

“SCIENCE OBSCURED”

The significant title, “Science Obscured”, given to a marginal heading on page 139 of *Science and Health*, applies most pointedly to the state of thought in the Christian Science Field to-day, and consequently to the now frightening state of the world, for “judgment must begin at the house of God:” (I Pet. 4: 17). In other words, the world only reflects the condition of church thought.

In this arresting paragraph, entitled “Science Obscured”, Mrs. Eddy issues a very definite warning in regard to the desecration of Holy Writ by Church Councils. She writes: “The decisions by vote of Church Councils as to what should and should not be considered Holy Writ; the manifest mistakes in the ancient versions; the thirty thousand different readings in the Old Testament, and the three hundred thousand in the New, — these facts show how a mortal and material sense stole into the divine record, with its own hue darkening to some extent the inspired pages.”

Again, in Revelation 22: 18, 19, St John records a grave warning on the same subject in these words: “For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book:

And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and *from* the things which are written in this book.”

So it is seen, that the desecration of Holy Writ is placed under a perpetual curse.

Is not our Textbook accepted and acknowledged by every loyal Christian Scientist to be Holy Writ, and its revelator, Mary Baker Eddy, to be God’s anointed? Mrs. Eddy, herself, tells us that the Christian Science textbook is not of “human origin” (My. p. 115).

It may be startling, therefore, if not horrifying to the great majority of Christian Scientists, to be informed that since Mrs. Eddy's passing in Dec. 1910, our textbook, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, has been tampered with and altered, having been both "added to" and "taken from".

In view of the warnings given in both *Science and Health* and in Revelation, one would think that the Trustees (the Directors of The Mother Church) would have made it their especial care to see that the Christian Science textbook, our "spiritually organized Church" (Retro. p. 45), was preserved and reproduced exactly as Mrs. Eddy left it.

But not so. With colossal arrogance the Directors have made vital changes in the chapter on "Fruitage", a chapter which is as indispensable to us as any other chapter in the textbook.

Also, they have removed a beautiful light picture of Mrs. Eddy, which she inserted at the beginning of *Science and Health* as late as 1908, showing that she had a particular object in doing so.

Furthermore, one hundred and thirty marginal headings have been tampered with in regard to the division of words.

In changes made previous to the Preface, perhaps the addition most obnoxious to every true Christian Scientist, is the announcement on the back of the title page, that "The facsimile of the signature of Mary Baker Eddy and the design of the Cross and Crown seal are registered trade marks of the Trustees under the Will of Mary Baker G. Eddy."

Registered trade marks! Think of it, *trade marks*! Our precious Christian Science seal, the sign of spiritual healing, together with the signature of the most spiritually minded woman who ever trod this earth, are being used as *trade marks*. Truly our conception of Christian Science has been "carried into a land of traffick" and "set in a city of merchants." (Ezek. 17: 4.)

Is it any wonder that Science has become obscured, that our fruitage has been so sparse and laboured, when that wonderful chapter on "Fruitage" has been deliberately contaminated by "human hypotheses." (S. & H. p. 457)?

Is it surprising that more and more Christian Scientists are entering hospitals, having failed to find healing in Christian Science?

Indeed it is very clear why this glorious concluding chapter of our textbook has been so neglected by Christian Scientists. How could it possibly be appreciated by institutional church (S. & H. p. 583, line 14), when it is the fruit of "the spiritually organized Church", the healings having been accomplished through the reading of the textbook alone?

Mrs. Eddy spent her life perfecting the textbook she gave to the world; then how dare any human hand reach forth to alter one word? "What can improve God's work?" (S. & H. p. 167, line 16).

On page 604 of the Christian Science textbook as Mrs. Eddy left it in 1910, there appears a beautiful testimony, "Insanity and Epilepsy Healed". This testimony has now been cut out altogether, and has been replaced by another one (not chosen by Mrs. Eddy) "Spinal Trouble and Indigestion Healed".

On page 698, an equally beautiful testimony, "A Priceless Boon", has been eliminated entirely, while worst of all, the final one, "A Grateful Testimony", which Mrs. Eddy chose so fittingly to complete this wonderful chapter, has been removed and exchanged with the previous testimony. Only the crudest thought would have wished to disturb this gem in its perfect setting where Mrs. Eddy placed it, for it is the final link, linking us with the *living* Word, the testifier having seen that to *live* the truth is far, far greater than either the Spoken or the Written Word. This truth is "the indissoluble spiritual link which establishes man forever in the divine likeness, inseparable from his creator." (S. & H. p. 491.)

Consequently, until the Field, as a first step, demands the replacement of these testimonies back into their proper and rightful places, the restoration of Mrs. Eddy's photograph, and the reproduction of the Christian Science textbook exactly as Mrs. Eddy left it, the Christian Science Movement and the world will continue to lie under the curse set upon the desecration of Holy Writ, and will continue to suffer the plagues prophesied in Revelation 22: 18, 19. Until this is done, peace for the world is impossible of attainment.

“The *art* of Christian Science, with true hue and character of the living God” (Mis. 372), as presented in Mrs. Eddy’s great work, *Christ and Christmas*, has also suffered sad defacement, in that the symbols portrayed in the first picture have become so dim as to be almost obliterated, except for the Star of Bethlehem. Hence the Field is unaware of the significance of the symbols as Mrs. Eddy left them, and *Christ and Christmas* still remains obscure to the great majority of Christian Scientists.

It is well to remember that the Manual also is Holy Writ, for Mrs. Eddy says that its By-Laws were “impelled by a power not one’s own”.

Mrs. JEAN W. SCOTT.

