

Mr. Young
Goes to Boston

by
Alan Young

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Dedication

To Ambassador Howard Jones for his
friendship and support during my stay
in Boston. As a Trustee of the Publish-
ing Society he upheld the dignity and
importance of this once vital office.

He knew his Leader's wishes
and obeyed them.



Acknowledgements

I shall always remember the patient understanding of my wife Virginia and daughter Wendy. They packed up our home and moved to Boston with me at a time which was most trying for both of them, and stuck it out.

My gratitude and thanks to Helen M. Wright for her inspiration and enthusiasm in requesting me to turn my written reminiscences into this book, and to David L. Keyston who first read my manuscript and persuaded me to publish it; his help and encouragement have been a blessing. Special thanks to Elizabeth Zwick for her judicious editing, gentle hints and superb artwork. What a team!

My alphabetical gratitude also to: Cindy Adams, Ann Beals, Peggy M. Brook, the Christian Science Research Library, Cambridge, England, Max Kappeler, and Rare Book Company.



Contents

Important Note	vii
Foreward	1

PART ONE - Alan in Wonderland

Chapter One— <i>“Next time I’ll stay in the frying pan!”</i>	4
Chapter Two— <i>“If we’re not going in circles how come we’ve passed ‘Boardwalk’ six times?”</i>	14
Chapter Three— <i>“Respect your enemies. They will prove more consistent than your friends.”</i>	26
Chapter Four — <i>“We didn’t invite you to the meeting because things go smoother when nobody has any actual knowledge.”</i>	31
Chapter Five— <i>“Whatever stands by doubtful means or measures will fall, and let us see that we are not buried in the ruins.”</i>	35
Chapter Six— <i>“A man is accepted into a church for what he believes and he is turned out for what he knows.”</i> - Mark Twain	40
Chapter Seven— <i>“A church in union with human governments is an apostate.”</i>	58

PART TWO - 25 Years Later: Boston Revisited

Chapter Eight— <i>Which came first—the big church or the “little book?”</i>	80
Chapter Nine— <i>Mary Baker Eddy: Her “Pleasant View” and Infinite Vision</i>	106



AN IMPORTANT NOTE

By the Publisher

Alan Young is known and beloved the world over, having earned widespread acclaim in his professional acting career in television and movies. As a past Christian Science lecturer he is also well loved for his inspired and timely talks on a variety of spiritual topics. In this little book, written in the 1970s but never before published, he relates his experiences with the Christian Science Board of Directors and the Boston-based Mother Church organization.

First as Director of Communications for the Mother Church from 1968 to 1971, and then as a Christian Science lecturer, Alan Young was engaged in a gentle but determined crusade to further the teachings of the Second Coming of the Christ, as found in the writings of Mary Baker Eddy, who fulfilled Jesus' promise and prophecy to bring the "Comforter."

Alan's innocence, optimism and dedicated persistence in trying to serve his beloved Leader shine forth in this powerful story, as he tells with pathos and humor of his struggle with the Christian Science officialdom, and describes his fruitless efforts to help the church organization use *modern* means and methods to "go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature."

This is a tale of idealism and frustration. In the years that Alan Young was Director of Communications, whenever there was a decision to be made which took courage he always faced the issue, no matter how unpleasant or unpopular it might be, and insisted that Boston make the right decision. Unfortunately the hierarchy rarely did. As this narrative shows, Mr. Young was not alone in facing this dilemma. Everywhere he

found talented and dedicated Christian Scientists eager to move forward, only to be knocked back time after time, and left stranded in the bureaucratic mire.

Alan Young's sad story brings to mind Mrs. Eddy's encouraging words to her beloved student, Ira O. Knapp, when he came to her with a tale of woe because he had met with only negative responses to his spiritual insights. "When you have tasted gall and wormwood," she said, "you will be ready for manna." If Mrs. Eddy were here today she would surely say the same to Alan Young.

It is heartening that in spite of all the wormwood and gall he met with from the ecclesiastical hierarchy in Boston, Alan Young never lost his capacity to smile and laugh, especially at himself, and to inspire others with his extraordinary warmth and kindness. What a devastating loss, that the Field was deprived of his talent, first as Communications Director, with his energy and know-how, and second as a lecturer who would have continued to draw thousands.

Why did it happen?

The difficulties Alan Young experienced with the Board of Directors and the Mother Church ecclesiastical hierarchy begin to make sense when we realize that this whole governing structure is maintaining its position *in utter defiance of Mary Baker Eddy and her Manual estoppels*. (See *Manual* p. 26, "Directors.")

These estoppels include a By-Law which, if obeyed, would have terminated the five-member Board of Directors at Mrs. Eddy's passing. Before she left us the Directors had repeatedly petitioned her to change this *Manual* By-Law which would topple them. Each time she told them that estoppel was "dictated by God" and she could "not change what God had dictated." Nevertheless, at her passing in December, 1910, instead of an-

nouncing to the world that Mrs. Eddy's *Church Manual* required the dissolution of the Boston Mother Church organization, the *Manual*-terminated Board of Directors told the press **THEY were Mrs. Eddy's successor.**

This 1910 take-over by the five-member Board of Directors was the quickest, quietest, most invisible, and mentally violent maneuver in all history. Even today, few Christian Scientists are aware of its insidious implications, as can be seen by Alan Young's account of how he and many of the most loyal students of Christian Science tried desperately to work with the Board, as though they actually *were* Mrs. Eddy's successor.

The experiences related in these pages should make us all pay more attention to the importance of a conversation between our beloved Leader, Mary Baker Eddy, and her student, Frances Thurber Seal, as reported by members of New York City's Fifteenth Church:

In a talk given on October 15, 1931, at Fifteenth Church of Christ, Scientist, New York City, Mrs. Frances Thurber Seal told of Mrs. Eddy confiding in her concerning the finishing touches she was putting on the *Church Manual* and how it was the most important work of her life since finishing Science and Health because it included the provisions for the termination of the government of the Mother Church.

Mrs. Eddy told Mrs. Seal that after more than thirty years of demonstration and constant study of her revelation, as a final culminating step she had shut herself away from the world and spent months in silent communion with God in order to bring forth this conception of

church government. She said the *Church Manual* [with its estoppels] was equally necessary to what was in Science and Health. It was the completion of the government of the Mother Church. Mrs. Seal said, "I can still see the look of far away vision as Mrs. Eddy said, 'When it is completed it will be the most perfect form of government the world has ever seen.' Then after a long pause, she continued, 'And the world will not be able to see it for a long time to come.'"

In *My. 230:1* Mrs. Eddy states, "Notwithstanding the sacrilegious moth of time, eternity awaits our *Church Manual*, which will maintain its rank as in the past, amid ministries aggressive and active, and will stand when those have passed to rest."

In the caricature of today's Christian Science, the misguided seeker is striving to be one with Mary Baker Eddy's great revelation and, at the same time, one with the ecclesiastical authority of the Board of Directors, unaware that material organization, while requisite in the beginning of one's journey Spiritward, tends to impede spiritual growth once the early lessons are outgrown. How many unsung heroes are floundering in this trap?

Mr. Young's book is saying to us "Choose ye this day whom ye will serve." Humanity is today at an historic turning point. Ecclesiasticism continues to dictate to us, even telling us what we can and cannot read. Isn't it time for us "heroes" to awaken to our newly (but forever) empowered and emboldened sense that the teachings of Christian Science have given us? Alan Young brings forth good reasons to do just this in his book.

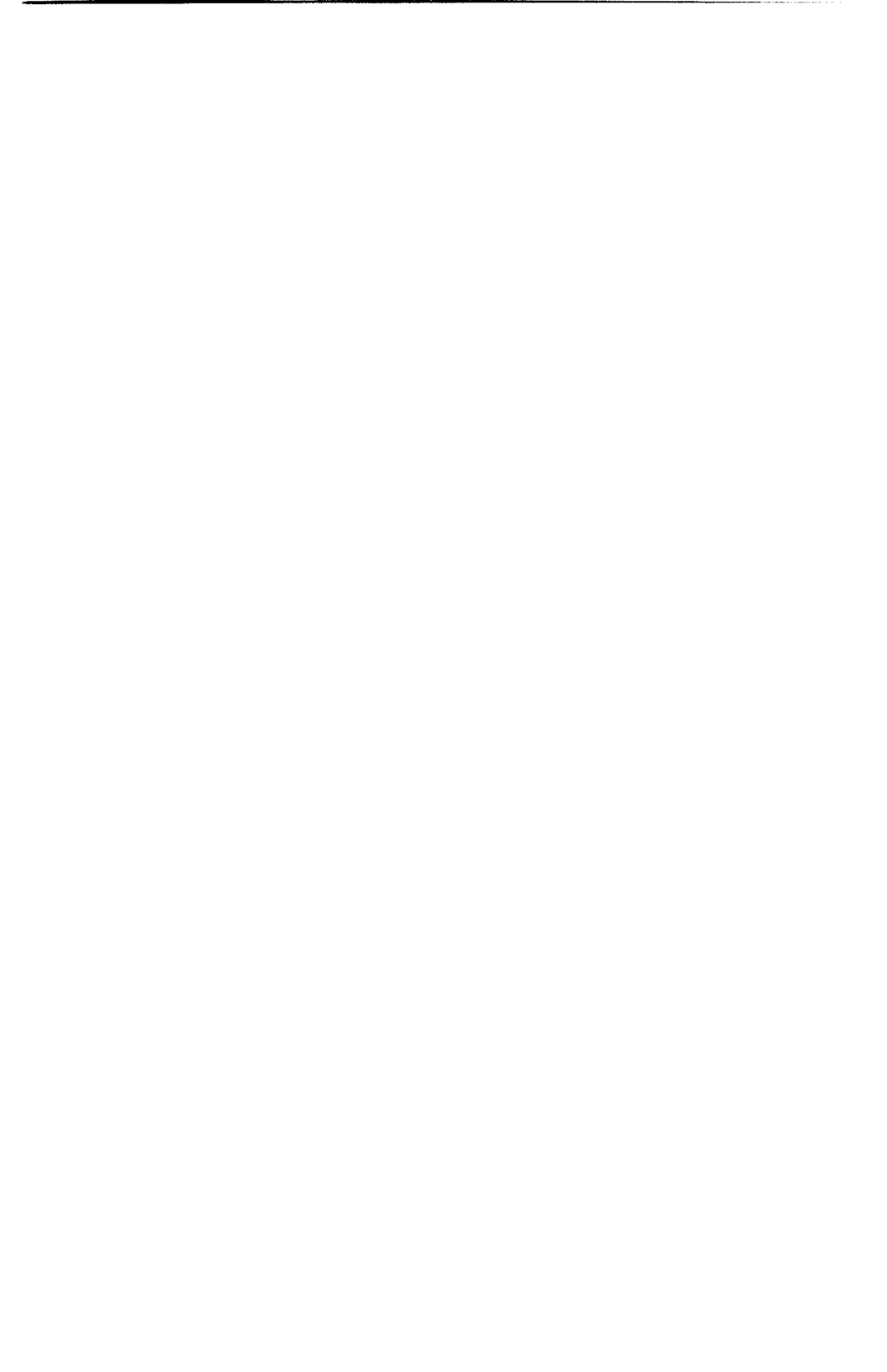
What has Mary Baker Eddy's teaching to do with

five mortals in Boston who call themselves (in a *Journal* article) “the tender guardians in our journey heavenward”?! Are not the Bible and our Leader’s writings our “tender guardians” today?

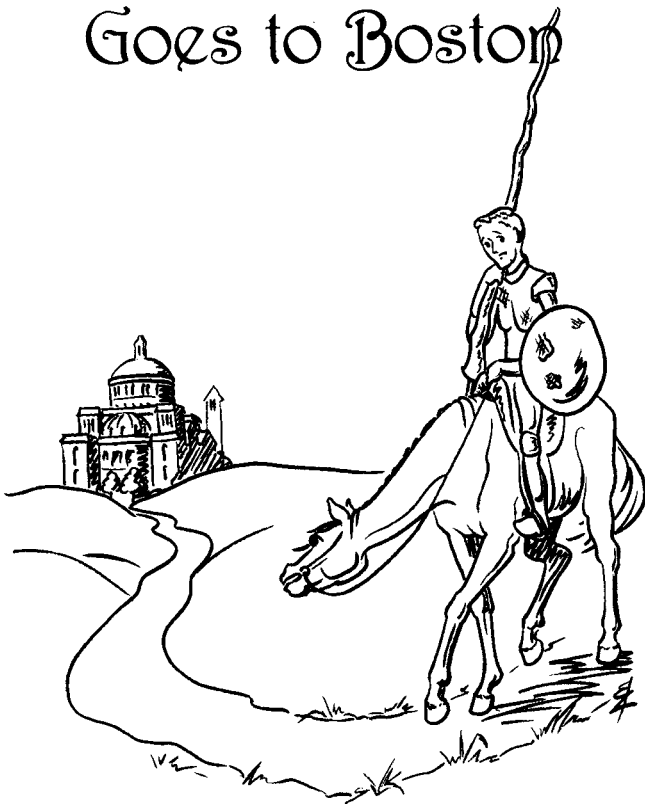
Mr. Young’s story, coming at this time in the history of the Christian Science movement, seems to have been written with a jack hammer, so revealing is its message of what has gone wrong in Boston and in the Christian Science movement. His experience shows clearly where the difficulty lies. There must be a radical change, a washing away of the terror which the illegitimate Board of Directors still strikes to the heart of those who love and revere their Leader, and who want to work to spread her message to all the world.

Alan Young’s is a riveting and tragic story, but it is told with great love. Saddened as he is by the disobedience of the Manual-terminated 5 member Board of Directors, and the difficulties this situation is causing well-intentioned Christian Scientists, Alan is not writing out of anger. He is not seeking to overturn the establishment, which he and many others see collapsing under its own weight. Neither is he seeking to prop it up. Rather, he is writing for the spiritually-minded, for “the remnant” that Isaiah prophesied “would be few and very feeble.” He is writing for those who love Mary Baker Eddy and want to cure what went awry. This book is a gentle and loving call to set aside rigid dogma and cherished differences and to take action in love, together and individually, to meet real needs here and now, and, in full obedience to our beloved Leader’s directives, to build the true Church—“the structure of Truth and Love [as our forever consciousness]” (S&H 583:12)—“the kingdom of God within you” which is The Church Universal and Triumphant. *Helen M. Wright*





Mr. Young Goes to Boston





FOREWORD

Other religionists are always amazed when they learn that Christian Science church members have no informational avenues through which we may learn what is actually taking place in the Church that we are supporting. They can't believe that we have no communication set-up to express a vote in the negative or even voice an opinion on what the church should or should not be doing. Yet we express great pride and joy at being a totally democratic organization!

When I was called to Boston in 1968 to become Director of Communications, I hoped to remedy this situation. This is the story of my experiences.

For those readers who are new to Christian Science, a little background might be useful. When people think of Christian Science they probably think of healing, or perhaps they have read the Christian Science Monitor, or recall having noticed one of the thousands of branch churches and reading rooms scattered throughout the world. To understand this story it helps to know that all this activity is closely monitored by the "Mother Church," a vast Boston-based organization which is headed by a five member "Board of Directors" and includes numerous departments and committees, including the powerful "Committee on Publication" or "C.O.P." (There are also state-based Committees on Publication which commonly use the same acronym. To avoid confusion in these pages I will write their names out in full and reserve "C.O.P." for the Boston-based committee.)

This book is written in the hope that readers will, with an open mind, research the pertinent facts herein. If it results in any sort of awakening then the book has done its job. I do not seek agreement nor disagreement.

This is an account of what happened. It is not my personal opinion.

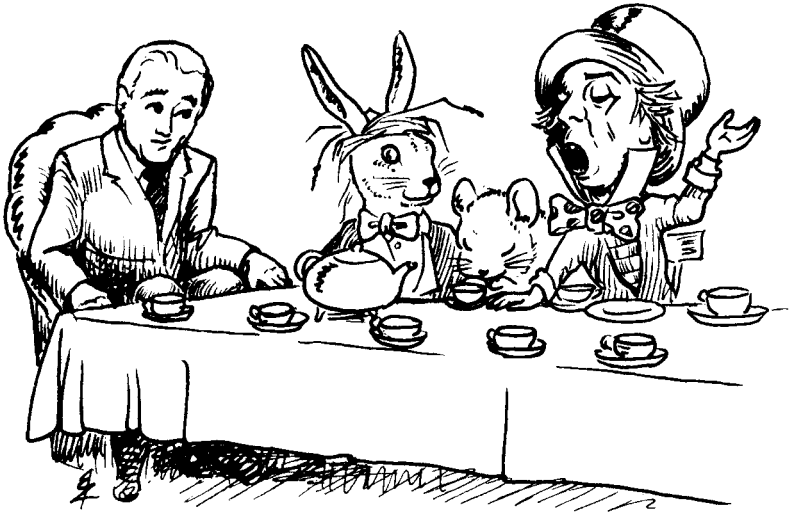
I have deliberately left out the names of many individuals, specifically those who helped me so greatly. If they wish they can volunteer verification. If they say anything I'm sure it will be that I have been guilty of understatement.

If I may be permitted one small individual hope, perhaps this book will inform some who may be interested that I am still a grateful, sincere student of Christian Science. It is a sad comment on our church upbringing that when anyone voices a different opinion from that of the Christian Science Church ecclesiastical hierarchy it is immediately assumed that he has stopped studying Christian Science! Hopefully I have stopped studying and obeying *people* and can better follow my *Leader* as I continue to find her in her writings.



Part I

Alan in Wonderland



CHAPTER ONE

"Next time I'll stay in the frying pan!"

In 1968 I quit show business. I'd been in it from the age of thirteen. I had saved my money—not a lot, but enough to get by. Everything was paid up. I had the Los Angeles Times until 1995 and I'd get Sparkletts Water for eight years. What more do you need?

This was not a sudden decision. In the middle of the Mister Ed series I said to myself (the horse would never listen): "Alan, you've had a good life since you came to America. You had your own radio show, made movies, wrote and starred in your own television show. Now what are you going to do when you finish this series?"

"Are you talking to me?" the horse asked.

"No, just thinking out loud," I said.

The truth is, my mind was made up.

My course had been set years before when a stranger knocked at the door of a chilly shack in British Columbia. When my family arrived in Canada from Great Britain the only place Dad could afford was a converted garage in the woods near Vancouver, Canada. Dad was unemployed. Mother suffered from agonizing migraine headaches. I had been diagnosed as anemic and had chronic asthma which had me bedridden much of the time. When we could afford a doctor he could provide only temporary relief. Although my sister was still healthy, living in that drafty, unheated building left us all pretty miserable.

A Christian Scientist living in a nearby town heard of our plight. She took a bus to the end of the line, then walked for three miles and located our shack. She sat and talked with my mother for a while, left her

a copy of Science & Health and hiked back. This she did twice.

She brought more than words and a book. She brought love. In a short time Mother and I were healed and Dad found employment. I don't recall exactly when Mother's healing took place, though I know it did. My healing came almost overnight and within a few days I began taking part in strenuous sports. We all became Christian Scientists, and my sister, who witnessed all this, became the most faithful Christian Scientist of the group!

When medical science has no cure for an individual's malady and the healing comes through Christian Science, as was the case in my family's experience, then the natural result is a deep desire to help others to find release from physical woe. All through show business I had planned that some day I would enter the blessed occupation of Christian Science practitioner, and in 1963 it finally happened. People began calling me for help and it seemed that was to be my second career.

Devoting myself full time to the service of Christian Science seemed like a natural next step. As a life long Christian Scientist and an immigrant who had "made good" in the United States, I had always felt profound gratitude for my faith and my adopted country. It had long been my desire to change to an occupation where I could spend 100% of the time sowing something good back into this land.

Politics was out. A naturalized citizen could never be President, and the ham always has to try for the top. Also, I could never figure out the difference between Democrats and Republicans. In any case politics is no place for a professional comic. Competition from the amateurs is too fierce.

The very thought of the political arena with its

intrigues, back-biting and game-playing turned me cold. I decided to work in the pure atmosphere of religion.

Little did I know!

If I had studied the lives of independent religionists a little more I'd have seen that there's only one thing more brutal than throwing a Christian to the lions, and that's throwing a lion to the Christians.

The difficulty is, by the time sincerity has been sifted through the sieve of organization and administration, it has often lost its inspiration. Most professional religionists are happy to guarantee our eternal future if we will pay for their temporal one, and when finance enters the door fidelity goes out the window.

Full coffers are the harbingers of empty hearts. Too many people aim to make a living out of religion rather than make a loving out of it. Jesus must have been trying to tell us this when he hired Judas Iscariot as the disciples' bookkeeper. "The treasury is the office through which the crucifiers will come," he might be saying.

