

STRONG ARTICLE ON CHRISTIAN SCIENCE

IT IS FROM THE PEN OF REV. JAMES McLEOD, D. D.

The Title of the Article is "Christian Science and Unchristian Science." Was Printed in a Recent Number of the New York Observer—Jesus Said the Sick Need a Physician Christian Scientists Say That Sickness Is Merely a Delusion on the Part of the Sufferer.

The following article from the pen of Rev. James McLeod, D. D., pastor of the First Presbyterian church of this city, under the caption "Christian Science and Unchristian Science," appears in last week's New York Observer:

"Christian Science is clearly related to Jesus Christ. It bears His imprimatur. He is its source and its inspiration, and all the benefits it has conferred upon the world are traceable unto Him. Whether we use the word Christian as an adjective or as a noun, it is a word of vast significance. When we say of persons or things that they are Christian, we thereby differentiate them from all other persons or things. The difference between a Christian man and a man who is not a Christian is immeasurable, and Christian knowledge differs immensely from knowledge that is not Christian.

"Christian Science as taught by Jesus Christ, and His apostles, is both intelligible and soul-satisfying. It does not trade off valuable real estate for clouds, nor does it exchange sober or saving truth for visionary and pitiful unreason. The great foundation truth of Christian Science is the existence, the personality, and the Fatherhood of God. No truth that fell from Christ's lips is more clearly expressed. Again and again, He speaks of God as His Father, and again and again, He addresses Him as a person. All who believe the Bible are agreed that Jesus teaches us that God can see, and hear, and feel, and speak; and if this be true, His personality must be conceded. The apostle James tells us that the Lord is very pitiful, and the Psalmist says that "He as a father pities his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him."

THE TRI-PERSONALITY. "Jesus teaches the Tri-personality of God. He claims Deity for Himself, as well as for the Father, and the Holy Ghost. He says that those who saw Him saw the Father. One of the inspired writers says that Jesus is 'the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of His person.' He was persecuted by His enemies, to the death, because while He seemed to them to be only a man, He nevertheless, claimed equality with God. When Jesus gave to His disciples their great commission, and when He framed for them the formula which they were to use in baptism, He gave equal honor to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost.

"Jesus teaches us that sin is in the world, and that it is sinners and He also teaches us that Satan is the arch-enemy of human souls. He, furthermore, points out plainly, to the sons of men, the only way of escape from the dreadful consequences of sin. He tells us that He came into the world to seek and save the lost. He declares that His crucifixion and burial, and resurrection were necessary for the salvation of sinners; and one of His apostles says that Christ "himself bare our sins in His own body on the tree;" and the Father says that apart from Jesus Christ there is no salvation, for "there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."

"Jesus teaches us to study and to reverence the Scriptures, and He tells us that the error of the Sadducees arose from the fact that they did not know the Scriptures. He took occasion, frequently, to interpret the Scriptures for the benefit of His disciples. He urges us to search the Scriptures, because they testify of Him, and He tells us that the Scripture cannot be broken. One of His apostles says "that all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and that it is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the value of the Holy Scripture cannot be over-estimated, and its right interpretation is all-important; for the Bible is the text book of Christian Science.

THE VALUE OF PRAYER. "Jesus teaches us the value of prayer. He, Himself, was a man of prayer; He prayed on earth, and He still prays in Heaven. He is the sinner's Advocate and Intercessor. He tells us to pray to God, and He assures us that God hears and answers prayer. He says that if we ask we shall receive. He gave to His disciples a form of prayer which they have used ever since, and which can never be improved. Prayer to God must always occupy a conspicuous place in the realm of Christian Science.

"Jesus also teaches the doctrine of immortality. He has, by His lips, and by His life, and by His glorious resurrection and ascension, placed that doctrine beyond the realm of dispute. He has abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel." These are some of the truths of Christian Science as taught by Jesus Christ.

Now compare these teachings of Jesus, with the teachings of that Unchristian Science, which is falsely called "Christian Science." On all the points enumerated, this scheme plainly and boldly contradicts Jesus Christ. It denies the existence, the personality, and Fatherhood of God. In its creed, "God is not a person but a principle." It denies the Bible doctrine of the

Trinity. In its creed, "life, truth, and love constitute the Triune God." It denies the Bible doctrine of sin in its creed. "The only reality in sin is the awful fact that, unrepentant, we seek real to human belief." It denies the doctrine of immortality, except in a pantheistic sense. There is no place in its creed for individual immortality. This scheme scorns the doctrine that the souls of believers are at their death made perfect in holiness, and do not immediately pass into glory. It teaches, on the contrary, that "the belief in good spirits belongs to the dark ages, that the superstition that persons are spirits is a mistake, that spirits are hallucinations."