August 1954.

[State committee's letter to a few friends, exposing the errors of the Houston meeting]

August 31, 2000

Dear Friend,

In recent years, I have shared with you reports following various conferences of Committees on Publication. This letter is a little different. It is, for various reasons, shorter and more subjective. I want simply to communicate a few issues for your thought and prayer that seem to me especially urgent at this time. As always, I speak only for myself and welcome your response. I also beg your indulgence for the impersonality of this communication.

July 20-25, 2000, the department now known as The Writings of Mary Baker Eddy convened what has been called an "historic" meeting in Houston. It brought together for the first time five departments of The Mother Church: the North American Committees on Publication (53 + 18 staff), Board of Lectureship (27 + 8 staff), Publisher's representatives for bookstores (44), *Science and Health* coordinators (65), and Reading Room representatives (46). With the addition of 41 staff from The Writings of MBE and 15 other guests, the total conference attendance was greater than 300.

The meeting was entitled "Demand-Response: 21st Century Spiritual Seeker." It was focused on a single programmatic goal: "to put the message of the Comforter (*Science and Health*) into the hands of as many seekers as possible." The five departments, whose personnel are now being known generically as "regional field workers," are being encouraged to devote their own efforts and also, especially, to "partner" with one another in support of this goal.

There are two particularly troubling developments that emerge from these current initiatives: first, an attempt to reinvent the Church of Christ, Scientist; and second, an attempt to separate the discovery from its founding.

- I. An attempt to reinvent the Church of Christ, Scientist. Some examples:
 - a. The five departments include two that are provided for in the *Manual* (COP and BOL) but three that are not. TMC skirts this issue by relating those three to legitimate *Manual* functions (RR reps and the *Manual*-established RR, for example), but it begs a basic question: If MBE thought it necessary for RRs to be coached, encouraged, trained, etc. by regional RR reps appointed by TMC, why didn't *she* provide for them in the *Manual*?
 - b. Four of the five departments are directly controlled by the CSBD (appointment, funding, direction, etc.). That permits far greater field involvement and control by TMC than we have traditionally experienced in our church. By roping COP into the group, it also asserts greater centralized control over the one activity that historically has been least controllable.
 - c. Descriptions/delineations of the five departments were presented on posters in Houston. When I asked in a recent conference call for those descriptions to be

made available to us individually, my request was denied. The descriptions are a "work in progress," I was told, developed by the CSBD acting under the authority of Article I, Section 6, of the *Manual*. It was clear that the CSBD wanted to retain maximum flexibility to create, define, and change functions of church departments at will, without fear of being held too closely accountable to their own descriptions.

- d. Though the five departments presumably stand on equal footing, it's increasingly clear that first among equals are the *Science and Health* coordinators. They alone have been given authority to present the "vision" of this program to the branches, to work with executive boards, lecture committees, and Reading Rooms (not otherwise covered by the RR reps), and to meet with branch church memberships by "invitation." COPs have been told to stop giving branch church talks by June 2001, presumably to clear the way for the *S&H* coordinators and to downgrade the traditional role of the COPs in the eyes of members.
- e. Informal conversations with RR reps suggest that they are being told (and in turn are telling RR librarians) that RRs are separate from their branches (on the basis that RR is a separate *Manual* article). RRs should seek special funding to permit their own advertising, promotions, even lectures; increased sales are being encouraged so that RRs might accrue sufficient profit to achieve greater independence from branches.

2. An attempt to separate the discovery from its founding. Some examples:

- a. MBE's self-chosen title was "Discoverer and Founder." Today our church speaks much about the discovery and Mrs. Eddy's dedication to "the seeker," but it shows little interest in leading that seeker to the church she founded.
- b. Several years ago, the idea was introduced of "taking the dome off of the book." That has been expanded to a host of initiatives that divorce the church (at least nominally, and often more) from its activities. The current emphasis on making *S&H* more available and accessible to the seeker specifically and explicitly avoids any reference to the church. The manager of COPs stated at the Houston conference that "*S&H* doesn't need denominational walls."
- c. A recent exhibit about MBE at the central library in Dallas was characterized in a newspaper account (presumably on the basis of supplied information) as "not funded by the church. It is a project of The Writings of Mary Baker Eddy, a nonprofit group that circulates Eddy's works and is led by Harris."
- d. COPs have been told decisively over the past nine months or so that they are not to be church spokesmen. Also, that they are not COPs for the Church of Christ, Scientist, but representatives instead for the Science of the Christ.
- e. The new website (starting fall 2000) is far more than an on-line presentation of *S&H*. It will include no reference to our church or to branch churches, but instead will feature a section called "Community of Readers," a "Spirituality" area with interactive chat room, a pre-programmed quote for the day, and a page that (according to a flyer for the web test site) "will allow you to search for events [though not church addresses or service times] in your geographic

area by zip code! Also note that you can request a speaker or submit your own event for consideration." The website focuses on a book and a cyberspace "community" surrounding it, instead of the opportunity for genuine community offered by the church Mary Baker Eddy established.

- f. The new MBE Library has been described by Ginny Harris as "its own entity," separate from the church. It is explicitly not a church department or project, although its capital funding, presumably, is being drawn from the Restoration and Renewal project and its annual budget from church income. Still, the Library has its own board of trustees, and features its own cadre of scholars, many of whom are not Christian Scientists.

Members may ask: "Is this still Mary Baker Eddy's Church?" I hope this is useful to you in supporting *that* church.

