

**EDITORIAL COMMENTS
ON THE LIFE AND WORK
OF MARY BAKER EDDY**

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ON

THE LIFE AND WORK OF

MARY BAKER EDDY

Discoverer and Founder of Christian Science, and Author of the
Christian Science text-book, "Science and Health
with Key to the Scriptures"



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FOREWORD

THIS volume has been prepared in response to the many requests that have come to the Publishing Society for the issuance in permanent and convenient form of at least a part of the many special articles, personal tributes, and editorials, dealing with the life and work of Mrs. Eddy, which appeared in the press throughout the civilized world during the months of December, 1910, and January, 1911. So wide-spread and generous, indeed, was this spontaneous tribute, that even in preparing the "Excerpts from Editorial Comments" which were published in the *Sentinel*, it was found impossible, for lack of space, to make a representative selection from the voluminous matter in hand without in most instances using only such parts of the editorials as bore directly on the particular achievements with which Mrs. Eddy was so generally accredited. It is believed, however, that the articles and excerpts herein presented are indicative of a general desire to render honor where honor is due, and that the book will be welcomed not only by Christian Scientists but by fair-minded thinkers everywhere.

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MARY BAKER EDDY

FREDERICK DIXON

THERE is a sentence of Abraham Lincoln's, occurring in his famous address on the battlefield of Gettysburg, which comes instinctively to memory in reading the multitudinous articles which have been contributed to the press of the world, during the last few weeks, with respect to Mrs. Eddy. "The world will little note nor long remember what we say here," he declared, "but it can never forget what they did here." These articles have been, on the whole, extraordinarily appreciative. Here and there some writer, with little knowledge and less wisdom, has indulged the passion to wound, here and there sectarian bigotry may have shown that intolerance which never knows when to be silent, but the columns of remarkable tributes, printed in the *Christian Science Sentinel* for Dec. 17 last, are witness to the respect and admiration felt for Mrs. Eddy by the press of her native land. Still, these are words: and words, unless indeed they are the expression of some mighty purpose, are not apt, in Lincoln's phrase, to be much noted nor long remembered. That recognition is reserved for deeds; and when the story of the world's achievement in the nineteenth century comes to be written, the foundation of the Christian Science church will occupy, in the perspective of the ages, an importance very different from that so frequently assigned to it by the prejudices of contemporaries, who, testing all things on the touchstone of their own ideals, demand with wearisome monotony, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?"

To those who have known Mrs. Eddy personally, she has always been a very different figure from that conjured up by critics who had never seen her face, nor held her hand, nor listened to her voice, but who wrote or spoke with all the foolish dogmatism born of ignorance. I remember

her now as I last saw her in the workroom of her house, on the outskirts of Boston, one day in the year which has just closed. She was sitting in a low chair beside a table piled with papers in the bow window with its glorious view of the Massachusetts hills marching with the coast on which the Pilgrims landed, the gentlest, sweetest, and most refined lady I have ever known. Yet with all that gentleness she possessed the fire of a great reformer; with all that sweetness she was none the less the deepest of thinkers; while her innate refinement did not prevent her from being the foremost leader of men in the world-battle of good against evil. "No one," once declared one of the "great Commoner's" great officers, "ever entered Mr. Pitt's cabinet who did not leave it a braver man;" and no one, it may fearlessly be said, ever entered Mrs. Eddy's study who did not leave it not only a braver but a better man.

Fear, indeed, had no resting-place in Mrs. Eddy's presence. The greatest debt perhaps that humanity owes to her is that she has shown it that it need not be afraid of fear. It is impossible for an observant person to go about the world today without discovering that men and women are crushed beneath a load of fear. Half their activities are devoted to taking precautions against fear—fear of sickness and death, fear of sorrow and want, fear of man's inhumanity to man. In the midst of this medley, standing like some tenth legion in the throbbing *sauve qui peut* of physical existence, there is an ever-increasing army of people which, in the light of Mrs. Eddy's teaching, is learning to understand, and understanding to prove, what Christ Jesus meant when he said, "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." The kingdom of God is within men, and where that kingdom is there is peace and not fear.

Nothing perhaps has struck those who have come in personal contact with Mrs. Eddy more than the immense strength of her character mingled with her extraordinary tenderness for humanity. This strength was itself the expression of an entire absence of fear, for when a man's fears are aroused there is commonly little tenderness shown for

those who have aroused them. With Mrs. Eddy the one paramount impulsion has ever been the good of mankind, in every thought and deed she has lived the gospel which she preached, and consequently the more bitter or brutal the attack, the more she has striven to help those who most needed her assistance.

One other thing which must have struck immediately any one who had occasion to talk to Mrs. Eddy was her capacity for packing the maximum of information into the minimum of words. What she could do in this way in writing may be discovered by any one who will read the tiny volume known as "Unity of Good," but the faculty here expressed was even more noticeable in her conversation. Curiously enough, one of the commonest objections taken to Science and Health is its diffusiveness. As a matter of fact, no criticism could be wider of the mark. Science and Health is not a text-book for a specially trained cult; it is a text-book for humanity, and a commentary on the entire Scriptures. It has to meet the needs of people of all nations and of all manners, the scholar and the working man, the idealist and the materialist, and those who are burdened alike with sorrow, or sickness, or sin. It is a library in a volume, for it contains between its covers the essential literature of a movement. Many books might be made out of it; and, as the necessity has arisen, Mrs. Eddy has taken the material for several volumes from its pages.

The real object of the book however was to give the world of today a vision of how the Christianity of the first century might be made practical in the twentieth. During all those ages the voice of Christendom had prayed for light in puzzled wonder, until its hopeless expectation had become articulate in the words:—

Dim tracts of time divide
Those golden days from me:
Thy voice comes strange o'er years of change,
How can we follow Thee?

To those with eyes to see, Science and Health made the way plain, and there grew up a new church, which accepted