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'SCIENTIFIC OBSTETRICS'

(S. & H. p.463)

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Overcoming death through spiritual birth

Wedding the letter to the spirit. A dominant question that students of Christian Science ask is: How can I progress most rapidly in the understanding of Christian Science? Mary Baker Eddy's first, but not her whole answer is: "Study thoroughly the letter and imbibe the spirit." (S. & H. 495:27) In a spiritual subject, the exact and absolute letter is important, yet not sufficient. If the letter is not wedded to the spirit, something essential is lacking. Spiritual reality cannot be fathomed with the intellect of the human mind; the Mind of Christ alone can reveal it to our thoughts. Through the Mind of Christ the absolute letter blends with the spirit of the letter, so that the letter becomes the living letter. Therefore, in order to imbibe the spirit we must first investigate the method of how the letter can blend with the spirit. This method is found in the birth of Spirit, through which the spiritual meaning of the letter is gained.

Spiritual birth is the answer to the belief in death. Usually people are much more concerned with the problem of death than with that of birth. Their important question is: How can we overcome death? They consider death to be the last enemy. But it is quite obvious that we can deal with death in a final way only when we solve the question of material birth. Without material birth the question of death could not arise. Whoever solves the question of birth has also solved the question of death. Therefore Mary Baker Eddy considered birth, not death, as the last enemy. In a letter to a student she stated: "Mankind has reached the last enemy, birth, and knows it not." Understanding spiritually that the real man was never born into matter we handle also the belief of having to die out of matter.

Woman must give birth. Christianity started with the virgin birth, and in our age, the Science of Christianity demands for its demonstration an understanding of the Science that governs spiritual birth: scientific obstetrics. To Christianity, the Mary-consciousness was super-important; without it the Jesus-manifestation could never have been ushered into human presence. Today it is the understanding of the Science of spiritual birth that can bring forth the demonstration of the new child: divine Science.

Of virgin birth, Jesus was "a natural and divine Scientist . . . who needed no discovery of the Science of being . . ." But what about us? "To one 'born of the flesh', however, divine Science must be a discovery. Woman must give it birth." (Ret. 26:17) It needs the womanhood sense within us to give birth to our true selfhood. What is this true selfhood,

what is our child? Our child in this age is divine Science. If we acquaint ourselves with the spiritually scientific method of being reborn as the idea of divine Science, then we solve the question of true birth and resolve the question of death.

The question therefore is: How does spiritual birth take place? Let us first consider how Jesus explained it and afterwards how the textbook of Christian Science presents it in its spiritually ordered method.

Nicodemus: How can a man be born again?

In the discourse between Jesus and Nicodemus (John 3: 1-13) Jesus makes it plain that without spiritual birth we cannot enter the kingdom of God. Let us take a closer look at what this new birth implies.

"There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: the same came to Jesus by night and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God . . ." Nicodemus could already see that Jesus' teaching was not of this world, not of mortal origin, not of any human school of thought nor a personal doctrine, but that it was of divine Principle.

" . . . for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him." "No man", and no student of Christian Science, can "do miracles", i.e. experience the saving power of Science, unless God is with him. This is why we have to rely solely on the "teacher come from God", on the Christ, and not on human teachers. We are not students of personal teachers but students of God. Yet, in order to be taught of God, God must be with us. Without that sense of Immanuel, "God with us", these miracles cannot be done. Isaiah had prophesied that a virgin would bear a son whose name was to be called Immanuel. It is actually through the birth of Spirit that the sense of God and man being separate can be dissolved and the spiritual unity of God and man (Immanuel) established.

What does "God with us" imply? By substituting for the term God the seven synonymous terms for God our virgin-consciousness accepts that our true child is called "Mind with us", "Spirit with us", "Soul with us", "Principle with us", "Life with us", "Truth with us", "Love with us". This is the new child or divine idea. Through this Immanuel-consciousness we are being re-born, reborn into the divine nature. At this point we are no more conscious of ourselves as mortals, but as God's nature in operation, which means that we are conscious of being the operation of the intelligence of Mind, the ordered unfoldment of Spirit, the unchanging identity of Soul, the powerful demonstration of Principle, the inspiring, exalting method of Life, the all-pervading wholeness of Truth and the ever-fulfilling plan of Love.

"Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily I say unto thee, Except a man be born again (or: from above), he cannot see the kingdom of God." True birth must come from above, from the standpoint of the seven synonymous terms for God; only then can we see the kingdom of God, i.e. the realm and reign of the divine ideas of Mind, Spirit, Soul, Principle, Life, Truth, Love. This lifts us out of the realm of things and people into the realm of divine ideas. The birth does not come about by using moral and human efforts in order to rise from the human to the divine; this would be Adam's method of tilling the soil (see S. & H. 545: 7-10).

"Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?" Nicodemus was asking if reincarnation could be the method of the new birth, if man could rise higher and higher through more and more exalted material stages of evolution. Could a fleshly rebirth evolve us Spiritward? Can we reach the spiritual ultimate through various stages of mortality? Jesus had to correct this false belief.

"Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." If we do not understand first "water" and second "Spirit", we cannot have the third, the kingdom of God. Water is a symbol of the elements of Mind (S. & H. 507:3). So if we are not born of Mind and of Spirit we never find our true identity (Soul), the kingdom of God, the dry land of the third day of creation (Soul). Therefore, in order to give birth to our true identity, which is at the point of Soul, we must fulfil two prerequisites: oneness with Mind and Spirit. We have to see first that all comes from Mind, that Mind is the creator, the cause, the origin, the parent Mind and that Mind manifests itself only as ideas and not as mortals; secondly, we have to see that we keep these elements of Mind pure, separate from false concepts, so that the vision of Mind is our only vision (Spirit). Unless Mind and Spirit constitute our consciousness we cannot see the true identity of our being, of our true mission and destiny. When we are born of Mind and Spirit our identity is definite and will be divinely defined and named (Soul).

Then Jesus gives the scientific reason for the true law of spiritual birth: *"That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."* Here we find the scientific sense of order: like producing like. The flesh can bring forth only fleshly things whereas the spiritual can be brought forth only from Spirit. So, if we start from the flesh we shall not be able to be born again, but starting with Spirit we shall bring forth our spiritual identity and know ourselves as God knows us.

"The wind (Spirit) bloweth where it listeth and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." In spiritual birth it is super-important to realize that we let Spirit operate in its own way, that we cannot outline how and when God should operate nor prescribe the solution and how it should come about. All we can do is to let the Spirit blow where it listeth, be still enough to listen to God and hear what He tells us. We cannot use Spirit for attaining the consummation of our material and human desires and aims.

What does it mean in scientific terms that the Spirit bloweth where it listeth? As Spirit reflects the seven synonymous terms for God, it means that Spirit says: I, Mind, have an infinite idea and conceive of its plan; I, Spirit, unfold this idea in perfect order; I, Soul, give to each idea its definite identity and mission; I, Principle, demonstrate what I, Principle, have destined to demonstrate and not what people want me to demonstrate; I, Life, maintain, sustain, renew and multiply every idea; I, Truth, do what is right, at the right time, through the right means, for the right purpose; I, Love, fulfil the divine plan. As we realise this, we lose all sense of trying to accomplish anything according to our human conceptions and thus we do not obstruct the smooth rhythm of Spirit.

"Nicodemus answered and said unto him, How can these things be? Jesus answered . . . And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven." If we put this sentence into spiritual order we can better understand the divine process that is described here. Jesus' answer consists of three phases and when we put them into a spiritual sequence they would read: 1) There is the Son of man, which is in heaven; 2) this Son of man comes down from heaven, i.e. he translates himself to the point of human experience; and 3) this enables men to ascend up to heaven. In practical life-experience it means: Even if there is a deep desire to rise into heaven we must realise that this desire alone cannot have the power to fulfil itself. The standpoint from which to start is the acceptance of the divine fact that man is already in heaven. This true idea has a Christ that comes to everyone with the impelling power to lift mortals out of themselves to the point where they realize that they are already in heaven. Whereas the religious sense tries to rise out of mortality into immortality, the scientific sense presents the method of translation and retranslation: the translation of the true idea of man to mortals whereby mortals are re-translated into immortals. In Science we always start from God, from the seven synonymous terms for God; then our consciousness is at the point of being in heaven and, being only aware of ideas, works

changes in the human by lifting it out of mortal mind's claims, until finally man's true reality and his identification of being in the kingdom of God is experienced. The new birth is therefore never achieved by trying to improve the mortal. The scientific way is to start from God and His perfection in spite of the world's contrary testimony.

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This is how in the light of Christian Science Jesus explained to Nicodemus how the new birth takes place. Trying to improve the human through human methods brings suffering because it is not the way of Science, but when we choose the way of Science and start from the synonymous terms for God and their ideas, the birth goes on without suffering or crisis. The closer we stick to the Science of birth, to scientific obstetrics, the more natural the birth will be. It is well to remember that the birth is going on all the time and in all circumstances because it is the outcome of the Christ impact on humanity. The question is only whether we go along with the birth or whether we interfere with it. In the first instance our experience will be painless and harmonious; in the second, we obstruct the natural process with our human conceptions and then our experience will be painful.

