

CHAPTER I

THE BACKGROUND OF THE UNITY MOVEMENT

The Founders

Kansas Cityans delight to call their community the "Heart of America." In 1891 a real estate promoter, but recently converted to religion, announced that he had found there a "peculiar psychic atmosphere,"¹ which would make the area a center of great spiritual force. Prophet Joseph Smith, a generation removed, had suggested that Jesus Christ would shortly set up his reign just east of the city, and many of Smith's followers were gathered at the proposed temple site. It was also reported that Mrs. Eddy had discerned a "soul quality"¹ in that place which would eventuate in the most extensive Christian Science work on the earth. Unity School of Christianity was conceived under this remarkable influence. It has rewarded the community by carrying the name of Kansas City around the globe.

Unity School of Christianity is the product of the combined genius of Charles and Myrtle Fillmore. A short sketch of their lives will give some insight into the origin and growth of the movement. Charles Sherlock Fillmore (he has never used the middle name) was born on a Chippewa Indian Reservation on Sauk River near St. Cloud, Minnesota, August 22, 1854. His father, of English descent, originated at Buffalo, New York. He received only a common school education and nev-

¹Charles Fillmore, "A Divine Center," Christian Science Thought, II (Jan., 1891), 6.

er united with any religious organization, but Charles remembers him as having a good knowledge of the Bible and as prone to quote it. The father had no physical defects and enjoyed good health throughout his life. Apparently he had an adventurous disposition. When about twenty-one years of age he left the settled life of Buffalo and migrated to the wilds of Minnesota to become a trader among the Indians. He later became a land-owner in the northern part of the state. His son suggests that he was only fairly successful in his business affairs. He died at the age of seventy-three years.

In Minnesota Charles' father, Henry G. Fillmore, met Mary Georgiana Stone, who had been born in far-off Nova Scotia. Her father, by trade a millwright, had brought the family west while Mary was quite young. She had had little educational opportunity. The family was Anglican in religion. She married at eighteen years of age. Mary G. (Stone) Fillmore, like her husband, was blessed with good health; she died at the age of ninety-seven at Kansas City.

Charles, one of two sons, was born on the Minnesota Indian reservation, August 22, 1854. Although small of body, he had good health as a lad. However, as a lad of ten years he injured his hip severely while skating. He estimates that, when he reached manhood, his right leg was some four and one-half inches shorter than his left. He recalls his youth as a time of severe, physical struggle with little opportunity for play. His father had no interest in education, and under the frontier conditions Charles received only the limited

amount of a few terms in a rural school. Most of his knowledge has come in later years because of a personal thirst for knowledge. His crippled condition did not keep him from making his own way. He began clerking in a store, a job he held two years, when only fifteen. He then spent one year in the service of a bank. After that he moved out from his home, going to Denison, Texas, where he clerked in a freight office of the Missouri, Kansas, and Texas Railroad for six years. He pushed on to Leadville, Colorado, in 1879. He became interested in mining, learned assaying, and for two years practiced the art at Gunnison. After a short stay at Pueblo, he moved eastward to Kansas City, which became his permanent home. Charles was not privileged to attend any church during his childhood, and he never affiliated with any orthodox religious group. He says:

I was not biased on the God question by an orthodox education. Born and raised in the wilderness of the west, my religious education was quite limited. God was an unknown factor in my conscious mind and always has been until the past few years.¹

However, he early became interested in the mysterious and occult. While still a youth he dabbled in Spiritualism and was also drawn to the Hermetic philosophy. He announced in August, 1889 that he had had twenty years' experience in spiritualism.² This explains some of the conflict in thinking

¹Thought, V (Feb., 1894), 454 (editorial).

²Modern Thought, I (Aug., 1889), 8; cf. Unity, XLVII (Sept., 1917), 256.

between Myrtle Fillmore and himself during the early years of their movement.

Mary Caroline Page, daughter of Mark and Lucy (Wheeler) Page, was born at Pagetown, Ohio, August 6, 1844 or 1845. Her parents christened her Mary Caroline, but for some unknown reason she disliked the name and began using the name Myrtle. This change was made before she entered college. Myrtle Page was one of nine children, none of whom are now living. The education of both parents was beyond the grade school, and both were earnest Christian workers, members of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Myrtle became a member of the church during her girlhood. She was given the regular education of her community. In September, 1868, she entered Oberlin College, where she remained for one year.¹ She enrolled in the "literary course for ladies," carrying four subjects--mathematics, algebra, Latin, and English. In these courses she showed only average scholarship. She left no discoverable impressions upon the Oberlin students of that year. When she left college she followed a brother to Clinton, Missouri, and there secured a position as a teacher in the village school. She was also an enthusiastic worker in the local Methodist church. After two years at Clinton, she secured a contract to teach school at Denison, Texas. During her stay of six years at Denison she met Charles Fillmore.

Charles Fillmore and Myrtle Page were married at

¹Letter from Registrar of Oberlin College, August 10, 1933. Unity School publishes that she was a graduate of Oberlin. See Myrtle Page Fillmore (Kansas City: Unity School of Christianity, 1932), p. 8.

Clinton, Missouri, March 29, 1881. It was a strange combination--Charles, twenty-six years of age, small of body and slightly stooped, with a decided limp because of his shortened leg, suffering from curvature of the spine and deafness in the right ear;¹ Myrtle, ten years his senior, and, according to her claims, already a victim of tuberculosis.² It would seem that only tragedy could be their lot! The pair started their home in Pueblo, Colorado. Three sons were born into that home: at Pueblo, Lowell, born January 4, 1882, and Waldo Rickert, born June 1, 1884; at Kansas City, Royal, born July 16, 1887. Mr. Fillmore reports that the children were sturdy and had only minor diseases such as measles and whooping cough before ten years of age. Lowell was given a grade and a high school education; Rickert continued through the Chicago Art Institute; and Royal spent three years at the University of Missouri. All of them have been engaged with their parents in the business of Unity School of Christianity. Royal died of diabetes at the age of thirty-seven years.

The Fillmores came to Kansas City late in 1884. Kansas City was at that time in the midst of a building boom, and Mr. Fillmore decided to enter the real-estate business. He evidently achieved some little success as a promoter of real estate, for he claims to have accumulated a hundred and

¹The Origin and Growth of the Unity Movement (Kansas City: Unity School of Christianity, 1937), p. 3. By this time Mr. Fillmore was calling his leg condition tuberculosis of the hip.

²Myrtle Page Fillmore, p. 5.

fifty thousand dollars.¹ But before 1888 the boom had collapsed; and, like many others, Mr. Fillmore lost heavily and was "left in debt to the amount of one thousand dollars."² Myrtle Fillmore was also having serious physical disturbances. The change from the mountains of Colorado to the low country of Kansas City had done her no good. She was sure that she was suffering from tuberculosis, and she was looking forward to the birth of her third son within a few months. Perhaps Lowell and Rickert were having one of the children's diseases already mentioned. Myrtle Fillmore felt that she had more than she could bear. Then something happened! The Fillmores explain it as follows:

Just when it seemed that there was nothing left to life, there came an extraordinary change over Myrtle. During the many heartbreaking trials she had reasoned out that there must be a supreme power operating by fixed divine law, and that this law, applied in faith and faithfully, must of necessity set aside all destructive agencies. And she applied her theory with remarkable success. Her tuberculosis vanished, as did the ailments of her children. . . . Sickness and poverty became as bad dreams. In their place health and the ability to work reigned. And Charles Fillmore, grasping the full meaning of this divine law, began to help her in her ministrations, reaping much benefit physically, mentally and materially.³

Christian Science to Kansas City

What had caused the change in Myrtle Fillmore?

