

THE LAW OF ACTION AND THE LIE OF REACTION

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LAW, the only true law, is the expression of the government of Principle. The Principle of the universe is God, of whom Jesus said that He is Spirit. This Spirit, or Principle, being one and all-powerful, all-wise, and ever present, there is evidently nothing beyond its eternal, infinite activity, or spiritual law. Spiritual law is the rule of action for all reality, all presence, all potency. Therefore any other claim of law must be false. Material laws, so called, are not then laws at all, because they advance the proposition of law which is not spiritual—and there can be none such. They are but so many suppositions, or reversals of spiritual law. To attempt to project a law of matter is to misstate or misunderstand the law of Spirit, God. Mortal mind's effort to govern through its belief in law is merely an attempt to materialize that which is wholly spiritual.

Matter and its modes will never help us to arrive at Principle and its law. But we may take up, one by one, material laws, and by a process of reversal arrive at spiritual law. Thus every material hypothesis will be found to represent falsely a law of God, while the divine expression will be found to render the spurious presentment null and void, without power, without content. Our work as Christian Scientists consists, in large measure, in both detecting and reversing spurious laws and in so living the truth as to exclude from consciousness all that is not entitled to classification as spiritual law.

How well I remember that day in my college course when I attended my first lecture on physics. The professor, whose eccentricities were traditional, after carefully surveying the new class suddenly asked of me the question, "What is the natural state of matter?" Having been forewarned, I prudently replied, "Rest;" whereupon triumphantly he shot back; "No such thing; it's motion!" Having thus accomplished my discomfiture to the great delight of the class and himself, he proceeded to elaborate, showing how matter is made up of atoms, which in their activity, their play one upon the other, produced the varied manifestations we see. At no time, he explained, does a single atom ever come to rest, but from the ceaseless friction of countless particles in violent agitation arise the phenomena of light, heat, color, form, consistency, and so forth. He then laid down for us what he termed the basic law of physics: For every action there is a reaction, equal in force and opposite in direction.

This so-called law is foundational to all the suppositional expression of matter. It may be called the law of material action and reaction, and human belief in it is largely responsible for the limitations and failures, the disappointments and woes of human endeavor. Moral fault, the sins of omission and commission, ignorant and intentional, are all based on the physical law that matter both acts and reacts.

The basic character of the proposition will be seen in the fact that if matter is always in a state of motion, and every action is followed by reaction, then reaction is as fundamental and natural a state of matter as action, and its supposed law must be at the bottom of all its modes. The force of a bullet leaving the muzzle of a gun is equalled by a force acting oppositely, although this opposing force is dissipated over the larger surface of barrel and stock, the arm, shoulder, and body of the gunner, and so rendered harmless. The illustration might be multiplied indefinitely; wherever so-called material power is exerted in one direction, an equal force is exerted oppositely.

Let us bear in mind that matter's suppositional manifestation is based on the supposed law that material action and reaction are ceaseless. Then let us remember that, since material growth, construction, progress, claim to occur under the operation of positive activity, reaction, being equal in force and opposite in direction, is destructive, retrogressive. Material sense under such a law only builds to tear down, and there is no permanence, but instead only ceaseless change. The flower buds only to fade, the fruit ripens but to decay, the leaf forms only to fall; mortal life sees its end in its beginning. All things in materiality are mutable and mortal.

How utterly unlike the creator of all is matter! "Heaven and earth shall pass away," said Jesus, but "my words shall not pass away;" and James declares that with "the Father of lights" there "is no variableness."

Why does matter, claiming to be a creation, the offspring, of the Father of all, so fail to express the immutable nature of the creator? Here is a paradox explainable only by the clear logic of pure metaphysics, for Christian Science alone challenges the false claim of matter to be a creation of God, and shows it to be merely a counterfeit of creation, a false presentation of God, man, and the universe. Matter is revealed in Christian Science to be but the objectified forces of the human mind, expressed in terms of action and reaction. Christian Science shows, moreover, that the so-called laws of matter are but clumsy imitations of divine law, counterfeits of the activity of divine Mind. Reaction is a phase of this pseudo-action of false mentality. It is therefore a lie and not a law.