The divine Being is constantly giving birth to the divine idea and its evolution. This is why throughout history we can witness a continually progressive and rising development in the world as a whole. The divine idea is constantly precipitating itself on humanity, bringing forth ever higher states of civilisation, but in general the world experiences this progress with birth pangs. To avoid this, individually and collectively, we have to go along with the birth by understanding spiritually scientific obstetrics. Then there will be painless unfoldment, painless progress, painless changes and painless achievements.

Spiritual anatomy

Whereas Jesus was explaining to Nicodemus the new birth in biblical language, Mary Baker Eddy presents it to our age in scientific language, giving us the method of the law of birth and calling it in the marginal heading "Scientific obstetrics" (S. & H. 463: 5-20). She starts her explanations with the statement: "Teacher and student should also be familiar with the obstetrics taught by this Science." What does the word 'also' mean here? It means that spiritual obstetrics is complementary to what has been stated before, namely the spiritual meaning of anatomy with which she deals in the preceding paragraph (S. & H. 462:20). Spiritual anatomy prepares the ground for spiritual obstetrics. Just as the claim of material birth has to be translated into spiritual birth, so also material anatomy with its matrix of mortality has to be translated into

spiritual anatomy with its matrix of immortality. Without understanding spiritual anatomy the succeeding paragraph on spiritual obstetrics cannot gather its full and practical meaning. Therefore true obstetrics must start with the true concept of anatomy. Only spiritual anatomy with its spiritual matrix can give the right sense of that womb within which something spiritual can originate, be developed and brought forth.

Let us consider this paragraph in more detail. It starts: "Anatomy, when conceived of spiritually, is mental self-knowledge, and consists in the dissection of thoughts to discover their quality, quantity, and origin." This mental self-knowledge is highly important. Do we know what our intentions, desires, aims and purposes are? Is it a selfish or a selfless motive and ambition? What is it that we actually want to gain and to achieve? For what purpose do we want to study and demonstrate Christian Science? Have we dissected our thoughts so as to know what is in our mentality? Have we analysed our consciousness to discover the quality of our desires, motives, affections, inclinations? The very first thing we have to do is to be honest and ask ourselves this significant question: Why do I want Christian Science? For what purpose do I seek it?

In trying to find the answer, let us be aware that it cannot be found in psychoanalysis, which deals only with the elements of the human mind. Only the divine Mind can reveal an honest answer. The dissection of thoughts to discover their origin will answer the important question: "Are thoughts divine or human?" Do they measure up to Mind and Mind's idea or do they originate in human thoughts, in human will or in human longings? Are we motivated by divine ideas or are we motivated by illusions, sentiments, human conceptions and opinions, and personal ambitions? With wrong motives, life experiences are painful, therefore, "this branch of study is indispensable to the excision of error."

As we have first to know if thoughts are divine or human, the anatomy of Christian Science is two-fold. First, "the anatomy of Christian Science teaches when and how to probe the self-inflicted wounds of selfishness, malice, envy, and hate. It teaches the control of mad ambition." Are we in our study of Christian Science motivated by mad ambition, e.g. by the ambition to see and understand more than our fellow-students, to get along better and faster than they, to be self-important and stand in the limelight or to show how much better we can give Science to the other fellow?

Secondly, "the anatomy of Christian Science . . . unfolds the hallowed influences of unselfishness, philanthropy, spiritual love." Are we, in our study of Christian Science, motivated by love, i.e. by unselfishness

(which means no self-love), by philanthropy (which means love for mankind) and by spiritual love? The only true motive that can impel true birth is our love for Life, Truth and Love, our love for the Christ-idea, love for the divine ideal. With such a spiritual anatomy our consciousness is ready to conceive of the new idea, but without this love we are bound to fail. The anatomy of Christian Science also "urges the government of the body both in health and in sickness." Is our love for Truth motivated by our love to heal ourselves of sickness, to have dominion over error? Or do we love Truth for Truth's sake, even if it demands that we take up the cross and lay down the mortal sense of things? These are questions each one of us has to answer for himself and only this honest dissection conditions him for the new birth to take place.

Scientific obstetrics

In the womb of spiritual anatomy the new birth can take place. Can we help the birth to take place harmoniously? In the paragraph on "Scientific obstetrics" (S. & H. 463: 5-20) Mary Baker Eddy presents the method for painless birth, spiritually and humanly. The scientific method follows the divine order of Mind, Spirit, Soul, Principle, Life, Truth and Love, - the order of the Word of God, as given in answer to the question, What is God? (S. & H. 465:10) Let us consider more closely what ordered birth implies.

Mind

"Teacher and student should also be familiar with the obstetrics taught by this Science."