This does not imply an evil intent. It just turns out that way. Bureaucracy, like a pregnant woman, is going to grow bigger no matter what the weather. Religious bureaucracy, even in Christian Science, as I would quickly discover, consists of the usual administrative entanglements, the maze known as "administrology"—"administration for the sake of administration." Or, one might say, "A chicken is only an egg's way of making another egg."

I shouldn't have been surprised. Organized religions have always developed into big business. Today it seems to include franchises! Nobody doubts the sincerity of the various proponents, but perhaps their taste could be more considered. On television many cable channels look like evangelistic Gong Shows; some church headquarters sound more like theme parks. If

God's power is so slight that it needs threats and implications of doom to assist it and grandiose church centers to house and administrate His word, then maybe Church and State are melding quicker than we thought.

That would explain all the committees! Does God really need that sort of help to communicate with us? It wasn't a committee that spoke to Moses out of the burning bush. If the Sermon on the Mount had been written by a committee, it would have been called Leviticus.

From what I've seen, these tactics don't really work for churches, either. Denominational outreach is often like a moon probe. Most of the money is spent for the staff and the launch pad. You rarely see anything land.

Of course, my own church puts no emphasis on the size of the congregation, especially if it's small. But I notice that God gets a lot more credit if it's a full house.

Bertrand Russell said, "Christian humility is preached by the clergy, but practiced only by the lower classes." The following chronology of events is not meant to be critical but factual. I trust I'll be as hard on myself as I may appear to be on others. When you're working in your Leader's "home" you must, like Caesar's wife, "be above suspicion."

A Call

My active association with the Mother Church organization began one afternoon in 1963 with a phone call from Cindy Adams. Cindy was then a newscaster with the ABC network operating out of New York. She told me the program department was allow-



ing her to present an hour long interview on the subject of Christian Science. It was her plan to interview various celebrities who were students of this religion. I agreed, of course, and she promised to get back to me as soon as she had her cast set.

An hour or so later the phone rang. "Do you know an 'S.P.' in the C.O.P.?" she asked.

"No," I answered. "I know an R.F.N. in the G.O.P. Does that help?"

There was a pause on the phone.

"Nice try," she commented, "But I happen to be married to comedian Joey Adams, of whom you may have heard."

I had heard. Joey had been appointed Ambassador of Goodwill by President Kennedy and was touring the world in that capacity.

"Tell me more about this 'S.P.' in the 'C.O.P.,'" I said. I was beginning to get tired of these initials.

"Well, I thought you might know him," she continued, "because this man [Allison "Skip" Phinney] had the nerve to say that the interview sounded fine, but he didn't feel that an actor belonged in an interview on Christian Science."

"After the show he may prove to be right," I said. "But what is your reaction?"

Cindy has a sharp mind and a tongue which could clip a hedge. Her reply was instantaneous. "I said to him, 'Listen Buster, if Alan Young doesn't do the show then we don't put the show on, and the Church has lost another opportunity to be heard from.'"

The show was scheduled. The C.O.P.—the Committee on Publication of the Christian Science Mother Church—decided to have the panel include Erwin Canham, then Editor Emeritus of the *Christian Science Monitor*; Robert Peel, consultant for the C.O.P.; Mrs. Z.

Wasson, CSB, a Christian Science teacher from St. Louis; and myself. We were called to Boston by David Sleeper, C.O.P. manager, two days before the scheduled interview in New York. The atmosphere was rather tense, as this was the first time an interview of this magnitude had ever occurred in the experience of the Mother Church officials.

We met for an hour or so to discuss the possibilities and areas of the questions, and to try to rehearse or at least prepare our answers. I was most impressed with the attitude of those taking part. They were relaxed, and delighted with the opportunity. I was particularly pleased to become a little closer to Erwin Canham, who confided that he really felt we should try almost anything that would shoot a little excitement into the *Christian Science Monitor*.

"How about a gossip column?" I asked facetiously.

He looked at me with a twinkle. "Do you know, if we felt that might do it, we'd try," he answered. "We've certainly thought about it."

The show went off quite well. The questions were fairly asked and thoughtfully answered. When the program was reviewed in the weekly *Variety*—a trade paper which reports and critiques each and every new show as it appears—they said, "religious programming could take a tip from the Christian Science show...."

Even the non-Science reporters at the station were impressed. At a party after the show individuals questioned me for hours about Christian Science and its application to daily life. What a good communication!

Some astute individuals at the Mother Church decided to make prints of the program and release it to the branch churches for viewing and possible re-release

on local stations. Brochures were printed and it looked as though we were going to have an up-to-date Christian Science communication vehicle to put us into the Twentieth Century. We waited for the release. And we waited. Finally I called Cindy.

"They've scrapped it," she said. "They decided that somebody on the show—I think it was Canham—said something that wasn't absolutely metaphysical."

For some reason I ended up with a print of the program. I've played it over many times and whatever was said that is not absolute metaphysics is covered by the genuine enthusiasm of four Christian Scientists who voice the joy and confidence of those who have, in a small way, put into practice this precious, practical, saving Truth.

Yet a committee decision shelved, not a *great* achievement, but a fine little step forward. This should have given me a hint of what was in store.

A Hollywood Connection?

In hind sight I can see that there were plenty of hints. Some months later I received a letter from the Manager of the C.O.P. He said they were earnestly seeking for a new kind of television program which would explain Christian Science to the world. He and his assistant would be coming out to Hollywood, and he hoped I might be able to set up some appointments with various production people who might be able to help. He said they were willing to try *anything*, even animation, to get the message across.

I set up a meeting at my home with one of Walt Disney's top animators, together with a man acknowledged to be one of the best production managers in Hollywood and also a top assistant director. All three were capable of giving a cost break-down on any production Boston might have in mind, and all three were

sincere students of Christian Science.

The C.O.P. men voiced vague ideas and admirable ambitions concerning the type of production they had in mind. "What are we describing in terms of cost?" they then asked.

Without specific script demands it was difficult for the experts to give a penny-close estimate, but they presented a reasonable "ball-park" figure with which all seemed to agree. My limited production knowledge accepted their estimate as proper for that day's market. The estimate for a half-hour program came to about thirty to thirty-five thousand dollars.

The shocked expression on our visitors' faces indicated the meeting was over. "We were thinking in the area of eight thousand dollars," one of them finally said.

"You couldn't make a commercial for that type of money," explained the production manager kindly. And the discussion was closed.

However, none of us Hollywood professionals was discouraged. We knew that ultimately, just as Mrs. Eddy had availed herself of the most up-to-date means of communication, so must we. I know that our friends from Boston were still thinking of the possibilities of modern methods. We, living near the heart of communication development, knew it could, it must be undertaken.

From time to time many of us would receive calls from various departments in the Mother Church asking us to help out in advertising campaigns, sales slide-films, etc. We did it gratis and gratefully. In fact, one member of our branch church who owns one of the largest sound studios in Hollywood said to me, "Why doesn't the Mother Church ask me to help out sometime? I have every religion in town availing themselves of my services for no payment. How I'd love to do

something for my own Church!" To this day I don't think anyone has asked for her assistance.

A Day I Shall Never Forget

In 1967 the Mr. Ed show ended and I seized the opportunity to enter the public practice of Christian Science. Since 1963 I had been helping people who called me, but it was on an informal, word of mouth basis. Now I opened an office and was listed in the *Journal* as a practitioner, preparing to devote myself to this work full time.

A little later that year I received a phone call from an individual in New York who said that he was a member of a newly-formed committee called (as I remember) the Communications Advisory Committee for the Mother Church. It was comprised of men who were acknowledged as tops in their fields: marketing, promotion, communication, publication, etc. The only one I recognized was a man who was one of the editors of *TV Guide*—not a bad advisor in the field of communication.

Though these men were all sincere students of Christian Science they did not work for the Mother Church, but were offering their service and expertise to aid the Directors in forming a Communications Department for the Mother Church. From time to time they would correspond with me and many other individuals who had some knowledge of communications, and in this way they put together a pattern for a general approach to promoting Christian Science to the world.

Then came the day I shall never forget. My family and I had moved to a delightful home facing the Pacific Ocean. Our boat was tied up—pardon me —“moored”—at our little dock. As I was securing the lines on the boat the telephone rang. As all practitioners do, I hurried to answer.

I was greeted by a gentleman named Bob McLaughlin, the chairman of the Communications Advisory Committee. He told me they had made final recommendations to the Board of Directors of the Mother Church. They had advised, and the Board accepted the suggestion, that the Church must have a communication department, a division which could unify all of the information and communication emanating from the Mother Church.

“Good stuff,” I said. “Now where do you go?”

“We’re looking for an individual to head this all up,” he said. “This kind of individual is hard to find. He has to have an ability to write, to communicate, and administrate, and he must be a Christian Science practitioner. Got any ideas?”



The reason I mentioned my boat, the ocean, etc. was to indicate that, frankly, I was very happy with the life my family and I were enjoying. However, something made me open my mouth and say to Mr.

McLaughlin—and I’m sure he will recall these words—“Well, I have absolutely no desire for this job. I fill only two or three of your requirements. But if you need a yardstick to hold up to any of your applicants you can use me as a last resort.”

I hung up, happy that I had made my final contribution to the Communication Advisory Committee. Three weeks later I received a phone call from the Board of Directors asking me to fly to Boston and talk. I flew. I listened.



CHAPTER TWO

*"If we're not going in circles
how come we've passed 'Boardwalk' six times?"*

My first meeting with the Christian Science Board of Directors lasted about an hour. They carefully explained what they wanted and it was identical with what McLaughlin had told me on the phone. They wanted to form a Communications Department which would be responsible for every communication emanating from the Mother Church with the exception of the written word. The individual heading this division would be named "Director of Communications for the Mother Church." In closing they asked if I would take the position.

I replied, "It really disturbs me that out of all the Field I'm the best you can find."

They laughed and someone mentioned something about a refreshing modesty. I wasn't being modest. I meant it. They asked me to think it over and gave me some large files to read that they felt would help my decision. I was given an office, a key to the wash-room, and left alone with my reading matter.

One of the files contained the findings of a Youth Committee report headed by Erwin Canham. They had questioned Science and non-Science young people for about six months and had put together a comprehensive and outspokenly honest report. Unfortunately, nothing was ever done with the report or its recommendations, though the cost must have run into many thousands.

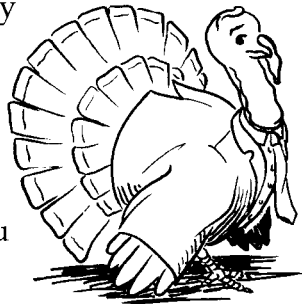
The second file contained the year-long findings of the Advisory Committee which had recommended me. As might be expected, it made a strong case for

setting up a communications department.

The third file was astonishing. I'm sure the Board never intended for me to see it. Evidently an in-house committee had been established by the Board to duplicate the work of the outside Advisory Committee. This "Communications Coordinating Committee" was made up of individuals who were working in the Mother Church. On this committee were members of the office of the C.O.P., the *Monitor*, the Promotion Department and one or two others whose names I did not recall.

This committee was totally against having any outside groups advising the Mother Church on the selection and formation of departments. Above all they expressed a definite antipathy toward bringing in a "Czar" with outside commercial experience to direct the communications of the Mother Church. Their report could not have been a more strongly worded recommendation against the very thing the Board was intending to do! I felt like a turkey being invited to Thanksgiving Dinner.

However, I also felt sure these individuals would forget their feelings once the Board made its decision. Oh Alan, you really were a turkey!



Stepping In

Two days later I was called back to the Board and asked for my decision. I agreed to take the position. This was a Friday. I flew to California, packed, and flew back to Boston to report to work at nine o'clock Monday morning.

Commencing this challenging job didn't bother me too much, as David Sleeper, the Executive Adminis-

trator, had assured me he would "take me by the hand" and lead me around for the first few weeks until I became gently oriented. Unfortunately, over the weekend one of the Board of Directors passed away, and on that Monday David Sleeper was elected to fill the vacancy on the Board. David had no time to lead anybody.

It was while mulling over these recent developments that I had my first visitor. There was a gentle knock on the door, it opened and a familiar, beaming face peered in. It was a man I had met only once some years before, Paul Stark Seeley. He left a message that was to serve me and perhaps save me many times during my Boston service.

"What're you going to do in this new job?" he asked.

"Oh, I really don't know yet," I said. "I'm just going to have to listen for awhile and be flexible."

"Flexible is good," he agreed. Then he paused and looked at me with his captivating twinkle. "There's another word I love perhaps even more and that's 'elastic'. When you have elasticity you're not only flexible but you snap back!"

During the next few years I was to flex a great deal and, gratefully, would always manage to snap back.

The next visitors to my office intentionally or inadvertently almost spelled doom to the entire communications idea. It seems the Board had been talked into hiring an outside management consultant firm to put the various departments of the Church on a more businesslike footing. I did not realize that this firm and its changes were causing much chaos and differing of opinion amongst the executives and staff. Many of the department managers refused to go along with the decisions of the consultants, and others gave lip-

service to their advice and then continued on in their own way.

I didn't know who was who to begin with, so when two pleasant-faced gentlemen came to see me I naturally assumed they were with the Mother Church and were popping in to be of assistance. I didn't realize that they had a job to do and—as there were very few departments cooperating with them—the idea of a new, unstaffed division, plus a wide-eyed neophyte director, offered a lip-smacking opportunity.

"We will have to make up a department description," they said. "What will you be doing?"

"Communicating Christian Science."

"But doesn't the Publishing House do that?"

"Oh yes, they do it with print. We'll be doing it with films, radio and the spoken word."

"That's too intangible for a department description. We'll have to work something out and get back to you. Now, about your position. Can you give us a job description?"

"Well, there has never been a job like this in the Mother Church," I said, "so it's difficult to describe."

They looked a little sad, but became quite helpful. It seemed the problem was that they couldn't find a salary level until they had established my "ability quotient." That, plus my academic education would immediately slot me into the "commensurate remuneration amount."

I also tried to be helpful. "I've been in show business since the age of 13," I volunteered. "I can act, sing, dance a little, write and ride a horse. And I'm also a practitioner listed in the Journal."

Their reference-books listed none of the above. "You don't have a degree in music?"

"No."

“Literature? Journalism?”

“No, no. The only award I got was in the third grade when they gave me a gold star for improved bathroom habits.”

The two men left, promising to come back later in the week.

The Film—or “Make a Baby in Three Months”

Next, the really hot potato was dropped into my lap. It seems that a well-meaning and enthusiastic ad hoc committee called the Annual Meeting Coordinating Committee had decided to prepare a film to be shown at the following Annual Meeting. The idea had been approved by the Board and a general outline was in the works. It was to include filmed reports of the activities of Christian Scientists throughout the world. Individuals in various countries had already been approached; they had voiced enthusiastic approval and were awaiting further developments. In other words the count-down on this unplanned undertaking had begun and it could not be aborted.

The Church’s film department consisted of one man, John Behrend. He had been teaching the subject at a university but admitted to no commercial filming experience. However, I soon learned how knowledgeable he was in the art of documentary filming.

As soon as the news spread through the other departments the various managers began transferring workers to our department. They were mostly recent arrivals or young people just out of university with little or no experience in any business. But they were young, enthusiastic and wanted to serve their Church. Their spirits never dampened, even when the administration, puzzled as to what “slot” our communication division should be put into, placed us under the general com-

mand of the Maintenance Department! The Maintenance manager, Al Carnesciali, kindly relinquished his office for me, but for months I felt like a broom!

I loved every one of these new recruits and we soon had a cohesive, capable corps. However, though our staff was eager and willing, it was hardly enough to launch a world-wide film shoot and have it edited and printed in time for the Annual Meeting only five months away!

It was about this time my two business management friends came to see me again. They seemed delighted. "We have it worked out for you," they said, "but to have all the job descriptions match our established categories we'll have to give the department a new name."

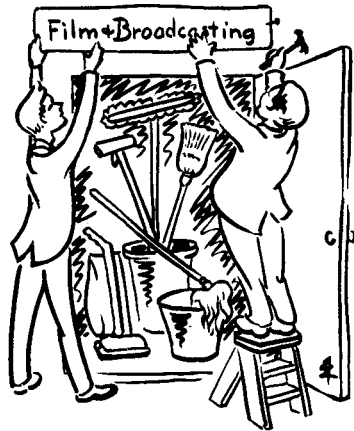
"It's communications." I said.

"But you can't form a staff or hire anybody until you have a department description," they explained patiently. "Now, you will be making a film, so we have worked out a proper category, calling your section the 'Film and Broadcasting Department.'"

"The Board wanted it to be called 'communications department.'"

"In broad terms the word 'broadcast' means to sow, to distribute. That's what your department will be doing."

I was anxious to get going. There was a monstrous film task ahead. We had to have a staff, a budget, offices. None of this could be put into the computer until



we had a name. Here, bowing to expedition, is where I made my first and biggest mistake.

"Okay," I said. "It's Film and Broadcasting."

This title immediately limited the responsibility of the original communications conception and left the office of the C.O.P. with a firm handhold on communications from the Mother Church. At the time, however, I had no idea it would make any difference. I could not conceive of bureaucratic politics and maneuvering in our Leader's Church.

Thinking I now had a green-light to forge ahead, I contacted a young Christian Scientist in California who had worked on the Mister Ed show while completing his courses in film production. His name was Kim Walker, and he had been doing "on the job training" with some of the most successful production companies in Hollywood. I knew Kim could work out all the production costs and give a breakdown on all expenses we would be facing. He said he would love to work for his Mother Church. I sent him a ticket and he was hired.

A few days later a gentleman came to see me from the Personnel Department. "You really shouldn't have brought Mr. Walker out," he said tentatively. "We have no job description for him."

"But I hired him to write the job descriptions," I said. "I sure don't know how to do it, and don't have the time even if I did know."

"But he's not qualified to do that," my friend replied. "Tell you what. I'll do the paperwork so you will have him on staff. But," he paused smiling. "In the future let's make sure we have our..."

"Job descriptions," I finished for him.

Kim and I would sit for hours trying to separate the bureaucratic warp from the woof. We couldn't start

filming until we had submitted a budget. We couldn't submit a budget until we knew how much our staff would cost. We couldn't hire a staff until we worked out all the job descriptions and sent the proper papers through the Personnel Department. Then they would search for the talent, even though we already knew who we wanted.

Back to square one.

"I've got it," said Kim. "Let's put in a request for an office manager and let **him** make out all the job descriptions!"

Great idea. I called Personnel and said we wanted to hire an office manager.

"All right," replied the executive. "Would you fill out a job description on the office manager?"

I paused. "That's why I'm hiring him—so *he* can do it."

"But you'll have to do it before you can hire him."

I hung up and Kim and I sat crying quietly. We also did a little praying and, as always, the answer came. The manager of the Publishing House, Bob Bergenheim, called and said, "I have an office manager who is over-qualified for the work we have. Do you want him? I can have his job description in personnel within the hour and he can sign on with you tomorrow."

I hung up and Kim and I started crying again, this time for joy!

So it was that Harry Hicks came into our department, a perfect mixture of energy and expertise. Harry was small in stature but big in clout. I always felt that if I had the task of casting Bible characters in a play, I would give Harry a sling and five small stones and God help Goliath.

The Filming

It was now mid-January. The 1969 Annual meet-

ing was four and a half months away and we only had about two hundred feet of film shot, most of it unsatisfactory. Those of us who had any experience in professional film-making had to judge the task an impossibility. But, being Christian Scientists above all, we knew that these obstacles were opportunities to witness Principle in action.

It was necessary to form three film crews, as we needed to photograph in North and South America, Europe and Great Britain, Asia, India, Australia and wherever else we could find examples of Christian Science being lived and practiced. Reports had been sent in by various Committees on Publication around the world, and items had been forwarded by lecturers and visitors to the various areas. There was no time for us to send out advance reconnoiters as is normal in such documentary work. The teams had to get on their way and do their own checking on the spot, finding, in many instances, that the situation was not at all as it had been reported. Almost always, our crews stumbled across a totally different and more inspiring account!

Back in Boston, the remaining staff decided we would adopt the slogan "God First" and start each day with an inspiration meeting before our 8:00 A.M. duties. This made an incredible difference, both in the home office and in the field. Each field crew reported that when our prayer activity began, they experienced tremendous impact in their work. They would telephone or wire regarding pending problems, work was then taken up in the department, and we rejoiced at the resulting response. Immigration and customs difficulties suddenly resolved themselves; transportation obstacles faded away.

A point we had briefly considered but never really dwelt on was that our crews had no way to see the film

they shot, since it was all sent back to the United States to be developed and viewed. By the time this was done our camera crew was at another site, and perhaps in another country, with no time nor opportunity for retakes. Yet out of the hundred thousand or so feet of film exposed, not one part of it was lost, damaged or unusable! In a major film production of this international scope this result was novel, if not downright amazing.

All of this photographic success was gratifying but now our technicians faced another seemingly insurmountable challenge. These thousands of feet of film must now be developed and viewed, "work prints" made and rough editing begun. Sound tapes must be edited and matched to the visual footage. Then the result had to be reviewed for content.

