

COURAGE

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*"The 'still, small voice' of scientific thought reaches
over continent and ocean to the globe's remotest bound.
The inaudible voice of Truth is, to the human mind,
'as when a lion roareth.'"*

— Mary Baker Eddy

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THE SOLDIER

The Bible is preeminently the book of the soldier. He is honored in it from cover to cover. When the patriarch Jacob had wrestled with and overcome a false sense of life in matter he was renamed. "He had conquered material error," Mrs. Eddy says on page 309 of Science and Health, "with the understanding of Spirit and spiritual power. This changed the man. He was no longer called Jacob, but Israel, — a prince of God, or a soldier of God, who had fought a good fight." The name, therefore, of "soldier" is a most fitting one for every Christian, since all true followers of Christ, Truth, are counted as "children of the promise" or of Israel.

This becomes still more obvious when we consider the life of Jesus. Although we may not find the name of "soldier" among his titles, still a moment's reflection will show us that the Master is even to-day the truest and best type or example of a soldier the world has ever witnessed. Nay, he was more than that, — he was in a marvelous way a great general. His campaign, if such a term may be used to designate the life and ministry of Christ Jesus, was laid down upon eternal laws, upon Principle, well understood, and it was for the salvation of the whole world. The whole world was to be made captive to the Christ, Truth, which dominated the life of Jesus of Nazareth. The Master, of course, realized that the battle would be fierce and the warfare long, because it was mental and not material, and no quarter could be given. For that reason his battle plans, hidden from material sense, were beyond the reach of time, nor could human act subvert or obliterate them, even as he indicated when he said, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away," a saying that expresses a more than human faith in the all-conquering Truth which he exemplified. Now the Savior's plan for the captivity of every thought to Christ, Truth, was simplicity itself; it was Truth destroying human consciousness, even as he was demonstrating to all mankind the falsity of the belief that there is life, truth, or intelligence in matter. "If ye continue in my word," he said, "then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." It was none other than Christ Jesus, therefore, who inaugurated the true fight for freedom.

One of the prime elements that go to make up a true soldier is

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obedience. Here again we must turn to the example of Christ Jesus. No general ever made such unqualified demands for obedience as did our Master, neither did anyone ever render a more implicit obedience than he did himself. Like a true soldier he obeyed the demands of Principle even unto death. Because of Jesus' unparalleled obedience his commands were proved to be based upon that living Principle or Mind which dominated his life completely. "Jesus' teaching and practice of Truth," Mrs. Eddy says, "involved such a sacrifice as makes us admit its Principle to be Love" (Science and Health, p. 26).

Now the great fact about Jesus' commandments is, as everybody knows, that if they were obeyed they would end wars for all time to come. Therefore the Master really began a warfare of extermination not only against war itself but against all of those deceitful human perversities that act as causes for war, such, for instance, as greed, lust, envy, mad ambition, and the desire for temporal power. His kingdom, which is also our true abiding place, he said came from above, from Spirit and not from matter. It was and is essentially, then, a kingdom ruled by a righteous peace, or the peace of righteousness, which is the same thing. The saying of Jesus, therefore, "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword," simply meant that the false peace of unrighteousness or ease in matter would have to be destroyed because this false, unrighteous peace would continue to engulf humanity in sin, disease, and discord of every name and nature. Jesus knew full well that obedience to his commandments would force an awakening from the sense or dream of life in matter, which is the false, unrighteous peace, and bring on the inevitable conflict between Truth and error, Principle and belief, until victory should be clearly seen to be on the side of right or spiritual understanding.

Another one of the things a soldier deems necessary is numbers, — the bigger the army, so he has been told, the more certain its victory. But nothing is really farther from the truth. The Bible goes to great lengths to show us that numbers alone do not signify very much, but that the courage that is begotten of spiritual understanding means everything. One has but to think of Gideon and his handful of men, of David and Goliath, or of Jehoshaphat and the singers whom he appointed to go before the army to praise the beauty of holiness, to see all the value of moral courage, a courage based not upon a belief in a tribal god, but upon an unalterable

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Principle, eternally good. Indeed when an army is a mere expression of numbers, soldiers, so called, are "like the beasts that perish." The warrior, therefore, who has a sense of Principle on his side, be it ever so faint, really outnumbers in conquering power any number of aliens, for he has an imperishable idea to fight for him. When the battle is the Lord's, He fighteth for us. The true soldier, then, as we now begin to see, is not flesh and blood, but an immortal or spiritual idea, — the right idea of liberty and justice. It was very evident that Christ Jesus had in mind the power of the right idea when he referred to his army, — his "more than twelve legions of angels," the divine messengers or ideas of Truth and Love, that would defend him and likewise those who, like himself, would fight for Principle at any cost to material self and sense.