Scientific obstetrics applies equally to "teacher and student". The teacher can in no way bring forth the new idea for the student, nor be responsible for it. There is no vicarious birth. The new birth is individual. Each one must give birth to his true identity and so each one has to become familiar with the method of spiritual birth. This does away with the belief that the teacher can do everything for the student or that he can transfer his knowledge to the student. The starting-point is not the belief that the teacher has all the knowledge and that the student is in deep ignorance and consequently has to be educated out of ignorance. In Science, both teacher and student have the Mind of Christ, both teach themselves as "a teacher come from God". Mind is the teacher and only in Mind can there be a real student. There is only one Mind and this Mind must be the Mind of the teacher and the Mind of the student. Therefore we must turn to and appeal to the divine Mind in us as the teacher that communes and teaches through Mind's ideas. Only the divine Mind with us, the Mind-Immanuel, the Mind-consciousness can

teach Mind's ideas and can hear and know Mind. Nothing but Mind can know Mind. All that a personal teacher can do is to show the student the method of divine self-teaching.

We therefore begin to fill our consciousness with the wonderful fact that there is only one Mind, that we have the Mind which is God, the Mind that knows all, sees all, hears all, apprehends and comprehends all, so that we become aware that there is nothing going on but Mind knowing itself. Through the Mind of Christ we can commune with the all-knowing, all-seeing, all-perceiving Mind so that there is nothing we cannot know or that remains hidden. Thus we do not start out with the human mind's thinking and reasoning but approach the question of divine being with that Mind which is God. Then no other teacher is needed. Mind which is its own interpreter teaches us everything.

What does it mean that we should be "familiar" with the Science of obstetrics? It indicates that our Mind is completely attuned to divine Mind, that it is in consonance with it in every little detail. The all-knowing Mind, which is our Mind, is intimately acquainted with every idea, with every truth, so that nothing remains hidden, veiled or unknown. There is only Mind communing with Mind. The Mind of God (and our Mind) is the one and only Mind. In this divine atmosphere where Mind knows Mind, revelation is constantly going on, flooding our thoughts in a natural way and with new inspirations.

So we begin the new birth with the consciousness of the Mind of Christ. Each one has the Mind of Christ; it is our true heritage, our birthright. We had it before Abraham was. Let us accept it and love it and refuse to question it by asking: "Is there no king in thee? is thy counsellor perished?" (Micah 4:9) We know that we can know as Mind knows. This attitude is most important in studying the textbook or the Bible. These books contain Mind's revelation of itself. Therefore they cannot be studied and fathomed by reading them with human intelligence, academic intellect and culture, nor with human logic. We can only study them with the same Mind that wrote the books, which means that we study the letter not with our own mind but with the Mind of Christ which dwells in us, with "the king and counsellor" in us. Then the text imparts the spirit of what we study.

The parent Mind ushers in the new birth. Humanly we have fleshly parents and are born materially with all the human advantages and disadvantages. But it does not matter who we are or what we are humanly, nor can we be held responsible for our human birth with all the shortcomings that we are heir to. We do not need to ask what we are humanly and then try to improve it. Rather we should ask, What is our true

parentage? Who are we divinely? The divine Mind is our parent, the divine Mind wanted us and conceived us in all perfection and could only bring forth the true idea, the perfect idea, the fulfilled idea. This is our inheritance. This makes us realize that the true, spiritual birth is going on continually in spite of our whole mortal and human make-up which can in no way interfere with, retard or stop the new birth; otherwise there would be no hope for us.

Spirit

"To attend properly the birth of the new child, or divine idea, you should so detach mortal thought from its material conceptions . . ."

In order that birth can take place in a harmonious way a significant postulate must be observed: to detach mortal thought from its material conceptions. What does this imply? It implies that we should not interfere with the natural birth of Spirit. Spirit can give birth only in a purely spiritual way and therefore we must be willing to let Spirit happen in its own way, - to let the Spirit blow where it listeth. Translated to human requirement, Spirit asks us to draw the line of demarcation between material conceptions and spiritual conceptions and then to detach ourselves from all material conceptions. If we bring in our mortal way of thinking and form mortal concepts of how, when, where, by what means and for what purpose the new idea should be brought forth, we shall experience a miscarriage; the birth will be forced, untimely, and the outcome deformed.

Watching our thoughts we are quite surprised to find that the claims of mortal thought attending the birth of a new idea, and therefore preventing its healthy manifestation, are legion. It is of great help to analyse our thoughts and make a list of all the mortal suggestions that creep in, telling us why we cannot give birth to the new idea. Such a list can grow to dozens and dozens of claims. Let us face them squarely. It is useless to fight them; we have to detach ourselves from them. For instance they all try to convince us:

- that humanly we are not good enough to bring forth a saving idea;
- that we have not yet gained enough understanding;
- that we are not scientifically minded enough to perceive a clearer sense of what constitutes Christian Science;
- that we are either too young or too old, too inexperienced or too much embedded in our old ruts, to see something new;
- that we have not enough womanhood or manhood to take proper care of a new idea;
- that we have not enough free time to care properly for an idea;

- that there is too much resistance, persecution or misunderstanding from the world, church organization or ecclesiastical despotism;
- that we are not strong enough to resist hate, jealousy, envy and slander.

