

## Science and Health and the Church Manual

*Jesus: Pentecost: Mary Baker Eddy: Today*

*W. Gordon Brown*

### **PART I SCIENCE AND HEALTH**

#### **Human Law and Divine Law One in Coincidence**

As signified by her several legal Deeds of Trust and their relationship to the Church Manual, the solution to the problem of organic life comes only when the human law of the land is caused to reflect, and therefore be subordinate to, the divine law of God, until the two are one. Hence the need for Science and Health, as the law of God itself, to be put into life-practice through all that is represented by the liberating By-laws of the Manual. In proportion as this is done, material, serpentine mis-called law will cease to control the human race.

Never, therefore, was the hand of divine wisdom more apparent in the Founder's mission than in the following historical facts, brought recently to light by Christian Scientists working independently of the Boston church. In the year 1903, a few months after she had added (in the Manual only) a fifth Director to the original four, she instituted a series of legal Deeds requisite for the building of the Mother Church Extension. And this she did, not in favour of the new body of five (Manual) Directors, but in favour of the four to whom the original Deed of 1892 was given, which launched the second phase of her church organization, known specifically as The Mother Church.

Yet, in this original 1892 Deed, as already noted, the church is nowhere called The Mother Church, but The First Church of Christ, Scientist, in Boston, only. And this title remained unchanged in the several Deeds that related to the Extension, drawn up in 1903.

An act of far-seeing spiritual genius was being put into operation. For it was in these 1903 Deeds that Mrs Eddy was led to incorporate, under what she called "further trusts (Man 137), the final By-law in the Mother Church Manual, requiring that no Tenet or By-Law should ever be amended or annulled without her written consent.

The marvel was that by including this By-law in the new legal Deeds, the civil law of the land was itself empowered to

bring into operation humanly the divine law of God, so making human law and divine law one. And this world-regenerative spiritual idea of law would (ideally) come into force at the time of Mrs Eddy's passing in 1910, or, failing this, at such time as the civil authorities were caused to acknowledge and understand her unalterable legal provisions. It is on record that as far back as 1898 Mrs Eddy had voiced the prediction that one day the Manual would be "regarded as law by law." She said, "This Church Manual is God's law . . . and will be acknowledged as law bylaw. I mean by the laws of our state, even if it has to go to the highest courts" (Clara Shannon, Golden Memories, p 14).

Then would the church as an outside ruling Mother be spontaneously self-dissolved; then would the branch churches (under God alone) be free to fulfil their individual and collective missions; then would the church in Boston assume its original identity as The First Church of Christ, Scientist, in accordance with its name in its several legal Deeds; then would the "mother" aspect of this church, like the body of Jesus before it, ascend as pure idea to "the right hand of the Majesty on high" (Heb

1:3), its mission divinely accomplished.

The continuing operation on earth of Mary Baker Eddy's church would be seen then as the branch of God's own planting, the work of God's own hands, that God himself might be glorified (Isa 60:21).

### **Study of the Two Books: Textbook and Manual**

In our pursuit of the subject of human liberation from the dictates of ecclesiasticism, let us, at this point, establish our bearings first in terms of the first sixteen chapters of our divinely foursquare textbook, and, after that, turn to the text of the sixteen main headings under which the Rules and By-laws of the Mother Church Manual are ordered and arranged.

At the same time, and in each case, let us bear in mind the parallel sequence of the sixteen sections of text (including the 23rd Psalm at the end) which make up the textbook's sixteenth chapter, "The Apocalypse." For, as we shall see, these sixteen sections are precisely correlative not only with the sixteen chapters, but also with the sixteen sets of By-laws themselves; and it is helpful metaphysically to conceive of all three sequences as they unfold in relation one to another.

First, then, the sixteen chapters of the textbook, and, secondly (starting p 56), the sixteen departments of the By-laws.

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