NO PLACE FOR PRAYER. "In this scheme there is no place for prayer. Why should there be? If, as this scheme teaches, there is not a living, intelligent, personal God to hear and answer prayer, it is, of course, the height of absurdity to pray. There is no reason in offering prayer to a senseless thing, which it calls 'a principle.' One might as well pray to chemistry, or to electricity, or to the atmosphere, and yet the victims of this delusion pray. Their only idea of prayer is 'desire.' They reject with scorn, the Bible idea of prayer, which is the offering up of our desires unto God, for things agreeable to His will, in the name of Christ, with confession of our sins, and thankful acknowledgment of His mercies.

"Jesus says the sick need a physician. These deluded mortals say: 'No, for all sickness is a delusion, and the way to treat this delusion is to send a "healer" or employ one, who can give "abstruse treatment." It matters not whether the case be a headache or a cancer, a gun shot wound or consumption, this "healer," who has never studied medicine or surgery, and who is entirely ignorant of the first principles of therapeutics, can, it is alleged, work an effectual cure. While the adherents of this scheme, profess to take the Bible as their text book, they do not hesitate to twist the Holy Writings into all sorts of shapes to suit their folly. They forget that there is such a thing as wresting Scripture to one's destruction, and that there is such a thing, moreover, as being given over to a strong delusion, to believe a lie.

"Here is a pretty fair sample of Biblical exegesis, according to this scheme, but it is had enough in all conscience. "The name Adam is from the Hebrew adamah, signifying the red color of the ground, dust, nothingness. This way ought Adam to be enough of, as a damn, an obstruction, an error opposed to truth. There you have it in all its baldness. Surely a scheme that denies the fundamental truths of Christianity; that spurns the doctrine of Christ's atonement, that scorns the doctrine of sin; that tramples upon the Holy Scriptures, while professing to reverence them; that denies facts that stare us in the face, such as sickness, disease, and death; that boasts that this sinful world does not need a savior; and that would rob us of the God and Father of our Lord and Saviors, Jesus Christ—surely this scheme is a complete contradiction of Christian Science, for what ever else it is, it is not Christian.

Scranton, Pa. James McLeod.

TWILIGHT IN THE TROPICS.

How Long It Actually Remains After the Sun Has Set.

From the San Francisco Chronicle. The belief that there is little or no twilight within the great tropical belt encircling our planet is a very widespread one. History, however, warns us that the newly discovered facts, in accord with fact. It might indeed almost be said that they usually do not. The tolling and molling millions, the humble units that, taken in the bulk, constitute what is called a "great power," have neither the time nor the inclination to overhaul their opinions. They are not assailed by doubts as to whether the intellectual coffee which they have at odd moments imbibed may not have been mostly chicory. Such a state of mind unquestionably makes for happiness, and although such happiness may bear rather too much resemblance to that of, say, the cow, it is none the less real for all that.

Twilight is at its shortest at the equator and increases with the latitude—as the equinoxes—at about the same rate as that at which the meridians decrease their distance from one another. The increase is, therefore, very slow in low latitudes and very rapid near the poles.

Practical, or civil twilight is the time which elapses between the moment of the sun's setting and the moment of the seven degrees of a great circle below the horizon. At the equator this time cannot of course be less than twenty-eight minutes. At the edges of the tropic zone it is about thirty-one minutes. A person with good eyesight will, should he care to make the experiment, find that when at sea and on or near the equator, he is able to read average type on deck for at least twenty-eight minutes after the sun has set without the aid of artificial light and when there is no moonlight. This is the common-sense experiment by which the duration of practical twilight has been determined. The actual duration is considerably longer than the practical and, even at the equator, something like seventy minutes will elapse before night holds undisputed sway. This is the length of the true—the astronomical—twilight.

It is at or near the equinoxes that the phenomenon under consideration is at its shortest all over the globe. At those periods it lasts at Honolulu thirty minutes; at San Francisco, thirty-five; at London, forty-five; at St. Petersburg, fifty-seven; at the Arctic and Antarctic circles, seventy-two, and at the poles, eighty-eight days. When, then, we say that the poles have six months' light and six months' darkness, it is little more than a façon de parler. The north pole has no less than 222 days of practical daylight each year, the south pole 215 days, the equator 77 days. Nansen, when in high northern latitudes, was able to read the "Verdensgang" many days before the longest of sunrise followed the longest of day. The great length of the twilight in polar regions is a boon indeed to explorers. The popular imagination usually attaches itself to the great cold they have to endure, but the real enemy is the long darkness, which is trying to the enthusiasm of even a Nansen, a Peary, or a Jackson.