As one listens to the myriad individual suggestions and considers all the collective and universal arguments of mortal error, such a list grows from day to day and could finally become impressive enough to make us give up all hope. But what a spiritually overwhelming release it is to follow the admonition to detach ourselves completely from all mortal thought, to put the whole gamut of mortal suggestions right behind us and turn to the divine Mind that is Spirit, i.e. to the divine Mind that is completely detached from material suggestions and operates through Spirit alone! Then our consciousness is absolutely pure, cleansed of mortality.

As we start out from Mind, from the All-Mind knowing only its own ideas, we feel completely detached from all human and material conceptions. We become aware that actually we are not mortals but Mind's idea operating as us, as a compound idea free from human conceptions. Nothing stands in the way to obstruct the birth of the new idea and we feel that the continual new birth is the most natural thing in the world. The serpent's talking ceases; we can no longer hear its slightest whispering. Consciousness is then roaming in the realm of spiritual ideas with its ever-newness of infinite reflections.

When all mortal suggestions are silenced, instead of detaching mortal thought from its material suggestions, we rise to the more positive attitude of accepting the spiritual conceptions of Mind in its forever operation impelled by Life, Truth and Love. In spiritual conception we cling to the eternal fact that the only thing that is ever going on is the divine impulsion of Life, the fact of Truth and the fulfilment of Love. We then let Life, Truth and Love happen as Mind's divine conception. Thus spiritual birth is seen as the infinite development, unfoldment and evolution of Mind's own idea taking form under the impact of Life, the logicity of Truth and the goal-fulfilment of Love. The divine I or Person, Life, Truth, Love, then reigns and any personal I is dispelled. In this way we have opened the spiritual womb wide enough for nothing to hinder the spiritual birth.

Soul

"... that the birth will be natural and safe."

Soul makes everything definite and safe. Jesus had explained to Nicodemus that unless a man is born of Mind (water) and of Spirit he cannot inherit Soul (the kingdom of God, the dry land of the third day of creation, which symbolizes the definite identities of Soul). Here it is

stated, too, that unless we start with Mind (with having the Mind of Christ) and keep it pure through Spirit's line of demarcation, the idea which is born to us will not be safe, untouchable, will not have incontestable definite identity (Soul). An idea born of Mind and Spirit is of the nature of Soul; it is safe, nothing can touch it, nothing can change it. As we are not its parents, it is not *we* who have to keep it safe nor could we keep it safe. Mind (the creative) and Spirit (the conceptive) are the parents and they alone can keep it safe and intact (Soul). The natural order of birth is brought to definite manifestation without human push and pull; and opposition, persecution, libel, misrepresentation and antagonism can no longer touch it.

Principle

"Though gathering new energy, this idea cannot injure its useful surroundings in the travail of spiritual birth."

Whereas up to this point it has been shown how the idea is brought forth - the Word aspect, now the standpoint changes and presents the dynamic power of the idea - the Christ aspect: the idea gathers new energy and blesses all in its operational process. Principle gathers all ideas to itself. As an idea is always an idea of Principle, it gathers the nature of all of Principle's ideas. In Principle every idea blends with every other idea, so that the nature of an idea has the nature of the infinite One.

Principle's idea, gathered into harmonious relationships within its divine system, cannot injure its useful surroundings in the travail of spiritual birth. The coming forth of a new idea demands changes, i.e. restructuring. If we are not going along with this restructuring, and resist change, we experience painful travail. If we do not let go of the old, the new brings birth pangs. The spiritual power of an idea works on every outgrown condition until the no longer useful surroundings give in and disappear. Consequently a spiritual idea does injure surroundings that are no longer useful. A new idea overturns and overturns old cherished beliefs until it appears in its perfect manifestation. During the transitional period everything will be taken away from us that would hinder the birth of a progressive vision or step. If we understand this divine process, we shall be willing to let go of all that does not belong to a spiritual idea. Furthermore we shall welcome - and no longer resist the overturnings, as we shall know that we are gaining everything and not losing anything useful.