Christian Science had come to town! The earliest traces of

¹v. E. Sutton-Mattocks, "Miracles Wrought by a Woman's Faith," The Kansas City Star, November 28, 1926, p. 1c.

²Unity, XVII (August, 1902), 69f.

³v. E. Sutton-Mattocks, "Miracles Wrought by a Woman's Faith," The Kansas City Star, Nov. 28, 1926, p. 1c.

organized Christian Science in Kansas City were in 1887. The route from Boston was through Chicago. Dr. J. S. Thatcher came from Chicago early that year and in March, about four months before Royal Fillmore was born, opened the Kansas City College of Christian Science. Eugene B. Weeks, also of Chicago, organized and taught the first class; Charles and Myrtle Fillmore were members of that class. C. I. Thatcher, a brother of the founder, later came to teach in the college. Christian Science found a well-prepared soil in Kansas City, for by 1890 this one college announced that it had taught more than eight hundred students, and Christian Science, a Chicago magazine, reported that there were already three thriving schools in Kansas City with an attendance of fifteen hundred Scientists.¹

Because Unity School is now frequently classed as Christian Science and Mr. and Mrs. Fillmore are said to have been at one time associated with the Christian Science Church, which they deny, it is necessary to trace the historical contacts of the two movements. A study of the first volume of Modern Thought, the original magazine which the Fillmores began to publish in April, 1889, reveals the influences that led them toward Christian Science. They never studied under Mrs. Eddy, but the first book they advertised for sale from their office was her Science and Health. This indicates that, at the very least, Kansas City was quite Eddy conscious.

Moreover, the Fillmores were removed only one step

¹Christian Science, II (March, 1890), 10.

from Mrs. Eddy. Three persons exerted noticeable influence upon them at this point. The first was Mrs. Ursula Gestefeld, Chicago. When Mrs. Eddy made her first trip to Chicago, April, 1884, Mrs. Gestefeld met her and became a member of her class. The First Church of Christ, Scientist, of Chicago was incorporated June 13, 1886, with a membership of fifty-one. Mrs. Ursula Gestefeld was made clerk of the church and the following year became one of its directors. She was an ambitious woman of marked literary ability, and she soon was producing literature on the subject of Christian Science, which did not fully agree with the thought of Mrs. Eddy. In 1888 she published A Statement of Christian Science, with the subtitle, An Explanation of "Science and Health." In this book she ignored the subject of "malicious animal magnetism" and also declared that the statement that "there is no matter, no body, no world, no anything, but God and man, who is spiritual and not material"¹ is a misleading half-truth. The writer was sharply criticized as a "mesmerist of the most dangerous variety" by The Christian Science Journal of Boston, and she was dismissed from the First Church of Christ, Scientist, Chicago, February, 1889. Mrs. Gestefeld was too spirited to acquiesce quietly to such treatment. She replied in Jesuitism in Christian Science,² a pamphlet already in the hands of the Fillmores

¹Modern Thought, I (Nov., 1889), 9. Quoted from the prospectus of the book.

²In reviewing Jesuitism in Christian Science Mrs. Eddy said: "Her reasoning is intoned with Pagan philosophy, her humanity besprinkled with Buddhism, and her pride and purpose nerved with the spirit of a Judas." The Christian Science Journal, VI (Nov., 1888), 427.

when they published their first issue of Modern Thought. The reaction of this magazine to the controversial book was very different from that of Mrs. Eddy. They recommended it in glowing terms:

All those who have read this work pronounce it a masterpiece in its line; being so far the most coherent statement of Christian Science from the basis predicted by Mrs. Eddy. . . . It marks an era in the externalization of the divine philosophy.¹

Mrs. Gestefeld was frequently quoted by Mrs. Fillmore in 1889; she contributed heavily to Modern Thought throughout the nineties. An effort was made to bring her to Kansas City early in 1890; when she could not come, her lectures were secured and used in a class.² She had an abiding influence in shaping the basic thought of Unity School of Christianity.

Joseph Adams, at this time also a resident of Chicago, was a second influence upon the Fillmores. He was an Englishman, converted in the city of London by the ministry of J. G. Finney. Under Finney's influence Mr. Adams came to Oberlin College and studied for the ministry. He was ordained by the Methodist Episcopal Church and continued under the connection for fourteen years. He then turned to Congregationalism and located on the west coast of the United States. The congregational ministers of San Francisco voted to withdraw their fellowship with him because of the "looseness of his views" in 1886. Mr. Adams turned hastily to Boston, studied under

¹Modern Thought, I (Dec., 1889), 12.

²Modern Thought, I (March, 1890), 8.

Mrs. Eddy, and became her assistant pastor¹ for a short while in the First Church of Christ Scientist, Boston. He then settled in Chicago. He was at that time a warm defender of Mrs. Eddy. When he lectured in Kansas City, December, 1889, the Fillmores attended his lectures. He originated a little journal, The Chicago Christian Scientist, in 1887. In the controversy of 1890-1891 he changed its name to The Chicago Truth Gleaner. He and Charles Fillmore held lively conversations through the columns of their respective publications.

A third person who had immediate contact with Mrs. Eddy and who, in the early days of their movement, made a more pronounced impression upon the Fillmores than either of those already mentioned was Emma Curtis Hopkins. Mrs. Hopkins, wife of an Andover College professor, became associated with Mrs. Eddy about 1884 and for one year was Assistant Editor of The Christian Science Journal.² When she disagreed with Mrs. Eddy, she turned westward to Chicago where she founded "The Hopkins' Metaphysical Association." She became the highly advertised contributor, during 1889-1890, to Christian Science, a monthly edited by Ida A. Nichols. This paper also bore the name The Blue Bird. Mrs. Hopkins was not satisfied with the name of her Association, but her followers hesitated to change it. However, in 1889, after three requests by Mrs. Hopkins, the members voted to change their name to "The Christian

¹ Joseph Adams, Chicago Christian Scientist, II (June, 1888), 18.

² Edwin Franden Dakin, Mrs. Eddy (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1929), p. 181.

Science Association." One reason given for the change was that the term "metaphysical" was too general to designate their position. About this time Mrs. Hopkins organized the "Chicago Christian Science Theological Seminary." J. S. Thatcher, the original Scientist leader of the Kansas group, arranged for Mrs. Hopkins to lecture there in January, 1890. The Fillmores were already under her influence for, in announcing her engagement, they said:

She is undoubtedly the most successful teacher in the world; her instruction not only gives understanding to the student by which he can cure the ills of himself and others, but in many instances those who enter her classes confirmed invalids come out at the end of the course perfectly well.¹

Mrs. Hopkins' class numbered eighty-seven, which was the largest Christian Science class held in Kansas City up to that time. She fulfilled her advance notices, and the Fillmores found it hard to express their appreciation of what she had brought them. Although their teacher repeatedly warned them against worshipping "personality" and insisted that she was "simply an instrument of the Spirit of Truth," they felt that they must give her the recognition she deserved:

In even these few words of commendation, we do violence to the desire of her heart, and in extenuation we voice the whole class when we say that we bow before the sweet spirit of the All-Good, which has found a tongue so eloquent; and knowing, as we do, that without that spirit Mrs. Hopkins would be dumb, our souls breathe a prayer of thankfulness to that Divine Mind for the light shed upon us through her personality. We doubt if ever before on this planet were such words of burning truth so eloquently spoken through woman. . . . It is safe to say that this course of lectures has given an impetus to the

¹ ~~Modern Thought~~, I (Nov., 1889), 12.

work in this city which will ultimate in the freeing of every mind from the thralldom of sin, sickness and death, and open the way for the new heaven and the new earth.¹

Mrs. Hopkins, importuned to return as soon as possible, visited Kansas City a second time in March, 1890. The Fillmores became her students in the Christian Science Theological Seminary, Chicago. Mr. Fillmore was ordained by that school in December, 1890.

