usefulness to others, and this produced the supply of her own need. She no longer seemed to herself to be earning a living. She was doing the thing she loved to do, the thing she had kept as the happy employment of her leisure. It was thus proved that man does not have to earn his bread in pain and difficulty. Life is the gift of God, and so is all that expresses God's love and providence for His children.

THE PROVIDENCE OF GOOD

HERE AND HEREAFTER

MAN is more than physical sense can outline or describe. We may enumerate all the organs or divisions of the human body, and yet include nothing essential to immortality or to real manhood. When we refer to our highest sense of man, we invariably do so in terms of Mind. All that is included in the mortal, material concept of man is in a state of perpetual change and decay, though the individual identity is not altered or impaired by these processes. The physical form of man dies daily in some degree, and yet the real life of man remains uninjured. Is life any more affected when material law declares the entire body dead? We cannot speak of man as dead in terms of Mind, but of matter only; hence in Mind man must live on continuously, unaffected by, because not included in, material conditions.

Although the Founder of Christianity declared that those who kept his sayings should not see death, the possibility of living on without dying has been deemed too transcendently spiritual for human attainment. The belief that life proceeds from something other than God, or good, having no truth in it, eventually collapses in the opposite belief of death. This consequent of a false view of Life being so inevitable, mortals have declared death a divine, unescapable law, and thus have laid upon God the terrible and revolting charge of destroying His own offspring. From this unlovely concept of God, who is Love and Life and Truth only, Christian Science would turn human thought to the apprehension of the Supreme Being as having no partnership with nor complicity in sin or death.

While the logic of Scripture and the demonstrations of Jesus support the Christian Science teaching that death is unreal, because not of God, the present human sense of existence is on too low a plane fully to realize the exhaustless vitality expressed in God's spiritual man. Mortals therefore continue to pass from the cognizance, of present environment into that plane or condition of human consciousness called the hereafter, or beyond the grave. Just what lies

THE PROVIDENCE OF GOOD

across this "great divide" is the mystery that troubles the world, a mystery that has ever attracted the hope and fear of the weary and sinning human race.

While Christian Scientists do not deny the phenomenon of death as a tenacious but temporary human belief, the result of mortal ignorance of Life as God, they are endeavoring to obey their Leader's teaching by cultivating faith in Life rather than death. That which appears on the surface is not always the fact, as daily experience proves. What death appears to be and do was not accepted as fact by Jesus, but rejected, and his example should appeal to all who have faith in it. What he said and did regarding death has the same authority and force as what he said and did regarding sin and disease. While our growth in goodness and spirituality may be as yet too feeble to prove completely all that we believe, we should be thankful that Jesus has done so, thus placing his teachings forever above mere speculation. Christian Scientists accept as real not that which is seen, but that which is unseen to material sense, and in this they feel that they are doing only what the Scriptures enjoin upon them. The whole tenor of inspired Scriptural teaching is that God only is the Life of man, hence for man to die must be a mistake; and Christian Scientists are seeking to understand this teaching and to make it practical.

The problem before every mortal is how to be delivered from evil, a term that includes all that is known as sin, disease, and death, with all the miseries that follow in their wake. The evil conditions in human thought, of which death is the outcome, are not evaded by dying, any more than the ills of the flesh are avoided by getting sick. The period required for the perfect solution of the problem of being, for our growth out of the flesh and evil into the stature of perfect man, may not, perhaps, be encompassed before the shadow of mortality falls across our path; but we may know that individual character and identity are no more affected by it than by the darkness that has divided today from yesterday. Christian Science has proven the unreality of disease, and by the same understanding of Principle maintains that the immortality of man is unbroken, despite the

THE PROVIDENCE OF GOOD

material evidence to the contrary. That there is no death is the joyous note of Christianity, the glorious sunburst of truth in Christian Science, scattering the clouds of sorrow, and giving mortals a glimpse of those higher planes of being to which Jesus has led the way, and where God alone is the light and the Life of man.

Is it truth or is it error, a right or a wrong law, that has laid upon mankind the doom of death, separating loved ones, and draping the world in perpetual mourning? What human sense of pity and love can measure the depths of mortal sorrow, the anguish of stricken hearts beating pitifully against the unresponsive silence of the grave? What but a heart of stone could behold the heartache, the unfathomable misery, the blinding, bitter tears, that daily mark the course of mortal being, and not melt before it, or joyfully deliver if possessed of the power? What but an unconceivable monstrosity, devoid of love or pity, could darken the joy of being with such a cruel, bitter curse, and yet require in return the homage of our love and reverence? Thanks to God and Christian Science that this pagan thought of God is passing out of Christianity, thereby giving mortals the liberty to love instead of the necessity to fear Him.