It takes courage, spiritual courage. Why? Because humanly we do not know whither the new birth leads us. Scientifically we know that all that is useful for the idea will be sustained and all that is not useful will be

taken away from us. It is not we who decide what is useful and what is not useful for our spiritual advancement; it is Science that decides, and so it takes courage to trust Principle's working and to rejoice in (human) tribulation. Humanly, it may be bitter; divinely, it is big with promise. In this intermediate period the Christ, Truth, says: "I wound to heal; I punish to reform; I do it all in love . . ." (Mis. 215:4)

Life

"A spiritual idea has not a single element of error, and this truth removes properly whatever is offensive."

The nature of an idea is that it reflects all other ideas. Consequently, every idea is complete, whole, perfect, fulfilled, universal, infinite. By its very nature, an idea cannot have a single element or taint of error; it is a spiritual truth and any truth removes whatever is erroneous, offensive. Again we become acquainted with the Christ aspect, the saving office, of the divine idea, showing that an idea removes, and saves us from, error.

Here we are called upon to trust the power of an idea to remove all that is harmful to and useless for our divine identity and mission. The idea removes radically and entirely everything that is opposed to the nature and intention of Mind, Spirit, Soul, Principle, Life, Truth and Love. Like the prophet Nahum we can trust that nothing that is unlike God can resist the operation of a divine idea. It is useless to try to resist the removal of what we love humanly if, from a divine standpoint, it is offensive; we have no chance of succeeding. The power of an idea is like a bull-dozer clearing away all that stands in its path. Nor does it help to mistake the Christ impact and believe, when the overturning takes place, that it is animal magnetism at work. When, in our daily experience, the Christ-idea removes something which we love humanly, we are apt to misinterpret it and think that it is a phenomenon of the workings of animal magnetism. Unknowingly we then resist the Christ-idea and mistakenly work against it, thus using animal magnetism ourselves.

We have the blessed assurance that the idea removes "properly" whatever is offensive; it removes it in the right way, at the right time, adapted to the situation, without strain, stress, pressure, struggle, crisis, and so on. It will not demand of us anything that is beyond our spiritual capacity and understanding. Nor will it hurt "the oil and the wine" (Rev. 6:6), our consecration and inspiration. Again, we see that it is not we who have to decide what is offensive in our way of Life and what has to be removed out of the way. We can rest in consciousness with the assurance that once we have brought forth the new idea in an ordered way through Science, the divine idea will operate under Life-impulsion as the divinely cybernetic idea: self-operating, self-regulating, self-correcting. Life says: let it happen!

Truth

"The new idea, conceived and born of Truth and Love, is clad in white garments."

Up to this point it has been shown how, through the Word aspect, the new idea can be brought forth: through Mind and Spirit its true identity (Soul) becomes manifest. Then the Christ aspect presents the dynamic power of the idea, by gathering all ideas into the system of Principle and by removing through its Life-impulsion all that is offensive. Now the aspect changes to that of Christianity which describes the inner contents and the true form of the idea. Every idea born of God has the form or gestalt of the wholeness of Truth and Love's perfection. So every idea is born of Truth and Love. What does Truth and Love mean in terms of ideas? It means, for instance, the ideal form (Truth) in its perfection (Love), divine consciousness (Truth) operating in the plan of Love, true manhood (Truth) at the point of fulfilment (Love), the Christ-idea (Truth) never losing sight of loveliness (Love).

So every idea born of God is from eternity to eternity already clad in white garments. The vesture of Truth, the form and gestalt of Truth, is of the nature of the seven-hued white, i.e. of the nature of all the ideas of the seven synonyms for God. The form of an idea is Mind-conceived and Mind-empowered; Spirit-ordered and Spirit-unfolded; Soul-identified and Soul-determined; Principle-governed and Principle-demonstrated; Life-eternalized, Life-provided and Life-impelled; Truth-conscious and Truth-idealized; Love-fulfilled, Love-planned and Love-blessed.

"Its beginning will be meek, its growth sturdy, and its maturity undecaying." Though to divine sense an idea already has forever all that God has, to human sense its appearing is in the beginning meek; it is unpretentious, it does not come with a big splash, it is at first unrecognized and unnoticed by the world. The mother-sense in us sees its promise and anticipates its fulfilment; it is aware that an idea is always an idea of the infinite One and consequently knows that the growth of an idea is sturdy; that the idea is great, significant, a blessing for the whole world, that it has healthy powerful growth, that it can take care of itself and is strong enough to stand in the face of any opposition. Being irresistible and irrepressible its maturity is undecaying. What God has begun He will also accomplish. Whenever a new idea is born to consciousness, we can know that it will be for eternity and that nothing in the world can suppress or oppress it eternally and that all generations to come shall call it blessed.

Love

"When this new birth takes place, the Christian Science infant is born of the Spirit, born of God, and can cause the mother no more suffering."