Mrs. Hopkins was also indirectly responsible for giving Unity School of Christianity its basic text, Lessons in Truth, by H. Emilie Cady. She went from Chicago to New York for a series of lectures, and Miss Cady, a practicing physician, went to hear her. She became convinced that the "Divine Science" of which Mrs. Hopkins talked was what was taught in the Bible and that an individual could learn to cure people as Christ did. She began to experiment with her own patients and met such a favorable response that she was led to write a little booklet, Finding the Christ in Ourselves. Somehow this booklet fell into the hands of Mrs. Fillmore, who asked permission to reprint it in their magazine. Dr. Cady granted the request; she then wrote for them a series of articles which were finally gathered and published as Lessons in Truth; it became the standard Unity text-book. A third series, Miscellaneous Writings, relates some of her experiences in applying this method to patients. But Miss Cady, under this influence, did not give up her work as a physician; she combined "Divine Science" with her medical training until her

¹Modern Thought, I (Jan., 1890), 8.

retirement at an advanced age.

Thus the movement of the Fillmores originated amidst the influx of Christian Science into Kansas City. Lowell Fillmore, addressing the First Annual Unity Conference, July, 1923, said: "Father and mother were studying, among other things Christian Science, and mother found that there is a healing power."¹ The bodily illness of Mrs. Fillmore, the care of the two ailing children, the worry incident to the birth of the third child, and the business reverses of the head of the family found their solution in this grand new discovery. The wife was an immediate and enthusiastic devotee of the new cult. She began at once to treat her friends. The husband did not respond so quickly. Indeed, it was some years before he published his own complete assurance that he was able to demonstrate the discovery. However, Mrs. Fillmore's enthusiasm countered his doubts, and in April, 1889, they began the publication of a small monthly magazine, which they named Modern Thought.

The Search for a Name

Two questions arose at the beginning of the ministry of the Fillmores: First, should they charge for their services according to the standards which were customary among the practitioners of Christian Science at that time? Mrs. Eddy had set definite standards, both for lessons and for treatment. But Joseph Adams, one of her former students already mentioned as having influenced the Fillmores, had broken from her stan-

¹ Unity Souvenir Booklet (Kansas City: Unity School of Christianity, 1924), p. 5.

ards in this particular and created his own. He had started his work in Chicago on the basis of one hundred dollars for a course of lessons and one dollar for a treatment. Although he realized that his Christian Science friends would censure him, he decided, in 1888, to let each recipient give as that one felt, believing this to be the voice of God:

Now a change has come, and as far as our personal conduct is concerned we cannot walk up to the light which has come to us, and fix a price any longer for instruction or treatment on any condition whatsoever. . . . Hitherto we have tried to improve upon the Master's plan by telling the applicants for the Truth, "Yes, we will give it to you on condition that you give us so much money." This we now see, as never before, changes the basis of our relation to Christ, and makes the applicant of the gospel our Master, inasmuch as we look to him for the pay of time and services, and not to Jesus Christ, our only Lord, from whom we get the Truth and the assurance--"Thy bread shall be given thee and thy water shall be sure."¹

The decision to receive what each patient felt he should pay did arouse severe criticism. But Joseph Adams was vigorous in his own defense, and others, including the Fillmores, followed in his steps. They have continued that policy both in teaching and healing for fifty years declaring that, since it was God who was doing the work, He would reward them. So each person helped has been urged to make a "love offering" to them. They started the same system in payment for food at Unity Inn, but it did not work out so well and was soon abandoned. They have always had regular charges for their magazines.²

¹Joseph Adams, Chicago Christian Scientist, I (May, 1888), 275 f. (editorial).

²Unity has recently announced that charges were placed on their magazines only to meet postal requirements. See Weekly Unity, XXX (Jan. 14, 1939), 2.

The other question, much more vexing, was the naming of their teaching. This was not settled at once. A quarrel between Mrs. Eddy and some of her followers had been raging for some time. Some of these began choosing other names to designate the product. Mrs. Hopkins organized her first group in Chicago under the name "The Hopkins Metaphysical Association." But, apparently, the name "Christian Science" was already a helpful advertising symbol; and, as we have noted, her group returned to it.

Modern Thought began its life at about the same time. The name indicates the thinking of the editors at that time; at least, it indicates the position of Mr. Fillmore. Modern Thought was begun as a "good practical magazine dealing with the mental handling of problems."¹ Immediately beneath the title of the magazine Mr. Fillmore placed this slogan: "Devoted to the spiritualization of humanity from an independent standpoint."² Years later Mr. Fillmore stated that he had not at the beginning believed in Jesus Christ and had wanted nothing to do with religion.³ This policy of independence is clearly shown in the leading editorial of the first issue of Modern Thought. I quote:

The wave of spiritual thought which is sweeping over the land has created a demand in this vicinity for a publication devoted to its discussion and dissemination. With this object in view Modern Thought had its birth.

¹Weekly Unity, XVII (July 28, 1926), 10.

²Modern Thought, I (April, 1889), 1.

³See Charles Fillmore, "Purpose of Unity," Weekly Unity, XVII (July 17, 1926), 7.

It is not the organ of any school of thought, but the mouthpiece of all honest souls earnestly seeking for spiritual light. It recognizes that all friends of the movement are striving to attain the same noble end--the Universal Good, and that the roads traveled, though various and apparently divergent, in reality all lead to Rome. It is the desire of Modern Thought that all who feel the bubbling up within them of the spirit of Universal Love, will use its columns to express their views. If God speaks thro' man, he speaks through all men and all women, and every thought that has for its ultimate object the amelioration and elevation of humanity, will be welcomed here. It is not intended, however, that these columns shall be used to tear down, but always to build up, hence no space shall be accorded to the iconoclast nor pessimist, nor he who seeks to cast a slur upon the work of his neighbor; but the ideas of all generous, loving souls will be thrice welcome. We have no desire to unsettle the religious convictions of anyone, but we long to be instrumental in freeing the human mind from creeds. The influx of new thought is always necessary to life, and he who writes a creed or puts a limit to revelation, is the enemy of humanity. Creeds have ever been the vampires that sucked the blood of spiritual progress in the past, and life can only be kept in the present movement by latitude of thought,--tempered always by the power that moves the world, Love.

Modern Thought is a journal of progress. Its statements of to-day may not be consistent with those of yesterday, nor those of to-morrow, with those of to-day. We desire to grow--to unfold from the truth side of nature, regardless of preconceived opinions. We believe with Emerson, that 'A foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds, adored by little statesmen and philosophers and divines. If you would be a man, speak what you think to-day in words as hard as cannon balls, and to-morrow speak what to-morrow thinks in hard words again, though it contradict everything you have said to-day.'

We believe that truth is an unexplored domain, man has here and there touched its shining sands, but a universe lies beyond, which he can only compass step by step throughout the years of eternity.