There is practically no difference in the length of twilight at the equator at the equinoxes and solstices. Even at Honolulu it will vary by more than a couple of minutes. At the higher latitudes, varying duration is very marked. In latitude 29½ degrees, for instance, it lasts fifty-six minutes at the equinoxes, but at the summer solstice it lasts from sunset to sunrise—that is to say, from 9.30 o'clock till 2.50, or for five hours and forty minutes.

North or south of 53 degrees practical twilight lasts all "night" at the equinoxes. The sun is, it is true, only twelve hours above the horizon, but as he cannot set more than seven degrees below it, he continues to daylight for the twenty-four hours. In such cities as Stockholm and St. Petersburg there are close on to fourteen hours of daylight at those seasons when day and night are said to be equal, and at the equator the day all the year round is made up of thirteen hours daylight and eleven hours darkness. It must also not be forgotten that in those latitudes where the sun remains for months below the horizon there is during that period a good deal of daylight, so that taking the day all the year round is made up of thirteen hours daylight and eleven hours darkness. It must also not be forgotten that in those latitudes where the sun remains for months below the horizon there is during that period a good deal of daylight, so that taking the day all the year round is made up of thirteen hours daylight and eleven hours darkness.

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Sunday School Lesson for February 5.

The Nobleman's Son Healed.

JOHN IV. 43-54.

BY J. E. GILBERT, D. D., LL. D.,

Secretary of American Society of Religious Education.

INTRODUCTION.—In the time of Christ the Holy Land formed part of the Roman empire. The territory lying west of the Jordan was divided into three districts or provinces—Judea on the south, Galilee on the north, and Samaria in the middle. The Jews adhered to the institutions of Moses, as interpreted by the priestly party at Jerusalem, and esteemed themselves as superior to their neighbors. The Galileans were greatly influenced by the commercial spirit, while the Samaritans were depressed through the mixture of races and the lack of high incentives. Our Lord found it to His advantage to pass repeatedly through all these sections, extending to all classes alike the benefits of His wisdom and power, avoiding in this way the complications and misunderstandings which might have arisen had He confined Himself to one section only. Our lesson today presents an incident connected with one of those journeys.

DEPARTING.—After the woman had prepared the way, as shown last week, Jesus remained two days in Sychar, preaching to the people, many of whom believed on Him (verses 39 to 42). He then resumed His travels northward (verse 43), accompanied by His disciples. His old home, Nazareth (John 1:15), lay directly in His pathway, and there He might ordinarily find many things of interest, especially as He had been absent for nearly a year. But, turning aside, He passed on into the heart of Galilee. It appears that the propriety of visiting the scene of His boyhood and early manhood was considered, although no mention of the conversation is made in the narrative. He knew the temper of His townspeople which was afterward displayed (Luke 11:29) and He was at that time to encounter the opposition which was certain to arise; and He explained by saying to His disciples that a prophet had no honor in his own country (verse 40). Hereby He exhibited or, as a datum, an obstruction, an error opposed to truth. There you have it in all its baldness. Surely a scheme that denies the fundamental truths of Christianity; that spurns the doctrine of Christ's atonement, that scorns the doctrine of sin; that tramples upon the Holy Scriptures, while professing to reverence them; that denies facts that stare us in the face, such as sickness, disease, and death; that boasts that this sinful world does not need a savior; and that would rob us of the God and Father of our Lord and Saviors, Jesus Christ—surely this scheme is a complete contradiction of Christian Science, for what ever else it is, it is not Christian.

RECEIVING.—As Jesus moved on further north in Galilee He found the people ready and anxious for Him (verse 45). Many of them had been at the feast at Jerusalem (John 11:55). In obedience to the law as given by Moses (Deut. xvi:16), showing that they were loyal to the institutes of their religion. There they had seen the miracles which He wrought (John 11:2), and they had been so impressed that the state of his own mind, as already noted, adhering to the thought that the Master must visit the sick boy. There was no defect in His faith as we shall soon see, but there was a mistake in His judgment concerning the essential conditions of power (verse 49).

HEALING.—That was enough. The private remark of Jesus to the Jews standing near had served several good purposes. It showed them that their faith in Him had not yet risen to its proper level—that it was depending on the testimony of the senses. It gave the nobleman an opportunity to reveal the state of his own mind, as already noted, adhering to the thought that the Master must visit the sick boy. There was no defect in His faith as we shall soon see, but there was a mistake in His judgment concerning the essential conditions of power (verse 49).

