

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

DR. AKED'S CONGRATULATIONS

THE CHURCHES may now add to Mr. Rockefeller's responsibility for the taint of wealth, that through his university he has tainted the nation's theology. George Burman Foster has finally been ousted from membership in the Chicago conference of Baptist ministers.

But he still remains a member and a minister of that denomination, as well as the professor of comparative religions in what is generally known as Mr. Rockefeller's Baptist University. It was a merry war, filled with expletives and unchurchly heat, which ended Mr. Foster's ministerial affiliation.

But now comes Dr. Aked, pastor of the Fifth Avenue Baptist church of New York, "the Rockefeller church," and agrees with the professor, though he can see no excuse for a book dealing with the fundamental tenets of the Christian religion, and "dashed off in thirty days," like a best seller.

He approves, however, of its purpose, which he says was to supplant the foundations of the faith of our fathers with something unbelievers may believe, but which more likely was to put cash in a purse that felt a money hunger.

Dr. Aked also congratulates "the whole church of God" upon the admission to the Presbyterian ministry of three young men who refused to accept the birth of Christ as miraculous, or the story of Adam and Eve as told in Genesis, or some of the miracles of the New Testament as authentic. He calls them "young men

who think and are prepared to advance in the fulness of Christian thought and Evolution."

– Duluth News Tribune.

THE ROMAN CATHOLIC REPLY TO CHRISTIAN SCIENCE

"Current Literature," presents briefly the Roman Catholic reply to Christian Science, as set forth by the Rev. L. A. Lambert, LL.D., as per the following extract: –

According to Mr. McCrackan, "Christian Science teaches that there is but one God, a God who is Infinite Spirit and Creator, the universe, including man, consisting of an infinite number of expressions of this One Spirit." This conception of God seems to approach the Christian concept; but actually, Dr. Lambert contends, it is something very different. As he puts it:

"You say, 'God is Infinite Spirit.' Why not say an Infinite Spirit? Why persist in avoiding the individual article an? You say, 'God is Infinite Creator,' but in the same sentence you deny that he is Creator when you say the universe, man included, consists of an infinite number of expressions of the One Spirit, or God. If by 'expression you mean that the universe, with all its phenomena of changes and individuations, is only subjective changes and evolvments of the Deity, you should say it frankly, as the Pantheists do, and take your place among them, and drop the word Creator from your philosophy. If you mean by the word Creator what Christian philosophy means by it – the production by God, from nothing, of things distinct from himself – you should drop the term 'expression' and use the word Creator. Exact science does not tolerate the use of both these terms in the same sense. Not the least objection to Christian Scientists is their misuse or vague, non-committal use of terms; it is characteristic of all their literature."

Christian Science, Mr. McCrackan asserts, "does not deny the existence of the universe. It does not question the reality of a single object in the universe. But it teaches that this reality is an expression of mind, and not matter." But this statement, Dr. Lambert holds, is a mere subterfuge. "There can be no doubt," he observes, "that Christian Science denies the reality of the universe in the sense that Christians affirm it. In saying it is an expression of mind they deny its creation; in saying it is not matter they contradict the common sense of mankind." The argument proceeds:

"Christian Science denies the real existence of the typewriter by means of which Mr. McCrackan wrote his letter, and the paper on which he wrote it, and the train that brought it to us. All these, it tells us, are mere mental expressions, having no real existence outside of and distinct from the Divine Mind. The bullet that entered the body of President McKinley was only an idea of a bullet existing in the Divine Mind, as was also the President, and the assassin who killed him, and the chair in which the assassin sat to receive the idea of a death shock from an idea of electricity, is only the idea of a chair, existing nowhere but in the Divine Mind. And the human mind that believes in the material reality of the bullet that killed, and the wretch who shot it, and the chair that he sat in, and the electricity that killed him, is, according to Christian Science, a mind victimized by delusions and hallucinations. The assassination was, in reality, only a clash of incompatible ideas in the Divine mind, and one of them went down into the idea of a grave, which also exists only in the Divine Mind; and the idea of a government of the State of New York sent the other antagonistic idea to the Divine idea of a grave. And the idea of the world will continue to revolve – in the One Mind – as heretofore."