If it were true that man really died, what healing balm would remain wherewith to minister to the broken heart, or to comfort the widow and the fatherless? When Jesus gave back her son to the widow of Nain, he gave the lie to death. His tender, pitying love, expressing the divine compassion, was not called forth because he believed in the necessity or reality of suffering and sorrow, but because of mortal ignorance of man's true being, permanent in God. Our Master's sympathy for this extremity of earthly sorrow was touchingly expressed at the grave of his friend Lazarus, and he there exposed the falsity of the death claim in his demonstration of the indestructibility of Life and its manifestation. In this he also showed the needlessness of human grief, for was not the loved one alive and well even when material law plead for decay and corruption? Our present understanding of the Christ, Truth, may be too material to recall our friends from the shadow that seems to envelop our sense of them; but

THE PROVIDENCE OF GOOD

we know that with them as with Lazarus life has gone on unbroken and uncorrupted.

The grace and charm of manhood and womanhood are not constituted of flesh and blood, hence they are immune from the material law of waste and decay. The pleasure of true friendship and the joy of companionship never drew their life from matter, and are not involved in the ruin of any material concept. A melody does not lose its sweetness because ears have ceased to hear it. The beliefs of material perception, sight, sound, touch, do not decide what is, but what seems to be, and hence cannot be interpreters of truth. That which God decrees for man is all he can legitimately know and experience, and what man reflects of good must abide with him forever.

The gracious qualities of departed friends, their generous impulses, kindly sympathies, and loyal love, have not been stifled, nor even touched, by death. All that makes man lovable and good belongs to Mind, over which the grave has no power. (See Science and Health, p. 291.) Whatever was true and good is so forever. Beauty and joy, constancy, tenderness, and love, were never laid away in the tomb, nor deprived of their perennial expression. These are emanations of the divine nature, and are not influenced by the supposed law of mortality. Mortals may find it hard to disbelieve that their friends have died, with all the phenomena of that belief before them; but Christians must some time learn the power of Truth over this as well as over other forms of error. No sweeter assurance of man's continuous being has ever fallen upon human ears than that conveyed in our Lord's words to Martha, "He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die."

Just what may be the conditions and environments of those "on the other side" is not so important as to know that man is ever within the consciousness of God, in whose presence is fulness of joy. To him who has obeyed his highest ideal, life must be progressive hereafter as well as here. The activities of courageous and noble purpose gather fresh impulse and strength from every lesson and experience, bearing

THE PROVIDENCE OF GOOD

onward to fulfilment the heart's pure desire. To pass from holy work here does not mean idleness hereafter, but continued service in the line of light until the Master's example has been followed to its highest point. Life must ever grow broader and more invincible to such a one. No effort or operation of evil can narrow the opportunities or the privileges of the consecrated Christian. Wherever error advances its claims, whether on this or some other plane of belief, there will the champions of Truth be needed. Human wisdom is very finite and reaches little farther than it sees. We need a broader comprehension of being, wherein death does not mark the finis of the human problem but is one of its errors, the last to be corrected and overcome through an understanding of Truth. Until this understanding is attained, mortals must continue their strife with error's delusions, ever working and growing, ever climbing upward toward the summit of man's perfect spiritual consciousness.

Our Master has wisely said that the evil of the present is sufficient for us to meet without taking thought of that which may await us. And so while Christian Scientists make no special claim for themselves, they desire to think and talk as little as possible of death as well as of sickness, rather to devote their thought and attention to health and life. Nevertheless they desire, so far as they may, to minister to those in sorrow, to bind up the broken-hearted, to bear the messages of Life instead of death to men. Let us rejoice for all the good that has been and is being manifested and for the blessed assurance that man ever lives and moves in God. Hand may not clasp hand, nor voices mingle in sweet discourse, but the Father's care still shelters us, whether here or there. In God's perfect creation each has his appointed place and work, unhindered by the fitful shadows of false mortal beliefs, which have no coming or going in the love-lighted universe of Mind. Some time every wrong must cease, every error yield to Truth, every shadow in human consciousness be swept away; then man will behold himself as God's image and likeness.