Metaphysically, then, the basic law of physics is revealed as a lie which may be stated: For every good there is an evil, equal in force. It is a lie, of course, because it is not possible that there could be in reality a force opposite to infinite good. Metaphysically reversed and properly stated in terms of divine Mind, the lie disappears and the law of infinite action appears: For every lie there is a true statement, which acting oppositely to the lie, destroys it.

There is indeed a law of God which may be termed properly the law of action. Since God is shown in Christian Science to be the one infinite Mind or Principle, this law of action is entirely mental; it is the expression of the divine Mind, and is ceaseless, positive, and unchanging. It therefore produces no reaction, no friction,

no destruction. In human affairs, the lie of reaction builds but to tear down, whereas the true law of action tears down only that the right may appear. This true law of action touching humanity destroys the falsities of inertia, sloth, inaction, disease, failure, limitation, the whole mass of materially mental conceptions, only to bring to view the permanent structure of divinely mental ideas. The spiritual law of action is ever operative, positive, constructive, and supports eternally all that Mind creates and reveals. It brings to the tired toiler the joy of achievement; it breaks the gloom of despair and discouragement with the radiance of hope and anticipation; to the somnolent, supine with folded arms, it cries, "Awake!" to the disheartened, with hopeless eyes and helpless hands, it whispers, "Try again."

This spiritual law of action is ever opposed to the lie of reaction, but always this law is victor over the lie. Humanity starts bravely to work out its problem. Early enthusiasm soon reaches a climax, wanes, and ends. What has happened? What is it that causes men to strew life's pathway with unfinished structures, here an excavation, there a foundation, farther along the skeleton of a superstructure, all abandoned, falling to ruin and decay? It is the lie of reaction! From the quarries of reaction are taken the flagstones of good resolutions with which the streets of hell are paved. The human mind's good intentions are but crude imitations of the building blocks of action which, under Principle, rise to completion in the permanent edifices of character

and achievement. What is it that whispers in the ear of the earnest worker: "You are tired, you must rest; you really need recreation; you have labored long and have accomplished much. See how far along your work has progressed; see how much you have achieved. Now ease up and rest! If you do not take care you will grow stale and your work will become ineffective. Beware of overwork! After a rest you will work better and accomplish more"?—today inspired, to-morrow dull—the lie of reaction! For every action there is a reaction, says the lie of matter, but the law of Spirit declares, "God rests in action" (Science and Health, p. 519), and so His creation rests. Christian Scientists, when tempted to suspend work by the seeming reasonableness of the lie of reaction, may take refuge in Mrs. Eddy's statement in "Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures" beginning on page 519, "The highest and sweetest rest, even from a human standpoint, is in holy work."

When the true law of action has replaced in human consciousness the lie of reaction, humanity will forever do away with the life limit of "three-score years and ten," for men will not grow old and die; mental faculties will not be impaired by the beliefs of age and disease; incompleteness will no longer characterize human endeavor; for action will be seen to be man's natural state, and completion will be the mark of his endeavor, the perfect manifestation of infinite Mind.

Christian Science does not forbid one to rest, to play, to take periods of

recreation; but it does warn the worker, in whatever field of human activity, that the understanding of the true meaning of rest and recreation must be attained to set aside the false law of reaction which otherwise would turn play and recreation into the mesmerism of forgetfulness, and merge rest into sloth, inaction, inertia. Remember that reaction is destructive, an element of the imitative and evil so-called activity of mortal mind; it is, in short, a law of physics, and has wholly to do with that ceaseless change, the tearing down process of the forces of matter. On the other hand, genuine action is divine, the expression of infinite Mind, whose forces are actual, positive, direct, eternal, whose law of divine action builds and preserves. As this distinction between the spiritual law of right action and the lie of reaction becomes clear, the student begins to cast aside limitation, fear, uncertainty, and to rejoice in freedom, inspiration, and achievement.