We believe that the inspirations of to-day are worthy of the same reverence as those of former ages; and in all our citations and quotations from whatever source, whether religious or secular, corroborative testimony only, is the object, and not that infallibility was in the past possessed by any man or coterie of men, but that certain lines of truth run like silver threads through the web and woof of the world's history.¹

¹Charles Fillmore, Modern Thought, I (April, 1889), 8.

The contents of that first issue--articles dealing with Christian Science, Unitarianism, Theosophy, Spiritualism, Transcendentalism, Rosicrucianism, and occult suggestions for psychic development--show how free the editor was from any system of thought. This is in accord with Mr. Fillmore's lack of religious experience and his tendency towards the occult.

Mr. Fillmore was given no peace in the independence he had chosen for his magazine. Questions were raised about the attitude of Modern Thought toward the expanding Christian Science movement. He replied that their views were "not those of orthodox Christian Science."¹ But there are hints in the magazine that Mrs. Fillmore strongly favored the Christian Science position. In the second issue, May, 1889, a "Christian Science Department," edited by "M," appeared. This was the pen name assumed by Mrs. Fillmore. A month later, in a criticism of Spiritualism, she quoted voluminously from Mrs. Geste-feld's writings and ended by making her position quite plain:

I have never yet seen a Spiritualist who was fully satisfied. He is always searching for greater proof. Christian Science can give him this proof, for we take nothing for granted but reason from cause to effect. We are conscious of a power of thought. Consider for a moment this possibility, if we think up to God, shall we not find him; become conscious of him as we are of all things. And this conscious unity satisfies the heart of man. Let him wander in his consciousness as he will, he cannot separate himself from God, and he is hid from man only as long as he neglects to use his own powers; neglects to travel along the line of connection between himself and God until he finds him. When we have this conscious unity with God, or good, we lose sight of evil;

¹Charles Fillmore, "Is This Christian Science," Modern Thought, I (May, 1889), 12.

we have health, joy, peace and rest.¹

However, Mr. Fillmore was not yet ready to make Christian Science the one emphasis of the magazine:

We think that Christian Science, or some other mode of spiritual unfoldment, is necessary to make men and women permanently good, and consequently happy, but our experience is that there is frequently a general spiritual awakening² in the Christian Scientist, without specific reform.

He also proposed to his Spiritualist friends that they follow him in the study of metaphysics, which Spiritualism lacks.

Modern Thought wants the attention of all progressive Spiritualists, because it can give them metaphysics from the standpoint of one who has had twenty years' experience in their ranks and is, therefore, competent to intelligently meet many of the arguments advanced by those who think they know all about the invisible source of the healing power of Christian Science, and many Mind Cure schools.³

Meanwhile, a discussion concerning the right to use the name "Christian Science" had broken forth in the Chicago area. Mrs. Eddy had declared the name her own peculiar possession. Joseph Adams, still in her good graces, supported her claims through the Chicago Christian Scientist. Another Chicago editor, not a devotee of Mrs. Eddy, agreed that her claim was legitimate:

The peculiar tenets of Mrs. M. B. G. Eddy were stated by her under the name of "Christian Science." As a chosen term to designate her distinctive philosophy it is her trademark, and every principle of equity and honor de-

¹Myrtle Fillmore, "Why Should They Conflict," Modern Thought, I (May, 1883), 12.

²Charles Fillmore, "Notes and Comments," Modern Thought, (Aug., 1889), 9.

³Charles Fillmore, "Spiritualism and Metaphysics," Modern Thought, I (Aug., 1889), 8.

mands that "Christian Science" be conceded as a synonym for the Eddyistic philosophy. . . . If people want to buy her goods they ought to be able to do so by calling for "Christian Science."¹

Mrs. Emma Curtis Hopkins, who was seeking to change the name of her Association and make it include the term "Christian Science," was leader of those who desired an inclusive use of the name. She insisted that the name "Christian Science" was descriptive of a special line of argument and was not the property of any individual.² Mr. Fillmore took the position that "Truth" is a universal thing and belongs under no particular label. He caustically criticized those who made a "farce" out of names:

There is much wrangling in these metaphysical days as to the power by which the kindred schools of Christian Science and kindred cults are inspired. . . . The neophyte is apt to take as gospel truth what is taught by his preceptor, and the impression is abroad that each school of Christian Science, Mind-Healing, Mental Science, Metaphysical Healing, Psycho-Therapeutics, Mental Cure, Spiritual Science, Pneumatology, Old Theology, Ontology, Christian Metaphysics, Mental Healing, ETC. ETC., has each the power to confer upon the individual certain distinctive qualities not possessed by the other schools, and which qualities are exclusive, God-given and attainable only at denominated shrines. . . .

Many people are also blinded by a name, and labor under the delusion that because they have taken lessons in Christian Science that they are in possession of truths that cannot be obtained anywhere in the universe, unless that magic name is over the door. The names by which certain philosophies and religions are known, and the truths which they aim to teach, bear about the same relation to one another as the letter of the Bible to its spiritual import. People of limited spiritual unfoldment are sticklers for names and creeds, and are thus worshippers of idols. . . .

They quarrel over names, names, names, vapid unmean-

¹G. E. Charles, "Render unto Caesar," The Christian Metaphysician, III (Jan., 1889), 21.

²See Christian Science, II (Jan., 1890), 154.

ing names, that never were anything of themselves, and do not even represent that which they allege to represent.¹

But this article does not fairly represent the usual approach of Mr. Fillmore to the various groups about him. He was always looking for the good in other writers; and, when he found it, he did not hesitate to pass it on to his readers. Mrs. Eddy, at this time, was rethinking her relationship to the many parties of the growing Christian Science movement, and obviously she hoped to bring some of them to her side. Mr. Fillmore discovered such sentiment in an article in the Christian Science Journal, which he, terming it "broad and Christlike," copied:

For some time it has been clear to my mind that those students of Christian Science whose Christian characters and lives recommend them should receive full fellowship with us, no matter who has taught them. If they have been taught wrongly they are not morally responsible for this and need special help. They are as lambs that have sought the true fold and the great shepherd and strayed innocently, hence we should be ready and glad to help them and point the way.²

When Mrs. Hopkins came to Kansas City a month later, she easily convinced the Fillmores that they should follow her example and claim the name "Christian Science" for their teaching.

The following editorial explains their position:

In harmony with the foregoing gospel of non-limitation we have taken what seems to us another step in the progressive direction, by the unreserved espousal of that system of scientific religion known as Christian Science. We have leaned hard in that direction from the first,

¹Charles Fillmore, "Truth Bows at No Human Shrine," Modern Thought, I (June, 1889), 9.

²Mary Baker Eddy, "The Way," The Christian Science Journal, VI (Dec., 1889), p. 433; and quoted in Modern Thought, I (Dec., 1889), 12.

but because of the narrow sectional spirit with which Christian Science has been interpreted by many of its advocates, we were loath to come under what we conceived to be a galling yoke. Since listening to Mrs. Hopkins' exposition a broader conception has come to us, and we now see that the basic statements of Christian Science form an epitome of the best features of the ethical and religious systems of the past. . . . As a consistent Christian Science journal we shall necessarily confine ourselves to the essential methods of that school.¹

At the same time Mr. Fillmore insisted that he was to be the final interpreter of the "All Good" regardless of details taught by any school of Christian Science. The Fillmores now dropped the word "Modern" from the title of their magazine, and across the word "Thought" they wrote in smaller letters the term "Christian Science." This change was made in April, 1890.