Samuel Frederick Swantees.

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THE EFFECT OF COURAGE

Never, perhaps, in the history of the world has there been a greater demand upon moral courage than at the present day. In the midst of peaceable avocations the call has come to many in almost every part of the world to prepare to do battle with the forces of arrogance, self-righteousness, and pride; and to respond calmly, even exultantly, as many have done, requires a serene courage begotten of a knowledge of fundamental Principle.

As courage is necessary in the fight for right, it is indispensable in the utterance of truth. Mary Baker Eddy knew this as few have known it. Her life was a long and victorious battle with the forces of evil, fought in an age when materialism might be said to be reaching its zenith. Her experience was, therefore, of the ripest, and her words convey the wisdom of that experience. "It requires courage," Mrs. Eddy wrote, "to utter truth; for the higher Truth lifts her voice, the louder will error scream, until its inarticulate sound is forever silenced in oblivion" (Science and Health, p. 97).

Courage increases as fear diminishes. Fear paralyzes effort in the exact proportion in which the human mind entertains it. Fear, if unchecked, binds a man as completely as if he were tied with cables of steel. It robs him of the power of initiative, making him liable to every danger, and at the same time causing him to become a positive burden to all with whom he may be associated. Everybody knows this, for there is not a single human being who has not experienced the effects of fear upon himself and observed its action on others. Similarly, everybody knows the effect of moral courage. It is literally life to a man. It is the comrade of strength and endurance. It is necessary to all valiant effort directed by the consciousness of right against the false beliefs of men in the reality and power of evil.

The psalmist wrote, "Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day." He was conscious of the truth which Christian Science reveals that a man is protected from disease and material weapon alike when he is abiding "under the shadow of the Almighty." What is it to "abide under the shadow of the Almighty"? It is to have an understanding of Principle, God, and of God's actual and continuous

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relationship to His spiritual creation, man. God is not a being who lives aloof from His creation, taking no intelligent part in its government, and leaving it to go on anyhow, like a machine out of control. That is a very common false belief about God, even if it be not openly expressed by mankind. But it is utterly wrong, and is based on ignorance of God.

What, then, is the truth? It is that God is perfect Mind, infinite or unlimited, and that creation, in which individual man is included, is forever embraced in perfect Mind. Thus man is recognized or known, through Christian Science, to be constantly safe, one with the Father or omnipotent Mind. It is perfectly evident, therefore, that man cannot fear and that fear can tempt only the man who, deceived by mortal, material sense, believes himself to be apart from God. That there is no real cause for fear is what Christian Science is teaching the world now, and it is showing how men can know the truth about man and God and bring true courage into their own experience.

Writing on page 423 of *Science and Health*, Mrs. Eddy, while alluding to the Christian Science practice of healing, throws a great light on the metaphysics of courage. Her words are: "The metaphysician, making Mind his basis of operation irrespective of matter and regarding the truth and harmony of being as superior to error and discord, has rendered himself strong, instead of weak, to cope with the case; and he proportionately strengthens his patient with the stimulus of courage and conscious power." These words practically unmask the hidden illusory causes of fear which produce loss of courage.

If the human mind be analyzed, it will be found that human beings are beset by the constant dread that life can be destroyed, health injured, and strength impaired, because they believe that life, health, and strength are directly dependent upon the human body. But Christian Science declares the fact that man's life cannot be destroyed, man's health and strength cannot be depleted, because God is man's life and health and strength, and God is eternal. To hold fast to spiritual truth is to hold to an unfailling life buoy on the ocean, and to be incased in impervious armor on the battle field. The man who fears is never safe, even if he be ten thousand miles from the firing line.