The human mind, uninstructed by Principle, honors the lie of reaction in its every manifestation. This ignorance, when it observes any constructive deed or thought, looks on with complacency and says, "Wait till the reaction comes." Thus it contemplates all physical endeavor, all social and civil reform, every effort to do and to be good. Mortal mind, with its unflinching perversity, awaits the hour when its law of reaction shall destroy the work of its hands. With great care it builds an automobile, only to expect it to wear out through the contending reaction of friction, heat, centrifugal and centripetal force.

The action of drugs that purge and those that stimulate is followed by reaction, so that oftentimes the latter state of the victim is worse than the first. Indeed, the entire round of material medical practice is largely a hopeless battle against the forces of reaction; and this is true, whether the physician be given to much drugging or whether he be a devotee of some drugless method, such as hygiene, exercise, manipulation, or pseudo mental science. These systems, one and all, are predicated of the human mind and hence are subject in belief to the operation of the lie of reaction.

Look where it may, there is no escape in material theories for humanity. It is only when a man turns from the material to the spiritual and finds all being in divine Mind, where cause and effect are wholly spiritual, or divinely mental, that he begins to escape from the operation of the lie of reaction, with its train of destructive effects, and to find the law of frictionless, reactionless progress, with its products of health, harmony, and achievement. The law of action, spiritual and eternal, identifies cause and effect as inseparable, between which, and because of which, there is no friction, no reaction, but always cooperation, infinite progress. This law of action is thus a law of annihilation to the lie of reaction, and to the degree of his understanding of this fact, the individual is saved from the supposed operation of the physical so-called law.

A thing to be remembered is that the lie of reaction will seem to have sway in human experience and in the entire physical realm, so long as, and

in the degree that, it is given the dignity of law; for law implies power, and a source from which to draw that power. The claim to power must be withdrawn from physical law by denial of its verity. The only way to prove the unreality of the laws of matter is to know the allness of the law of Spirit. Spiritual law, if universal and eternal, must of course set aside and eliminate material law as invalid. When thus resolved into merely a false claim of law and replaced by genuine law, the so-called law of physics is seen to be only a falsity which crudely imitates the divine law of action, which law expresses the infinite, ceaseless activity of divine Mind, in which "we live, and move, and have our being."

It will be seen that thought must be spiritualized to escape the destructive

action of materialism. So in the daily war of the Spirit against the flesh, salvation can come only through recourse to divine metaphysics. Mrs. Eddy says in *Science and Health*, (p. 123), "Divine Science, rising above physical theories, excludes matter, resolves *things* into *thoughts*, and replaces the objects of material sense with spiritual ideas," thus annulling the physical law of reaction.

Honor not the lie of reaction. Do not permit the argument to obtain that "the reaction will come and things will slip back into their former condition," but know that all effort for reform, all constructive work, whether physical, mental, or moral, can be made genuinely progressive and permanent through denial of the lie of reaction and realization of God's spiritual law of action.

EDUCATION

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THE application of the teachings of Christian Science to pedagogics is a most interesting subject. It is in all respects the most important feature of such education to-day. In cases of abnormal or subnormal children, the operation of Truth is already recognized as radically corrective. Such cases under the care of a practitioner have been restored to normal conditions by metaphysical means alone. Restoration has taken place also where such children were under the daily instruction of teachers so imbued with Christian Science that the healing took place incidentally, without the aid of specific treatment. To cure defectives and so re-

move from the educational path one of its most troublesome obstructions is indeed a great service to the schools.

To children pronounced entirely normal an understanding of Truth proves of inestimable value in everyday work as well as under the stress of trying circumstances. The majority of young people approach the examination period with concern; many submit to it with positive dread; some emerge from it prostrated. The conviction that God is the loving intelligence everywhere present quiets the disturbed thought, and permits it to work clearly, definitely, and accurately, without fa-