This "rough cut" must then be shown to the different department heads who were responsible for their contribution to the picture. As all of them were inexperienced in film techniques, much time had to be spent in explaining the intricacies of the medium, as well as the impossibilities of what they might be questioning or demanding. Time was a-wasting. We were now six weeks from the Annual Meeting, and the Board was eagerly awaiting their Annual Meeting film.

At that time Boston had no lab facilities capable of professionally processing film from a "state of the art" criteria. Rather than take any chances with our precious film we had to turn to the best possible markets. We commenced a shuttle service to New York which enabled our staff to "hand carry" the film to New York film laboratories, and watch over it until it was developed and a satisfactory print was made.

With the deadline facing us, and the limited facilities of New York, we found it necessary to send a man to Los Angeles, three thousand miles away, to pro-

cess a vital part of our film. I shall never forget his report to me.

The nation was then in the beginning stages of pornographic films. Every available film editing facility was being used by this newest phenomenon of mortal mind. The producer reported to me: "I was trying to edit a touching and spiritual account of Christian Science healing while, next to me, a projectionist was viewing the most explicit sex-film you can imagine."

I asked him: "What did you learn?"

He said, "How to separate the human from the divine."

Then he added: "From time to time the porno editors would leave their rather challenging viewing chore and come over to watch my film. It seemed to refresh them a great deal."

I knew we had a picture!

My "Mission Impossible" team had ample reason to be proud of themselves that June. The film was very well received. When the Board of Directors finished previewing it they had tears in their eyes, and when the film was shown at the Annual Meeting many people said they found it deeply moving. After the Annual Meeting the Board decided to have copies run off and sent to the branch churches.

We had little time to bask in the limelight, however, because we had the task of filming the Annual Meeting itself. With a tightly packed week of general meetings, committee meetings, issue meetings and workshops to cover, we were really kept hopping. Afterward we needed to edit and distribute that film. Then, if we didn't want to end up hopelessly behind, it was time to begin making plans for film presentations for next year's Annual Meeting.

Mr. Young Goes To Boston

There were other tasks as well—such as starting a new radio program—and meetings, meetings, meetings. And then suddenly it was November, and I realized, with a shock, that I had survived my first year.



CHAPTER THREE

*"Respect your enemies.
They will prove more consistent than your friends."*

That first year's work as Director of Communications was amusing, frustrating, heartwarming, inspiring, exciting, challenging and deeply rewarding. But from the moment I arrived in Boston, something else was also going on, a disturbing undercurrent which made itself felt in a myriad of subtle ways.

The events in the accounts that follow may seem unbelievable. I could hardly believe them when they were happening. I refuse to accept these occurrences as personal attacks or an over-all conspiracy against Science. I take them, rather, as unmistakable examples of fear, possessiveness, jealousy and insecurity. It's a "smother-love" beyond comprehension, an attitude of "I'm sure this is what our Leader wants and I'm going to carry out her religion of love if I have to kick everybody's head in to do it!"

My first meeting with some members of the C.O.P. should have given me an inkling that something was wrong. A group of them came to our viewing room with photographic slides they had been working on. They wanted to put them on film and release them to the branch churches for inspirational meetings.

I had just arrived in Boston and was unfamiliar with what they needed; in such cases I keep my mouth shut. It was just as well, because none of them spoke to me anyway. The minute they walked through the door they looked me square in the chest. I have never before in my life said "hello" and received no reply. It was like dialing a wrong number. I couldn't believe it, especially since one of the men, Ted Cooke, was one who

had come to California and sat in my home, and another, Allistaire Phinney, had worked on the A.B.C. interview show in New York.

When the meeting ended we went through the same ritual. I smiled and said "Good-bye" to nothing but backs! At such a time it seems only natural to think, "Naw, this can't be happening. It must be *me*."

But I wasn't imagining it. Shortly afterward, one of their own department, a young lady named Pat O'Brien, came to me with tears in her eyes and apologized for her department's attitude. "I don't know what got into them," she said.

Pat added that she would love to transfer from the C.O.P. to our department. It wasn't long before this was accomplished, for which we were most grateful, and the Christian Science Field was much benefited. Pat devised and produced our successful radio program "The Truth That Heals."

Soon I discovered what had caused this frightened, almost frightening reception. A bright, happy young man named Rod Hanson came to see me. "Alan," he said, "I hope you are handling animal magnetism sufficiently. If not, you'd better."

He told me that Charles Reilly, the manager of his department, Branches & Practitioners, had called the entire staff together and said, in substance, "We have got to handle the belief of Hollywood expertise." This manager then went on into the dangers of show business, high pressure etc. All this before I'd even unpacked!

Oddly enough, this manager was the first to invite me over to his office, welcome me, and proceed to tell me which one of my staff should be fired. "If you ever send 'Sykes' over to do any film work for me I'll never speak to him," he said. It seems odder still, in light of the fact that every department's Policy Book

states that no manager should advise another manager what he should or should not do.

At first I tried to respect Charles Reilly's opinions on public communications because, apart from being a CSB, he told me that he had been a concert pianist for many years. I later found out from some of his life-long acquaintances that he had been a piano tuner. While being a piano tuner is a demanding talent and an admirable profession, it is far from being an international concert pianist.

This manager continued in these undercutting methods. Perhaps this is an accepted administrative approach in business. It was a little hard to accept in the Mother Church.

Mr. Reilly never realized how well informed I was. When his meetings were over, if there was any threat to our department's welfare, my phone would ring and one or two members of his staff would alert me as to what I might have to be aware of. While their secret support could be construed as disloyalty or insubordination, to me it was a compassionate lifesaver. It was nothing I had searched for but was lovingly supplied by many young people in the Church who knew the deplorable situation but were not awed by it. When they saw an obvious unfairness they believed in stopping it. This was the first time I heard the expression, "Metaphysics plus a mess-of-physics!"

One day a new member of this protective group called me. He introduced himself on the phone, as we had never met. "I'd like to talk to you," he said.

"Fine," I replied. "Go ahead."

"Not on the phone," he replied. "Can I take you to lunch?"

I agreed, and then he said something that still makes me shake my head in disbelief. "It wouldn't be

good for anyone in the C.O.P. to see us together. Would you stand on the corner near your doorway at 11:45? I'll pick you up."

I was standing there when a black two-door pulled up to the curb. The driver leaned over, opened the passenger door, then beckoned me in. I felt like Sam Spade. He drove to a restaurant outside of Boston. "I found this place some time ago," he said. "We won't see any of the department here."



About now many of you reading this are saying, "Aw, come on. Not in the Christian Science Church! Not with people who read the same books I do."

My friends, I was saying the same thing to myself. This new acquaintance proceeded to tell me that the executives in the C.O.P. did not like the idea of Alan Young being in Boston. They were most possessive in their role of policy-makers on what should and should not be distributed and by what methods. He gave me many instances of reports from his superiors which promised great difficulties facing the Film and Broadcasting Department.

When we parted he handed me two 3" by 5" cards upon which he had written a number of citations for me to study. I have long since lost the cards but one thing I can never forget—they were all on Pharisee-ism and mental malpractice. What a purging parley! A month before I might have smiled and put them into the "hold" bin. That night I studied them hard and long. They made immediate sense and protection.

Thus attacked and thus shielded I waded through the challenges of those years in Boston. The

Mr. Young Goes To Boston

negativity directed toward me was a continual drain, but it was more than offset by the love and support I received. In the end it was not attitudes toward me that ended my efforts to work within the Boston organization; it was the much deeper resistance directed toward the core of what Mary Baker Eddy worked so hard to give us.



CHAPTER FOUR

"We didn't invite you to the meeting because things go smoother when nobody has any actual knowledge."

Dilbert's boss (the pointy-haired one)

In the fall of 1969 the Board of Directors appointed me to the Planning Committee for the 1970 Annual Meeting. As the title implies it was the duty of this committee to decide on the theme of the meeting, and choose subjects for the various panels, together with the individuals who would take part.

In short, the committee arranged every detail, even down to determining how much time each speaker should have. Of course every phase had to be passed by the Board, and the Board's wishes were carefully observed. All in all it was a very time-consuming activity.

I shall never forget the day we were working on the opening day's plans. We were attempting to cut the reports down so that the meeting would not run too long. The Monday morning session was predictable at best but we wished to make it flow a little quicker. It was at this point that the chairman, Peter Henniker-Heaton, a candid, refreshing individual, said, "Now we come to the Treasurer's report. I suggest that if he tells the truth we give him three minutes, but if he tells the same old stuff we cut it down to two!"

Annual Meeting Priorities

I don't know how it is done now, but in 1970 as soon as the Annual Meeting was over the vacations commenced for Board members and for most of the departments. For the remainder of the summer the Board was never complete so no important decisions could be made until the Fall. At that time the Annual Meeting

committee was again appointed, and, from September on, each department was busy preparing for the next years' Annual Meeting. These preparations had to be made early because if a department didn't get its program in to the Committee by January it could not count on getting its activities included in any film that may be in the works. It was like a great treadmill, grinding to the big June show.

I am not familiar with the time spent on preparing for Annual Meetings by the other departments but, by the very nature of things, the Film and Broadcasting Department began groundwork in September. By late January about seventy-five percent of our staff was busy preparing films and sound-tapes for the meeting. Nor did our work stop in June with the Annual Meeting. It was our job to film the entire meeting, and the summer was spent in editing, previewing and preparing the finished product for distribution. It seemed to me to be a tremendous expenditure of time, energy and money to simply talk to ourselves.

Upon being appointed again to the Annual Meeting Committee I decided to find out if Mrs. Eddy had had this type of activity in mind for the Annual Meeting. Within ten days the Mother Church archivist had a comprehensive report for me. There were many pages of Mrs. Eddy's comments on meetings, conventions and committees, none of them favorable. At the end of this compilation the archivist made his summarization: Mrs. Eddy quite definitely did not approve of large gatherings of Christian Scientists for the purpose of meetings.

Our Annual Meeting committee was quite surprised by the report, but agreed with it unanimously. The chairman, Peter Henniker-Heaton, was most enthused. Frankly, I found Peter most enthusiastic about everything. What a delightful man! Our committee

made a strong recommendation that the Church return to the type of meeting our Leader obviously intended for her Church: short and small.

We felt it would also save the Church a tremendous amount of money, and we thought that would be welcome, as, way back in 1970, we were being ordered to cut expenditures. We were not a little surprised when the Board responded by agreeing only to cut the following Annual Meeting slightly and then build back to the "usual" within three years. Which they did. So much for Mary Baker Eddy's opinion.

An Alternative?

One of my most interesting experiences related to Annual Meetings had to do with the Communications Advisory Committee. This was the group of successful, professional men located in New York who had recommended me for the job. As I stated, these men were top level advertising, editorial, promotion, and administrative executives. Even after I had taken over the communications position I would often call upon them for their advice, which was always quickly and unstintingly given.

During my second year in Boston this committee presented me with a most exciting proposition. They had worked out a plan whereby the Annual Meeting could be broadcast closed-circuit throughout the United States and by satellite to Churches throughout the world. In this way, instead of eight or ten thousand members making the long and expensive trip to Boston, every church member would be able to view the activities in their branch church.

I set the meeting up with the Board and a week later our group entered the Board room with a carefully worked out presentation. Here I must say that I have noted with amazement the attitude of most

Christian Scientists meeting the Board of Directors for the first time. It doesn't matter if the individuals are highly regarded captains of industry—when facing their Board they turn into schoolboys facing the principal.

My friends weren't much different.

One by one they gave their part of the presentation, which I felt was absolutely splendid. However, the nervousness and perspiration was quite evident. The Board did little to obviate this unfortunate situation. They sat stolidly, staring glum-faced. I thought when my team reached the section where they itemized the tremendous savings of their plan in dollars and cents something might break. It didn't.

When we were dismissed and got outside the Board room, one of the group who was perspiring the most, a man who was used to meeting and interviewing some of the biggest stars in television, said, "I don't know when I've been so nervous. How do you think we did?"

The chairman of our committee was quick to answer. "We bombed out," he said.

And he was right. We never heard another word from the Board of Directors, and within a few weeks the Communications Advisory Committee disbanded. I truly feel that Mother Church officials want the yearly pilgrimage to "Headquarters." It is obvious they enjoy the adulation of the Field—"the poor souls"—a term used by a C.O.P. member, quoted in one of Peel's books.



CHAPTER FIVE

"Whatever stands by doubtful means or measures will fall, and let us see that we are not buried in the ruins."

(Author unknown)

"One day a turtle became very fearful for his future. He made up his mind to build himself a much more protective shell, roomier and far stronger than the old.

As the work proceeded he decided that the shell might just as well be a little more ornate. In fact he felt he deserved something a lot more beautiful; something that would live long after he was gone; perhaps a symbol that he had been there.

Finally the work was finished. The shell was complete, and how gorgeous it was! Strong and heavy for protection, beautiful for contemplation, and large enough to accommodate any amount of growth.

When the weeds grew he didn't have sufficient strength to move the shell to safety. It was gradually covered over and hidden. The turtle himself just shriveled up and disappeared."

The Building Program

During my tenure in Boston, the Mother Church building program continued on its way. This introduced another facet of my administrative responsibility. I. M. Pei, the designer of the complex, had reserved a large section of the Colonnade Building for an up-to-date film and broadcasting facility. It was my duty to supply plans and specifications for such a plant.

I suggested that instead of building our own studio, it would be more economical to rent an up-to-date facility whenever we needed it. Since we would only be

using our own studio periodically it would be a financial drain to maintain a plant and expensive equipment. I recalled that one of the wealthiest men in the world, Howard Hughes, made most of his earlier movies by renting space in various studios. "The only equipment he owned was a desk and a pen," his aide recounted to me. "This way he saved a fortune in overhead."

That approach was out of the question, an administrative assistant told me. The Board would want to be close to the operation, so it would have to be done "in house." I set aside my reservations and plunged ahead.

While our department had some brilliant engineering minds in the field of sound and film none of them had ever planned a studio of such proportions with such technical detail. To add to the concern, the building was to be comprised of huge concrete cells, pre-formed with built-in ducts and conduits. Once those massive blocks were placed, any later alteration would be like trying to put indoor plumbing in one of the Pyramids.

So far as my expertise is concerned, I have as much information on technical matters as I have on the Mongolian Yak. So, it was felt that the safest thing to do was to hire a company whose specialty was planning studios. We found an experienced company who could work well with the designer. The cost for this special work staff was in the neighborhood of \$300,000.00, as I recall. It also added more meetings, explanations and reports to interfere with the work I was really familiar with — communication.

I was not privileged to operate out of the new studio, as I left before it was completed, but later I was shown through the facility and it is truly magnificent. Completed at a 1969 cost of one million dollars, it is a

production capability that any commercial television studio would be delighted to own. Unfortunately the studio is now in mothballs and at the present rate of progress, by the time it is used its equipment will undoubtedly be obsolete.

The Colonnade building presented another challenge which, I am grateful to say, the Board placed in hands other than mine. It was decided by someone in high office that this new building should have a feature that would attract public notice and recognition, something along the lines of the famous Mapparium in the Publishing House. The fact that didn't seem to be recognized by those deciding on this feature was that the echo effect in the Mapparium, while justly famous, is actually a freak circumstance—a magnificent effect but nonetheless an acoustic caprice.

The desire for the Colonnade was to attain something that might prove equally novel. What sort of effect did they have in mind? The administration admitted that they really didn't know what they wanted but it should be something impressive and memorable. It was like King Nebuchadnezzar asking his magicians to interpret a dream even though he'd forgotten what it was!

This challenge was given to Warren Brooks, as he reported it to me.

I contacted the Disney Studios for him but they would have no part of a not-for-profit undertaking. A top multimedia artist who had presented a thrilling photographic effect at the World's Fair was called in. He made presentations to us and gave a bid for a million dollars, as I recall. I do remember clearly that it would also cost around \$30,000 per year to up-date the system. This was turned down.

Warren gave up and the project became the responsibility of another man who gave it his best shot, failed and shortly after left the Mother Church employ. The C.O.P. took it over for awhile and after some sincere, capable efforts, they too threw in the towel.

All through this I had assiduously avoided becoming involved in the project, as I could see it would take up all of our time and it was not truly a communication matter. It was a cosmetic facility which would keep until we had taken care of more important outreach to the world.

Finally, when I was no longer the head of the department, my replacement, George Ward, took it on as his responsibility.

George had been a highly successful agent and manager in his show-business days, as well as being a life-long Christian Scientist and dedicated practitioner. It took much effort, time and administrative muscle to work him into our department. Finally it was George himself who went to the Board members individually and talked his way in! However it was done, I was truly grateful to have him aboard. I knew I couldn't last long in this capacity without having someone with me who professionally and scientifically understood the problems.

In any case, George understood long before I did that the Film and Broadcasting Department (néé Communication Department) had a short life expectancy and shouldn't be taken too seriously.

"Do the best you can," he said. "And get out quickly."

To write the "Colonnade" script George hired an expert film writer who also happened to be the husband of a Christian Science teacher and was, himself, a dedicated student. To produce the project he hired a

film-maker named Steve who was a fine producer and sincere student of Christian Science. Steve gave up his production business to devote himself entirely to the undertaking.

It was at this time that I left Boston to embark on my new career as a Christian Science Lecturer. However, the producer kept me informed on his progress. He flew to Israel with a crew and photographed thousands of feet of film, documenting the areas named in Bible history. His photography was completed just before the Arab-Israeli conflict so he had valuable footage which can never be duplicated.

When he returned to Boston it was decided, for whatever reason, to shelve the project entirely. The producer returned to New York. The film was put into storage. I was told by one in charge that the production cost was around \$150,000.

In 1976 the producer contacted me in Los Angeles. He told me that he felt the film he had shot was too valuable both historically and financially to lie unseen. He asked if I would contact the Church and, if they were not planning on using it, perhaps it could be purchased. We felt that if we offered ten to fifteen thousand dollars the Church might be happy to get ten cents on the dollar rather than nothing at all. There was no favorable response to our bid and, so far as I know, the film is still lying in the Film and Broadcasting storage.



CHAPTER SIX

*"A man is accepted into a church for what he believes
and he is turned out for what he knows."*

(Mark Twain)

From time to time while I was Communications Director I would receive a call from a church or individual saying that they had been asked by their local radio or television station to give information on Christian Science and what should they do?

"Do you have any information to give?" I would ask.

"Yes."

"Do you know how to give it?"

"Yes."

"Then give it."

There was always a pause after this.

"But don't we have to get permission from the Board or the C.O.P.?"

I would respectfully direct their attention to Article XXIII, Section 1 of the *Church Manual* "Local Self-government," which says in part "...the Mother Church of Christ Scientist shall assume no general official control of other churches..." and that always cinched the conversation.

It's a pity I was not always obedient to that section myself. One day I was called by Tom McLain, the head of the Board of Lectureship. He told me that a group of Church members in Scottsdale, Arizona had raised some money and were planning to make a short film on Christian Science for release on television. He asked if I could somehow dissuade them and get them to wait until the Mother Church had come up with a television program. We were experimenting with the idea at the time.

I met with the people in Scottsdale, and after a short meeting they agreed to wait. Not all of them were happy about the postponement but, like most Christian Scientists, they were obedient to "Boston" and lovingly went along. It was two years before we came out with a program for television release but I'm not so sure that a locally produced message might not have had greater impact on a local audience. I'm sure *Manual* article XXIII, Sec. 1 was not written to be ignored.

One day I received a call from a Committee on Publication in Florida. This delightful man said he was reporting to me on a radio interview he had been asked to do. I told him to go ahead and do it. He thanked me and said that he was glad the Church had a communication department because up till now he had never been able to get permission to go on radio.

A week or so later he sent me a tape of the broadcast. He was not a particularly good speaker, but the love, joy and genuine enthusiasm carried him through magnificently. As I recall, the announcer said he would like the man to come back again as he was greatly helped by the interview.

I am sure that it was events of this nature that finally brought things to a head between our department and the C.O.P. The Committee insisted that this sort of thing was their responsibility. My policy-book and the Board of Directors' wishes stated it was mine. Finally Harry Hicks sent them a copy of our book for their perusal and asked if we might have a look at theirs. This they refused to do. The stalemate went on.

Several meetings were held by us, together with the Executive Administrator, but to no avail. Finally the Administrator's office called to say they had worked out a solution with the C.O.P. that was acceptable to

them and what did I think of it? They had decided that the C.O.P. would be in charge of communicating Christian Science in the major cities, and we would take care of the rest.

"What's the difference between a major city and all the rest?" I asked

There was no way to make that division immediately so we carried on as before.

It amazed me that this situation could not be resolved easily. The Board had appointed me as Director of Communications. I reaffirmed it with them. One of the Board, Arthur Wuth, CSB, said to me, "It is my understanding that your department is in charge of all communications except the written word." Yet no one in the Administrative office, nor on the Board would exert any authority in making this position clear to all concerned. It seemed to many of us that the office of the C.O.P. had some sort of hold over everyone, including the Board of Directors.