Sincerely,

*[A second letter from the state Committee for Georgia
after he was disciplined for writing the first letter]*

As most of you know, I have prepared summaries of various Committee on Publication conferences for years and have sent them to a group of about 15

friends concerned about church issues. After the meeting in Houston last

July, I prepared such a summary which was sent August 31. The summary was

copied further and distributed, and without my knowledge began to achieve a

wide distribution. During the late fall, I received calls from many appreciative individuals I did not know (for the most part), as far west as

California and as far east as England and Scotland. I was stunned, though

gratified by the good thinking I encountered, and I realized that my letter

was unintentionally reaching a surprisingly large audience.

Eventually, that audience included The Mother Church. On January 4, Gary

Jones called me, expressing his displeasure and concluding by saying he would have to think more about the issue and that he would get back with

me. That came on Thursday, February 15, when Gary called and said that he

would like to meet me in my office on Friday morning. At the meeting Friday, Gary informed me that I was being removed as Committee on Publication for Georgia effective immediately and that appointing Readers

would be getting such notice later that day. In accordance with Article XXXII, Section 5, of the Church Manual, they would be asked – expected –

to formalize my removal and appoint another Committee of the CSBD's choosing. That choice is Don Griffith, a fine man whom I know and respect,

now retired though formerly the superintendent of schools of a small suburban Atlanta school system. Because of prior commitments on Don's part,

though, I was told that he would not be able to be in the office right away; therefore, the Manager and CSBD were asking David Smith, COP for Louisiana, to "caretake" the office until the new Committee returned, then

to help with transition and training. David will be acting Committee for

Georgia as of Monday, February 19.

The Readers handled their responsibilities expeditiously, and I received a

letter of removal from them on Saturday, February 17, less than 30 hours

after I first was informed about the action of the Manager and the Board.

I tell you all this, first, because you are my friends, and I cherish our time working together; second, because you should be aware that your own

distribution network may not be as private and secure as you think; and third, because this incident once again demonstrates how determined The Mother Church is to stifle dissent and assert control. It also shows that,

regardless of one's heart and history, he still can be branded, in effect,

an enemy of the church. Clearly in my case, it was decided not only to remove me from office, but to discredit my work, separate me from church

service as fast as possible, and silence my voice (presumably to prevent my

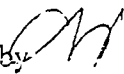
"poisoning" the new Committee).

I pray for growth in grace through this experience, and my prayers are with

you as you go forward to bless mankind.

Christian Science Committee on Publication for Georgia

CIRCULAR LETTER 01-5

TO: Assistant Committees on Publication
FROM: Clifton Neil Irby 
DATE: February 16, 2001
SUBJECT: Good bye and thank you

This communication is hurried and brief -- and I apologize for that -- but it will also be my last. By the time you read this, I anticipate that I will have been formally and officially removed as Committee on Publication for Georgia.

The precipitating reason for the removal stems from a letter I wrote August 31, 2000, following a July meeting of Committees on Publication and a number of employees of The Mother Church in Houston. The letter shared concerns I have about current directions and initiatives of our church and was sent to a group of about 15 friends. It was not intended for further reproduction or distribution, but the letter began to be circulated and ultimately went far and wide. Eventually, some copies of the letter found their way to The Mother Church, and in early January 2001 I was contacted by Gary Jones, Manager of Committees on Publication.

Yesterday, February 15, Gary called me and indicated a desire to meet with me today in my office. He and I met this morning, at which time I was notified that I was being removed as state Committee under Article XXXIII, Section 5, of the *Church Manual*. That removal will be official as soon as I receive notification from the appointing Readers from First Church, Decatur.

My understanding is that the new Committee on Publication for Georgia will be Don Griffith, a member of First Church, Decatur. Don was formerly superintendent of schools for the Decatur city school system, and is an active, experienced, and capable Christian Scientist. I wish him well, and I encourage you to help him in any way you can.

I appreciate your love, support, and faithful service over many years. Working with you has been a privilege, and I wish you the best as you go forward.

**FIRST CHURCH OF CHRIST, SCIENTIST
DECATUR, GEORGIA**

February 28, 2001

Executive Boards of Christian Science Branch Churches and Societies in Georgia

Dear Friends:

As the First and Second Readers of the branch church that appointed Clifton Irby as Committee on Publication for Georgia this year, we wish to share some recent developments with you.

As you may know, our duty to appoint comes from the *Church Manual* by Mary Baker Eddy – specifically Article XXXIII, Sections 4 and 5. On Friday, February 16, we received a letter from The Christian Science Board of Directors requesting that we, the appointing Readers, remove Mr. Irby as the current Committee on Publication and appoint Mr. Don Griffith as the new Committee. The Board of Directors made this request under Article XXXIII, Section 5, of the *Manual*.

The *Manual* requires that State Committees act under the direction of the Manager of Committees on Publication. (Article XXXIII, Section 2.) The Board of Directors' letter said that the Board had found that Mr. Irby declines to act under the Manager's direction. Therefore, we were asked to remove Mr. Irby and to appoint Mr. Griffith as his successor.

We want you to know that on Saturday, February 17, we met with our branch Church's Executive Board, reviewed the request carefully, and completed the removal and appointment requested of us.

We wish to express our gratitude to Mr. Irby for his years of service as Committee on Publication for Georgia and all that he has accomplished in this office.

Mr. Griffith is an experienced and dedicated Christian Scientist, with many years of active public service. He was formerly Superintendent of Public Schools for Decatur. Due to a previous commitment, Mr. Griffith will be temporarily unavailable. However, in the interim, Mr. David Smith, Committee on Publication for Louisiana, will be working at the Committee office in Atlanta, assisting Mr. Griffith by monitoring media, legislative, and other matters.