Here the Christianity aspect changes to the Science aspect, where we see that nothing is ever going on but God as depicted through the seven synonymous terms for God. If, up to this point, we have kept the birth pure, not mixed with any human conceptions, then we have let Spirit bring forth its idea in its purity. The text refers to the "Christian Science infant" and not to the infants of Christian Scientists; it refers to the meek manifestation of a Christianly scientific consciousness, which, born of the Spirit as an orderly unfoldment, brings forth the fruits or substance of Spirit. As we let consciousness operate in the purity of the preceding steps of Mind, Spirit, Soul, Principle, Life and Truth, free from any impure, dualistic attitude, the new child or divine idea "can cause the mother no more suffering"; there will be no crisis, no chemicalization, no friction, no struggle, no push and pull, no tension, agony, frustration and the like. All unfolds in an orderly, peaceful, restful, frictionless and painless way.

The preceding section of "Truth" explained that every idea is "conceived and born of Truth and Love", that fundamentally an idea has the full form (Truth) of perfection (Love), but this perfect form is only born to us without hurting the mother if it is "born of Spirit", of a scientifically pure consciousness.

"By this we know that Truth is here and has fulfilled its perfect work."

Being is; it is here and now. Each moment is new, although the "new" has always existed in Being. Birth is the way Being appears as development on the human level. It is the ever-going-on of Being when considered from the human standpoint. Scientific obstetrics takes the end for the beginning; it takes the fact that "Truth is here and has fulfilled its perfect work" as the scientific starting-point and keeps it so pure that in the course of its spiritual birth all opposing mortal suggestions are thereby refuted and consequently cannot manifest themselves as discord on the human plane of existence.

Summary:

The Science of spiritual birth follows the scientific order of Mind, Spirit, Soul, Principle, Life, Truth and Love. It shows clearly that the precondition for a natural birth is that in consciousness we are familiar with, or one with, the all-knowing and all-conceiving Mind and keep this attitude free from all material conceptions (Spirit), so that the manifestation of the idea is safe (Soul). As an idea is always an idea of Principle, it gains power and operates in a harmonious way, impelling all error to yield (Life). It is then up to us not to resist this Christ-operation, but rather to realize the greatness of the idea, to recognize it as being

clothed in seven-hued white, i.e. clothed with all the ideas of the seven synonyms for God. Then we see that the idea is eternal, its maturity undecaying (Truth), and finally that the idea has always existed here and now in its perfect form (Love).

The new birth: the idea of divine Science

Birth: an eternal process. We started with the important question of how we can progress most rapidly in the understanding of Christian Science and with the answer that we have to begin by studying thoroughly the letter and imbibing the spirit. But how can we imbibe the spirit? The spirit has to grow from within us and is called the new birth. Therefore understanding Christian Science demands spiritualization of thought whereby the birth of our spiritual identity takes place continually. So "the new birth is not the work of a moment. It begins with moments, and goes on with years . . . Time may commence, but it cannot complete, the new birth: eternity does this; for progress is the law of infinity." (Mis. 15:13-20)

The student of Christian Science who makes it a rule to give devoted attention to "scientific obstetrics" each day, before he starts his study of the Bible and "Science and Health", becomes more receptive to the spiritual and scientific meaning of the revealed letter. He experiences the birth of the new idea and progresses in understanding Science. In 1904, Mary Baker Eddy wrote to the students in the Board of Education: "We understand best that which begins in ourselves and by education brightens into birth." (My. 253:26) A student who cultures daily the idea of spiritual birth, and who does not neglect it as he goes on over the years, is bound to grow in understanding and in his spiritual and scientific stature. He will not after thirty, forty, fifty and even more years feel that he still has to rely on others to help him master the problems of his daily life. Simply reading the letter, listening to it and speaking it, may give the student after many years a fairly clear concept of what Christian Science means, but it will not endow him with living power; it will only form a mental concept but will not be experienced as a divine idea which can only be brought forth through spiritual birth.

Students often undertake the study of Christian Science with the attitude: What shall I get from Christian Science? Will it work for me? This is side-stepping the real issue: What can I give to Christian Science? Is my desire to lay off the "old man", to "detach mortal thought from its material conceptions" so that my spiritual identity can come forth? Mortality cannot put on immortality. As mortality is put off, Spirit gives birth to immortality.

Birth is no longer a mystery. Today the question of spiritual birth or virgin birth, is no longer a mystery. It has found its scientific explanation. As Science is teachable, learnable, demonstrable and provable, every student of Christian Science can take hold of the scientific method and experience for himself the virgin birth of the divine idea. In “scientific obstetrics” we are given the step by step process of spiritual birth, so that it can be understood and demonstrated by any sincere student.