Finally Harry came to me in triumph. He handed me a two-page document. It was an excerpt from the Policy Book of the C.O.P. When I asked Harry how he obtained the pages he smiled and winked. "They wouldn't give them to me so I had to get them. I have friends," he said.

These pages gave the C.O.P. the authority to communicate the message of Christian Science. In other words we had both been given the same responsibility!

At home that evening I was evidently so absorbed in my thoughts that I passed my little daughter in the hall without noticing her and went upstairs to my room. Many years later she told me that I "looked frightening." She rushed to her mother crying and said that they "had to get Daddy out of there."

Nothing in show business had ever been that trying to them. Later my wife went to a dinner party at the home of her teacher, Clayton Bion Craig. He was a member of the Board of Directors. When she made the excuse to him that I couldn't attend as I was just not up to it he smiled and said, "What's wrong with Alan? Is Dr. Stokes (of the C.O.P.) still giving him trouble?"

Two days later George Ward hand-carried my resignation to the Board. As my assistant he was well aware of the problems we were facing, and he was determined to get me out of there, as he knew the battle was fruitless. George returned about half an hour later.

"Well, you're out of the department."

I was delighted, though I knew I would miss the staff I'd grown so fond of.

"However, they want you for something else," he said.

"What?"

"The Board of Lectureship."

An appointment to the Board of Lectureship is considered a plum by many practitioners and teachers. Frankly, I simply wanted to return to California and open my office. Having spent a life-time in theater, being in front of audiences was no novel experience for me. Traveling the country for ten months a year, doing four or five lectures a week was nothing I relished. However, the Board pointed out that this experience would aid me in seeking the best method for presenting a televised lecture. Since this was then one of their great desires, as well as the desire of most of the Church members, I decided to do it.

The Lecture Circuit

Two years before, when I had first arrived in Boston, a member of the Board of Lectureship, John H.

Wyndham CSB, an excellent lecturer, came to see me more than a little disturbed. "The lecturing system must be improved," he said. "Because if I'm to believe what I see in the field I'll be out of a job in ten years." He was greatly disturbed by the gradual falling-off of lecture attendance. He was an excellent speaker and his lectures were most popular. That was twenty-five years ago and, while we rejoice in the fact that the Lecture Board, even in changed form, is still going, we cannot take much joy in the dismal attendance.

This sparcity was the first thing that became apparent to me as I began lecturing. In one small Texas town I came off stage after the lecture feeling rather dejected as there had been only about a hundred people in the audience. The lecture chairlady rushed up to me, her face beaming. "Oh Mr. Young," she said, "How grateful we are to have you here. We had four times our usual attendance!"

In this town of a few thousand people they usually drew only twenty-five for a lecture? She went on to say that she had not seen most of the people before so "they must be non-Scientists!"

I didn't have the heart to tell her that this was not the case. Standing in line after the lecture I'd met most of the audience and found that there were several busloads from nearby towns. Some had driven two hundred miles from Amarillo for the lecture. They were all Christian Scientists. We were still talking to ourselves.

In a small town in New Jersey I lectured in the fire hall. There was a brass pole coming down in the center of the room and all through the lecture I was praying that there would be no alarms given. They had evidently moved the fire engines outside to accommodate the people and the place was packed, so much so that it was necessary to give a second lecture

immediately after the first. Again I was grateful that the pole was unused.

On the way back to the hotel we passed a theater and the lecture chairman said, "That's where we used to have our lectures. I wish we had this time. It holds a thousand."

"Why didn't you?" I asked.

"It's been kind of embarrassing," he said. "The last few lectures there were only seventy-five people."

Of course the audience came because my television show was still fresh in their minds. That gave us a built-in promotional plus. But most lecturers didn't have that advantage. The Board of Lectureship just could not rely on a personality. We had to get a better system.

This was most evident when doing promotion in local radio and TV stations, especially in the smaller towns. My experience was invariably the same. The lecture chairman would take me to the station where I was to appear on the local news or interview show. I would sit in the waiting room with two or three local "celebrities," perhaps a farmer who had developed a double-yolk duck egg, or a man who was demonstrating potato peelers. I saw their brochures pushed ahead, while the Christian Science lecturer's publicity was shunted aside.

That is, until someone recognized who I was. "Hey," they would suddenly say, "I know you! Aren't you the fella that talks to the horse?" Suddenly the Christian Science material was brought to the fore, and we managed to get as much publicity as the double-yoke man and the potato peeler.

But what of the lecturer who is not recognizable? Either he doesn't get near the studio in the first place, or he is relegated to a place behind the others and, perhaps, gets a two minute interview. In either case it does

not seem that Christian Science should be relegated to sitting in a waiting room and hoping. There is an inspiring poem in one of the early Sentinels which concludes along the lines, "I shall lovingly and patiently take my place, but I shall take it now!"

Christian Science is worthy of this preferred treatment. It is the Truth to this age and must be respected as such. We cannot arbitrarily demand this recognition, but we must prepare for it and make sure that our agents are truly representative and prepared, both metaphysically and experientially. We are operating in a human world completely inured to the ingenuous; it demands expertise.

In everything I have read about Mary Baker Eddy it is clear that she demanded professionalism. It is recorded that she hired an expert elocutionist to read a talk for her—not necessarily a Christian Scientist, but an expert communicator. Mrs. Eddy had taken care of the content. She wanted another expert to take care of the transmission.

Would anyone hire an operator for "Tel-Star" simply on the grounds that he was a Christian Scientist, and ignore the proper scientist-engineer? Yet, it is being done in the Mother Church day by day.

The Filmed Lecture Idea

In mid-December of 1972 we were at home in Los Angeles for the Christmas vacation. We didn't have to start on the road again until the middle of January, so I decided to work on the filmed lecture idea. I contacted various knowledgeable studio people to work out concept, costs, etc. and suddenly all the pieces began to fall into shape. After the holidays I phoned George Ledbetter who was then one of the executive administrators and a fine man. I asked him if he thought

it would be worth while for me to fly to Boston immediately and present the idea. Otherwise I'd be lecturing until June and we would lose precious time. "Could you request a moment with the Board?" I asked.

He paused. "Well, there are all the same people here, Alan," he said. I never quite knew what he meant by that but my experience later gave me an indication. In any case he made the appointment with the Board and, at my own expense, I flew to Boston.

Usually the Board allows about twenty minutes for the individual to present his case. I was tremendously encouraged when, after an hour, they were still asking questions about the project. Finally they all agreed that the idea was terrific. I was delighted.

"I think we should get this idea into the works," one of them said.

At that I thought they would naturally send me to see George Ward in Film and Broadcasting as it was his responsibility to handle all film production. I nearly dropped when Mrs. Hanks said, "I think Mr. Young should have a meeting with the Speech and Editorial department immediately."

"Speech and Editorial?" I asked. It was puzzling. As the name implies, this department writes speeches, works on talks for the Annual Meeting, and coaches the speakers and the lecturers, as well as okaying the lectures and, sometimes, writing much of them. But produce a film?

"That's right," one of the Board said. "They have been put in charge of getting a filmed lecture out."

As soon as I left the Board room I called my friend George Ward, manager of the Film and Broadcasting Department and told him that I was by-passing his authority. He understood thoroughly and didn't seem to be much surprised. Then he told me he would be retiring from the

department shortly and would return to California.

The Speech and Editorial Department consisted of two people, Evelyn Steele and Peter Henniker-Heaton. They listened as I went through the same presentation I had given the Board. At the end Peter said that he thought the concept was delightful.

"But you'll have to lead the way, Alan," he continued. "Because neither one of us knows the first thing about doing this kind of project. Frankly I don't have a 'telly!'"

Evelyn's reaction was exactly the same. She said that they would soon be getting busy with the Annual Meeting preparations, but that we would continue to keep in touch and hopefully get seriously into the project by summer. This fit well into my plans and we parted company with great enthusiasm.

A week after the Annual Meeting I received a telephone call from Evelyn. She said that they were ready to go ahead with filming the lecture and they had chosen me to do it. This is not at all what my presentation included. In fact it was one of the things I had assiduously avoided. There is nothing in this world duller than photographing a man giving a speech for an hour. It had been tried by the Board of Lectureship many years before and the results were disastrous.

"You can't do that!" I blurted out. "It has been proven that people's concentration only focuses strongly for about ten minutes. Then you've got to bring in a juggler!"

Evelyn was adamant. This is what was going to be done and if I didn't want to be the lecturer then they would have to get someone else. I agreed that they should pick another lecturer. "But," I said, "I'll still help you with all the arrangements such as getting the proper studio, director, camera set ups, etc."

Here is where she dropped the big bomb.

"This will be like any other lecture," she said. "It must be sponsored by a branch church.

I explained to her that motion picture studios would not rent facilities to a church for a public lecture. They had security and insurance considerations, plus the fact that studios just don't like the general public wandering through their lots.

"Then we'll hold the lecture in a church," she said.

I then explained that there would be many sound and lighting challenges and the chances of having an artistic film would be minimized by having to photograph in such close quarters. I felt like a teacher trying to explain production to a student. I do not mean to ridicule Evelyn, but simply to point out the unfairness of giving a chore such as that one to an individual who knew absolutely nothing about the medium.

After our conversation I decided to get the advice of the filmmakers who had offered their help. I didn't want to abort the project on my own opinion.

They couldn't believe that this was the way the Church wanted to go. I wrote Evelyn, gave her their report and begged her to reconsider. At the end I again offered any assistance I was able to give. I received no reply, but a few months later I learned that they had completed their filming. It turned out to be tremendously expensive and was a total failure. Later I met the lecturer who had made the film and he said that it had been a terrible experience.

I was not happy to have been proven correct, only sad because we had lost a great opportunity and wasted a lot of money.

A Plea For Modern Means

Once again the church organization had failed to make effective use of film and broadcast options for

the Mother Church. Why? At first the Board of Directors wished to take advantage of every avenue of up-to-date communication, as witness their investigations of the current state of the art methods. My experience suggests that they didn't turn away from it because the art was lacking, but because of their own lack of understanding, reinforced by the inexperienced and self-serving advice of those surrounding them who were making a comfortable living out of being secure scientific sycophants, intellectuals lacking inspiration.

It seems obvious that this is not what Mary Baker Eddy would have wanted. Mrs. Eddy turned to what was then the most modern means of communication—the lecture platform. There was no radio, no television, no Internet in her time. The chataqua and theater circuit was the only way to reach Fargo, Dallas, or any other city, with a personal message. When a Christian Science speaker came to town he was generally introduced by the governor, mayor or other dignitary. Reading the old periodicals we can see that the Christian Science lecturer was met, respected and introduced by such dignitaries, who made no bones about the fact that they were not Christian Scientists, but were obviously willing to listen with open mind and heart.

Following along the line of Mrs. Eddy's admonition that we, together with the publishers, keep "abreast of the times," doesn't it seem logical that we, too, should avail ourselves of the best up-to-date communication? Not that we should fall into the trap of "commercial religionism" nor the tempting glitter of becoming everything for anything's sake. But surely we can find our place in the healthy mainstream of progressive, scientific advancement. Jesus stood in a boat and talked to multitudes on a hillside. What an acoustical achievement! And I was lecturing in a firehouse!

This did not bother me on my own account. I had performed under much worse circumstances. I was once in the middle of my theater act when a monkey cage broke open backstage and several of the little creatures joyfully joined me on stage. One of them jumped into my arms, then onto my shoulder and began a gentle investigation of my hair, much to the delight of the audience and the destruction of my act!

However, in the present situation it was a case of Mrs. Eddy's lecture board being treated like third class citizens.

It seemed obvious to me that the outreach ship was in danger of floundering. Many fine, dedicated people were spending all their energy bailing, and some were drowning. Those at the helm were unwilling to change course. I continued to attempt to bring the outreach up to date. I expressed my concerns and offered one proposal after another, but the Board's attitude seemed to be, "Why fix the holes when you can go down with the ship?"

In February, 1973 I wrote to the Board of Directors:

Dear Friends,

This letter is a re-affirmation of my discussion with your Board on January 15th.

I support wholeheartedly our Leader's concept of the Board of Lectureship and its *Manual's* requirements.

I find it impossible to reconcile a professional career of thirty-five years in the entertainment-communication field with the present obsolete approach to the great responsibility of the Board of Lectureship.

Therefore I sadly but earnestly request that I not be re-elected to this Board for the 1973-74 season.

It is my desire to actively serve our Movement wherever possible. What talents and abilities I have are at the service of your Board of Directors.

Sincerely,

(signed) Alan Young

I did not hear from the Board, but instead received a letter from Lloyd Marts, one of the "Executive Administrators." I might have known. The big worry was not "Why don't you want to continue?" or "Maybe we're doing something wrong," but, "How do we release this news to the Field and not make the Board look bad?"

Resignedly, I accepted Lloyd Marts' premise that the main consideration was not, "How do we announce Alan Young's retirement from the Lectureship Board after only two years and full houses?" but, "How do we protect the Board from questions and possible criticism?"

It was decided by Mr. Marts that the release should read:

"...Alan Young has asked that he not be reappointed to the Board of Lectureship this year. Mr. Young will be undertaking, from time to time, some special assignments for The Mother Church and the Christian Science Publishing Society."

I conceded, not because I agreed, but because, as are most loyal students, I was cultured to salute the flag and honor those whose positions were higher than mine in "our Leader's service." This may sound like a ridiculous explanation for an obvious conformance, and it is. When one has spent years acting *en regle* one learns



to quietly retire in the same way. How I wish I had then been familiar with the words: "*Whosoever is conscious of being right is stronger when standing alone, than in a compromise with evil for the sake of union.*"

It was understood that from now on I should accept a request for a lecture from anyone who asked me, according to *Manual* Article XXXII, Sections 1, 2, and especially 3. I received such calls and accepted, then requested that the branch Church put a formal request through the Board of Lectureship. They did so, and I never heard from them again. This was a little disconcerting as, when we returned to California my wife and I bought a small house in the hills which we could close up quickly should the need arise for us to take off on a lecture tour.

We sat on our hill and waited—and waited. Finally I received a phone call from a friend who was on the Committee on Publication in Ohio. "Well, you sure let me down," he said.

This dear friend's honesty was evident and appreciated. "I did what?" I asked.

"You promised to lecture for our church. It is going to be televised. We have street banners planned. And now we hear from the Lecture Board in Boston that you are not available."

I had no answer because I couldn't believe it.

The next call I received was from Florida. The same situation was taking place. I had promised to lecture and asked them to put the request "through the proper channels." They never heard from me again but

were sent a different lecturer.

I called David Sleeper, then Chairman of the Board of Directors, and told him what was happening. His answer was simple. "I guess it's another case of administrative foul-up," he said. "The Board probably never notified the Board of Lectureship about your appointment."

A dedicated career destroyed, but a Board protected. I said to him that perhaps I should totally retire from the Board of Lectureship, and also take my card out of the *Journal*. He agreed, but then it was suggested that I still be named "Special Speaker for the Mother Church." Another slow let-down so the thump would not be heard by the Field.

The thump they seemed so frightened of was, in the words of Fred Allen, "as loud as a caterpillar backing up into a pile of peach-fuzz on a thick rug." The job was done. I was out and nobody had stirred the waters. There is no record of my total resignation from the Board of Lectureship on file in the Mother Church, nor was there any request from me to take my name out of the *Journal*. Mr. Sleeper kindly offered to take care of this for me.

Another Proposal

My wife and I started off the year 1974 facing the prospect of re-entering show-business after six years of working in the Christian Science Movement. It's an odd sensation, to say the least. The first thing a performer must seek is publicity and exposure. I couldn't do this because the first thing the interviewer would want to know would be, "Why did you quit working for the Church?"

I couldn't give a straight answer to this question because it would be criticizing the Church.

And I couldn't give any other answer because it would sound foolish. So it seemed the most prudent thing to just not take part in any publicity for awhile. Not a very positive approach for one in show-business!

One would think that the wise thing to do at this point would be to put the Church and its problems out of thought. But I have never been accused of being wise. I also loved my Church and knew that the Board was still looking for some sort of answer to the televised lecture question.

After months of research I came up with some startling facts. I'm sure they are not new to many Christian Scientists, but they are worthy of consideration.

In one televised Crusade in the Los Angeles Coliseum, Billy Graham reached more than ten times the number of people the Christian Science Lecture Board reaches in a year. When that tape was televised nationally it was seen by many more people than the Lecture Board has reached since Mrs. Eddy started it.

I felt that we could not stay off television any longer. We were keeping the message of Christian Science a secret. The last television series had discontinued in 1960. I had been told that they were glad to stop it because of the "chemicalization it brought about." This seemed to me to be a cop-out. The old show went off for the same reason that all shows go off. They become "old hat."

One evening after church, entrepreneur and western star Gene Autry came to me and said, "I understand you'd like to get a program on Christian Science produced."

I said, "Yes," and he replied, "You can use any part of my studio you wish for nothing, and for as long as it takes!"

He owned one of the largest and most modern facilities in Hollywood and naturally I delightedly accepted. Within a few days all the other aspects began falling into place. My film-making buddy Baldwin Baker left the Mother Church and returned to Los Angeles. He offered his camera services for nothing. A top screen writer almost begged to be able to contribute his talent, and the same thing occurred with a production manager. As it finally turned out I was facing the promise of at least a \$30,000 production for a cost of about \$750!

I wrote to my Board contact in Boston, David Sleeper, and told him that I had an idea for a show and I would finance it myself. If they liked it then they could pay me my out-of-pocket cost, \$750. If they didn't like it then it would cost them nothing. David said he would love to talk about it right away, so again I bought my own ticket and left for Boston.

David invited me to talk to him in his home rather than in the formal surroundings of the Mother Church. For this I was most grateful. We spent over two hours together and went over the idea in detail. It is a bit too detailed to go into at this time as I had a marketing plan worked out in conjunction with the release of the film. All of this had been double-checked by individuals who knew a great deal more about marketing ramifications than I did. They all gave it a healthy future. One of the most attractive features of the production, naturally apart from the content, was that it would cost the Church nothing apart from the original seven hundred and fifty dollars. Also the prospect could be a continuing series of half-hour films and an ultimate profit to our Church of thousands of dollars.

David was delighted with the idea, but he said it would not be a good idea for him to take it to the other members of the Board, but would be better if I

made the presentation to the group as a whole. This seemed to make sense to him, although not to me, frankly; but it was what he preferred so I agreed and flew back to Los Angeles and waited for a reply. I should have known that things just do not change quickly when they're in the mire. Some weeks later I received a letter from my erstwhile enthusiastic friend. David said that the Board would love to have me drop in to see them with my idea whenever I happened to be in the area. Not right away though, because the Annual Meeting was coming up. Sometime afterwards perhaps. I knew that after the Annual Meeting the staggered vacations began so there would be no full Board until the beginning of September. I shelved the idea for good.



CHAPTER SEVEN

"A church in union with human governments is an apostate."

(Author unknown)

It must be very difficult for Christian Scientists to read this account about their Church, and even harder to accept. I assure you it is equally hard to write. These events were inconceivable.

In my travels I meet more and more members who are deeply aware that something is falling apart but they can't quite put their finger on it. Thoreau said, "Some circumstantial evidence is very strong, as when you find a trout in the milk." The evidence is obvious to all who have "been there" in any top-level capacity.

Most of the ex-Mother Church officials I have met share the reaction of a man I recently talked to. He was a highly successful businessman who had retired young in order to work for his Church, and ultimately entered the practice. We were speaking of "The Kerry Letters," a series of letters written by an insider and sent to the entire Christian Science membership, exposing some of the "rot in Denmark." This man did not totally agree with Mr. Kerry's methods but he could not fault his conclusions. "I am familiar with only about eighty-five percent of what Mr. Kerry states," he said, "but of that eighty-five percent I find him ninety-nine percent correct. And if managers don't agree they are either unaware or unobservant."

In 1976 I flew to Boston to question one of the Directors of the Mother Church concerning a few specific accusations which had been made about dishonesty and immorality in the organization. While he denied any wrongdoing, I found his answers unsatisfac-

tory but, in the main, nothing I could pin down.

The Director's answer to immorality charges, however, was disturbing. The Manager of the Benevolent Association had been accused of having affairs with a nurse or nurses at the institution. The Director told me that they had found this to be true, but that when the Manager had admitted his indiscretions and was contrite, he was forgiven and kept his job. This charitable exoneration may seem commendable, but the Manager's policy book demands instant expulsion for adultery, and many employees with lesser infractions were discharged under the same rule.

Even more disturbing, the same member of the Board who admitted this situation to me later told a Boston newspaper reporter, "I've not seen one iota of evidence" regarding sexual misconduct in the Mother Church!