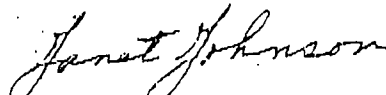
As in the past, your continued metaphysical and financial support for the office of the Christian Science Committee on Publication is deeply appreciated.

Please distribute this letter to your members.

Sincerely,



Fawn Griffith
First Reader



Janet Johnson
Second Reader

Friday – Closed Committee on Publication Session – All day

Discussion of Overview of Committee Manual By-law

1. No mention of re-appointment; Article 33 states: The readers of the three largest branch churches in each State shall annually and alternately appoint a Committee." *To be in keeping with the Manual*, we will now move forward each year with an appointment. There will no longer be two ways of appointing the Committee – one page making it easy to reappoint and one page asking the church to think deeply about appointing a new Committee.
2. The work is to be more focused on proactive work in the legislature and media. This falls under the "corrective" work with the idea that "*omission*" is an imposition. Therefore the work is not now one of correcting wrongs in the media, but is one of placing the words of Christian Science in the public's eye and thought whenever possible.
3. The new word for the work is "partner". The Committees are no longer to give the talks to those requesting informative or traditional corrective talks regarding Christian Science. We now partner with the Board of Lectureship. They give all *talks* to the public. This is based on the fact that the Manual gives no outline for this work in the Committee domain. Lectures, i.e. talks, are the work of the Board of Lectureship.
4. In the same vain of thinking, the Committee will no longer be giving talks to the branch churches regarding their rights in practicing Christian Science in their home fields. The Manual does not outline that work so the Committees will not be allowed to talk to the churches.

The new thrust of this line of communication will be to strengthen the assistant committees and train them to speak to the churches regarding the work the Committee does. As they will be addressing their own churches that will fall under the branch church domain and will not be directly governed by TMC.
5. The main work for Committees will be to write pieces for the media: radio, TV and print – always working to get Christian Science into the public view. That coupled with watching for needed accommodation in the legislative work constitutes the work of Committees. As senior writer for the Committee on Publication Manager's office told me that this work is actually public relations work – public relations in the highest sense of the word.
6. We were then told and I quote "to value the journey of the seeker; to clear the path (of impositions) for the seeker. The committees are responsible for the mental atmosphere of their jurisdictions. If the committee is doing its job, more seekers will read about/hear about Christian Science in the media; there will be better laws for the practice of Christian Science; more seekers will find the Reading Rooms, more people will buy S&H." Apparently there is no individual responsibility any longer. The committee is the thought czar. And the branch churches have been totally left out of their own community. They were not referred to at all.

7. Partnering with the newly designed partners is the rest of the work. Interestingly, enough, these partners are not specified in the Manual. They have no Manual based authority. But the whole point here for those at headquarters is "to unleash the Church design to make the comforter available and accessible as never before." Therefore, these reps have been given almost *carte blanche* to work in the field.

RR Reps: These are the reps of the "Writings of Mary Baker Eddy" to the Reading Rooms. They do not serve as initiators but rather as facilitators. They are in a coaching position – there to impart the vision to the librarians, to inspire the Reading rooms, to communicate the vision. This is "the Manual design in action. This is giving consent to the design to meet the need of the seeker." They call the appropriate RRs to alert them to opportunities when events are happening. The RRs should then spring into action and set up satellite RR booths. Any event where there is a seeker should be acted on. If the RR won't do it, then TMC will sponsor the event booth. At that point, one need not be a member of the local branch church or TMC to man the booth and sell S&H. Seekers themselves have been enlisted to sell the book. The point here is that the goal is getting the book to the seeker. "Get the church off the book" "Get the denomination off the book."

Pub Reps: These are the reps of the "Writings of Mary Baker Eddy" to bookstores. We currently have relationships with 3,000 bookstores nation-wide. These reps go into bookstores, teach the employees how to handsell the book, set up prominent displays and organize book talks.

S&H Coordinators: These are representatives of the "Writings of Mary Baker Eddy" to the branch churches and communities at large. They are to be seen as "walking letters from TMC." They have authority to speak to and work with the executive boards, Lecture committees, Librarians and Outreach committees, individual branch members as well as members of TMC. They also have the authority and right to give workshops to branch churches.

They are again, not to be seen as initiators but rather as facilitators. They love the branch churches and their job is to inspire the branches, communication the vision, sharing with the branches, listening to the branches.

This position of S&H Coordinator is "to bring the branch church into the 21st Century, getting the members fired up so they can fire up the seekers." Branch churches will be asked to get linked up through computers and email so that they can have access to their coordinators, the Library, and TMC.

8. "Partnering should be for the purpose of moving closer to or accomplishing our common goal. Our common goal is getting the message to the "seeker."

9. "There should be no institutional baggage – leave the church out of it and just represent the Science. As a committee you no longer speak for the church or on behalf of the church. You speak from your own experience. Represent the Science in your own life. If you didn't have a single C.S. in your jurisdiction, you'd still have the same job."

10. We have an environMENTAL approach to the work – the environs are mental and we are the ones responsible for the purification, the weeding of thought, the protection of thought. If we do our job, the seeker will find S&H.

11. We have three core messages:

- CS is a proven system of healing
- S&H with Key to the Scriptures is the full statement of Christ Jesus promised Comforter, divine Science
- Mary Baker Eddy – a woman of the 19th century – Discoverer and Founder of Christian Science in her "true light and life" (as author, healer, publisher, and thinker for modern times)

Gary Jones told us specifically: "Don't resist. Don't analyze what you are being told. Don't resist the changes. Just accept them. Be open to them. Don't discuss this among yourselves. Just listen and be receptive."