A storm of criticism broke over them. The Fillmores, now on the defensive, declared that they were not trying to fence themselves away from their friends, assuring them that Christian Science, since it had no creed or dogma, hampered no one:

That strength is alone in union is a self-evident proposition, but the natural tendency of the intellectual man is toward selfishness in reforms as in other matters, and instead of looking to the Divine Mind for guidance, he is a law unto himself; the result is a great diversity of opinion as to methods and names. We fell into this very error from an honest conscientious standpoint. We felt that Christian Science had a higher grasp of truth than any system extant. But because Mrs. Eddy claimed it as her exclusive property we rebelled, yet at the same time advocated like principles. We felt that this was hardly right and asked the Divine Mind to guide us. The answer came and we were made to see that Christian Science is the most simple and practical method for the permanent uplift of humanity, that its origin was ante-

¹"Where We Now Stand," Modern Thought, I (Jan., 1890), 8 (editorial).

rior to any child of Earth, and that it is not the property of Mrs. Eddy, Mrs. Hopkins, nor any one else, but that it is a manifestation of the Divine Mind for every soul in the universe.¹

The writers opposed to Mrs. Eddy's exclusiveness, who were trying to maintain a free and unlimited usage of the name, welcomed the support given by the little Kansas City magazine. The editor of Christian Science wrote: "Modern Thought has changed to the Eternal Mind by writing across its beautiful title page, 'Christian Science Thought.'² Joseph Adams, in the Chicago Christian Scientist, said: "The editors C. & M. Fillmore have become converted to the pure doctrine, and their journal is now an exponent of this conviction."³ But the tide of opposition was not easily dammed, and again Mr. Fillmore arose in defense and gave an explanation of the implications suggested by their new name.

The name Modern Thought was not an index to the Christian Science principles which the paper advocated and we were in consequence inundated by communications of a nature which we did not care to publish and were also constantly obliged to explain our exact place in that great maelstrom of "modern thought." The new name now does all this for us. . . .

Names of themselves are nothing, 'tis true, but so long as this mundane world sphere exists they will symbolize ideas, and just at present people are getting a new idea of God, and in their reaching out for that idea the word Christ seems more nearly to meet their needs than any other. There is a great running to and fro on the earth to-day, the new dispensation is upon us and the hearts of the people yearn for that light and love which Christian Science in its essence represents. So to the public understanding the name "Christian Science"

¹Modern Thought, I (March, 1890), 9 (editorial).

²Christian Science, II (March, 1890), 304.

³Chicago Christian Scientist, III (Sept., 1890), 17.

stands for all the different schools of metaphysics regardless of the technical differences by which their leaders distinguish them, and it will so continue.¹

The millennium had started! Christian Science Thought found indications of this in another article written by Mrs. Eddy under the title "Love Your Enemies." The Fillmores copied this article, and enthusiastically commented as follows:

The paragraph upon which special stress is laid,--
"The only justice of which I feel at present capable is mercy and charity toward every one; with special care to mind my own and not another's business"--should be carefully studied by all students of Divine Science. . .
. . . Let us remember this, and remembering it, forget to poison the minds of seekers for Truth with a tale of the differences with which mortal error attempts to separate those who try to follow Christ.²

But Mrs. Eddy obviously did not want followers who admired from afar and did not put themselves immediately under her instruction. Christian Science Thought was informed that her articles must not be copied by other magazines. The lines were drawn more sharply, and it was not long until those who had been trying to widen the use of the name "Christian Science" changed their tactics. In early 1891, Joseph Adams, now at odds with Mrs. Eddy, changed the name of his magazine to the title Chicago Truth Gleaner. His editorial apology was quoted by Christian Science Thought as expressive of the views of that magazine.

Christian Science is a Name given by the author to the best exposition and practical application of the

¹Charles Fillmore, "Why Christian Science Thought?" Christian Science Thought, II (June, 1890), 9.

²Christian Science Thought, II (May, 1890), 12.

gospel of God that I know anything about, and right near to this fact, I find one of the strongest reasons which impels me to drop the name, and that is--this exposition of the gospel of God called Christian Science is being substituted for the Gospel itself, and men and women by the hundreds are looking at the opinion of the author of "Science and Health" concerning the Gospel, instead of looking at the Gospel itself. . . .

The name of Christian Science has given birth to another caste or sect, which for jealousy, bigotry, intolerance, selfishness, unrelenting persecution and deification of personality exceeds any sect in Christendom that we are acquainted with to-day. . . . If I should go to a place where they have never heard of Christian Science . . . Jesus would tell me to say to my audiences, "Be preaching to the people that God reigns, the kingdom of heaven is at hand and if you believe in and trust the everywhere present and all powerful good, you will be saved from your sin and sickness." That is the Jesus' method. Christian Science would say, "You tell the people, 'There is no life, substance or intelligence in matter, all is Mind.'"¹

The month following the publication of this statement Mrs. Fillmore, in the absence of the editor, told the readers of Christian Science Thought that Thought lives and shall live and keep its own individuality; it shall be the same true Thought no matter what modification may be placed before or after its name."² The description "Christian Science" was dropped from the name and the magazine, for the time being, carried as its title the one word "Thought." The editors became increasingly adverse to Mrs. Eddy, and through the years they have sought again and again to differentiate their teaching from the Boston brand of Christian Science. They especially criticized those Christian Science leaders who, they thought

¹Charles Fillmore, Christian Science Thought, III (Sept., 1891), 252 f., quoted from Joseph Adams.

²Christian Science Thought, III (Oct., 1891), 300 (editorial).

had lost their morale and had shut themselves away from the Spirit by abject submission to Mrs. Eddy. Perhaps their statements were too harsh; for Unity, in these latter years, has had to develop its own technique for guaranteeing the purity of its product.

Names of themselves may be nothing, as Mr. Fillmore suggested, but they do symbolize ideas. The Fillmores' choice of the term "Unity" to designate their thinking was a very fortunate one. The name did not come at once. In 1890, Mrs. Fillmore organized the "Society of Silent Help" with the purpose of combined prayer for those who sought their aid. In June, 1891 the Fillmores ambitiously started another monthly under the name Unity as the mouthpiece of the Society of Silent Help. This organization then became the "Society of Silent Unity." Finally, they changed their publishing name to "Unity Book Company," But Unity magazine was discontinued in 1892. Meanwhile, Mrs. Fillmore, who had developed in Thought a department for children, which she called "Wee Wisdom's Way," decided to make out of it a regular monthly paper. Wee Wisdom began August, 1893. These two, Wee Wisdom and Thought, were united in 1895 under the title Unity. This is the chief magazine of Unity School of Christianity to-day.

The Fillmores have related two stories as to the origin of the name, which, they claim, came to them by special inspiration. Mr. Fillmore, addressing the First Unity Conference, 1923, said:

We have borrowed the best from all religions; that is the reason why we are called Unity. The name, Unity, was revealed to us by the Spirit. One day in one of our

little meetings--I do not think we had more than a dozen in attendance, it was given to me like a flash: "Your name is Unity." Then and there we adopted the name, Unity.¹

Three years later another origin was suggested: Mrs. Fillmore received the enlightenment. As she lay musing one night, perhaps after reading Emilie Cady's Finding Christ in Ourselves, the name "Unity" came to her as a "term that would symbolize their sympathy for all movements helping in the uplift of humanity."² The first story is the one told to-day, but the writer is convinced that the second is more likely the correct one. The evidence points in that direction. Silent Help, the child of Mrs. Fillmore's thinking, became "Silent Unity" that year. The first Unity magazine was started as the organ of Silent Help. Mrs. Fillmore discovered Miss Cady's booklet about that time and arranged with Miss Cady to publish it, which they did in October, 1891. Perhaps Mr. Fillmore, with his keen business sense, decided the consolidation of the two papers in 1895 and, at that time, selected the name "Unity."