A year later I was very amused when, after having accepted an invitation to speak at "The Willows" in California, I was summarily canceled as they feared I might use the platform as a "sounding board for dissidents." At the same time they were hiring this womanizing ex-manager of the B.A. as their administrative head!

I know this is not the only case of such misconduct being winked at. While I was Communications Director in Boston a young security guard came to me and said that most of his associates were hesitant about driving one of the Mother Church musicians to the airport each week because they had to fight off his sexual advances. The victims didn't want to report the situation as it was their word against a "higher up." The man is still plying his trade, both in the Mother Church services and, I presume, in the car.

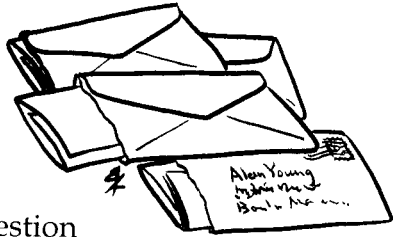
Although the trauma caused to the innocent victims in these situations can not be lightly dismissed,

one might argue that the Church's worst fault is nothing more sinister than laxness or inattentiveness. How I wish I could believe that. Unfortunately, my experiences in Boston suggest otherwise. For example, one day I was interviewing a young girl for our radio program. She was in the C.O.P. at that time and would later become a Journal-listed practitioner.

When she told me she had something to do with the mail I told her that many of my personal letters had been opened.

"Is that a common practice?" I asked.

"Yes," she said, smiling. "I open them!" She was ordered to do so!



Then there is the question of money. In June, 1973, I spent the night at Daycroft School in Connecticut. There I met Marc Engler, the new Treasurer of the Mother Church. He had been to Boston, had examined the Church books and was now having a week-end in the country. He met me outside his room and literally threw his arms around me. His eyes were brimming. "Alan, what are we going to do?" he said. "I've just looked at the Mother Church accounts. We have no money!"

I am convinced Marc didn't mean "no" money in the sense of "none." But, to an experienced, successful banker such as he, the amount we had was certainly approaching "none." To make matters worse the Board had just announced at the Annual Meeting that contributions toward the Building Fund were now closed as they had enough. The treasurer was dumbfounded. Later someone must have thrown cold facts in the Director's faces because the following month they re-opened the solicitation for funds.

Many Christian Scientists were distressed when one of the most beautiful, smaller buildings on choice Fifth Avenue in New York was sold by the Mother Church Board. Just like Pleasant View it was sold quietly and quickly. When a group of Christian Scientists heard about the pending sale they offered the Board *one half million dollars more* than the bid under consideration; in other words, it could be sold for three million dollars and remain in the hands of Christian Scientists. The bid was turned down and the building was sold to a diamond merchant for two and one half million. The property is now worth over ten million dollars.

What is going on here? This is not gossip. Anyone can check these figures and the sequence of events. In fact it would be a healthy move if every Christian Science Church member followed up this story because who knows what is next in the sale of properties—properties that were bought with our contributions.

But this is not what I find most disturbing. During Annual Meeting week of the same year, 1973, I was sitting in the Church commissary when David Sleeper sat at my table. His face was beaming. He told me that he had been having lunch with De Witt John and they were desperately trying to find a man to put on the Board of Trustees. They'd had an opening for some time and seemed unable to fill it. While carrying their trays out they bumped into Bob Walker coming in. Immediately they turned to each other and said, "That's our man!"

An hour later I was sitting in the Colonnade hotel lobby when Bob Walker came in. He sat down beside me and said, "The oddest thing just happened."

"You've been made a Trustee?" I asked.

He was amazed. "Yes," he said, "How did you know?"

I told him my story and he corroborated it completely. The story is not particularly unsettling until you open the *Manual* and read that, while the Board has the "power to declare vacancies in said trusteeship," it does not have the right to fill them. "Whenever a vacancy shall occur, the Pastor Emeritus reserves the right to fill the same by appointment; but if she does not elect to exercise this right *the remaining trustees* shall fill the vacancy, subject to her approval."

Here the Board are not only taking the Pastor Emeritus' place, but are also disobeying the *Manual* and usurping the responsibilities of the Trustees, a duty given to the Trustees by Mary Baker Eddy.

Unfortunately, my experience would seem to indicate that such casual disobedience to the *Manual* is not only prevalent; it is deliberate. I had hardly been on the Lecture Board a month when I asked the Manager of the Board why we didn't stick to the letter of Article XXXII Sections 7, 8 and 9, instead of handling it through an administrative function. He replied, in essence, "If we stuck absolutely to the letter the Lecture Board couldn't function." (Lectures could continue, of course; each church or community would select for itself the lecturer best suited to its needs.)

"All right," you say, "we know the problems. Why keep bringing them up? Why not just pray about it?"

This reminds me of another experience from my time in Boston. A meeting was held by the Mother Church, at the Chestnut Hill Benevolent Association, on behalf of all the "Black" Church members. The Board, Trustees and managers of the Church departments, myself included, met with responsible Christian Scientists from the Black community. These members

addressed us in a most inspiring and edifying manner, presenting us with the problems their various communities were facing. They also gave us a light on the general tone (color) of our periodicals.

When they had finished one of our top legal officials stood up and said, "Your remarks were most inspiring, but you must pray about it."

The Black members were silent. Finally, one of them said gently, "We *have* been praying about it. How do you think we got here?"

The comments this group of dedicated students received from the Board seemed to indicate that if a human situation is off course then prayer is undertaken for a higher concept, not specifically to try to heal a human situation. But it would be hypocritical to say that the action wasn't taken with the hope of eventually correcting the false human picture. Otherwise, why have Christian Science at all?

Members *have* been praying about the problems they see in the Christian Science Church organization. They continue to pray, and this prayer leads them to questions. "Why doesn't the Board level with us so we can help?" seems to be the constant query. A review of the history of my own department in The Mother Church gives a prime example of the continual regression.

The *Journal* for January, 1975 carried the last request for contributions to the "Broadcasting Fund." In July, 1975, the *Journal* reported:

...the Film and Broadcasting Department of The Mother Church and the Committee on Publication staff have been researching and developing new material for radio....New five minute public service broadcasts sponsored by the Mother Church hint at directions for the future

....public service broadcasts called 'Hymns to Heal' will be on the air soon in parts of the United States.

I wonder which parts? Certainly none that I have been in during the ensuing years. But the reports continued. In a page and a quarter statement in the *Journal*, again in 1975, we read:

The Film and Broadcasting Department reflects the importance of audio visual communication in today's world...because the educational processes of today are moving so strongly toward the audio visual medium we can't ignore it.

That's why The Mother Church is providing this film and broadcasting area—to stay contemporary, in tune with the times. To do this effectively we will need to have equipment and facilities of the highest order...step by step the inventory of equipment will continue to be upgraded to keep pace with technological advances and the Church's expanding need for audiovisual communication.

While most production houses normally specialize in one product—film, radio, or TV,—the new communications center of The Mother Church will be able to fill most demands in all three areas. This is rare in today's world of specialization—and is specifically designed to advance a radical, healing dialogue with all mankind.

...Our job is to "go...into all the world," as Jesus indicated, and to bring this sense of godliness and Christliness

and heal the sick. It isn't enough for our audiovisual efforts to be just philosophically pleasant. They must be specific and productive from a healing point of view.

These beautiful words undoubtedly represented sincere intentions on the part of the workers in the Department, but the phrases became gobbledy-gook as the Board began almost immediately to *phase out* the communications capability of The Mother Church.

Not too long ago a spokesman for the Church indicated that perhaps now is not the right time to challenge world thought with Christian Science. The lead article in the *Sentinel* for July, 1980 follows this same propaganda line. The writer takes a dim view of today's television outreach by other churches, dubbing it "hand-on-the-dial" religion. The article seems to totally ignore the good works and successful results of such reputable religionists as Billy Graham, Norman Vincent Peale, and others.

Many of the article's points are well taken, but what are we offering to the world? The whole thing smacks of an old familiar administrative approach, namely, keep emphasizing a point of view through the periodicals, letters to the branch churches, practitioners, teachers, *et al*, until the members' thought is thoroughly cultured in that direction. Then, when the Church's move is made, the members all rejoice in the oneness of mind — the Board's mind.

But what of the Field's muted cry: "Why don't they tell us what's going on?" Are we not all involved, like members of a family? If parents are experiencing economic and financial challenges isn't it only Christian kindness to share the challenge with the rest of the family? Perhaps they can help.

All we heard from Boston during this time was that "contributions are up." Up from what, and by whose figures? And if they were up then why the sale of so many of our valuable and historic properties?

We heard it reported that membership in the Mother Church was up thirty percent! Where? In Africa. Who on earth was this statement supposed to impress? Certainly nobody in the churches I attend. It's sometimes very lonely in the middle-row.

All right, I've told most of my story. Others have also told theirs over the years. Now why can't we all just forget about it, hold hands and dance onward? Fine. I am all for that. But there are a few false trails to be back-tracked, a number of erroneous decisions and interpretations to be openly erased.

Why openly?

In an early *Journal* Blanche Hersey Hogue wrote an inspiring article entitled "A Workman Approved" in which she states, "So the Christian who makes mistakes where his brother can stumble because of them, must bring his repentance and reform just as clearly to the light to undo the effects of the error. If one actual deed of honesty or unselfishness or kindness can out-value hours of argument, or break down years of prejudice—and we know it can—the Christian disciple, in order to win friends to his cause, must bring the shining evidence of his corrected life into the view of his fellow men."

In 1968, shortly after I had entered the practice of Christian Science, I was named college organization advisor for South Coast College in Newport Beach California. One of the students said, "Why can't we have a more informal meeting? We have to sing three hymns, yet none of the four of us can sing nor play the piano. We have to just read the hymns aloud. Then we have a

reading and testimonies. It's not inspiring enough to bring our friends to."

I checked with the C.O.P. The answer was that there is nothing in the *Manual* governing the order of an Organization meeting, but there is a letter in the Church archives which indicates that the present form was worked out between Mrs. Eddy and some Christian Science students at Harvard. I gave this explanation to one of the young girls and she almost hit the roof. "When I joined The Mother Church," she said, "I signed a paper agreeing to obey the *Manual*, not a piece of paper in the Church archives that I haven't even had the privilege of reading!"

Later, when I was working in Boston I asked about this so-called letter and was casually informed by Ted Cooke, a worker in the C.O.P., that no one was really sure about this supposed communication between Mrs. Eddy and the Harvard students and no record could be found!

In other words, Christian Science young people throughout the world were being hamstrung with a totally archaic and unrealistic so-called "service" in their colleges which was, to most of them, strangling what could be an inspiring and healing organization meeting. I'm sure the traditionalists will disagree with me, but when the majority of the students are sincerely loving and living this precious Science we just cannot bind their inspiration with administrative voodoo.

How can the "remnant" best communicate Christian Science to the world? Does it have to raise millions to enter cable broadcasting, produce radio ads or build cathedrals? Does it need to "glitz things up" as has been promoted in the press as an answer to falling attendance?

I'm convinced that God doesn't need that sort

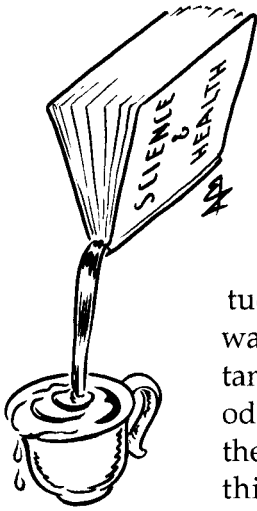
of help to communicate with us. During the building of the Church Center in 1965, Alton Davis, a successful Chicago businessman, was brought to Boston by the Board of Directors to communicate with the black residents of the community as the demolition and reconstruction of the neighborhood took place. He said to me, "Alan, we don't have to reach out to the neighborhood with words. If we could heal one case of flat feet in Roxbury we would bring in the Black community."

In today's communication arena I feel the Christian Science Church has, in the vernacular, "blown it." They threw away millions of dollars with cable news broadcasts, a television station, taped talks, and "innovative publications," but always a few steps behind the charismatic evangelists who were leading the way. It was a little like a harmonica player following a block behind the Rose Bowl Parade. In any case, none of it worked. There's an old theater motto, "It ain't what you do, it's the way you do it!" As Mrs. Eddy phrased it, "The right thing done at the wrong time is no longer the right thing."

Mary Baker Eddy also states, "...truth communicates itself but never imparts error" (Science and Health p. 85:31). My family experienced this first hand when a compassionate Christian Scientist walked miles to knock on our door, to bring us a message of healing and hope. We were not healed by a church. We heard nothing about an organization based in Boston. The woman was not even a registered practitioner. We found a book and experienced love. That's what it's all about.

Mrs. Eddy writes, "Give them a cup of cold water in Christ's name and never fear the consequences."

That's all. Just a cup, not a pail or a barrel. We



don't have to install plumbing. Just a cup. But let it be cold, not lukewarm, cool with refreshing inspiration and love. This is the most fulfilling and successful communication we could make.

Jesus healed and the multitude came. When Mary Baker Eddy was on the scene in person many instantaneous healings took place. Our periodicals document them. Newspapers of the day carried almost daily reports of this religious phenomenon, as they called it. The medical profession was impressed. Even the famous Mayo brothers began sending their "incurable" cases to Christian Science. Thousands were healed, and many doctors turned to Christian Science as their healing system.

One of my first practitioners was a Doctor Foeder of Toronto, Canada. He read *Science and Health* while he was a practicing medical physician and decided to try it on his next patient. He gave her sugar pills, placebos, and tried Christian Science treatment. The patient was healed. He told me he decided to try it once more and if it worked again he would give up his medical practice and become a Christian Scientist. He tried it. It worked. His name can be found in the old *Journals*.

In 1910 *Science and Health* topped a list of books most frequently borrowed from public libraries in the United States (*C.S. Sentinel*, 1910). Even after Mrs. Eddy left the healings continued. Up through the 1940s Christian Science churches grew as membership doubled and tripled on the momentum she had started.

In 1925 a poll was taken to determine the greatest American women. Mrs. Eddy was at the top of the list. As a boy (much later!) I can remember that when great women were named Mrs. Eddy was always included.

In a poll taken in 1990 Mrs. Eddy's name was not mentioned!

I watched the TV program "Jeopardy" not too long ago and none of the contestants knew who she was. It's obvious to anyone who has contact with the Christian Science movement what's happening to church membership. Is Mrs. Eddy being forgotten because of the decline in church membership? Or has the membership been declining because Mrs. Eddy has been forgotten? Or, if not forgotten, remembered now only as the dear little white-haired New England woman who was such a lovely human being?

In 1969 when I made my debut in Boston I had to figure out how to communicate Christian Science. As part of my research I talked with several evangelists who were generous in their advice. One said, "Simply advertise free prayer pamphlets. People have been cultured to voluntarily include money when they send for free offers." He said that this mail brought in hundreds of thousands of dollars.

It was obvious to me that Christian Science, like any Science, cannot be communicated through the emotions. It must be studied, understood, then proved. Mrs. Eddy's words kept coming back to my thought: "...truth communicates itself..." and "...the voice of truth, the revelation of Truth, the light, the leaven, the standard." I reasoned that if people could learn about Mrs. Eddy, they would discern her Science, and understanding and demonstration would naturally follow.

One of the first things I wanted to do when arriving in Boston was to interview and film anybody

who knew or had met Mrs. Eddy. My staff went out searching and it seemed we were a little late. Doctor Tutt had seen Mrs. Eddy on one of his trips to Boston but knowing how busy she was he refused to satisfy his own desires, so he didn't bother her. Paul Stark Seeley had been around then but had never bothered Mrs. Eddy either.

Finally one of the staff came up with someone right under our noses. This man, a practitioner living in Boston, was the only one I could talk to who had actually met and spoken to Mrs. Eddy.

He had been a porter on the train that brought Mrs. Eddy from Pleasant View to live in her new home in Brookline. He asked "this sweet looking lady" if there was anything she wanted and she requested a glass of water. When he handed it to her she just looked into his eyes and thanked him, and he said he felt an overwhelming sense of love and spirituality. He suddenly felt like a changed man. He went straight back to his little compartment, took a bottle of whiskey out of his cupboard and poured it down the drain. He said, "That night, for the first time, my family greeted a sober father coming in the house, and I never drank again."

When he retired from the railroad he entered the public practice of Christian Science and became a *Journal*-listed practitioner. His account told me more about Mary Baker Eddy, the woman, than reams of written material.

There's a funny ending to this story. We wanted to include this interview in a series to be shown at the Annual meeting in 1970 but the report came down from the administration that they didn't feel it fitting to include the account of our railroad porter because, as they understood it, he'd been married three times and it might suggest promiscuity.

The man was almost a hundred years old. He outlived his wives. So at that age, if he was promiscuous that was one heck of a healing!

As I continued working for the Church I made some suggestions. They were nothing brilliant; in fact they were rather obvious. I was admonished: "Don't rock the boat."

I couldn't believe it. "You must rock the boat at times," I said.

My father worked in a shipyard. When a new boat was launched all the workers boarded the vessel and climbed to one side of her. Then they commenced rocking. If their work was going to capsize or fall apart *now* was the time for it, not in a storm a hundred miles at sea.

We must "rock the boat" to test it. If our ark reflects our best efforts and we have faith in our work then let's rock it. If it holds up then the test is over, and we sail safely into the deep.

My experience with the organized church was, as you have seen, disillusioning. I am sure the church's experience with me was equally unsettling, as its "Who let him in?" was echoed by my "Who let them out?"

The Christian Scientists' idea of "church" is, or used to be,—and hopefully will return to being—a democratic and loosely connected organization of lay persons. No officer is ordained and the present church Board of Directors can be replaced overnight if a majority of members wishes.

However, like many self-perpetuating administrative bodies, this Board, over the years, has established an aura of irreplaceability and infallibility. It has mantled itself in the cloak of authority so that now any criticism or even advice is considered treason. Over time, this

situation has evolved into rule by a committee whose decisions are final.

How many times have I seen memos come down from the administrative office with the familiar sentence: "This Board directive is undebatable." Some office wags would change the word to "infallible," a sad but true comment.

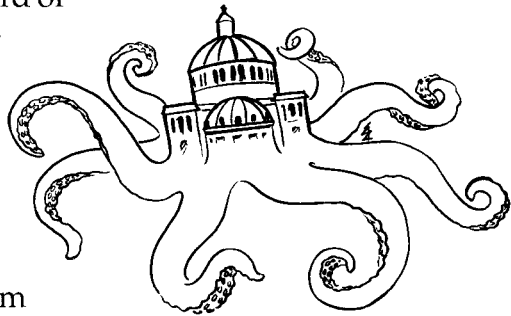
This regrettable attitude was brought home to me later, when I was on the Board of my local church. A suggestion was made as to a splendid outreach program we could undertake but the chairman shook his head. "We will have to check this with Boston first," he said.

"Aren't we capable of making decisions?" a member asked.

"Well," he replied, "I just feel that those five people on the Board, praying at their level, know what is best."

I couldn't fault him. The years of Boston brain-washing had paid off.

The Board's tyranny pervades every aspect of Christian Science, even the healing demonstration, as I learned from my experiences as a practitioner. If sincere, the practitioner is dedicated to a twenty-four hour a day job. That is what it means to be "in the practice." The next step is to be "listed in the *Journal*." Now the practitioner finds he or she has given up more than free time. The Board of Directors, Department of Branches and Practitioners and the C.O.P. have a strong hold on practitioners. To be dropped from



the *Journal* is akin to being sent to Siberia. One is immediately suspect and shunned.

The hold on Christian Science teachers (CSBs) is the most binding of all. Class teaching is mandated by the Board of Education, which is really the voice of the Boston Board of Directors. Each year the teachers are "invited" to visit Boston and the party line is reiterated. (Recently several independent, thinking CSBs bravely protested this regimentation, though what changes, if any, have transpired I do not know.)

The Kerry Letters

The Board's cover was blown in the early 1970s when Reginald Kerry mailed his first open letter to church members, explaining the situation.

I first met Reg in Santa Barbara when he was police commissioner, and a stalwart of his church. A few years later, in 1968, we were both speakers at the Annual Meeting of the Mother Church. In 1969, when I was hired as communications director, he was hired as head of security for the church.

We met again two years later when he brought the directors of the Carpenter Foundation to my lecture in Rhode Island. On behalf of the Board he had just negotiated a pact whereby the Carpenters would turn over their archives containing copious volumes of Mary Baker Eddy's letters and writings with the understanding that they would then be available for Christian Science church members to read. (The Board of Directors never lived up to this provision. Instead they buried this precious legacy in the bowels of the Archives, never to see the light of day.)

In 1975, when I was First Reader in my branch church, Kerry and I met again. Reg came to the evening service and afterwards we talked. He poured

out his heart to me and I to him. Our stories jibed completely. We had each thought we were the only ones who knew what was transpiring at “Headquarters,” and it was a blessing to discover that we hadn’t been just dreaming it all.