Committee analysis: Boston appears to be systematically reducing the Committee's role and thereby gain as much control as much as possible what is being said and to whom.

The set up for the dissection and dismissal of much of the work has been explicit wording in the Manual -- or explicit omission of such work. But there appears to be a double standard. At the Houston conference, there were approximately 320 attendees. 53 were Committees on Publication. 27 were members of The Board of Lectureship. Approximately 30 staff members were there from the Committee office, Lectureship office and Board of Directors. That leaves approximately 210 workers who have no specific Manual basis for their ever increasing authorized work. And they were zealots!

We were told time and again the goal of all the work is to connect the seeker with the book. There was not one word about God, the work of Church, the ultimate goal of healing and salvation. The goal was to sell the book to the seeker. And the emphasis is now on the selling of the book – to give the book away is to devalue the book.

We obviously have a new lexicon – one not derived from our Leader or her writings. While she does write about the honest seeker, the sincere seeker, the *simple* seeker, the present course is to take off all qualifiers and we pursue any seeker....seeker of crystals, seekers of medicine, seekers at any event -- the "Mind, Body, Spirit Connection" events being the genesis of this line of thinking. It's interesting that there seems to be either some ignorance or negligence of her remarks regarding "those who seek Truth...through material conservatism..."

The overtone of the conference was one of a new age Amway business. Respecting others journeys, partnering, the seeker, we must be on fire about the book, "having our hearts burn within..." events. All heavily used throughout the 6 days.

It was most disheartening to have them specifically contradict the very words Mrs. Eddy has read every Sunday -- Science and Health is our denominational textbook. But that is no longer to be used as a description of Science & Health. We are divorcing the book from the church.

There seems to be a very refined crafting of the specifics of the Manual when they want them and a total disregard for the Manual when it is inconvenient.

The title of her talk was: "Demand and Response -- the 21st Century Seeker"

We were told many times how "HISTORIC" this meeting was.

We are seeing a major confluence for spirituality -- spiritual seeking. Animal magnetism would tell us it's not as great as all that...so we were told to handle 3 areas of a.m.

1. General resistance to Christianity
2. Seeds of doubt, fear, mistrust
3. Apathy and inertia

The demand is stronger than ever before. Spirituality is relevant as never before. There is a ravenous spiritual hunger.

We are all therefore to commit ourselves to engage with the seeker...to ask ourselves daily, "Have I engaged with the seeker more today than yesterday? Have I made the textbook available and accessible?"

We are "committing to that, demonstrating that, achieving that in tangible goals -- the goal of course, being that of getting the book to the seeker."

We are to embody the attitude of the seeker:

- open
- non-judgmental
- wanting access to spirituality
- availability 24 hours each day
- wants spirituality on own terms
- wants spirituality without heavy doctrinal weight
- honoring the journey

We need to realize there is a difference between humanity and sect. There is a distinction between The First Church of Christ, Scientist and Christian Science. We need to be representing the Science.

Committee analysis:

There is distinctly a move toward selling the book to the seekers rather than encouraging them to seek the kingdom of heaven. We are being told that we need to declare the work of Mrs. Eddy and get her "light and life" story out to the seeker. That we have the light and we need to quit covering it up. Yet, the question arises: Is what we are now doing real shining as in "let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father..." or is it artificial light.

Saturday, General Session – AM: “The demand for spirituality.”

Conducted by Chairman of the Board – She spoke for 2 hours and didn't really say a great deal. She emphasized “The seeker.” Spoke about the record numbers of seekers now seeking spirituality. The increase in the demand for spirituality. And that this will be *THE* year to remember. The year 2,000 will be the year it all turned around. This will be the definitive year when Christian Scientists look back and consider the changes in the world.

CS is responsible for the spirituality of mankind now coming to the surface. We are responsible for the changes taking place. We are in the middle of great change. Mrs. Harris goes to NYC frequently to meet with other “thought-leaders”. They discuss this very kind of thing – what changes are taking place, what are the current trends, where are we headed. There is a new book by her friend, George Gallup Jr.—something to the effect, “The Great American Spirituality: The God-Rush”. Mrs. Harris firmly believes this is the result of the leaven at work and we are now better equipped to meet this need than ever before. Another new book pub in 1998 “The Second Coming of the Church” by George Barron (not sure of the spelling of his name) speaks about the identity crisis of church – its true mission, vision and relevance. “We need to be at the table of these talks. We need to have a voice in these discussions. We need to be declaring what the previous pioneers have done.”

She read from the unpublished letters...said we would be hearing a great deal more from them...One letter she quoted from was the Armstrong one – pray 2 times each day that people want MBE's book and will buy it. Another letter she quoted from said something along the lines, “We need a constant mental force going out to stop the lurking evil that would stop the teaching in Science & Health.”

We are in the middle of the second wave of great mental change. We are only 20% into this change and the next 80% will be coming ever faster. There is a third wave of change that will take place with such speed and force that most people won't know it has even hit. (None of the people I spoke with understood what Mrs. Harris was saying but she seemed to think this was very significant.)

She spent two hours setting us up to accept the coming program. She again told us to “not resist. Don't resist. Don't judge. Don't react. Just accept it and be open. Great things were going to happen.”

We were told that we need to explain that Jesus was the "example" and not the "exception". Yet, there was no mention of *us following him in words and deeds*. The emphasis -- indeed the only discussion -- was that of getting the book to the seeker.