The name, however, was not new; it had long been in the nomenclature of the Mental-Cure movement. As early as 1883 a group of Boston people under the leadership of J. W. Winkley, a former Unitarian minister, organized a mental-healing group and called it the "Church of the Divine Unity." Mrs. Eddy had made use of the term in the title of her book, Unity of Good, published in 1887. The International Journal

¹Unity, LIX (Oct., 1923), 404.

²Unity Catalog, 1929, p. 4; cf. V. E. Sutton-Mattocks, op. cit., p. 10

of Christian Science, August, 1888, carried an article under this title. And in 1890, before they took the name "Christian Science" to describe their Thought, the Fillmores were carrying in it an advertisement of the International Magazine of Truth, published by the Unity Publishing Company of New York.

The name was also in use outside the Mental-Cure group, and the Fillmores were familiar with it from this source. A group of Unitarian ministers established a magazine in Chicago, March, 1878, which they called the Pamphlet Mission. The name did not prove satisfactory, so late that same year they changed the title to Unity, which it has carried since that date. In 1891 the Fillmores were advertising Christian Science Thought in The Christian Metaphysician on the same page and immediately following the advertisement of Chicago's Unity.¹ This group also claims that the name came to them by a flash of insight comparable to those already mentioned.² The editor of the Chicago magazine protested when the Kansas City paper appeared under its name, but the Fillmores refused to look further. Certainly the name has proved a grand slogan for their organization.

Unity Differentiates Itself from Christian Science

Mr. Fillmore thinks of the early period of their movement as a wandering in "the wilderness of the 'isms'."³

¹The Christian Metaphysician, V (Jan. & Feb., 1891), 29.

²Unity (Chicago), CI (March, 1928), 9. Quoted from an editorial of J. L. Jones in 1890.

³Charles Fillmore, "Greeting," Unity, XIII (July, 1900), 38.

Their metaphysical pattern was that of Christian Science, but they had opened the pages of their magazine to "all Truth seekers." When they adopted the name "Unity," while it may have suggested their sympathy for the entire race, they were compelled to explain anew their position in the Mental-Cure milieu. Especially did they feel the need of distinguishing themselves from orthodox Christian Science.

We have already noted how critical Mr. Fillmore was with any who asserted an absolute authority. Creeds were anathema to him; each individual under the leadership of the Spirit was his own authority.

The student who enters the metaphysical arena should be on his guard in this matter, remembering always that God is no respecter of persons, and that no man nor woman, nor angel nor archangel has a copyright on truth; that all claims of exclusive inspiration, of whatsoever nature, are fraudulent, and that such claims are never made by those who have an apprehension of the real Christ principle.¹

When differences of opinion arose, each person must accept the responsibility of arriving at his own decision.

I noticed . . . that all the teachers and writers talked a great deal about the omnipresent, omniscient God, who is Spirit and accessible to every one. I said to myself, "In this babel I will go to headquarters. If I am spirit, and this God they talk so much about is Spirit, we can somehow communicate, or the whole thing is a fraud."²

This idea kept him independent in thought and action. He thought of Truth as something that one must discover and use each day.

¹Charles Fillmore, "Truth Bows at No Human Shrine," Modern Thought, I (June, 1889), 9.

²Charles Fillmore, "Greeting," Unity, XIII (July, 1900), 38.

A person must not worry about inconsistency but speak the best he knows at the time. However, since he believed that the source of Truth was the Absolute, he felt that people of kindred minds should seek co-operation. The Fillmores have always had a strong leaning towards fellowship with other groups. This led them to adopt the characterization of Christian Science, while, at the same time, they refused to accept the particular guidance of Mrs. Eddy. When it seemed necessary to acquiesce in her leadership or renounce the name, they took the second course. Mrs. Eddy is the only individual severely criticized in the fifty years of their magazine's history:

The "loyal" Christian Scientists are taught that all those outside are traitors, mesmerizers and workers of iniquity.¹

There is no doubt but that the persistent claim by Mrs. Eddy of divine illumination has woven about this name a glamour of superiority, and its chief disciples have unconsciously absorbed the belief that because a man or woman is known as a Christian Scientist they occupy a realm beyond the pale of error.²

Hence the Fillmores, although they believed that Christian Science contained the then greatest known Truth, and so adopted the name and, for a time, quoted Mrs. Eddy and sold her publications, never accepted her leadership.

Since their early contacts were mostly with those who had already exposed themselves to the wrath of Mrs. Eddy,

¹Charles Fillmore, "Truth Bows at No Human Shrine," Modern Thought, I (June, 1889), 9.

²Charles Fillmore, "Be Not Deceived," Modern Thought, I (July, 1889), 9.

they inevitably tended in that direction. This group looked especially to the thought of P. P. Quimby as interpreted by Warren Felt Evans. The group, many of whom got their first introduction to the subject direct from Mrs. Eddy, began the development of their thought from the same premise. All agreed that God is "Mind, Intelligence, Life, Love, Substance, Spirit." Out of this definition Christian Science of Boston concluded: "Man is God's changeless image and likeness forever. God and man are all in all, therefore there is no sin, sickness or death."¹ They continued their thought by declaring for no world, no matter, nothing mortal. The outlaw group began with the same God-concept but moved positively to the construction of a real world. They affirmed a "living soul," which forever images God, and a "substantial environment" known as the material world. Man is composed of an existent soul and a material body. They felt that Mrs. Eddy ignored the fact of a "real world" and a "material body," that she reduced the world of sense experience to "mortal error." And they pointed out that, while she was teaching that there was no such thing as sin, sickness, or death, her own healers all over the country were getting results treating these things.

The discussion reached its climax over Mrs. Eddy's teaching concerning "malicious animal magnetism" which, the others declared, was only her way of covering her own ignorance. Mrs. Eddy and many of her "loyal" followers insisted that instruction concerning "malicious animal magnetism" was a

¹Ursula N. Gestefeld, The Difference between Science and the Science of Being (Chicago: The Exodus Publishing Co., 1899), p. 4. (Pamphlet.)

necessary part of the system of Christian Science. Joseph Adams, her most ardent advocate in the Midwest at that time, said:

Instruction regarding belief in mesmerism is an essential part of Christian Science and, in a course of study must not be left out. . . . If you proclaim yourself a Christian Scientist the public will expect you to give them all that is involved in Christian Science or you will be a cheat for you will keep back part of the price.¹

This apology for her position pleased Mrs. Eddy. She at once wrote her approval with permission to publish:

The leading article in your Magazine was needed and will do good. It is only by laying bare the atrocities of animal magnetism and malicious mental malpractice that the human race can be saved from a bondage that will so far exceed the history of the Israelites in Egypt as the power of sin exceeds the inertia of matter to cause sufferings.²

Her opponents were just as belligerent in their criticism.