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This second visit would be rendered more agreeable by the events that attended the first. It would not be surprising if He received a cordial welcome at the house where the water was made wine, and if many present on that occasion manifested to Him honor (verse 46). His presence was soon noised about and known even in other towns. A nobleman residing in Capernaum, who had a sick son, hearing that Jesus was in Cana, hastened to Him, involving a journey of twenty miles. He then met his servants coming to report that his son was alive (verse 47). The information did not surprise him—it was only what he expected. But there appeared then a disposition to verify all that had transpired, to connect to a certainty the word spoken in Cana with the cure wrought in Capernaum. He learned that at the very hour when Jesus spoke, the fever left the son. The coincidence of the announcement and the occurrence was proof to him that one was the cause of the other. This was good reasoning, for there was no other adequate influence that could have stayed the course of disease, and in an instant of time began the work of restoration. It will be noticed that the report of the servants was rendered on the day following the remark of Jesus (verse 52), so that the nobleman had not hastened homeward.

BELIEVING.—There was a rejoicing household in Capernaum when the nobleman returned. A son saved from death is an unexpected blessing to an oriental (Luke, xii:24). But the joy changed its character somewhat and took on an element of thanksgiving, when the facts of the journey were related in detail. How the plea had been presented, how it was at first received with apparent indifference, how in more earnest words the urgency of the case was made known, how the benign and gentle Jesus had spoken, how the heart of the father clung to that word, how he turned away homeward, feeling that the work was done—all this the nobleman must have related again and again to eager listeners, dwelling on the circumstance that at 1 o'clock the fever left when Jesus uttered the word. And as a result of that account all the household of the nobleman believed in Jesus—believed Him to be the son of God, the Messiah of the Jews (John 11:2). These were the first converts made in Capernaum, the beginning of that large number who should afterward become attached to Him in His future home (verse 53).

REFLECTIONS.—Let us try to discover the elements of the ruler's faith, which secured for him the life of his son. 1. He heard that Jesus had done great cures, and on that testimony he believed Him to be able to work this cure. 2. He heard that Jesus was in Cana and believed that He might go to Him and plead his own case. 3. He had heard of the goodness of Jesus and believed that He would go twenty miles to do a generous deed. 4. He knew that his son was near to death, but believed that Jesus might save his life. 5. He heard the rebuke administered to unbelieving Jews who were incapable of faith except by physical demonstrations, yet he believed that Jesus had power to heal without being present. 6. He went home, not in great haste, because he believed that the one he loved would live (Ira., xxviii:19). 7. Withal, his faith was contagious. It spread through his family. Other hearts and minds than his yielded their tribute to Jesus, and new plans and purposes as well as new joys entered in to make a new home.

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REPORTING.—The nobleman went home believing; every step was an act of faith. He needed no evidence except the word of Jesus. On that he rested with fullest assurance that the desire of his heart had been attained. In the way he met his servants coming to report that his son was alive (verse 47). The information did not surprise him—it was only what he expected. But there appeared then a disposition to verify all that had transpired, to connect to a certainty the word spoken in Cana with the cure wrought in Capernaum. He learned that at the very hour when Jesus spoke, the fever left the son. The coincidence of the announcement and the occurrence was proof to him that one was the cause of the other. This was good reasoning, for there was no other adequate influence that could have stayed the course of disease, and in an instant of time began the work of restoration. It will be noticed that the report of the servants was rendered on the day following the remark of Jesus (verse 52), so that the nobleman had not hastened homeward.

BELIEVING.—There was a rejoicing household in Capernaum when the nobleman returned. A son saved from death is an unexpected blessing to an oriental (Luke, xii:24). But the joy changed its character somewhat and took on an element of thanksgiving, when the facts of the journey were related in detail. How the plea had been presented, how it was at first received with apparent indifference, how in more earnest words the urgency of the case was made known, how the benign and gentle Jesus had spoken, how the heart of the father clung to that word, how he turned away homeward, feeling that the work was done—all this the nobleman must have related again and again to eager listeners, dwelling on the circumstance that at 1 o'clock the fever left when Jesus uttered the word. And as a result of that account all the household of the nobleman believed in Jesus—believed Him to be the son of God, the Messiah of the Jews (John 11:2). These were the first converts made in Capernaum, the beginning of that large number who should afterward become attached to Him in His future home (verse 53).

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