From this fantastic statement of the implications of Christian Science, Dr. Lambert passes on to an affirmation that the new

creed is sheer Pantheism. The very essence of Pantheism, according to his definition, is the denial of the creative act. "Those who hold to that ism," he remarks, "do not say that God is in matter, but that all that is, is God; that all the phenomena of which we are conscious are but the visible unfolding or evolvment of the [R4471 : page 276] Divine nature, as the rose unfolds itself, all unconscious of what it does; and this universe, as seen by us, is to God what the surface of the ocean is to the ocean, whose waves and bubbles rise and fall back into it, never ceasing in all their changes to be a part of it. Pantheism looks on the universe and all its changes – including thought – as phases or forms of the Divine Being, evolving and ever to evolve or unfold, by a fatal necessity." But this is precisely what Christian Science teaches. Addressing himself directly to Mr. McCrackan, Dr. Lambert says:

"As you deny the existence of all spirits except the Infinite Spirit, and deny the existence of the material world also, there remains nothing in existence but the Infinite Spirit; hence you can, by the term 'expression,' mean only some form, state or change of this Spirit Himself. The term 'expression,' then, in your sense, clashes with creation; it goes further, and denies creation, leaving nothing but subjective change, development or evolvment of the Infinite Being. This is Pantheism pure and simple. You may not intend this, but it is the inevitable conclusion from your Christian Science principles.

"You confirm this conclusion when you say: 'The only real universe is mental. Things are thoughts.' That is, thoughts in the mind of God. If things are nothing more than thoughts, existing only in the Divine Mind, then things – this universe – are eternal, for God's thoughts are eternal and unchangeable. Consequently, there never has been a creation; for, had there been, there would be something more than thoughts. There would be thoughts plus their realization in time and space by the creative act. You see,

then, that when you deny the existence of everything but thought, you deny creation. It will not do to say that God created his thoughts, for that would necessarily imply that he had to do something – create – before he could think – a supposition too absurd for a sane mind. To say, therefore, that only divine thoughts exist is to deny creation and fall into Pantheism. While you hold such views you should eliminate the term 'creation' from your Christian Science vocabulary; it has no place there whatever.

"In contrast with this is Christian philosophy, which teaches that from all eternity the archetypes, patterns or exemplars of all things that have real, substantial existence were in the Divine mind, as the plan of a yet unbuilt palace is in the mind of the architect, and that by the creative act of Divine Omnipotence copies or replicas of these eternal archetypes were brought from nothing into real being, separate and distinct from their Creator. Here it will be seen that the creative act is the mark of distinction between Christian teaching and Pantheism in all its forms, including Christian Science as one of its forms."

Proceeding to an examination of the Christian Science attitude toward evil and "mortal mind," Dr. Lambert quotes this statement of Mr. McCrackan's:

"The use of the word 'Mind' in Christian Science deserves special notice. Spelled with a capital M it is synonymous with Spirit. Thus God is spoken of as Mind or Spirit. Spelled with a small letter, mind is used to designate that human mind which rises in rebellion against the Divine Mind – that mortal mind which attempts to counterfeit the Immortal Mind. This Mortal Mind is the 'carnal mind,' spoken of by Paul, and is the fruitful source of all sin and sickness. It is – not to put too fine a point upon it – the lying serpent, the devil, which tries to separate man from his Creator."

This method of distinguishing the Divine Mind from the human mind is credited by Dr. Lambert with originality, if with nothing else. But it leads, he thinks, to an identification, rather than a differentiation, of the two kinds of mind. For if the Divine Mind is all, how can the existence of mortal mind be even imagined? To quote verbatim:

"The logical conclusion is that the human mind, alias mortal mind, alias the lying spirit, alias the devil, is an expression or mode of the Divine Mind. It cannot be anything separate and distinct from the Divine Mind, since according to the writer above quoted, what ever is not that Mind or a mode of it is absolute nothingness. A further conclusion [R4472 : page 276] is that sin, sickness, the spirit of rebellion and counterfeiting, the lying serpent and the devil, are in and of the Divine Mind and have no existence outside of it. They are all, therefore Divine in their nature, as the Mind of which they are but an expression or mode is Divine. The Universe, including man, is only an eternal thought existing in the Divine Mind, having no corresponding external reality. All the evils of this life of our conscious existence, sin, sickness, pain and death, are only ideas in the Divine Mind! Such, it seems to us, is the god whom the Christian Scientists call Infinite Love, Perfection and Truth!"

