

no noble men and women in New York. They are here, but they exercise no influence upon government and as paradoxical as it may seem, they are in one sense as selfish as the typical Wall street crowd. They make no effort to stem this tide toward the degeneration of the race by changing the government.

There is no possibility of changing these putty faced millions during this generation. They will continue "to vote 'er straight" and each will follow his political "boss" with all the earnestness that the fanatics follow Dowle.

What then is the remedy? Let the west and the south take the political power away from Wall street. Set up different ideals. Go back to first principles. Let the west wrest control of the land, money and transportation from the two or three dozen great intellects that now make the 80,000,000 people of the United States their servants and who have applied to their methods the "materialistic conception of history" and know no "ought" or "ought not." That is the mission of the people's party. Every man in the whole United States who believes that there is something higher and better in life than the accumulation of dollars, rightfully belongs in the ranks of the people's party.—T.

A MILLION DOLLAR CHURCH

It is a Poem in Granite—A New Cult That Spreads Like a Prairie Fire—What an Old Pop Saw in New York

New York City, Jan. 14, 1904.—(Editorial Correspondence.—Christian science has so overspread New York and other cities that it has to be reckoned with. There are no authentic statistics concerning the membership of this new religious cult, but it is everywhere conceded to be very large and what is more, it is rapidly growing. As thousands of readers of The Independent know no more about this sect than what they have gained by casual, and often sarcastic references to it in the daily papers, they will doubtless be interested in a statement concerning the movement as it appears to an unprejudiced observer. The Independent's motto is: "The truth about everything," and it as freely publishes the truth about Christian science as it would about the money question.

The membership of the Christian science churches in this city runs up into the thousands. The First Church, scientist, located at 96th street and Central Park, west, the very heart of fashionable New York, cost \$1,185,000. It has the second largest organ in the United States, and another organ at the other end of the church from which chime and echo edects are rendered; and a membership of 1,400. The architectural effect is the most imposing in this country and it is doubtful if there is anything much to exceed it in all Europe. The effect produced upon a visitor is that of serenity, rest and permanence. There is perfect harmony in color and form and a solidity that makes one say, "Here is the rock of ages." Certainly there are no such striking effects produced anywhere else in America by the art and skill of the architect as in this building. It is a song of rest, a poem of the ages, a picture of the invisible.

There are many Christian science church organizations in New York. Some meet in halls, others in church buildings, one of which, besides the First Church, is very costly and beautiful. The editor of The Independent has examined the congregations of some of them with, he trusts, an unprejudiced and critical eye, inquiring what is the character and intellectual standing of the men and women who have adopted Christian science.

The first thing that impressed itself

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upon him was: All these people are enjoying the best of health. Their complexions are clear and their eyes are bright. In a large audience of a thousand or more, when there was an epidemic of coughs and colds in New York, and when a constant coughing was heard in every other assemblage, in this congregation there was but one person who coughed during the whole evening. There was no sign of chronic disease or other illness to be discovered in that audience. The face of every one who could be seen from the point of observation was critically examined. The point of view, however, was such that only about one-third of the faces could be seen.

Another thing that impressed itself upon the observer was the look of hope, peace, contentment and happiness that was just as apparent as the evidence of health.

What is the intellectual capacity of these people? That is what every populist will first ask. Populists have had such contests with the political mullet heads in the past, men of such dull intellects that when they were selling corn, ten bushels for a dollar, at the same time were saying that they wanted two dollars for ten bushels, but declaring that they did not want money any cheaper—who could not see that when one dollar would buy twice as much corn, that that dollar would be 50 per cent cheaper—that they will care nothing about another set of people of the same intellectual capacity.

A Christian science mid-week meeting is one in which the congregation does most of the talking. So at the great First Church this writer went to judge of the intellectual standing of the men and women who have become followers of this new cult, by listening to them speak as well as to study their carriage and personal appearance. There were several distinct types among the speakers. Two of them, one a man and the other a woman, undoubtedly were of high culture. The words they used, the distinctness of their utterance, the elegance of their language proved that. There were others not so highly cultured, but all of the speakers were men and women of good attainments. The only conclusion, and it was irresistible, was these people averaged very high in intellectual ability.

What about the substance of the addresses that were made? For the most part they were testimonials concerning how they had been healed by Christian science methods. Some of these tales were most marvelous, and the strangest of all of them were given by the speakers who showed that they were of the highest culture and best education.

How did all this affect a populist from the plains of Nebraska? He must follow his motto, "The truth about everything." He will only write what he saw with his own eyes, and heard with his own ears.

He has never doubted the power of mind over the body. He has seen a man die of fear, when no material object touched him. He has seen a man die in the army hospitals from very slight wounds—mere scratches—when another, 'shot all to pieces,' recovered. The one believed that he was going to die and the other was determined to get well. To what extent the mind can mould the body—break down or build up tissue—has never been ascertained by the methods of modern science. The testimony of thousands of men and women—men and women of good character and sound minds—cannot be set aside as altogether visionary. That method of treating this new movement is neither reasonable nor honest.

The bald statements of the earlier teachers of Christian science are already being modified and toned down. It is impossible for men of sound mind to give much attention to statements that are self-contradictory. It is impossible to believe things that are inconsistent with themselves. It is very apparent that Christian scientists give different meanings to words from that generally accepted. Their terminology is not consistent or intelligible to the uninitiated.

As an example of this, one of the speakers at the First Church gave a description of a disease so accurate that none acquainted with medical practice would fail instantly to name it. It was pneumonia. He testified that under Christian science treatment he was healed in a few hours. A few moments after he declared most positively that the whole thing was an "illusion," an "error." "There is no such thing as sickness." "It is all a lie." When another scientist's attention was drawn to this declaration, he said: "Spiritual truths can not be expressed in words that have been invented to express only material things. All matter is simply



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the expression of mind and therefore all is in fact mind."

Whatever one may think of the system taught by Mrs. Eddy, one thing is certain: Its tremendous growth, the character and great wealth of the organization, the rapidity with which it increases, makes it something that must be taken into account. The press here no longer attempts to ignore it. Even the New York Sun, its most bitter opponent, has of late entirely changed its tone toward it. Million-dollar churches of such beauty that they are of themselves poems in granite, hundreds of thousands of adherents, with constantly increasing numbers pressing for admission to an organization whose tenets prevent it from proselyting or making any active efforts to obtain members, presents a situation that cannot be ignored. All this, when the terms in which it attempts to express its tenets are unintelligible to the outside world and its statements of its doctrines self-contradictory to the ordinary man, is a condition the counterpart of which was never seen in the world before.

(A Christian scientist who read the above article said: "The statement you have made of a point in political economy in the body of this article is

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as incomprehensible to me, and I fancy to most men, as anything can possibly be to you in the statements made by scientists. If I had studied political economy and you had studied Christian science, we would probably agree on both subjects.—T.)