He told me that he was going to beg the Board to clean up its act or he would appeal to the members. They didn’t, so he did. Reg’s language was blunt and perhaps a tad rough at times, but, after all, he was used to dealing with law enforcement and they tend to make themselves undeniably clear. I later checked his account with several department heads. All confirmed that Kerry’s report was quite correct.

Kerry endeared himself to me a few years later. I had left the practice, was trying to return to my old profession, and found myself quite alone. (Nobody puts a bookmark in the place you left, especially in show business. They’re busy trying to fill it themselves!) Reg said, “Alan, I spent most of my own money sending out my letter to the Field but I have \$10,000 left over. It’s yours if you need it.” I didn’t need it, but he made it clear that his offer was sincere. That’s the Reg Kerry I knew.

The Kerry letters were also undeniably sincere, and they opened many eyes. Under threats of repudiation from church members all over the world, the Board of Directors flooded the moat around their new Church Center, lifted the drawbridge, and sat shivering through the siege, pausing periodically to launch a few arrows and spill a little boiling oil. Facing a barrage of charges ranging from questionable morals to unquestionable manipulations, the church administrators denied a few of the accusations, ignored the rest, fired those who didn’t salute their standard, then covered up and stone-walled.

The *Christian Science Monitor* was unfortunately caught in this regrettable family feud. Most of the *Monitor's* income and support comes from Christian Scientists and others in the United States. Church members and adherents began canceling subscriptions to the newspaper and other publications. Once a mighty news-gathering force, the *Monitor*, under-subscribed and understaffed, has struggled valiantly to continue to operate, but twenty-some years later it is not carrying out the role Mrs. Eddy intended for it—"to bless all mankind."

Many branch churches and individuals are continuing to withhold their donations to the Boston hierarchy until the house has been cleansed. How long can this siege continue? Some estimate a year or two before total bankruptcy. Others feel the movement has been dead for some time, but the body is being kept pulsating by intravenous feeding of administrative serum from the C.O.P., (as well as by the cannibalization of branch church assets by the "Mother" Church.)

Going way beyond the reasonable responsibilities of something named "Committee on Publication," this powerful division of the Boston Church has gradually become responsible for "investigative," "corrective" and "protective" activities throughout the church and world. The C.O.P.'s limited mandate is clearly stated in the *Manual*: Article XXXIII, Sec 2, which reads, "It shall be the duty of the Committee on Publication to correct, in a Christian manner imposition on the public in regard to Christian Science, injustices done Mrs. Eddy or members of this Church by the daily press, by periodicals or circulated literature of any sort." The C.O.P. has clearly overreached its authority. It has taken over all the programming of the Church, it advises in the policy-making, and it carries out extensive *policing*. Indeed, one

member of the Committee once told me, "The initials C.O.P. indicate that we *are* Cops!"

The C.O.P. played a major role in conning the U.S. Congress in order to extend a false copyright on Science and Health, a copyright which Mrs. Eddy had never asked for. This monstrous and deceitful act was later countermanded by Congress after a lengthy and costly court battle by David Nolan. Had any "lowly" citizen been guilty of such a ploy and perjury, they would now be making license plates in Sing Sing.

Unaware of this fratricidal in-fighting, the average student of Christian Science attends his or her local branch church, which is democratic, and supposedly independent of the Boston Church, as stipulated by Mary Baker Eddy's *Church Manual*. The student daily studies the textbooks—the Bible, and Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures by Mary Baker Eddy—and is generally so busy trying to put into practice what is learned each day that he or she doesn't have much time or interest in what's taking place in far off Boston.

Indeed, whether or not this local member will react at all when the Boston organization comes a cropper will be interesting to see. It may well be that this falling apart at the seams is, in reality, the dissolution of the cocoon which has so long bound the limbs of the entire body. We may find that, finally freed from these outgrown, stifling wrappings, the church body will flex and take-off, will "soar and sing" as our Leader, Mary Baker Eddy, has indicated was her great hope for us.

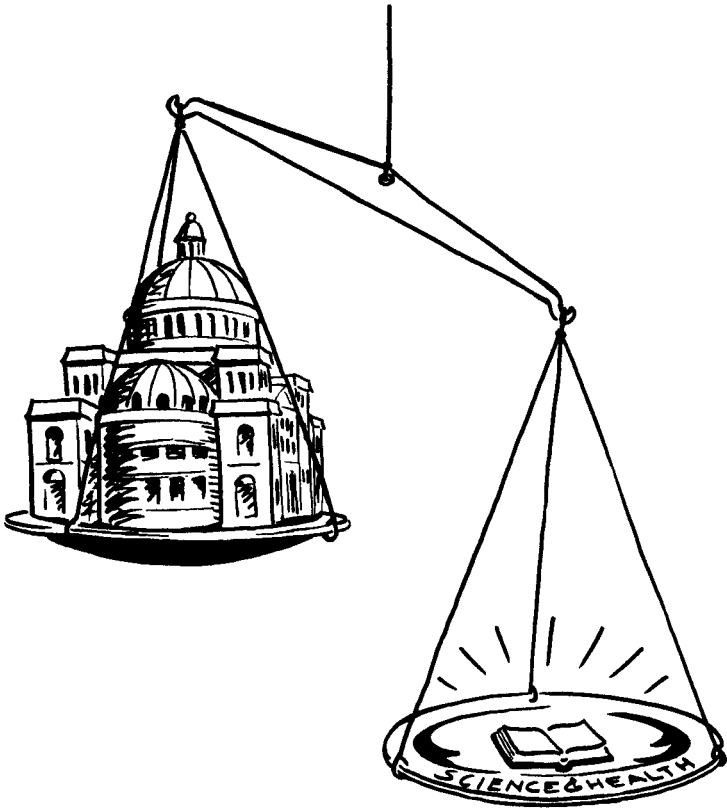
As for me, the lesson has been learned. Those things I believed, I believe in still, gratefully and quietly. I shall try to practice them effectively and unobtrusively. The burning bush is still voicing its message if we'll listen. The Sermon on the Mount still has its

simple but profound program of salvation, if we'll *live* it. It takes no committee, Board of Directors or administrative expertise to implement it. It's between the individual and his consciousness.



Part II

25 Years Later:
Boston Revisited



CHAPTER EIGHT

Which came first—the big church or the “little book?”

I think the critical question now is, what will benefit the movement most?

Most of the recollections in Part I were written twenty-five years ago, shortly after the events occurred. I had tried in every way possible to introduce better communication to help shore up the defects of the Boston bureaucracy, but they would have none of it. Now, in retrospect, I feel the goal was impossible, that the difficulties I experienced were the symptoms of much more fundamental problems. It is obvious to me that the “Mother Church” or Boston hierarchy is either collapsing or becoming irrelevant to Christian Scientists. Heretical as it sounds, I’m not so sure that’s a bad thing!

In *Science and Health* Mrs. Eddy writes, “To obey the Scriptural command ‘Come out from among them and be ye separate,’ is to incur society’s frown; but this frown more than flatteries, enables one to be Christian. Losing her crucifix, the Roman Catholic girl said, ‘I have nothing left but Christ’ ” (SH 238:9).

Are we saying that, having lost the symbol, the organization, we have nothing left?

In “Unity of Good” our Leader writes: “Disorganize the so-called material structure, and then mortal mind says, ‘I cannot see;’ and declares that matter is the master of mind, and that non-intelligence governs” (34:1).

Are we saying that? Are we saying, “My material structure has been disorganized, has disappeared and now I am lost”? I hope not.

In referring to Christian Science Mrs. Eddy uses the term: “...the Science that operates unspent” (*My*. 353:16). How can we be tempted by the illusion, the

mesmeric suggestion that Christian Science, the law of God, can be spent, ended, or even threatened?

At the crucifixion the disciples thought that their hope had gone—their Lord and teacher had gone. Peter, the rock upon whom the Church was to be built, had denied the Christ three times. Are we denying the Christ now by saying “He has gone?”

After the resurrection Jesus showed the world that the true body of man, and likewise of Church, was spiritual, indestructible, permanent, eternal. This is the message he gave to his faithful disciple John, to write in the Book of Revelation. It is when that revelation appears clearer and clearer, as the material so-called structure dissolves, that we behold a city built without hands, eternal—a city built foursquare.

In the Springtime, do we mourn when the blossoms fall from the tree? That natural activity signals that the fruit is coming. Without this dissolution of blossom there would be no fruition. This is the natural, inevitable order of things.

Hear some of the statements our Leader uses in regard to “Organization:” “But the time cometh when the religious element, or Church of Christ, shall exist alone in the affections, and need no organization to express it” (*Mis.* 144:32).

And again: “Despite the prosperity of my church, it was learned that material organization has its value and peril, and that organization is requisite only in the early periods in Christian history. After this material form of cohesion and fellowship has accomplished its end, continued organization retards spiritual growth, and should be laid off...” (*Ret.* 45:5).

And finally: “This period corresponds to the resurrection, when Spirit is discerned to be the Life of all, and the deathless Life, or Mind, dependent upon no

material organization" (SH 509:1).

Is it a coincidence that in Science and Health Mrs. Eddy places the word "decomposition" right after the word "organization"? (See SH 488:26.)

"But," we hear people say, "Mrs. Eddy didn't mean that the church structure should dissolve *now*."

Well, when *did* she mean it to happen? The statements just quoted show that she placed little or no faith in a continuing organization. In fact a careful study of the archival documents makes Mrs. Eddy's intent clear and unambiguous.

On April 12th, 1879 The Christian Scientist Association voted to organize a church and invited Mrs. Eddy to become its Pastor. She accepted and, as she writes, "...my church increased in members, and *its spiritual growth kept pace with its increasing popularity.*"

Ten years later, in November 23, 1889, she wrote to the succeeding Pastor of the Church, Reverend L.P. Norcross, "This morning has finished my halting between two opinions. This Mother Church *must disorganize*, and *now* is the time to do it, and form no new organization but the spiritual one. Follow Christ Jesus' example and not that of his disciples, which has come to naught in Science. Ours should establish Science, not material organization. Will tell you all that leads to this final decision when I see you."

She tells of this decision in *Prose Works*. "At this juncture," she writes, "I recommended that the church be dissolved. No sooner were my views made known, than the proper measures were adopted to carry them out, the votes passing without a dissenting voice. This measure was immediately followed by a great revival of mutual love, prosperity and spiritual power" (*Ret:44:23*).

Some students didn't understand why dissolution of the church was necessary but obviously their instant obedience to do exactly what she wrote and said brought about "mutual love, prosperity and spiritual power."

Instant obedience is feeble unless it's accompanied by complete, undissenting compliance, fearless of the future.

In 1890 The National Christian Scientist Association disorganized at Mrs. Eddy's request. Her request ended with the words: "...we all shall take step and march on in spiritual organization." They dissolved into what was an *ad hoc* assembly called "Voluntary Assembly of Christians." Later, when signing a land deed, Mrs. Eddy carefully noted that this group and Church was not a corporation but, rather, a "voluntary association of individuals."

Two years later, in 1892, Mrs. Eddy was urged by students to re-establish the church organization. In the following quotations from letters to the clerk of the Church of Christ, Scientist, in Boston in 1892, Mrs. Eddy's opposition to the idea is clearly evident, as is the difference she saw between the building of a church and the establishment of an organization:

March 23, 1892

Your only danger now lies in the past being repeated....I wrote you...not to organize a Church! Then it was reported that I gave the order to organize, but I did not....Again I repeat, do not (unless God speaks through me to you to do it), change your present materially disorganized—but spiritually organized—Church, nor its present form of Church government, and watch that the Directors are not carried to

propose or to make changes relative to the present forms of Church work.

May 8, 1892

I hope a word to the wise will again be sufficient. Hence my caution in this note. If you reorganize it will ruin the prosperity of our church....I have given full permission, or my poor consent, for the church to do anything she chooses. But I tell you the consequences of reorganizing and you will find I am right. Open the eyes of the church to these facts. I have consented to whatever the Church pleases to do, for I am not her keeper, and if she again sells her prosperity for a mess of pottage, it is not my fault.

May 10, 1892 (to the Church)

I have said you have my permission to reorganize, if you desire to do this. But I also realize it is my duty to say that our Father's hand was seen in your disorganizing, and I foresee that if you reorganize you are liable to lose your present prosperity and your form of church government, which so far has proved itself wise and profitable...

August 22, 1892

Drop all further movements towards chartering a church in Boston! God is not pleased with this movement that has been forced on me to attempt. Let there first be a Church of Christ in *reality*—*and* in the hearts of men—before one is organized.

These excerpts document Mary Baker Eddy's well-founded forbodings concerning material church organization, but they also show the extent to which she recognized and upheld her students' autonomy. This included the right to make their own mistakes, if necessary. When she saw the students' inability to understand and accept what she termed "a new rule of order in divine Science" (*Ret*:50:27) Mrs. Eddy gave in to a "suffer it to be so now" step. She reluctantly gave "consent for the church to reorganize," but now only as an unincorporated body, that is, *not controlled by human law*.

Given this fact, what was the Board's purpose in having the *Manual* *legally* interpreted immediately after Mrs. Eddy's passing? Was it their hope that, if they carefully hid the ten deeds of trust that make the *Manual* a legal instrument, her "estoppel clauses" could now be ignored based on a *legal* assessment? The Board has given little heed to the **moral** imperative of obedience to these God-inspired estoppels, which radically alter the nature of the Christian Science organization.

A letter from Bicknell Young written in 1937 states, "What we have now to run the Christian Science organization, our Leader never established. She set up two coordinating boards with deeds of trust to serve as a balance. Nothing has gone right since 1910 when she left; it has not been carried on according to Mrs. Eddy's intentions. Politics chiefly and financial pressure seems rampant, and the only answer to all this error is the Christ must prevail."

(All of these letters can be found in the Archives of the Mother Church, given to them by the Carpenter Foundation. Fortunately copies are also available in collections put out by the Carpenters in book form.)

As far back as my teens I had been puzzled by the “estoppel” clauses in the *Manual*. These are the rules governing those appointments that require Mrs. Eddy’s personal approval. They clearly indicated that without her permission or signature such appointments couldn’t be made. As Director of Communications I felt obligated to get the Board’s point of view on this question. Upon asking a Board member for their opinion he replied, “Oh, don’t bring up that old thing.” End of conversation.

Naturally I was not satisfied with this answer but “he was a Director and must have deeper information than I had.” A few days later my friend Clem Collins, the Publisher’s Agent, invited me into his office. In changing some files he had unearthed an old copy of Science and Health. It was one which Mrs. Eddy had used in her constant editing. The changes were in her distinctive handwriting, and one item I shall never forget. On page 442 line 30 the familiar statement originally read: “Christian Scientists; be a law to yourselves that mental malpractice can harm you neither when asleep nor when awake.”

She had crossed out the word “can” and written “cannot,” and changed the word “neither” to “either.” It was obvious that the slightest negative suggestion was unacceptable.

It is common knowledge that she pondered and prayed for months over a single word. It seems clear to me that this concern over the most minute detail indicates she meant exactly what she said with the estoppels. Indeed, archival records tell us that when some of the Directors begged her to cut these clauses out of the *Manual*, her reply was always that she “could not change what God had dictated.”

Maybe it’s time to try obedience. We have seen

where our refusal to listen to our Leader's wise counsel has taken us. The current disintegration of the Church organization did not come about through wicked people, or stupidity, or self-will, or mistakes, although that is what mortal thought would like us to believe, so that we may become mired in pointing accusing fingers at our fellow man.

We have been taught to look beyond the human picture, deceived and deceiving, and witness the operation of Principle. What would seem to be a darkened horizon is, in fact, a herald of the morning. In speaking of these adversities Mrs. Eddy writes: "When this hour of development comes, even if you cling to a sense of personal joys, spiritual Love will force you to accept what best promotes your growth" (SH 266:10).

Out of the ashes of a pre-ordained, necessary dissolution will spring the new growth of a spirit and purpose.

W. J. Brown, an independent member of the English Parliament, wrote an article in 1947 called "Imprisoned Ideas," in which he stated,

Whether the organization be political, religious or social is immaterial to my present argument. The point is that the idea, having embodied itself in organization, then proceeds gradually to slay the idea which gave it birth....

In the field of religion a prophet, an inspired man, will see a vision of truth. He expresses that vision as best he may in words....What he says is only partly understood by those who hear him and when they repeat what they understand him to have meant, there will already be a considerable departure from the origi-

nal vision of the prophet. Upon what his disciples understand of the prophet's message an organization, a church, will be built. The half understood message will crystallize into a creed. Before long the principle concern of the church will be to sustain itself as an organization. To this end any departure from creed must be controverted and if necessary suppressed as heresy. In a few score or few hundred years what was conceived as a vehicle of a new and higher truth has become a prison for the souls of men....The idea having given birth to the organization, the organization develops a self interest which has no connection with, and becomes inimical to, the idea with which it began....

Another element is....the factor of personal humility, the tendency to assume that, difficult as the thing seems, the leaders, after all, probably know best. Next there is the factor of sentiment. All of us tend to project on to the organization of which we are members the virtues which we would like to have, and to be blind to its defects. And, finally, men are gregarious creatures and dislike falling out of the ranks away from the comrades of years.

Gradually the organization changes. As it changes it attracts new elements which approve the change. Not because of conscious calculation, which comes much later when the idea has been de-

served, but because the organization develops its own logic, its own *raison d'être* and because men tend to become prisoners of the organization, *the organization can finish up by standing for the precise opposite of the idea which called it into being.*

We must be Servants of the Spirit, not Prisoners of the Organization....But all this was said long ago. It is all contained in one of the legendary sayings of Jesus which bears all the marks of authenticity:

"This world is a bridge. Ye shall pass over it. But ye shall build no houses upon it."

Bivouacs. Yes! Tents. Maybe!
Houses. No!

So suppose we do let go of the Mother Church? *Now* what do we do? Like the widow in Zarepath, are we going to take what little oil we have, make a little cake and then die? Or will we choose, instead, to gather all the vessels we have in the house, that they may be filled?

Well, what have we in the house? A little oil perhaps? We know what the "oil" is—"Consecration; charity; gentleness; prayer; heavenly inspiration."

What are the vessels? Well, we still have our Pastors, which are the Bible and Science and Health. We have our branch churches and Societies, but mainly we have our own individual study, spiritual understanding and demonstration.

In rebuilding "a Church of Christ in reality—and in the hearts of men," as Mary Baker Eddy urged, we are like Haggai rebuilding the temple, "...from the day

that a stone was laid upon a stone in the temple of the Lord" (Hag. 2:15). We are building with stones—"solid and grand ideas"—stone upon stone, idea upon idea, in a divine order.

Peter said, "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house" (I Peter 2:5). Oh, let us be "lively stones," building idea upon idea in the newness of Life.

Let's look back to a little over one hundred thirty years ago. There was no Christian Science Church; there was no organization; there were no Christian Scientists! There was one lone woman with a Bible—and a belief which became faith and then spiritual understanding.

Can we operate successfully without the "broad arms of the Mother Church"? How well have we done *with* the broad arms of the organization? This is not meant as a criticism or as hindsight, but here are the facts:

When Mrs. Eddy discovered and founded Christian Science the world population was approaching a billion. In this century nearly five billion people have been added to the population! There are now over five and a half billion people in the world. By the year 2032, it is expected to reach nine billion.

In a lecture recorded in a 1900 *Journal*, William P. MacKenzie stated there were, "in March, 1900, three hundred chartered churches and more than one hundred other congregations (societies) and new churches forming at the rate of six a month—10,000 devoted workers and 300,000 confessed adherents."

In 1910 there were over 1,000,000 adherents!

What is the Christian Science population today? Since 1950 it has been decreasing. There are less Mother Church members now than there were when Mrs. Eddy was physically with us.

Compare the number of practitioners in the *Journal* today with thirty or forty years ago. Count the num-

ber of printed testimonies as compared to the same time, and the quality and types of healings.

Again, this is not meant as a criticism, but simply to call attention to the facts. Why are people not turning to Christian Science as they used to? Is the medical profession healing everything? True, it is doing tremendously in comparison to fifty or sixty years ago, and humanity rejoices in the medical community's eradicating of heretofore tragic diseases.

But what of the new diseases that are appearing? And the life-threats that are materializing in so many different forms—war, hatred, famine, racial and family disorders, promiscuity, sensuality, crime, drugs, violence? There is greater need for healing than ever before in the history of mankind.

This should be no surprise to the Christian Scientist. Mrs. Eddy refers to "the convulsions of mortal mind," the "chaos" and "turbulence of mortal mind." She writes, "So let us meekly meet, mercifully forgive, wisely ponder, and lovingly scan the convulsions of mortal mind, that its sudden sallies may help us, not to a start, but to a tenure of unprecarious joy" (My 201:17).

Scanning the convulsions, the turbulence and the chaos we must realize that God is not shaking in his boots. Just think—with almost six billion people in the world today — *we* are a part of the tiny population who have been chosen to be Christian Scientists!