There is, we are told, no escape from this dilemma. Either "mortal mind" was created by God, or it was not. According to Christian Science, it was not. The sole remaining alternative is that of an uncreated mind apart from God. Dr. Lambert says:

"You tell us that this being was not created by God. As it could not create itself it is, therefore, eternal, because uncreated. You have then an eternal liar eternally facing and defying God; one the origin of good, and the other the origin of evil. This dualism is the necessary result of what you say of mortal mind. It

is Manichaeism, that combination of Magism and Buddhism that was condemned by the Christian Church in the third century."

In his consideration of the therapeutic methods on which so much of the success of Christian Science rests, Dr. Lambert has little or nothing to say of the results accomplished. He makes some telling points, however, against the theories that underlie the methods. When Mr. McCrackan urges, "It does not appear that Christ and the Apostles taught that God healed the sick by material means," he replies: "Neither does it appear that they taught that God appeased the hunger of the hungry by material means. There was no need to teach what everybody understood and believed. The fact that our Lord and his Apostles did not contradict the common and universal belief is the best possible proof that the belief corresponded with the truth." He goes on to argue:

"When the deaf, the dumb, the blind and the paralyzed came to him to be healed, what more opportune time could there be to correct the errors of their mortal minds by telling them that their diseases were only in their deluded minds and not in their bodies, for they had no bodies to be diseased, no ears to be deaf, no eyes to be blind, no limbs to be paralyzed. Instead, however, of talking in this Christian Science vein, our Lord received the sick and treated the diseases they complained of as real bodily diseases, and used his supernatural power to miraculously heal them. The leper said: 'Lord, if Thou wilt Thou canst make me clean.' And Jesus put forth his hand and touched him, saying, 'I will; be thou clean,' and immediately the leprosy was cleansed. – Matt. viii. 3. No suggestion here of error of the leper's mortal mind. All is real, both the leprosy and the miraculous cure."

The Christian Science theory of healing, it is contended, can not claim a New Testament basis. It involves its exponents, moreover, in a dilemma almost as bewildering as that raised by

the theory of "mortal mind." For Christian Scientists, be it remembered, teach that the material body, even when eaten by cancer or tortured by pain, has no real existence outside of mind, and that as existing in the mind it is a delusion, a phantom lie told by the mortal mind to itself. They teach that the testimony of the five senses, which bear witness to the reality of our material bodies and the material universe about us, is not good testimony, for it has to be constantly corrected. And yet they at the same time claim – in proof of their doctrines – that they have effected many cures. Dr. Lambert points out:

"Now these three positions make it necessary for the Christian Scientists to answer the following questions: How can their claim to have healed diseases be proved? How can they get their evidence present to our consciousness, or before the court of our mind, except through the senses? And if we cannot rely on the testimony of our senses how can we know that the cures they claim to have effected are real cures and not delusions?"

In illustration of his point, Dr. Lambert offers the following short dialogue:

"Christian Scientist: – We have cured many diseases.

"Christian: – Give us a case in proof. **[R4472 : page 277]**

"Christian Scientist: – Well there is the case of John Doe, who had a cancer on his cheek. You see, it is now entirely healed. Nothing but a scar remains.

"Christian: – It would seem so, and I would be inclined to believe it were it not that you have told me that my senses are not to be trusted. My senses are the only means by which I can know that the cancer has been healed. Now, as you say they deceive me, I cannot say on their testimony that I know anything about the cure which you speak of. Therefore, until you admit that my

senses are credible witnesses, I cannot admit any of your claimed cures.

"Christian Scientist: – But I can bring many other cases.

"Christian: – But the same difficulty remains as in the cancer case. Before your cures can be proved to me you must admit that my senses are reliable witnesses, and if they be reliable enough to prove your cancer cure they are equally reliable when they tell me that the cancer was a real one and that the body it was on is a real material body, and not a mere idea existing in some mind. You cannot use the testimony of the senses to prove your claimed cures, and reject it when it disproves your doctrine. It is good in either case, or it is good in neither."

The attempt to give Christian Science philosophy a Christian purpose, direction and end is pronounced by Dr. Lambert utterly futile. "It is the antithesis of Christianity," he says. He sums up the whole matter thus:

"Christian Science is a revulsion against gross materialism. It is the opposite extreme. Materialism denies the existence of everything that is not matter: Christian Scienceism denies the existence of everything that is not spirit or mind. They are both errors, equidistant from the truth, which is that both material and spiritual beings exist."

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