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What an intensely interesting question is this of courage when metaphysically considered. It becomes ultimately a choice between "the truth and harmony of being" and the false belief in error, discord, or matter; and the choice is presented to all. Paul urged upon his hearers the necessity of making the choice. It was to the Ephesians he addressed the command: "Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand." The whole armor of God is the truth about God. As a man puts his armor on, that is, as he understands the truth, he is equipping himself with the moral courage which will enable him to resist the assaults of error, whether they seem to come at him as sins of the flesh or in any other apparently materialized form. Evil at all times is error of belief, because God is infinite good. It is as counterfeit consciousness, therefore, that evil must be combated; and if defeated as such, it will not present itself in any concrete form. That is why true courage must be secured along purely metaphysical lines.

Duncan Sinclair.

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TRUTH'S SUSTAINING POWER

I suppose that in a letter from the front you will expect to hear something about the war, but I am going to write about something of far more importance than the material side of the war; in fact I am going to write about something which makes war, even when you are in the thick of it, appear foolish and unreal, despite the so-called horrors which material sense tries to tell us are so apparent.

After a few months' experience of the conditions out here, I think a good many people came to the conclusion that there is only one thing worth living for, only one thing worth thinking about, and that is God. Of course they have been forced to this conclusion, in a way, as a result of the terrible human experiences which they have been through. However, if men have advanced to such a state of spiritual understanding as this without the help of divine Science, you can draw your own conclusions as to what I have gained in understanding with that help.

It would be useless for me to try to thank you in words for bringing to me the truth that summer many years ago, — I can only do this by demonstrating the truth which was taught. Thank God, I have been able to do that these last twelve months in France and have been rewarded a hundredfold, so that the seeds sown many years ago have indeed yielded a rich harvest. Not only once or twice have I proved the allness of God and the nothingness of evil, but on every occasion since I have been in the trenches have I proved God's omnipotent power, and believe me those occasions have been many.

When you see great trees snapped off like a twig and hurled yards, when you see a whole house demolished by a single shell, when you see a great rent which would hold a thousand men torn in the ground by a mine, you begin to wonder what power there is in matter to help one to escape such destruction, and of course there is no power in the material world to help a man who is in such a strait. That is the turning point, when men turn from matter to Spirit, and man's extremity becomes God's opportunity. Above the mighty thunderings comes as the sound of many waters the unchallenged declaration, "The Lord God omnipotent reigneth." What a

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blessing to know that it is impossible for a man to be in any conceivable circumstance where God cannot help him, because if we do think this we are believing in a power opposed to God.

It has been my privilege on many occasions, when right in the midst of these mighty thunderings, to be able to realize my at-one-ment with God, and so be conscious of that peace which passes understanding. I cannot describe this peace, but it brings that calm and exalted thought which is undisturbed by all the testimony of the material senses. Sufficient is it for me to know that I always have it so long as I am conscious of that Mind "which was also in Christ Jesus," — always conscious of good; there is no need to fear. These promises from the Bible mean everything to me: "Thy God whom thou servest continually, he will deliver thee." "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee."

Surely one cannot be fearful or discouraged in the face of such promises. However, it is necessary for us to give up all our material aims and ambitions and plans, and that ought not to be very hard, for most of them have been ghastly failures. When we can with confidence leave everything to God, and say with Jesus, "Not my will, but thine, be done," then we can rise above the din and discord of mortal strife in the knowledge that the battle is not ours but God's. There is no need then to worry and think about when the war will be over or how it will finish, or what we shall have to go through, or whether we shall be killed or wounded. These things have nothing to do with us, since as Mrs. Eddy tells us, "Entirely separate from the belief and dream of material living, is the Life divine" (Science and Health, p. 14). It is good to know that the all-seeing, all-acting, all-powerful Mind is guiding and governing our affairs every second of the day and night.