Not that we are egotistical enough to think that we are the only ones who will save the world. Principle operates through all ideas because they are the ideas of Principle. But we have a precious duty, and a *system*, and it will be crowned with success.

This system is a science—the Science of sciences. It is interesting that in our textbook of 599 pages Mrs. Eddy uses the word "Science" more than a thousand

times. She uses the word "religion" about forty times, and then generally in a negative sense. Could she be trying to tell us something?

"Dear readers," she says, "the time for thinkers has come." "Readers" and "thinkers" she calls us. But are we really *reading* Science and Health? Are we really *thinking* out what she wrote? She begins the Chapter on "Creation" saying, "As mortals drop off their mental swaddling clothes...." and she finishes the chapter by describing new clothing—"The robes of Spirit," "white and glistening" like the raiment of Christ.

Might this not suggest that the time for thinkers is *now* and that our swaddling clothes have fallen off so we may don the new garments of scientific demonstration?

"The time for thinkers has come," but are we thinking of this as a Science? Or are we simply thinking of it as a metaphysical belief or faith or religion, making it no different from the many other religions that are going down the tube?

In an article called *Principle and Practice* which was published in the *Sentinel* of September 1st, 1917 and which, for some reason, received little notice and no republication, Mrs. Eddy wrote, "The inclination of mortal mind is to receive Christian Science through a belief instead of the understanding... Christian Science is not a faith-cure, and unless human faith be distinguished from scientific healing, Christian Science will again be lost from the practice of religion as it was soon after the period of our great Master's scientific teaching and practice. Preaching without practice of the divine Principle of man's being has not, in nineteen hundred years, resulted in demonstrating this Principle. Preaching without the truthful and consistent practice of your statements will destroy the success of Christian Science."

So we have a Science—a workable, provable, teachable Science, based on the practice and demonstration of divine Principle. What more do we need? Does the science of mathematics need a board of directors or an organization in order to operate? Without committees to govern it, is the science of music helpless or unexpressed or inexpressible? These sciences are expressing themselves continually; with certain rules obeyed and laws applied, any of us can have them operate in our lives.

It is the same with the Science of Being which we call Christian Science. Certain rules obeyed and laws applied—with practice—can only result in complete and perfect demonstration. Christian Science is not demonstrated by committee nor does it need a “board” to direct it. It is an individual reflection, indicating the oneness of Being.

Remember, “One with God is a majority.”

Years ago, I phoned a tree specialist to remove a dead peach tree from my garden. Walking past the tree I felt something bump my head. One of the branches in this skeleton tree had leaves and blossoms on it and what bumped my head was the beginning of a tiny fruit.

“This tree isn’t dead,” the specialist said. “As long as one branch is alive, the tree’s alive.” Needless to say, the tree stayed and the man left.

The leaves of the branch weren’t affected or even aware of the rest of the tree. They were doing their individual duty of turning outward and upward, drawing their strength and supply from the sun and thereby passing



along whatever was needed.

A month or so later this one branch was loaded with the most delicious peaches I'd ever tasted and it blessed our table for weeks.

"As long as one branch is alive, the tree is alive." And as long as one leaf is alive, the branch is alive. So not only are we lively stones, we're living leaves!

We may be small in numbers but we can be big in spirit.

A short while ago a friend of mine in one of our large cities bemoaned the fact that due to congregation shrinkage they only had twelve Christian Science Churches left in the area. I told him that in the town in which I grew up we would have liked to have had twelve Christian Scientists.

Being the only Christian Scientists in our school was a challenge to my sister and me. The command to "Come out from among them and be ye separate" had quite a hollow ring to it. You can't come out much further when there's only two of you!

That's when humor helps. "Our community was so poor," we'd quip, "that when the depression hit we never noticed. Later we read about it in the papers.

"Passing the collection plate was quite a venture. We felt it was a demonstration if we got the plate back. It was a great step forward one year when the entire congregation chipped in and we bought a Quarterly.

"We couldn't afford hymnals but that was just as well, as the dear old lady who played the piano only knew Stephen Foster melodies. But we sang anyway!"

We knew first hand what it felt like to be a "remnant." So do most Christian Scientists today. So what can we do? There is a time to be still and know. I'm sure we've all been knowing, but haven't we been still long enough? Have we been in hiding?

The word "protectionism" comes to thought. A Christian Science friend of mine was a college football coach and one day he said to me, "You know, we Christian Scientists have been hiding the ball for so long we haven't noticed that the game has moved to another field."

Quite frankly I've been as guilty as anyone, insisting that my children attended schools for Christian Scientists, youth clubs for Christian Scientists, picnics for Christian Scientists, camps for Christian Scientists, parking lots for.... Well, you know what I mean.

Not that I'm against these activities, but the world is waiting for *example*, not precept. And how can examples be followed if the examples are not there, visible to the world?

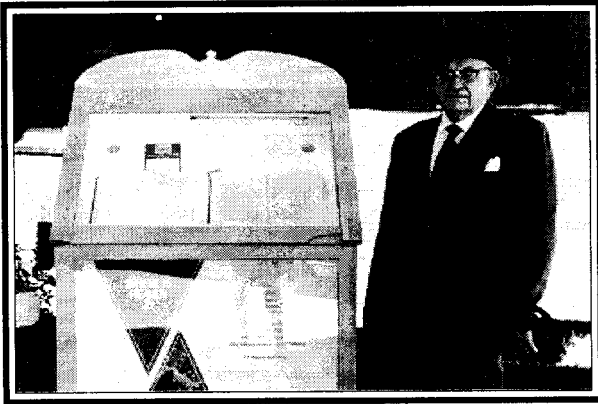
A single stone can have a significant impact. In 1972 I lectured in the little Christian Science church in Lead, South Dakota, where Mrs. Eddy's great-granddaughter was the lecture chairman of a church whose membership was four ladies. That evening at dinner George Glover, my hostess's father and Mrs. Eddy's grandson, told me that he had been sent to the hospital a few days before. As he had just begun to really study Christian Science, he took with him a cassette player and the tapes of Science and Health. He listened to them the whole time and consequently was soon up and about, much to the surprise of the doctor and the staff.

George added that not only was he healed, but he evidently played the tapes so loud that it healed the man in the bed next to him!

I received a phone call during that dinner. It was the doctor who had attended George, apologizing for not being able to attend the lecture because he had been miles away delivering a baby. He said he was so inter-

ested in George Glover's recovery that he wanted to attend the lecture and hear about Christian Science.

This would never have happened if George had gone to a nursing home for Christian Scientists. This does not mean there's anything wrong with a Christian Science nursing home. It just means that is not always where we must be.



George Glover with display case
he built for Lead, S.D. church

Sometimes a single leaf, just hanging in there, is all the example that's needed. A lady I met in Boston said that she had been trying for years to get her husband to attend church and study Christian Science, but to no avail. Then one evening at a dinner he met a man who was a Christian Scientist. Her husband talked with the man the whole evening. Later, on the way home, he said to his wife, "That man I talked to never mentioned Christian Science but he was so happy and interesting and there was just something special about him. If that's Christian Science I want to study it."

And he did.

It makes one ask the question: "If I were not a Chris-

tian Scientist and I met me—would I become one?"

"The tender word and Christian encouragement of an invalid, pitiful patience with his fears and the removal of them, are better than hecatombs of gushing theories, stereotyped borrowed speeches, and the doling of arguments, which are but so many parodies on legitimate Christian Science, aflame with divine Love" (SH 367:3).

The key word is "aflame." Not "sputtering" with divine Love, or flashing it. Aflame—constantly aflame. Not a flame-thrower, aggressively flinging fire. Just aflame. The seeker may simply need the heat, or the light. That's up to him, not us.

Example, not precept. George Glover was rejoicing in the Truth and it was overheard. The man at dinner was just rejoicing, and it was felt.

My father used to use an old Scottish saying: "Many a mickle makes a muckle." In other words, every little bit counts. Mrs. Eddy quotes the poem:

"What if the little rain should say
So small a drop as I
Can ne'er refresh a drooping earth,
I'll tarry in the sky."

We can't give up just because we seem insignificant. As the faithful remnant—a few lively stones—a single branch of living leaves—where do we start? What can we do? Well, first we can listen, listen to the need.

In a special survey done by independent, outside analysts years ago, church members throughout the world were interviewed about how the Christian Science Church could improve communications. Their conclusions made a lot of sense. Almost all those questioned stressed the importance of "one on one"—example, not precept. "Let our lives show our sincerity!" was their message.

They felt that the branch church is the natural place to begin to communicate with a community, and they emphasized something that should be obvious—that the community of the church in Paris, France, is totally different in culture and needs from the one in Paris, Indiana, and the Society in Ikot Expene, in Akwa-Ibom State in Nigeria, has a different community than First Church, Pasadena.

A member of a church in Columbia, South America, said that a recent radio program sent from Boston contained a testimony of a man from Chicago saying that he had made the demonstration over poverty. He had been so poor that he had to leave his car in the garage as he could not afford gasoline.

The native of Colombia delicately and humbly said that while he was grateful for the Chicago man's demonstration this sort of testimony would be hard to understand in his community where most of the natives would call it a demonstration if they could *live* in the man's garage.

A second similar report, also by independent analysts, focused on Christian Science youth. The researchers had interviewed young Christian Scientists at Principia and other Christian Science schools, as well as Adventure Unlimited and Sunday schools throughout the world. The youth report was exciting and refreshing, and it's interesting to realize that those young people of seventeen to twenty years of age could well be stalwarts in their churches today.

The youth dwelt in particular on their branch churches and Sunday Schools. I don't remember all of their requests and suggestions, but two of them stand out.

One came from a student who said that they had a large meeting room in their church which was used

as a Sunday School. Hence it was occupied only once a week for an hour and stood empty the rest of the week. He said that other churches in the community opened their auditoriums for local town hall meetings, civic activities and community talks. And how nice it would be if his friends and neighbors could utilize the facilities of *his* church and see that (as he said) "Christian Scientists loved their community, were quite normal and worshipped in normal surroundings."

The other statement I recall was from a young girl who had a most provocative suggestion. I saw notes in the margin which suggested that some of the church administrators who had read this report were also rather impressed.

She said, in essence, that she had grown up in her branch church from the age of three. She loved her Sunday School and her church and felt a little tug of sadness that she would be getting married and leaving her community. She said all of her "non-Science" friends had been married in the churches they had grown up in, and how she would love to be married in her church. She saw nothing in her branch church by-laws to prohibit this and it would certainly be informative and perhaps inspirational for the minister performing the ceremony, and her many school friends and their families, to finally be inside a Christian Science Church.

I saw these reports in 1968, at the beginning of my stint as Director of Communications. I later asked Erwin Canham, then editor of the *Monitor* and chairman of the Youth Committee which had authorized the surveys, what he thought of these suggestions. He was most enthusiastic and couldn't wait for some of the proposals to be enacted.

Inasmuch as these surveys had been made two

years before, I asked one of the administrators what the climate was for the investigation or implementation of some of these reports. He replied that with the current building of the new Church Center they all had their hands full and the reports had been put on back burner. In any case, many of these findings involved only branch churches, and the branches were not aware of these survey reports.

So my first finding as Director of Communications was that we Christian Scientists sometimes don't communicate!

Incidentally, I am sure these research reports are filed and available in the Mother Church. They may be over twenty years late but then—so are we!

And so we see that the branch church can do whatever the branch church wants. The Mother Church has **never** had authority over branch churches. (*Manual* page 70 Article XXIII - section 1) The only mistake that can be made is not what we might do, but what we might fail to do. Or fail to try. The only danger we face is not from without. It is from within.

Already we feel rumblings of splits and schisms. "Should this book be printed or shouldn't it?" "Did Mrs. Eddy mean this—or this?" "This teacher doesn't teach like my teacher." "These books could be classed as 'obnoxious literature.'" "I think the Jones' take aspirin now and again!"

Our movement is like a victim dying of thirst—crying for just a cup of water, and we're arguing over the color of the cup!

An ancient teacher once placed before his pupils a bound bundle of twigs. "Break this in half," he said. They all tried, but couldn't break the bundle. The teacher then untied the bundle, separated the twigs and broke them one by one.

Whenever there is an attempt to separate, separation itself is not the aim. The intent is the breaking of the individual. Let us not concentrate on, nor be mesmerized by, our differences but unite in our love for the Truth.

There is one area in which we must use great caution and watchfulness. For the past few years we have been seeing this phenomena in countries throughout the world. When the bindings or "swaddling clothes" of government fall away from any organization there is a great tendency for individuals to fly off in all directions. And then there is a cry such as went up from the children of Israel: "Give us a king!"

Some misled individuals feel the call of leadership from the depths of their personal inspiration. This is simply a cloak for false ambition.

Mrs. Eddy states, "What remains to lead on the centuries and reveal my successor, is man in the image and likeness of the Father-Mother God, man the generic term for all mankind." (My. 347:2)

"And how will (the church) be governed," they asked her, "when all now concerned in its government shall have passed on?"

"It will evolve scientifically," she answered, "Its government will develop as it progresses."

This is our challenge, to "evolve and progress scientifically, "stone upon stone," idea upon idea, building our church "...on the divine Principle, Love."

We have much work to do and many to work with us. We are not alone. In my travels and contacts with Christian Scientists here and abroad I have found as many or more individuals studying Christian Science *outside* the church membership as in it. In the textbook Mrs. Eddy says, "While respecting all that is good in the Church *or out of it*, one's consecration to

Christ is more on the ground of demonstration than of profession" (SH 28:9, emphasis mine).

Are we fearful of our Publishing Society being unable to *supply* the Lesson Sermon, or other inspirational writings? Why not use Lesson-Sermons which were approved by Mrs. Eddy herself? Could these blessed sermons possibly be "out of date?"

Where can you can find these Lesson-Sermons? Well, one source is The Bookmark, and another is the Rare Book Company, two avenues of pure, undiluted, timeless metaphysics, now used by countless *Journal*-listed teachers and practitioners as well as church members, including Mother Church administrators and workers. The Bookmark was founded and is administered by Mrs. Ann Beals, C.S., lifetime Christian Scientist, daughter of a former teacher and lecturer, and herself a former *Journal* listed practitioner.

The Bookmark and Rare Book Company are gold mines of Christian Science literature and archival treasures. Among these treasures are the writings of Helen Wright, C.S., whose books on our *Manual* shed great light on the Church's present situation. Her volumes on Mary Baker Eddy and Christian Science have been likened to taking Normal Class.

Here also you can find the work of John W. Doorly, CSB, of England who has written many books on the scientific evolution of Christian Science, as well as extensive works on the Bible in the light of the Science of Christian Science.

Rare Book Company also carries the work of Max Kappeler, a pupil of John Doorly and founder of the Kappeler Institute, dedicated to the revelation of Christian Science as a Science.

All of these miscalled "dissidents"—and friends, I have been called one of them—are totally dedicated

to our Leader's revelation and to showing her place in Bible prophecy. We must continually remind ourselves of Moses' admonition to Joshua, the son of Nun who said, "Eldad and Medad do prophesy in the camp....my Lord Moses, forbid them." Moses replied, "Enviest thou for my sake? Would God that all the Lord's people were prophets, and that the Lord would put his spirit upon them!" (Num. 12:27)

Despite all my negative experiences with the C.O.P. in Boston and everything I have seen of their stranglehold on Christian Scientists, I should and do feel great gratitude to them because of an event which took place a few years ago. The Boston office sent each of their local representatives in Los Angeles a report to be given to the branch church members "warning" them of a speaker, Dr. Max Kappeler, who was giving a talk in a local auditorium. The warning was so obviously biased and condemning that I took it upon myself to locate Dr. Kappeler and gain an appointment with him, something any C.O.P. could have done if he'd wanted to learn the true facts.

I said, "I want to ask you some pertinent, and perhaps, impertinent questions. He laughed and said, "Okay!"

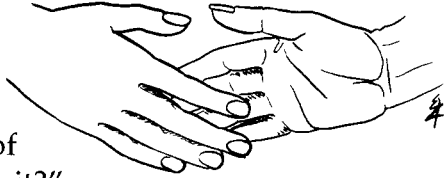
My first question was: "Are you desirous of taking Mrs. Eddy's place?"

He smiled. "I didn't know she'd gone anywhere," he said. Then he quoted her words: "Those who look for me in person, or elsewhere than in my writings, lose me instead of find me." (*My*. 120:2)

Humility and spirituality were so evident in his answers to my questions that I ended up attending not only this particular talk, but many others, as well as studying his writings on Christian Science, all of which turned the reader straight to Mrs. Eddy and her books.

So, as I said, I'm grateful to the C.O.P. for bringing this delightful man to my attention.

About fifteen years ago, when the Church began to face law suits and destructive media attention I spoke to Max Kappeler. I said to him, "If I could set up a meeting between you and the Board of Directors in Boston, though you both disagree in method and system, could you, in the unity of love for Mrs. Eddy and the cause of Christian Science, at least agree to 'hold hands' as it were in the spirit of brotherly love, especially in the face of what is now a concerted attempt to destroy the practice of Science. Would you do it?"



His answer was an unequivocal: "Of course. I would love to."

I went to a friend, a man who served on a State Committee on Publication, who realized the need for such cooperation and who favored the proposal. He was leaving for Boston and would present the idea to the Board of Directors and then get back to me. Two days later he called me. The answer? "Absolutely not!"

"Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee..." said Abram. That must be our watchword now. It is no secret that today the entire membership of the Mother Church world-wide could be seated in the Rose Bowl.

We need each other and the world has need of us, "and more as children than as men and women" (Mis. 110:4). Let us manifest the purity, love and forgiveness of the Christ-like thought. We have so much to give; and Love, Mrs. Eddy reminds us, is "infinite giving; Jesus gave on the cross—gave comfort to those hanging with him; compassion to his mother; blessing

to his disciples" (*Divinity Course and General Collectanea*, Richard Oakes, p. 213).

We do not need to fear forsaking all personal authority and organization, because we operate on the basis of divine authority. John Doorly said: "We are safe in the nobleness of God's interest." As our Leader reminds us, "The real Christian Scientist's compact is Love for one another...God is Love, and Love is infinite; realize this and you are safe from harm; nothing can touch you" (*Divinity Course and General Collectanea*, Richard Oakes, p. 224:7 and p. 20).



CHAPTER NINE

*Mary Baker Eddy:
Her "Pleasant View" and Infinite Vision*

Pleasant View was Mrs. Eddy's home for 16 years—the home she loved so dearly and from which she poured forth her love for us. From Pleasant View more than 380 editions of *Science and Health* went to press. Here Mrs. Eddy wrote *Retrospection and Introspection*, *Christ and Christmas*, *Pulpit and Press*, the eighty-eight *Church Manuals*, *Miscellaneous Writings*, *Christian Science versus Pantheism*, the three *Messages to the Mother Church*, *Poems*, and *The First Church of Christ Scientist and Miscellany*. From Pleasant View Mrs. Eddy wrote thousands of letters to students and performed many other time-consuming services for the cause of Christian Science, besides working daily for the world she loved, and for the healing of all mankind.

What happened to this shrine of Love after Mary Baker Eddy left the human scene?

The following account, written and published as a separate piece in 1980, is based on interviews and first hand accounts. My aim here is to give a brief history of Pleasant View's eighty-five year existence since Mary Baker Eddy said farewell. My hope is that this may bring into focus certain questions that an increasing number of Christian Scientists are asking:

Why was Pleasant View sold?

Why wasn't the Field told so that they might purchase it?

The Field's money paid for Pleasant View for more than 60 years; why were they not notified of the pending disposal of goods and properties?

Mrs. Eddy makes it undeniably clear that all con-

tributions from the Field must be accounted for. She wrote to the Board of Directors of the First Church of Christ, Scientist in Boston:

“Delay not longer to commence building our Church in Boston; or else return every dollar that you yourselves declare you have had no legal authority for obtaining, to the several contributors,—and let *them*, not you, say what shall be done with *their money*.”¹

One of my purposes in documenting these events is the hope that it might stimulate a ground-swell of interest and resolve that could reclaim Mrs. Eddy’s homesight in memory of her. It would not be a gravestone, but a landmark of her progress and accomplishments. A cursory glance at the *Concordance to Prose Works* tells us that most of Mrs. Eddy’s communications and inspiring articles and books were written during her sixteen year residence at Pleasant View. Isn’t this setting for her greatest victories worth keeping?

The most diabolically successful way to erode a message is to eradicate the messenger. Did this activity begin with the elimination of Pleasant View?

Paving The Path to Pleasant View

It is easy to gauge the success of a venture. You simply count the people who take credit for it. Mary Baker Eddy had brought her discovery through treacherous, stormy seas for over ten years, and by 1889 many hands were reaching for the tiller.