Mrs. Hopkins declared that the first two years she associated with Christian Scientists they were always talking about "the malicious mesmerizers" so that she could not enjoy their society.³ Mr. Fillmore expressed a similar attitude:

I am acquainted with Christian Scientists who give so much time to hunting up and locating what they call "impersonal error" that they have no room left for the All Good. I have experienced along that line just enough to find out, that such thinking creates what we would destroy and keeps alive, just as the pulpits do, the (d)evil's cause by free advertising. Thought is the vitalizing energy of the world; let us keep it sacred to the Good.⁴

¹Joseph Adams, "Common Honesty," Chicago Christian Scientist, II (Oct., 1888), 97.

²Chicago Christian Scientist, II (Nov., 1888), 121.

³See Christian Science, II (March, 1890), 229.

⁴Unity (discontinued), I (Sept., 1891), 3 (editorial). Unity School of Christianity has no record of the number of issues of this magazine.

And Mrs. Gestefeld, ablest writer of the opposition, gave the idea its most devastating criticism:

A result of "Christian Science" commonly observed, is the tendency to place responsibility for illness or misfortune--illness especially--upon one's "malicious animal magnetism" instead of upon one's failure to live the life that accords with its foundation principles.

While "Christian Science" repudiates the evangelical devil, it has one of its own instead, and one far more powerful. "Malicious animal magnetism,"--the influence of mortal mind, intentionally or unintentionally exerted over others,--is the subtle devil of this denomination, seen in the mother's face, in the eyes of a formerly dear friend, and even in a little child, when a member is looking for the cause of his indisposition.¹

Hence, while Unity has been classed with Christian Science because of their basic likeness in premise and similar aims, the Fillmores have strenuously sought to give their movement an independent rating. They have taken occasion repeatedly to point out other differences beyond those just mentioned.² Christian Science established a denomination; Unity maintains a school. Christian Science has sought to establish its own faith by tearing down the orthodox churches; Unity has always sought to carry out its work without demanding that its followers renounce their church membership. Christian Science has built an organization governed by a single individual; Unity has emphasized the freedom of the individual and the authority of the Spirit speaking Truth to and through the individual. As we shall note later, Unity has moved beyond the original movement in its concept of salvation and has suggested a tech-

¹Ursula N. Gestefeld. The Difference between Christian Science and the Science of Being, p. 12.

²See Unity, XV (Dec., 1901), 372 (editorial).

nique for attaining it which is distinctive. Unity School of Christianity should not be called Christian Science

Unity and New Thought

When the name "Christian Science" became recognized as the particular possession of Mrs. Eddy, her opponents had to select another designation for themselves; so, on May 17, 1892, the "International Divine Science Association" was organized. At the Chicago World's Fair, 1893, a meeting of the group was held under the name "The Columbian Congress of Christian Scientists." It was then that they released themselves entirely from the name "Christian Science." The third meeting was held in the Academy of Music, Kansas City, May, 1896. A. P. Barton, who for some time had written the Bible lessons for the Fillmore monthly, presided at the sessions, and both Mr. and Mrs. Fillmore appeared on the program. The president-elect, Mrs. C. L. Cramer, editor of Harmony, San Francisco, was a close personal friend who co-operated with the Fillmores for many years. The Kansas City Star spoke of the gathering as a meeting of the "anti-Eddy Divine Scientists" and reported one of the speakers as criticizing Mrs. Eddy because she had set herself up as "pope."¹ This "Congress" emphasized the watch-word "Unity" which had just been taken as the title of the Kansas City magazine. The fourth meeting was held a year later in St. Louis; at that time the new president, W. H. Daniels, asserted: "This is not a Christian

¹The Kansas City Star, May 12, 1896, p. 2.

Science gathering, but an 'International Divine Science Association' meeting."¹ The group then claimed a membership of two million, exclusive of Christian Scientists.

In 1897 the Fillmores made their first definite statement, which ultimately led to their official separation from all kindred movements. Speaking of their publication, they said:

These columns are open to teachers and healers who advocate and practice Pure Mind Healing only. This does not mean magnetism, hypnotism, mesmerism, psychometry, palmistry, nor astrology. Not that we condemn any system, but these are of the intellect and we seek a higher power. . . . We find by experience that concentration is necessary to success and we wish to confine these pages to that specific doctrine, and Holy Ghost power, taught and demonstrated by Jesus Christ.²

The first part of this statement had the approval of all in the Divine Science group, but when they said that they wished to concentrate on the "specific doctrine and Holy Ghost power taught and demonstrated by Jesus Christ," the Fillmores were giving a theological turn to the movement which many of the others could not follow and, when persisted in, led to the Fillmores establishing their own standards.

Meanwhile, other names were being popularized by similarly minded groups in other sections of the country. It was some time before it became evident what title would be given to the movement in its entirety. One group used the name "Practical Idealism." In 1899, another group organized

¹Unity, VIII (June, 1897), 447.

²"Explanation," Unity, VIII (May, 1897), 393.

the "International Metaphysical League" at Hartford, Connecticut. Dissension hit the ranks of this group the following year. In 1903 practically the same group reorganized and took the name "New Thought Federation." This name probably originated with a Dr. Holcombe, who employed it as early as 1889 to designate the mental-science approach to health.¹ Health was the primary problem during this period. While prosperity was being mentioned in the late nineties, the prosperity treatment did not come for some time. The group in the Midwest lined up with the "New Thought Federation." Unity of Kansas City was a regular member until late 1906. At the St. Louis Convention, 1904, Mrs. Fillmore gave an address; Mr. Fillmore was elected to the directorate, and C. E. Prather, a member of Unity's staff, was made assistant secretary. This convention also adopted a constitution in which we find the following statement of purpose:

To promote the better and wider knowledge and appreciation of the unity of all life, and to assist in the manifestation of this unity by means of co-operation; to stimulate faith in, and study of, the higher nature of man in its relation and application to health, happiness and character; to secure to the individual his rightful liberty in the choice of therapeutic methods; to foster the New Thought movement in general; to publish such literature as may be found advisable; and to take an active part in matters pertaining to education along the lines proposed. In accomplishing these purposes, the Federation in no wise shall interfere with, infringe upon or be responsible for the teachings and interpretations of affiliating individuals or organizations.

¹H. W. Dresser, A History of the New Thought Movement (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1919), 153.

²"New Thought Constitution," Unity XXI (Nov., 1904), 276.

Unity magazine introduced a "New Thought Federation" department in 1905. At this time the Fillmores were busy erecting their first building which they announced as the "first exclusively New Thought structure in the country."

But the Chicago convention of the year 1906 did not meet with their favor. When he returned from that meeting, Mr. Fillmore announced that the subject matter of the persons taking part was far removed from his understanding of New Thought. Having asked several to define the term, he decided that the name was being appropriated by many to advance new cults and so could no longer be used to express "Absolute Truth." This diversity of thinking threw him out of the ranks of the New Thinkers. His standard of faith permitted no compromise. Henceforth, he declared, his group would do their work under the standard of "Practical Christianity." This title was not new; in February, 1897 Mr. Fillmore had given a course of lessons using that phrase as his subject, and in 1903 the local Kansas City group had incorporated with the nomen "Unity Society of Practical Christianity." The decision was a hard one for them to make. They did not want to be considered critics of the New Thought leaders; yet so many lines of individual thinking had developed that they felt it was impossible to attain unity of expression:

There is but one foundation upon which we can have a permanent federation, and that is the One Absolute Mind. From that Mind, statements of Truth can be formulated that will be accepted by all who are functioning in the top brain, where the super-consciousness has its seat of action. Those in whom the tide of life flows no higher than intellectual perception, will not rise to

the consciousness of this Absolute, hence we cannot expect them to accept its basis of the origin of all things. Only those who think purely and act virtuously in all ways, conserving the vitalities of mind and body, can rise and stay in the top brain, hence we may not get together a very large convention in the beginning, but it will come, and be a permanent federation of all men who are truly seeking unselfishly to do the will of God.¹

This appeared to be the end of Unity's attempt to correlate its thinking and program with other New Thought groups. The next year the Fillmores organized the "Unity Annual Assembly of Practical Christians" in Kansas City, but, apparently, there were not yet enough living in the "top brain" to continue it. From time to time note was made of some New Thought meeting, but there was no move in that direction; rather the emphasis was placed on their originality and independence. In 1915 Mr. Fillmore assured his readers that his organization was not a branch of New Thought or Christian Science, but they should be thought of as "Primitive Christians."