There was no mention of healing ourselves or others. We were not brought together to share ideas on how to heal, how to handle the suggestions of *animal magnetism*, of what the signs of the times are and how we, as a church, should move forward in dealing with them. The attitude is one of "well, prayer alone hasn't worked, so we now are going to actually *do something*. We're going to sell the textbook. And we are going to tell Mrs. Eddy's story so that everyone today can relate to her."

We are turning from the leadership of Mary Baker Eddy to the person of Mary Baker Eddy -- much like the Christian church turned from the Christ to the person of Jesus in the evolution of that institution.

Saturday, General Session -- Afternoon

Presentation of Library

Ginny told us that MBE has very quickly moved to the front of public thought and this justifies our presentation of the library. She told of the letter MBE received from President Roosevelt responding to her article on peace during his presidency and how she wrote on the back of the envelope, "Save this forever". Then Ginny held up a piece of paper and said,

" 'Save this forever.' I think Mrs. Eddy knew this day was coming."

We were told again, "Don't resist this. Don't react. Don't judge." "We have loved and protected Mrs. Eddy for too long. We need to share her with others. They need to know her and that's why we are building a library for her. We need to have her records to know what she accomplished. The Library is not a monument to Mary Baker Eddy but rather a repository of her ideas."

Ginny introduced the former archivist of the USA and Don Wilson then spoke to us for about an hour on the purpose of and needs for the library.

"You need a living institution rather than a record of written materials."

That's why the library will include so much more than just her writings. It will be the place for holding symposia, conferences, children's programs, educational programs, a computer research area, it will disseminate publications, host exhibits and serve as a cultural and arts center.

Ginny then told us that we will partner with other institutions and organizations -- she sees us partnering with Harvard Medical School, with schools of divinity like Andover Seminary. Ginny said that there is great hunger for knowledge of this wonderful person.

Ginny quoted Dr. Dossy when he said "Mary Baker Eddy would be validated by the thinking going on today." She gave us the foundation to the inquiry today." And because of that, Ginny told us that this library is part of her legacy to the 21st century. "Mary Baker Eddy is responsible for the creation of this project."

Ginny took questions and some of them revolved around the \$50 million dollars involved in the project.

"I have committed \$50 million to this library," said Ginny Harris.

\$25 million has been set aside from the Renewal and Restoration fund. The other \$5 million a year for the next 5 years is already on hand and in the budget.

We see there will be monetary partnerships, grants, fellowships, etc. She thinks there may be a modest entrance fee to the library. There will be student and senior discounts. But *any* entrance fees, the Library, take in *will* give back to the city in the form of scholarships or something of that nature.

The library "intersects with the world in theology, medicine, women's leadership, business management, journalism, the arts, and God knows what else." Ginny Harris. This is to meet the need in the current "intellectual ferment."

The Library will stand alone as a legal, financial separate entity. It is created under the Manual provision for "trusts and syndicates." The historical collection will be a collection on "loan" from The Mother Church and will be used however deemed appropriate by the Library.

Committee Analysis: There seems to be such a need to have other^s agree with us - to validate our position - to give us recognition. It would appear that we don't have a strong comfort level with who we are and what our mission is. That we don't understand our own worth or power. We need to come to terms with this and gain a quiet strength and sureness of our place -- of our expertise, of our own treasures.

GH spoke of the hunger for this personality. But shouldn't we be realizing that man should have hunger and thirst after righteousness...and see *that* fulfilled.

D. Wilson spoke of the consulting board being in agreement that we need a living institution rather than just a record of the written materials. But that is exactly what Mrs.

Eddy gave us in her definition of Church. We do have that living institution...and we have the written word in her textbook.

The bottom line seems to boil down to one question -- do we need something more than what our Leader already gave us?

It seems obvious that the Library will be the hotbed of focus, attention, funding, activity and effort. Speculation ran high as to whether or not having this library will allow Ginny Harris to host the Mind, Body, Spirit conferences. She's hired Weinstein, the "pre-eminent historian in the US" to write the next biography of MBE -- "The light and life of Mary Baker Eddy."

It's a sad statement to suggest that NOW we will know what Mrs. Eddy accomplished because now we can read all that she ever wrote. That, prior to this library, we have not truly known what she accomplished.

In the opening lines of Adam Dickey's Memoirs of Mary Baker Eddy, he says that Mrs. Eddy had a "strong aversion of having her private life spread before the public." And he quotes her in one part as having said, "This is a dark hour for the Cause. And I'm not sure you are awake to it." He said she was afraid for her Church and what it would have to meet in order to survive and succeed. I believe we are now in the midst of what she saw and made her afraid for her church. This is a dark hour for the Cause.

There is a rush to abandon spiritual means and the current form of the church designed by Mrs. Eddy. Why? Because mortal mind suggests it has not worked. It is not working.

Ginny Harris expects the public, the potential partners, the press to accept all of this with open arms and embrace and accept Mrs. Eddy for who she was and who she is. But will they? Will they accept her as the revelator to this age? Will they accept her as Leader? Will they accept her book as final revelation?

Mrs. Eddy had terrific problems with the press when she was with us. Why should we expect an easy entree with them now? What has changed?

Sunday -- General Session -- Afternoon

Opened by Ginny Harris asking the question: "What is the significance of the year 2000?"

"This will be the year when future CSsts look back and say, "That's the year it began. That's the year we turned things around. That's the year it all changed!"

Then Ginny said, "When I think about the scope of what I just said, it gives me shivers. What is our legacy!?? We need to meet the needs of today."

