

**CHRISTIAN
SCIENCE, THE FAITH
AND ITS FOUNDER**

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Christian science, the faith and its founder by Lyman P. Powell

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LYMAN P. POWELL

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THE FAITH AND ITS FOUNDER

BY

LYMAN P. POWELL

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PREFACE

CHRI^STIAN SCIENCE has long engaged my interest. For years I discouraged none who sought its healing ministry. The indiscriminating censure visited upon it in apparent ignorance or prejudice made no impression on me. The desire Christian Scientists were constantly expressing to be judged by their fruits seemed to me to be both Christian and scientific.

A year or two ago, however, closer observation and more serious consideration brought me to three conclusions which appear to me unquestionably true:

1. That when members of any Christian church turn to Christian Science healing they usually turn away from historic Christianity.
2. That there are in the theory of Christian Science certain structural weaknesses which may easily be overlooked by people unschooled in philosophy, theology, or science.
3. That the answers of the accredited exponents of the movement to the criticisms

which are steadily gaining headway satisfy none save Christian Scientists and such others as read carelessly and think loosely.

This volume grew out of a booklet of mine which was never regularly published, but for which there soon came to be a large demand from all parts of the country. It was at the suggestion, altogether unexpected, of G. P. Putnam's Sons that I have expanded the monograph into a book.

My purpose, as the reader will discover, has been to write a book in which the average man who is outside of Christian Science can find the things he wants to know about its theory and practice. If to my readers it may now and then appear that I unduly emphasise the defects of the system, I ask them to observe that the good in Christian Science is the good in other religions and therefore requires no special emphasis, while the evil is distinctive and needs analysis and publicity to make it evident.

In studying the theory of Christian Science I have read various editions of *Science and Health*, covering its entire development, together with other writings of Mrs. Eddy, and the literature, now abundant, both in explanation and in criticism of the system. To read-

ing I have added interviews and correspondence with representative apologists and critics of the movement.

In considering Mrs. Eddy's personal history, I have made free use of Georgine Milmine's articles in *McClure's*. I have taken the pains, however, in each instance to verify her statements by correspondence or by interviews with those concerned. For this purpose alone I have travelled more than twenty-five hundred miles and am glad to be able to testify to the singular accuracy of the articles and the thoroughness with which they have been prepared.

In the chance that there might be witnesses whom Georgine Milmine overlooked to contradict the witnesses she introduces in the open court of a great magazine, I took counsel with the Committee on Publication of the Christian Science organisation. He referred me to the author of the *Human Life* articles on the same subject, but I was no more fortunate with her than with the Committee. I am, therefore, satisfied, so far as it is possible to be, that there is no significant evidence to offset the evidence presented in *McClure's*.

To name all who have in one way or another helped me in my work would be impossible.

But I must at least mention the following to whom I am especially indebted: Mr. Alfred Farlow, Mrs. Benjamin Welles, Mr. George A. Quimby, Mr. F. W. Peabody, Professor R. W. Micou, Rev. Dr. C. E. Holmes, Rev. Dr. A. E. Dunning, Mr. George Perry Morris, Mr. Horatio W. Dresser, Dr. A. M. Cushing, Mr. Livingston Wright, Rev. John Snyder, Rev. Wm. L. Chaffin, Mr. Robert K. Shaw, Rev. Dr. J. M. Buckley, Rev. Dr. S. A. Eliot, Rev. Dr. E. H. Delk, Mr. Richard Kennedy, Mr. Daniel H. Spofford, Mrs. Sarah G. Crosby, Mrs. Julia Russell Walcott, Mr. H. T. Wentworth, Mrs. Joseph French Johnson, Mrs. S. A. K. Robinson, Miss Florence Ben-Oliel, Mr. Henry B. Hinckley, Dr. John B. Huber, Dr. John S. Hitchcock, Dr. Elmer H. Copeland, and the librarians of Northampton, Springfield, and Worcester, Massachusetts.

To my wife, Gertrude Wilson Powell, I am under the deepest obligation for many aids which she alone could give. To the editorial skill of my nephew, Harold Ayres Powell, I owe much for a searching criticism of the manuscript. To Dr. Talcott Williams I am grateful, as often in the past, for the use of his comprehensive collection of magazine articles

and newspaper clippings which cover practically every subject of human interest, and can nowhere be duplicated.

Christian Scientists will say as usual that the truths of Christian Science are self-authenticating, and that another critic has, in undertaking to set forth the case, missed the essential point. But others will, I trust, believe that I have brought to one of the most elusive problems of the time a truth-seeking spirit, and that whether all my conclusions stand or not, the variety of quotation from Christian Science writings and the definiteness and comprehensiveness of the facts presented will convince people that it is perilous to commit themselves to this crude faith, which is repudiated with indignation by historic Christianity and with contempt by science, without a clearer understanding than is common of its insecure foundations and its inevitable implications.

L. P. P.

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