While professing great loyalty to their “beloved Leader,” pupils were going out into the world and immediately teaching and practicing their own brand of Christian Science. Some began publishing periodicals and, to meet all tastes, included a potpourri of spiritu-

¹ *Miscellaneous Writings* 141:26. [Emphasis the author’s]

alism and mysticism, along with their personal interpolations of her instructions.

Mrs. Eddy carefully avoided being drawn into the futile occupation of rushing about extinguishing the fires of insurrection. Instead, she strengthened her citadel and set an example for those around her, in "holding fast to that which is good."

Finally, necessity drew her to Chicago, the farthest she had traveled in her role as Leader of the Christian Science movement. It was a trip which had been set as a trap. Ambitious students of hers, members of a "National Association of Christian Scientists," wanted to found their own church and publications. When Mrs. Eddy arrived, expecting simply to attend a meeting, she discovered that, within a matter of moments, she was to be the key speaker!

The conniving members who arranged the program were anticipating and relishing the prospect of Mrs. Eddy's embarrassing debacle in front of thousands of Christian Scientists. They reckoned without her faithful, childlike receptivity and communicative ability. Mrs. Eddy extemporized a sixty minute address which was a model of metaphysics, and is an inspiration to this day.

Upon her return to her home in Boston, she found that her bedroom had been burglarized, and important documents relative to her development of the Christian Science movement were gone. This treachery came through those closest to her, obviously some of her own trusted students. The protective locks which were immediately installed on her bedroom door are still in evidence in the Commonwealth Avenue house, now the residence of the First Reader of the Mother Church.

Mrs. Eddy's triumph in Chicago heralded the

gradual ebbing of the splinters and schisms that had plagued the movement for several years. The Christian Science organization could now progress in relative peace, or so it seemed.

Mrs. Eddy was soon to obey a higher call to withdraw to the "Mount of Inspiration." The inspiration was to unfold the final establishment of her Church on a permanent foundation. The mount was Pleasant View.

Pleasant View Purchased

On March 8th, 1889, Mrs. Eddy left Boston for Barre, Vermont, explaining her departure through a short statement in the *Christian Science Journal*:

"...Inquiries are coming in from the 'four quarters'—For what purpose has Mrs. Eddy relinquished certain lines of labor in the field of Christian Science and called others to the work? Is she writing her history? or completing her works on the Scriptures? She is doing neither, but is taking a vacation, her first in twenty-five years. She is taking no direction of her own, or others, but her desire is that God may permit her to continue to live apart in the world, free from the toil and turmoil in which her days have been passed for more than a quarter century."

After a short stay in Vermont, Mrs. Eddy returned to Concord, rented a house on State Street and vigorously carried on her work. She was free, in a measure, from the thousand and one intrusions which, at times, threatened to inundate her in Boston.

On her daily carriage ride outside the capitol city of Concord, as she traveled along Pleasant Street, she must have looked out over the valley to the East, toward the friendly hills of her birthplace—Bow, New Hampshire. This peaceful remembrance of familiar sights and sounds gave her a vision which

might be termed in Ezekiel's words, a "Valley of Decision."

The vision symbolized itself in a small farm which she soon purchased, together with other parcels of land amounting to about seventy acres that sloped gently into the valley. This property she appropriately named "Pleasant View."

There was a farmhouse at the top of the hill to which she added several rooms for her staff. A small tower-room was added to the house where she could sit and view her loved valley, as love flowed out from her heart for all the world.

Can we who have been healed through Christian Science deny this tortured, triumphant, blessed woman a moment of lonely, peaceful reflection?

A thoughtful review of Mrs. Eddy's tormented history will reveal that Pleasant View was a plateau of peace for her. This Shekinah was in no way a self-indulgent interlude for recreation and relaxation. It was a pause in the climb, a moment spent in the "vestibule of Christian Science." Her Board of Directors, like Noah's raven, was flying to and fro in the world, viewing and reviewing problems. Mrs. Eddy, like the dove, was to bring home the solution.

In an outpouring of love, several students gifted her with a small pond which became the inspiration for her eloquent article, "Pond and Purpose" in which she states: "From my tower window, as I look on this smile of Christian Science, this gift from my students and their students, it will always mirror their love, loyalty and good works." ²

In response, a group from Toronto, Canada sent her a beautifully fitted and upholstered row-boat, deco-

² *Miscellaneous Writings*, page 203.

rated with Masonic insignia. A photograph of Mrs. Eddy riding in this little boat can be viewed in the Longyear Foundation in Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts.

In the late spring of 1889, she resigned as pastor of the Boston Church, resigned the presidency of the National Christian Scientists Association and turned over the ownership and management of the *Christian Science Journal* to a Publication Committee consisting of Joseph Armstrong, Edward P. Bates, William G. Nixon, Augusta E. Stetson and Caroline D. Noyes.

In August, she established an order of Church Service, making the textbook a definite part of the service. She requested the various church pastors to read corresponding citations from *Science and Health* and the Bible.

On September 23, 1889, she wrote to the Christian Scientist Association of the Massachusetts Metaphysical College, requesting that they dissolve the Association.

In February of the following year she stated that the Mother Church "must disorganize and now is the time to do it," announcing her intention of establishing her Church on a spiritual basis.

When it was evident that Mrs. Eddy was serious about divesting herself of organizational responsibilities, one of the executives of the *Christian Science Journal*, William Nixon, asked her to give him possession of the magazine. Mrs. Eddy refused this outrageous request, but this did not stop him.

The following year he became editor and commenced issuing his own instructions to the Christian Science Field. Some of his peculiar suggestions caused great upheaval not only within the ranks of Christian Scientists but throughout the religious world.

Mr. Nixon was relieved of his editorial duties

by the Publishing Committee. Then he promptly convinced them to establish a "General Association for Dispensing Christian Science literature." This was an arm of the Publishing Committee and its sole purpose was, quite evidently, to advise Christian Scientists *what they could and could not read!*³

Mrs. Eddy was quick to learn of this bureaucratic move and the following month the *Christian Science Journal* carried her card, which read:

Since my attention has been called to the article in the May *Journal*, I think it would have been wiser not to have organized the General Association for Dispensing Christian Science Literature.

1. Because I disbelieve in the utility of so widespread an organization. It tends to promote monopolies, class legislation and unchristian motives for Christian work.

2. I consider my students as capable, individually, of selecting their own reading matter, as a committee would be chosen for this purpose.

I shall have nothing further to say on this subject, but hope my students' conclusion will be wisely drawn, and tend to promote the welfare of those outside, as well as inside this organization.

In November, 1892, William G. Nixon resigned as Editor of the *Journal* with rather ungentlemanly and disrespectful insinuations leveled at Mrs. Eddy. Spurred on by these untrue allegations, Joshua Bailey, an

³ This was the first introduction of the concept of "authorised literature", a term which our Leader *never used* according to the *Concordances*.

ex-editor of the *Journal* and Augusta E. Stetson attempted to gain possession of the magazine. This, too, Mrs. Eddy managed to thwart.

Followers fell away, pupils strayed and teachers went into business for themselves, but Mrs. Eddy succeeded in welding the remaining faithful few into a nucleus of strength. It is obvious that she saw how uninspired ambitious pupils, short on spirit but long on organizational expertise, viewed Christian Science not so much as a revelation but as a money-making potential. This she could not allow.

Is it any surprise that she now surrounded herself with faithful, capable metaphysicians in every office of her Pleasant View household? The hatred and venom spewing her way from the disassociated bureaucracy was organized, constant and deadly. It was mortal mind with its tail stepped on; personal pride with its nose out of joint; formidable foes!

It is conceivable that, then and there, the carnal thought dedicated itself to the total eradication, not only of Mary Baker Eddy, but of her very memory. Pleasant View's ultimate extinction was promised. It took until 1977 to be fulfilled.

For sixteen years Mary Baker Eddy stayed at Pleasant View. It was the longest she had ever lived in one home, and not a moment of it was wasted. She wrote prolifically for the *Journal*, wrote thousands of communications to pupils, churches, newspapers and individuals throughout the world. She also completed three revisions of *Science and Health*, and guided the building and dedication of the original Mother Church.

She compiled the various rules and by-laws of the Church into the *Mother Church Manual* in 1895.

Her inspiring article, "Personal Contagion" was

written at this time, and she continued firming up her Church's outreach by founding the *Christian Science Sentinel*, establishing the Board of Lectureship, the office of Committee on Publication, and the Board of Education.

One of her few ventures from Pleasant View was to travel to Boston in April 1895 to visit the original Mother Church. She spent the night in the specially built "Mother's Room" and then surprised the congregation by coming down the aisle and giving an extemporaneous twenty-minute sermon.

Students from across the land were invited to Pleasant View to attend her memorable class of 1898 which was designed to impart a fresh impetus to the movement. In this class she asked the question, "How do you heal instantaneously?"

She followed this question with the much quoted simple answer, "...It is to love! Just live love—be it—love, love, love. Do not know anything but Love. Be all



*Mrs. Eddy with Calvin Frye
on the balcony at Pleasant View.*

love. There is nothing else. That will do all the work. It will heal everything; it will raise the dead."

Joseph Pulitzer, publisher of the *New York World*, began his scandalous and vicious attack on Mrs. Eddy in October, 1906, which culminated in the "Next Friends" suit.

Honest newsmen and papers throughout the United States rallied to Mrs. Eddy's support. Perhaps the most memorable individual, Arthur Brisbane, editor of the *New York Evening Journal*, traveled to Concord and interviewed our Leader at Pleasant View.

Mr. Brisbane admitted to being prejudiced against Mrs. Eddy. His attitude was soon to change. He asked her questions relative to her health, business ability and mental capacity. "Mrs. Eddy's mind, on all points brought out, was perfectly clear," he wrote, "and her answers were instantaneous."

In describing his farewell to her, he wrote, "Her face, so remarkably young, framed in the beautiful snow-white hair and supported by the delicate, frail, yet erect body, seemed really the personification of that victory of spirit over matter to which her religion aspires."

In August of 1907 the cross-questioning of our Leader by the Court took place in the drawing room of Pleasant View. After nearly a year of investigation and tribulation the case resulted in a total victory for Mrs. Eddy. Even those newspapers most antagonistic to her registered a change of attitude almost overnight.

This tremendous victory caused no great stir in Pleasant View. "When these things cease to bless, they will cease to occur," was Mrs. Eddy's only comment.

Her thought was far ahead of recent triumphs. The child-like thought doesn't voice yesterday; it speaks of today and tomorrow. Her year-long exposure to the sensationalism of yellow journalism laid the groundwork for the fulfillment of a carefully nurtured idea, "...a general newspaper owned by Christian Scientists and conducted by experienced newspapermen who are Christian Scientists."

In January, 1908, she left Concord without fan-

fare or announcement, to take up residence in Chestnut Hill, a suburb of Boston. Here she could be close to the Publishing House to supervise the establishment of *The Christian Science Monitor*, a newspaper she pledged should "...bless all mankind."

It is plain that her infinite vision, so clearly demonstrated in the idea of Pleasant View, would continue to work for the healing of the nations. A final reminiscence from one of her Pleasant View household reads:

At eight [p.m.] she always went out on the porch and sat in the swing until nine, which was the last general Watch Hour. I always felt that it was during this hour that she worked for the world and encompassed all humanity with her love, for when she came in to retire she often called me to her side to say good-night, and the love that she radiated was almost more than I could stand,—it affected me to such a degree.

The Exodus

The house so loved by Mary Baker Eddy, the site of so much diligent work on our behalf, might have stood for years as a cherished reminder of her dedicated efforts for Christian Science. Instead, a few years after Mrs. Eddy passed on, her home at Pleasant View was torn down. The land stood vacant until the early 1930's. It was then decided to erect a home where practitioners who had served the movement long and faithfully could live and continue their work.

Always an interesting trip for Annual Meeting attendants was a visit to Pleasant View with a side-trip to Bow where a pyramid marker, donated by the local

Masonic Lodge, indicated the old Baker homesite. This stone was the largest single piece of granite ever mined in the State of New Hampshire and was presented by the Masons as an exact representation of the capstone of the great pyramid in Egypt.

About thirty years ago the Christian Science Board of Directors issued an order that the marker be destroyed. It was dynamited to bits, and now an almost obscure marker indicates Mrs. Eddy's birthplace.

In the early 1970's, the decision was evidently made to sell Pleasant View, which had been home to practitioners for nearly fifty years. One of the reasons given for the sale was that there were almost no practitioners applying for admission as residents. However, in my investigation I found that new applications were being turned down by the Boston authorities, with no explanation offered!

On several occasions the administrator of the home made trips to various cities interviewing applicants. He found practitioners who met the requirements in every detail. Their qualifications were verified, their papers processed and forwarded to the administration in Boston—never to be heard of again! Discouraged, the Pleasant View representative decelerated enrollment.

The first indication given the Pleasant View staff of the impending sale came from residents of the city of Concord. A staff member told me that one of his "non-Science" neighbors asked if it was true that the home was to be sold. "Of course not," the neighbor was assured, but the staff member felt uneasy.

A more definite indication occurred in the fall of 1975. Management of the home was told by Mother Church officials that appraisers from the city of Concord were coming to Pleasant View and the staff was

requested to extend every courtesy to them. This was done, and now the uneasiness among the members of the staff was more apparent.

In November the manager was called to the Mother Church. There he was told that Pleasant View was going to be sold. He was informed that a member of the Board would visit Pleasant View to notify the staff and residents. Until then he was to keep the news to himself.

The manager did not obey the Board in this request. He felt that the news would have a disturbing effect on the residents, and the staff's full attention should be given to caring for those in distress. If the staff was also in a state of shock it might prove most alarming.

As the Pleasant View officials pointed out, people of advanced years find sudden change and uprooting most difficult to handle. Adjustments which are simple to the young can be difficult processes for these of riper years. So, while acknowledging the Church's predicament, and abiding by the decision, they hoped for a gentle and thoughtful implementation.

About the second week in December, 1975, the Christian Science Board member came before the assembled guests.

On the day of the Board member's visit, members of the staff were positioned in various posts throughout the room to be of assistance to the residents when the announcement was made.

The Board member commented briefly on the beauty of Pleasant View and how she had not visited it for some years. Then she dropped the bomb in two sentences. "The Church Center in Boston cost more than anticipated," she said, "and Pleasant View will have to be sold."

In a question period after the announcement, a

resident asked why the Board had spent so much money on the Center. The answer was that the Church now had a complex that could take care of the movement for the next 300 years. The residents were more concerned about the next three years. Or, more specifically, the next few months.

They were informed that there was no rush. Efficient representatives of the Church would be sent to Concord in a few days. Every resident would be interviewed as to his or her preference in finding a new home. Perhaps they would like the Chestnut Hill BA, San Francisco, or any other Christian Science facility under Mother Church authority. These were at least soothing thoughts for the guests.

The promised interviewers never arrived. Instead, a notice came to Pleasant View management that the residents would be moved out in two weeks. The manager refused to comply, saying that the relocation interviews had not taken place and it was physically impossible to move in such a short time, especially since the Christmas holidays were only a few weeks away.

The Church officials promised that the guests could stay until after Christmas and, after several delays, sent up interviewers to talk with both the residents and the associates.

Immediately after Christmas the exodus began. Small groups of residents were placed in buses, escorted by staff members. They were transported to the Chestnut Hill Benevolent Association, with U-Haul trucks carrying their trunks and other personal belongings. These trips continued daily until Pleasant View was evacuated. When one has met these practitioners and realizes that they spent most of their earthly years in obedience to the organization, and dedicated them-

selves to the alleviation of the ills of mankind, the pathetic wagon-train into Boston rings a distinct and discordant chord.

The trek was completed by the end of January and Pleasant View again stood empty.

I had been told by one of the administrators of the Mother Church that most of the residents were in favor of the move because of the rigors of the Concord weather, and the inaccessibility of transportation. A Pleasant View spokesman assured me that this was not the case. "Is the weather at Chestnut Hill any kinder?" he asked.

He said that many of the residents had been in Pleasant View so long it was almost the only home they could remember. One lady who had lived in the home for 17 years was completely blind but could find her way, unaided, anywhere in the area.

A Mother Church spokesman told me that the Church was not in the retirement home business, and the expense of running Pleasant View was becoming burdensome on Church finances. This, of course, is reasonable and understandable, especially under present conditions.

After the residents had left, the staff stayed on for a short while until the furnishings of the home were disposed of. For this purpose a decorator was hired who had, conveniently, been doing some work for one of the Church Directors. The decorator was given \$1,000 per week, an expense account, and contracted to receive 10% of the sales. It was also reported to me that she stayed at Pleasant View and availed herself of the dining facilities even while the Church was paying her for hotel accommodations.

Memorabilia, antiques, *objets d'art* and furniture were priced and tagged. Then the staff and various Christian Scientists were allowed to view the items and make purchases if they so desired, or could afford to.

One individual who was there told me that he would have loved to have purchased one object which had been in the home for many years but the price was far beyond his means. This must have been the general reaction of those present as very little was sold at this time.

Immediately after the first sale the decorator lowered the prices. Groupings of finer pieces were sold to various dealers at a lesser charge without the previous Church-buyers being aware of the lower cost. Then the doors were open to the general public.

My friend said he sadly watched the piece he had wanted go for a lower price to an individual who undoubtedly didn't know, and consequently couldn't fully respect, the antique's precious history. It was later reported to me that the decorator made a "small fortune" on the commissions and other income from the sale of all the furnishings.

The staff was appalled at the bargain-sale atmosphere that went on before the doors were opened. Towns-people and out-of-town professional dealers "literally pushed, shoved and even fought for position."

Most of the staff couldn't bear to watch this animalistic circus and retired to the kitchen. There, one of them told me, were two men who had worked at the Home for many years. Now they sat with tears pouring down their cheeks. One said aloud, to no one in particular, "I never thought I would sit here and witness the rape of Pleasant View."

The little boat, a gift from grateful Canadian Christian Scientists, was rescued from the attic, and was immediately claimed by Church authorities. It is now gathering dust in the Mother Church basement. The house at the foot of the property, once occupied by Joseph Mann and his sister, now sits empty and rotting.

After Pleasant View was vacated, a local, impar-

tial appraisal of the home and acreage was made. The appraisal was close to \$10,000,000. For some unexplainable reason the Board of Directors of the Mother Church negotiated the sale of the property for \$4,500,000! They also stipulated that the property would never be used as a medical facility.

Suddenly, this stipulation was removed by the same Church Board and the entire property was sold for a little over \$2,000,000! It is now a medical facility—a New Hampshire home of the insane.

Beloved Pleasant View—A Final Note

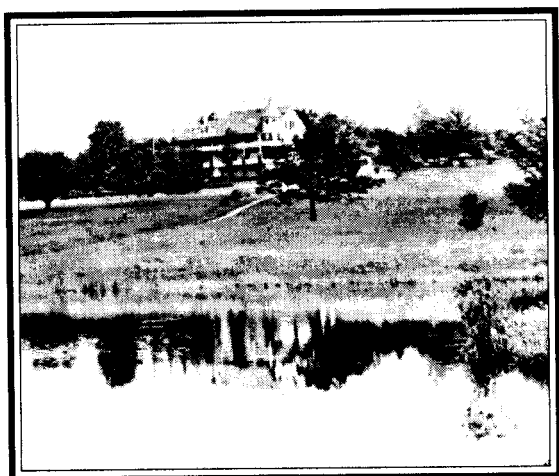
The Board believes it was empowered with certain legal rights by Mary Baker Eddy and that, over the years, it has somehow acquired others. It maintains that it had every right to dispose of Pleasant View, but what of its moral obligation to the incredibly tolerant Church members?

For over sixty years the Field had been obeying Board solicitations, and contributing generously to the maintenance of Pleasant View. They had gratefully purchased the famed “balcony picture” of Mrs. Eddy speaking before an audience at her home. Now suddenly, none of this meant anything. Their property was sold without the members even being given the courtesy of a chance to redeem it.

Few Christian Scientists were aware of this tragic and unbelievable transaction. Few know even today. I heard of the imminent sale in December of 1975 and immediately began to call people in an attempt to find alternatives. I spoke to the man who had been designated by the Christian Science Board of Directors as the sales agent. He gave me a long, confusing rationale and I realized it was too late. The job was done quietly and quickly—a little like a mercy-killing. Having witnessed

a great deal of the Boston Church administration, I knew the decision of the Board was final and undebatable. Any attempt to protest at this time was like throwing marshmallows at a tank.

In closing it seems fitting to re-read Mrs. Eddy's statement from *Pond and Purpose*: "From my tower window, as I look on this smile of Christian Science, this gift from my students and their students, it will always mirror their love, loyalty and good works."



Pleasant View as seen from the pond—decades ago

Always, dear Leader? The tower window is gone. Pleasant View is gone. The "smile of Christian Science" evidently does *not* "always mirror their love, loyalty and good works."

Your own followers and Church officials have begun what none of your enemies could manage—the eradication of your place and memory.

The pond is no more, but does the purpose still live? Let us answer ourselves at once and answer aright!









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