We then were introduced to Carol Hole who took us on a stroll down memory lane with all the different editions of *Science and Health*. Eventually the point was made that there have been quite a few versions when we were obedient to "keeping abreast of the times."

There have been more than 400 editions of S&H. These different editions are now called "expressions of the edition." (Strange use of the word but it was continually used during the afternoon.) As Carol showed us the different versions, she made fun of some of them. A very sad thing. It was not professional or done with reverence.

The new approach to S&H is that it be flexible, user friendly and accessible. Therefore we have reached certain positions: There is now a \$10 threshold for the book. We have come up with "the life-companioning" version for \$9.95. This will be a smaller edition of the Trade Edition -- so that people don't think you are trying to convert them when you sell them the copy.

We can order a printing and have it in hand in *one week's time now*. We can get a press run for as little as 100,000 copies.

The bookstores have asked for a "hardback" version of the book and so we are now printing a hardback version of the Trade edition and have decided to publish a companioning Bible to match it.

We will also be printing a leather version of the Trade Edition and matching Bible. In fact, the only versions we will *now be printing will be the Trade Edition*. No other editions will be printed from here on out.

All editions will have the index. It has been modified. It is now expanded. There are more words, more proper names; it is easier to use.

The publisher's note will now be moved from the front of the book to just before the *index* in the back of the book. It will also appear on the back cover and on the jacket flaps.

The exclusive gift sent to only members, is a special gift edition of S&H and is a way to thank each member for their participation and support and is a way to reconnect us to

TMC. The response card inserts are the "new chapter on Fruitage." (Though this was later clarified to assure us that they are not replacing the current chapter on Fruitage.)

Ginny Harris came back to the podium and announced that we were all being given our own copy of the new "life-companioning" version of the Trade edition. She picked up the book and started waving it over her head. As people were given their books, they joined the wave and eventually the room will silently filled with people following Ginny in waving their trade editions. (It was very spooky.)

"So, where are we headed? Keeping abreast of the times? There are 333 million people using the Web. There are 304 million sites. 25% of the Web users are seeking religious sites.

We need to be there. People are "exploring practical spirituality." And so, we are launching a Science & Health Web site in late September. The web site will continue to change as we see different ways in which S&H can answer the need for these seekers. This is our way to respond to humanity's spiritual search.

On the bottom back of the new trade edition is the following statement:

"For more information and to connect with a community of readers exploring practical spirituality, visit www.S&H.com -- an online companion to this book."

We have hired a web designer and she has put together a team. Ginny spoke of leaving our footprints in the sand with this new web page. The wallpaper of the web page is footprints in the sand on a beach....

The Web page designer spoke for about one hour regarding the layout and design of the web site.

"We are now not writing for the periodicals. We will now be writing for the seekers."

There will be perhaps 12 to 15 links on the Web site. One will be articles for the site. Some will be articles adapted from the periodicals but others will be strictly written for just the web site. (Is the web site being treated as a new periodical? No. Nor is it being wrapped into any of the current periodicals. It is to stand-alone.)

Other links on the web site:

- A store
- Places to go
- Spirituality
- Finances
- Wellness
- Relationships

- Places to Go continued
- Self-Identity
- Careers
- Current Events
- Lectures (3 minutes long)
- Book overview (synopsis of each chapter)
- Chat room with other readers of S&H
- Bible Lesson Sermon (though not the best place to read the daily lesson so the reader will be linked to the store where he can purchase the "booklet")
- Thought for the day (a place where you can get a quote for the day from S&H)
- Testimonials (from other readers – their bios and stories)
- S&H in its entirety
- to events in the seekers' community ("The seeker, in the virtual community, needs to relate to the physical community" so they will have links to 'events' in their community –i.e. bookstore talks, conferences, booths, etc.) (Interesting note: the seeker will not be linked to a branch church in their community, nor to a reading room in their community.)

"This new web site is a place to go to, to think rightly." "Imagine the seeker driving through their commute – it's a tough one and they end up very frustrated and upset by the commute. Right now, they go in to their office and begin work without any comfort. But in September, they will go through a tough commute, end up very frustrated and go in to their office, flip on their computer and be able to go to the Quote for the Day and find comfort. They will have the ability to think rightly.

If a user wants to, they can sign up for daily thought email...they will then just open up their email and there will be their thought for a day – straight from S&H.

"We are standing on your shoulders. We are building on what you have done."

The Web site will offer comfort when folks need it – our Reading Rooms are not always open.

TMC expects open reception with increased availability and publicity.

At the conclusion of the slide show and questions, we were all given a baseball cap with the words "seeking practical spirituality" embroidered on it as well as the trade edition image embroidered with Science & Health....(with Key to the Scriptures indefinable) Ginny picked up her cap and started the wave again. Approximately 314 others picked up their caps and joined the wave. (Spooky.)

Committee Analysis:

Having Science & Health on the Web is probably a good idea.

But why are we not linking the reader with Church? Why leave the local community branch churches out of the loop?

Under what authority are the articles being written? Why are we not placing the articles, the testimonies, and the daily lesson sermon all under their rightful Manual authority? That's where the protection to the Cause and to the seeker, lies. There are proper checks and balances in the Manual. They seem to be lacking. The necessary wisdom and balance in the human organization seem to be falling away in the rush to use human ways and means so that we can be counted in the players on the web. The word "urgency" was used in wanting and needing to be on the web. Not sure that is the reason to do this is this way.

Monday and Tuesday Sessions – Break out for Committees, Break out for regional teams and some general sessions reporting back to the whole.

The basic points already made were tested in the private break out sessions by having each group work up business goals in tangible, measurable terms – i.e. how many S&Hs will you give out during the next 6 months. How many newspaper articles will you write? Etc.