We understand and teach the Truth given by Jesus Christ in its wholeness. This means that we include in our doctrine the great plan of salvation for the race which Jesus inaugurated. New Thought ignores this and Christian Science attenuates its fundamental facts until they lose the force and power necessary to complete the salvation of the body.²

However, by this time Unity had become so important in the field of mental-cure that the "New Thought Alliance" felt the need of drawing them into the organization. When

¹"About Practical Christianity," Unity, XXVI (Jan., 1907), 9 f.

²Charles Fillmore, "Unity Is Primitive Christianity," Unity, XLII (May, 1915), 339.

the "International New Thought Congress" met in Cincinnati in 1919, the leaders wired Unity concerning the conditions on which they would unite with them. The Fillmores replied that they could come into the Alliance only if the entire group would adopt the Jesus Christ standard, which they stated as follows:

The universe is spiritual and we are spiritual beings. This is the Christ message to the twentieth century, and it is a message not so much of words as of works. To attain this, however, we must be clean, honest, and trustworthy, and uphold the Christ standard in all things. Let us build our house upon this rock and nothing can prevail against it. This is the vision and the mission of the Alliance.¹

The Alliance adopted Unity's suggestion in toto and then, to show its appreciation, added to its executive board the names of Royal Fillmore and E. V. Ingraham of the Unity staff.

Unity reciprocated by sending an invitation for the next year's Congress. The Kansas City meeting was a glorious love feast; not only Unity, but the "Divine Scientists" of Denver joined the Alliance. The following year the Congress was held in Denver. Here the Fillmores brought the idea of adding the name "Christian" to the official title of the Alliance, but action was postponed for one year. This, however, did not curb their enthusiasm for the Alliance. They reported to their constituency the peace and harmony of the meeting, saying that every branch of New Thought was represented on the program but that the doctrines they set forth did not conflict in the least.² Believing that "all Christian schools of metaphysics"

¹"Unity and the International New Thought Alliance," Unity, XLII (May, 1915), 339.

²Unity, LIII (Oct., 1921), 377.

were about to be united in one movement, they urged their own adherents to take membership in the "International New Thought Alliance."

But this second marriage did not last as long as the first. On March 7, 1922, at a called meeting of the directors and teachers of Unity, it was unanimously voted to resign immediately from the Alliance. Aware that this decision and the good faith of Unity would be questioned Mr. Fillmore wrote a long defense of their action.¹ He said that Unity had faithfully tried to co-operate toward the establishment of a permanent Jesus Christ standard which would be for the good of the race. But the other New Thought groups had insisted upon putting their own interpretation on the Jesus Christ standard rather than accepting the ideals as they had been working them out. Unity had majored in developing one particular line of teaching, and this was either denied or neglected by others. Unity taught that eternal life is to be won here and now by the process of body refinement. Body refinement can be achieved by mental realization of oneness with the Absolute plus the "renunciation of such sense habits as the lust for meat, tobacco, sex, coarse dances and all pleasures that exalt sense above the soul."² Thus man can overcome death. Most New Thought groups, however, taught that death was an entrance to a higher life. This difference of thinking would not have

¹Charles Fillmore, "Why Unity Withdrew from the I. N. T. A.," Unity, LVI (July, 1922), 49-53.

²Ibid., p. 49.

caused the break, at least not so quickly, had not two practical difficulties arisen: An open platform had been set up between all New Thought Centers and field lecturers from other groups appeared from time to time in the various Unity Centers. When they presented ideas at variance with Unity's basic thought-pattern, the Center leaders were much grieved. A stream of letters had come to Unity headquarters in protest. The other practical difficulty, which was perhaps the crux of the whole matter, was that the officers of the Alliance were trying to give it a directive standing among the various groups. Mr. Fillmore thought of the Alliance as a loose federation of schools; the officers were trying to establish at least one official school for all members of the group. This point is so important that I quote him:

The I. N. T. A. directors were doubtless not aware of it, but they were making the Alliance another school of New Thought people, instead of a federation of the schools that already exist. We were continually urged by the I. N. T. A. to co-operate in building up their school, which was working along lines parallel with Unity, yet so different in many respects that we did not harmonize with them. We were asked to become members of a faculty to establish an I. N. T. A. normal school, when we were already part of the faculty of Unity school, established for the same purpose years before the I. N. T. A. came into existence. . . . Mere protests that the I. N. T. A. is not a school do not count in the face of the facts in the case. In a circular letter from President Edgerton, sent out about the middle of February, 1922, to the Board of Councilors, he asked for suggestions about revising the field workers' text-book. Also for the elaboration and extension of the normal school into an actual training school, to be held for several weeks each year.

¹ Charles Fillmore, "Why Unity Withdrew from the I. N. T. A., " Unity, LVI (July, 1922), pp. 51 f.

This letter had precipitated the action of Unity. Unity felt that her position and growth were at stake. She expressed appreciation for the benefits derived from association with the others and withdrew. Henceforth, Unity was to travel alone.

When Mrs. Fillmore, after her conversion by Christian Science, decided to travel with her ailing friends, she had no idea of the journey she was about to undertake. The years. To-day she was around the world. The United States, not yet fully won, was still a land of strife. He saved himself from his real work with Mrs. Fillmore.

Mr. F. B. Doud, in F. B. Doud, The Wings of the Soul, 1897. Mr. Doud Publishing Co., Boston. The subject of a "perfected soul" is treated in (Nov., 1897), 11. Mr. Fillmore now gives the following explanation of its symbolism: "The winged globe or sun disk, as a religious symbol, had its earliest use in Egypt, but it is found in various forms in the religions of other lands. It represents the relation existing between Spirit, soul and body. Soul gives wings to the body. Spirit is the enveloping principle, like the atmosphere in which both soul and body exist, and from which they draw their original inspiration. The winged globe is also a symbol of the earth and its soul. The earth has soul, as have its products of every description. All exist in the luminiferous ether, the anima mundi, the divine mother. When the people of the earth lift up their thoughts to God, the Anima Dei or Directive Spirit, then the planet takes wings into a higher radiation of universal life--the mortal gains an immortality. As man develops spiritual consciousness, he attains the realization of the soul as the wings of the body. Back of the soul is Spirit. It quickens and energizes the soul, that is, it gives the soul wings. Artists paint their angels with wings, representing in this way their freedom from physical restraints. But the soul does not have wings like a bird. The life principle of the soul is quickened by Spirit until it rises above the elements of matter and floats free in the ether or fourth dimension which is called the Kingdom of the Heavens. Follow the teachings of Unity and you will realize for yourself that you are the winged globe." Charles Fillmore, "The Winged Globe," SPIRIT EXPOSITOR, 1897, 357.