What is the new child? We may ask ourselves: What is meant by “the new child, or divine idea” that is to be brought forth in spiritual birth?

Many students turn to this paragraph on “scientific obstetrics” when they have to deal with the problem of child-birth, but does the text really deal with this? Does it refer to the birth of a new baby or to the Christian Scientist’s infant? The text actually speaks of “the Christian Science infant”, and “the new child” is used as a symbol for the “divine idea”, and is therefore a wholly spiritual concept. Something much higher than attending the birth of a corporeal child is here under consideration.

Other students turn to this paragraph when working on specific problems. They know that any problem finds its solution when the right idea can be conceived. Thus they are usually engaged in attending the birth of “a” divine idea, a specific idea. Again, the text does not deal with the birth of “a” divine idea, but with the birth of “the” new child, or “the” divine idea.

The real and highest sense that “scientific obstetrics” conveys is the birth of the divine idea, which, from a scientific point of view, takes on the form of divine Science. Then the central question is: How can we give birth to the idea of divine Science? This gives us the broadest view, because divine Science includes both absolute Christian Science and Christian Science. Therefore when we bring forth spiritually the idea of divine Science, it is scientifically legitimate to apply the divine idea (and therefore the message of this paragraph) to the birth of a specific idea (on the level of absolute Christian Science) and, even further, to the painless birth of a new child in the flesh, as divine Science applied to the human (the level of Christian Science).

Being born of divine Science. In “scientific obstetrics” Mary Baker Eddy’s main concern is to teach us to attend the birth of the divine idea, the idea of divine Science, the Comforter for our age. Jesus was the prototype of a divine Scientist. His origin was not in material conception but in divine Science. Therefore the prophecy: “The time cometh when the spiritual origin of man, the divine Science which ushered Jesus into human presence, will be understood and demonstrated.” (S. & H. 325:26)

Here man's origin is traced back to divine Science, not to "God".

We know that the textbook deals with many states and stages of consciousness and our endeavour is therefore to rise in the scale of being. Religiously we may still be thinking in terms of God and man and of man created by God. Christian Science makes it plain that God is only a name, a name for the Supreme Being, and that man too is only a name, a name for the compound idea. Therefore in reasoning scientifically, the incorporeal sense of God and man is replaced by infinite Principle and infinite idea (S. & H. 577:2). The moment we approach the divine Being in its Science, the names and terms 'God' and 'man' become obsolete and we begin to reason solely and wholly in terms of Principle and its calculus of ideas, "the divine infinite calculus" (S. & H. 520:14). Then consciousness is at the point of recognizing that true spiritual identity is born of divine Principle and that the eternal and infinite operation of true identity finds its interpretation only in Principle's Science, divine Science. It is this divine Science that ushered Jesus into human presence and it is this divine Science that in our scientific age ushers the divine idea, the idea of divine Science, into human consciousness as our true spiritual selfhood. In the measure that our understanding unfolds to the recognition that our parent Mind is the self-organizing and self-regulating system of divine Science, the divine Scientist is born in us. This "new child" is no longer named man. In the age of Science we are summoned to mutate out of the concept 'man' and rise in the scale of being to the awareness of being the idea of the infinitely individualized structured form of divine Science. The momentous impact of this new birth is seen even more when we realize that divine Science includes absolute Christian Science, i.e. the infinite computation of ideas for all individual forms, and furthermore translates itself to Christian Science as its application to all human problems.

Woman must give birth. True, Jesus, who was "a natural and divine Scientist . . . needed no discovery of the Science of being", but "to one 'born of the flesh', however, divine Science must be a discovery. Woman must give it birth." (Ret. 26:17) Are we going to be "woman", to open wide the matrix of immortality for the birth of the idea of divine Science to take place? For "great is the idea", and with the knowledge of the method of spiritual obstetrics the travail does not need to be painful. By detaching our religious and mystical sense of God and man from all its material conceptions and accepting in its place that, in reality, there is nothing going on but infinite Principle and infinite idea, the divine Principle, Supreme Being, begins to interpret itself to us constantly as the divine idea of divine Science.

Further literature on scientific obstetrics -

John W. Doorly: Oxford Summer School 1948, Vol. 11, p. 42
Oxford Summer School 1949, Vol. 1, p. 14-18
Oxford Summer School 1949, Vol. 1, p. 71-74
Oxford Summer School 1949, Vol. 11, p. 171-177

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No. 99, p. 99-103

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Max Kappeler: Tape recording on "Scientific obstetrics",
2 Cassettes of one hour each.

Abbreviations used in this booklet for the works of Mary Baker Eddy:

S. & H.	Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures
Mis.	Miscellaneous Writings
Ret.	Retrospection and Introspection
My.	Miscellany