The method of defining what I will do for the seeker in the next 6 months was challenging when I felt the goals were all wrong. The one public offering I made during this first conference for my committee work was to say, "During the next 6 months, I will take something in my individual experience and heal it so that I can fulfill the Manual by-law where Mrs. Eddy says, "by [my] individual practice I will demonstrate that Christian Science heals the sick quickly and wholly, thus proving this Science to be all that [I] claim for it...as stated in Science & Health."

This goal was not mentioned in the report back to the general assembly. Apparently, it didn't meet the criteria called for.

At a regional meeting of the new team (CoP, RR Reps, Pub Reps, S&H Coordinators, Lecturers) I was specifically asked -- "since you would know from your practice" who are the folks who are resistant to this new approach and who is for the new approach?

I tap danced and spoke to the fact that my practice is not a regional one but is drawn from all over the country and there was no way I could give that kind of information.

Then I was asked, "well, but you are the CoP, so you would know which branch churches are pro Mother church and which branches are resistant. So, tell us."

Again, I tap danced and said, "Well, I'm the new kid on the block and I don't have a clue."

I was horrified (silently and without facial expression) that this was the attitude toward the field -- towards the branch churches and their right to govern themselves and serve their communities in their own prayerful way.

The zealots are ready to by-pass those who stonewall them in the branch churches...they want the CoPs to help them.... And the CoP from Connecticut said, "well, if you are having trouble with someone in the churches in my territory, just call me. I can help you get around them... or get them to change their tune."

Others wanted to know if they could enlist non-members to help staff the booths at conferences and fairs. Of course! was the answer. There are untapped helpers out there who are on fire about the book. They are the ones we need. If the branch churches won't take up the call to host a book-talk, host a lecture, host a booth, call the S&H coordinator. The coordinator has the best overview of the territory and knows which churches will be willing to do the work and if not, the coordinator has the authority to go to individual members and have them do the work. They don't have to be branch church members. It doesn't have to be done inside the parameter of the branch church work. There are no holes barred now.

Reading rooms are now being encouraged to have their own budgets separate from the branch church so that they can act without the express permission of their branch church boards or memberships. They want the reading rooms to be accountable and obedient to the S&H coordinators in practice though in theory the branches are distinctly democratic.

It would appear as though TMC has written off the field, written off branch churches as ineffective and unnecessary. They don't have the vision, they don't get it, they are resistant and so they are being left behind.

This attitude coupled with the specific charge to "get the church off the book" seems to indicate the demise of our church as Mrs. Eddy set it up.

[A brief report by "another concerned Mother Church member who was invited to and attended the Houston meeting]

The following quote I found helpful in alerting us to today's situation. Peel writes in *Years of Trial*, page 228:

"If Christian Science was to become a term that would mean whatever any ambitious claimant wanted it to mean, then truth would again be lost through dismemberment, perversion, fraud, and sheer trivialization."

The six-day Houston conference leaves me very concerned for our movement...this is a very dark hour for our cause! There is much to say on the disturbing developments that meeting brought forth. There appears to be a new thrust to control the field more tightly than ever before. And this will be taking place through a newly designed Church format.

Those present were told that CoPs talking to the branch churches is not specifically outlined in the Manual and therefore they are no longer "allowed" to talk with the churches. That, they say, really falls under branch church work and so the local branch church member should be doing that. They are supposed to tell their Assistant Committees what to say but they themselves are not to be the ones to say it.

On the other hand, there are all sorts of newly fashioned and appointed Field workers, or coordinators (for Reading Rooms, Lecture work, Sunday School, etc.), who are authorized to talk, encourage, coach, train and lead the Field to participate in events that couple the seeker and the book. However, none of these workers are even remotely outlined or specified in the Manual. Selective definition here seems to be the *modus operandi*.

There were approximately 320 folks at the conference in Houston -- 53 CoPs and 27 lecturers. The rest were either staff (approximately 67) or these new coordinators and representatives -- about 175 players not based in the Manual.

They never talked about God or divine Mind's plan for our movement, or what it takes to truly follow the Master, or what it takes to be obedient to Mrs. Eddy, handle m.a.m., and heal. That was amazing to me!

The ultimate blow at this "historic" conference, put on by the publisher of the Writings of Mary Baker Eddy, was the incredibly blatant attempt to separate the discovery of Christian Science from its founding. Today we are discussing the discovery of the Science, but we won't broach the subject of the church she founded. Anything but church seems to be the code. There were repeated directions to "get the church or denomination off the book."

When they launch the website for S&H, it will not link the seeker with a local church or reading room but rather to other seekers in the website chat room or at local events.



I'm hoping that the Field (which has been largely written off as resistant or incapable) will rise to the occasion and demand that the Directors speak with and hear from those whose voices are properly raised -- according to the Manual. Those in Boston feel they have the vision and know what is best for the Field and for the world. And if the Field won't go along, the Field will just be pushed aside and left behind as Boston marches forward into areas that belong to the branches. The Field must take up the cause and meet the demands in their own field of labor and not let the TMC run them over.

The Field needs Mother Love. I'm learning to be very grateful that as hymn 258 puts it: "And behind the dim unknown standeth God within the shadows keeping watch above [Her] own."

My own conclusion regarding the overwhelmingly troubling conference is to heal. Be better at it, be more disciplined, more loving. To get on with healing.

And with specific prayer for Church in accord with the great wisdom of our Leader's definition of Church in the Glossary of Science and Health.

[Another concerned Mother Church member who was invited to and attended the Houston meeting]