What a glorious lesson it is this week on "Sacrament." I think this is my favorite lesson, although I suppose we ought not to have any favorites, as they are all so beautiful; but there is something in this subject which always appeals to me and takes me far out of the reach of material belief. How well do I remember this lesson at this time last year, about a week before we left for the front. I was sitting under a little tree one Sunday

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evening, just by Stonehenge, Salisbury Plain. There was a sublime sunset and marvelous cloud effects in the sky, and studying the lesson under such peaceful and beautiful conditions I indeed had a peep into that city described in Revelation. As I sat there in the shadow of stones that are the remains of a great altar upon which human sacrifices were offered by the Druids long centuries ago, so this week, twelve months afterward, have I studied the same lesson in the shadow of the remains of buildings which mark the place of a greater altar upon which the greatest human sacrifices have been offered — in Ypres.

However, the divine Mind is not influenced by person, place, or thing, and although the conditions this year are about as ghastly as mortal mind could conceive, divine Love has shined through all and revealed even greater truths than last year. This experience reminds me of a verse in one of our hymns (Hymnal, p. 194): —

Feast after feast thus comes and passes by;
Yet passing, points to the glad feast above —
Giving sweet foretaste of the festal joy,
The Lamb's great bridal feast of bliss and love.

What beautiful milestones we have in the Lesson-Sermons on this great and sublime journey from sense to Soul! We cannot take the wrong road if we always keep our eye single to the light. It is not always an easy path; very often there are swift currents to battle against, dark caves of mortal thought with all kinds of dangers and temptations lurking in the corners, high mountains of material sense to climb and overcome; but, whatever we may meet on this journey, we can rest assured that we will not meet anything which Christ Jesus has not met before us. "In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." One cannot give too much importance to the words, "be of good cheer." If there is one thing which smashes the seeming reality of evil, it is cheerfulness; not the cheerfulness derived from material pleasures, which vanishes with the first approach of trouble, but the cheerfulness which is the outcome of high ideals and good works. This cheerfulness shines on as a beacon light, although perhaps surrounded by the most appalling human conditions.

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I remember during the winter months in the trenches toward the end of last year, and before we were equipped with the gum boots, we were days in the front line with the mud and water above our knees, and sometimes almost up to our waists; but amidst all this I was able to keep my mind so filled with thoughts of Truth and Love that I was hardly conscious of the material surroundings, and so was able to keep cheerful not only myself, but those about me as well. This is a great help to one's comrades, as they have nothing to help them and they look to you in every trouble. It is a beautiful position to be in, and you can fairly feel the good you have sent out return unto you tenfold when you see with what success you have helped them. I think this is the greatest reward a man can have, as it is the product of the greatest power in the world, the power of Love. As Paul said, the man who has not Love is as nothing. How true those words are!

All the inventions of mortal mind which are now being made to destroy men, are really destroying themselves; no matter how terrible or monstrous or destructive they may seem to appear, they fade away into nothingness with the first appearance of Love. There is a place on a well-known road here that leads to the trenches, which is called "Hell Fire Corner." Well, when we are in _____ we have to pass this corner every night on fatigues and working parties. They always shell this corner some time during the night, and you do not know what second the shells are coming. When I get near this place, instead of thinking of it in this way and expecting shells every second, I always think of it as "Love's Corner," as I know Love is there as much as in any other place in the world; and there is no more of God in one place than another, as He fills all space; therefore there are no dangerous places for God's idea.

It is beautiful what peace and comfort and what a sense of security I get if I realize this when passing such places. The same thing applies when I am in a listening post out in No-man's-land, just a few yards from the enemy mine. I have been able to realize some of the most beautiful thoughts when in these situations. Surely to be able to call upon a power like this, which is master of all material conditions and circumstances, is to have the "pearl of great price," for which we may well work, watch, and pray, no matter what we meet here to go through with in order to attain it; then we shall indeed finish our course with joy, and receive that glorious

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reward promised in Revelation, — "He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son."

What a glorious task we have before us, — what ideas of Mind there are still to be unfolded, how we may well work for that day when all peoples and nations shall recognize divine Mind as the only Mind, when man shall love his neighbor as himself, when all the ideas of Mind will be expressed in everything that is beautiful and good, when there is neither crying nor sorrow, nor any more pain, for all things will have become new. Thank God, we need not wait through long, tedious years before we can enjoy these spiritual blessings, but we can begin here, right where we are, to enjoy them.

Reginald Lavery.