

MIND, MIGHT, AND MASTERY:
HUMAN POTENTIAL IN METAPHYSICAL RELIGION AND E. W. KENYON

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Abstract

E. W. Kenyon (1867-1948), although unknown to many today, was largely responsible for assimilating mind-science into popular conservative Christianity. Our thesis is that in his attempt to champion Christianity against competing metaphysical healing movements (New Thought, Unity, Christian Science), the independent Baptist pastor, radio teacher and author developed a "metaphysical mixture" of fundamentalist faith-cure and transcendentalist mind-cure. Ironically, Kenyon's teachings helped metaphysical religious concepts to penetrate Christianity. Though never a pentecostal himself, his teachings on healing through "positive confession" (affirmation) were posthumously popularized by American healing-revivalists, and again by independent charismatics. Kenyon's views are now promoted by proponents of what has been called the "health and wealth" gospel (e.g., Kenneth Hagin and Kenneth Copeland).

Through original research, this thesis overviews Kenyon's teachings (chapter 1), explains the basic concepts behind metaphysical religion (chapter 2), documents new evidence for Kenyon's historical links to New Thought (chapter 3), and directly compares the teachings of both religious systems (chapter 4). The conclusion is that in certain of his distinctive teachings (e.g., faith-consciousness, affirmation, human deification), Kenyon's view of human potential is essentially identical to that of mind-science.

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I also thank the numerous New Thought clergy and laity with whom I have conversed over the last few years for helping me to understand and more accurately report their worldview, notably C. Alan Anderson of the Society for the Study of Metaphysical Religion. I am additionally indebted to Don Smith for kindling my interest, to Mary Ann Allen for equipping me to think clearly about the evidence, and to my knowledgeable committee (thesis mentor Gary Habermas and Dave Beck of Liberty University, and Gerry McDermott of Roanoke College) for their direction and correction. Finally, I acknowledge the pioneer in Kenyon scholarship, Dan McConnell, whose research is only further confirmed by my own.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO E. W. KENYON

With the arrival of the twentieth century, American Christianity was embattled from within and without. Higher criticism and Darwinism had challenged the church from the middle of the nineteenth century onward, causing not a few of the faithful to doubt, and some to abandon the faith altogether. The church itself was divided in its response to these challenges, with some stoutly maintaining their tradition by outright rejection of the new developments, and others incorporating these trends into a broader faith. Moreover, the nineteenth century had seen a steady growth of alternative religious movements in America to fill the spiritual void felt by many, and this competition only added to the troubled condition of American Christianity.¹

¹See Sydney Ahlstrom, "Challenges to Tradition," and "The Fundamentalist Controversy," in *A Religious History of the American People* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1972), 764-774; 909-915, cf. 907. Some participants in alternative religions observed:

The period around the turn of the century might be described as an age of struggle, with scientific materialism on one side and religion on the other. Unable to find answers in the orthodox churches, large numbers abandoned their membership during this period and drifted away or turned to new sources of faith. (Fenwicke L. Holmes, *Ernest Holmes: His Life and Times* [NY: Dodd, Mead and Co., 1970], 97)

"And they came to metaphysical churches in those early days by the hundreds. . . . [and later] by the thousands." (113)

This was a challenge for which Essex William Kenyon (1867-1948) offered a solution. Many religious groups had responded to people's continued desire for the supernatural by demonstrating "miraculous" healings, but Kenyon believed he could go beyond even that. Kenyon claimed that he had found "Reality," higher than even the "Higher Life" movement from which he emerged. This would be the solution to all of humanity's problems; in every arena of life, the believer could be absolute master by achieving and maintaining the right consciousness.

Kenyon's pathway to the full realization of human potential will be the subject of our study. Our thesis is that in his attempt to compete with the burgeoning "mind-cure"² which had its origin in his native New England, E. W. Kenyon was himself influenced by, and ultimately absorbed elements of, metaphysical religion. Kenyon's promotion of his religious philosophy--a curious blend of biblical fundamentalism and transcendental mind-cure--represents one of the earliest major penetrations of the conservative American Christian masses by mind-science.

Kenyon always considered himself a champion of biblical Christianity, and made clear his intention to remedy the menace of the competing metaphysical religions (like Christian Science and New Thought) by offering a superior alternative for seekers of Reality. Yet, ironically, the popular acceptance of his system, which we will show to be a "metaphysical mixture," resulted in a wider

²Mind-cure began in America as an outgrowth of Transcendentalism; its chief aim was the mastery of physical conditions through understanding and applying mental or spiritual laws. Adherents viewed mind as a causative force over the secondary realm of matter, and on that basis attempted to heal the body solely through changing states of consciousness.

As one writer quipped, mind-cure combined "a post-Emersonian Transcendentalism with additions of Eastern mysticism, and a complex rationale of 'transcend your cake and eat it too' as regards worldly goods and success." (Freeman Champney, *Art and Glory: The Story of Elbert Hubbard* [NY: Crown Publishers, 1986], 145) Chapter two of this thesis is a description of mind-cure, which will be referred to throughout with the synonyms mind-science, mental science, mental healing, New Thought, and metaphysical religion.

dissemination of mind-cure concepts. Hence, in this regard, Kenyon accomplished the reverse of his stated intention.

Current Kenyon scholarship

The meager scholarly attention E. W. Kenyon has received is not proportional to his actual significance.³ Most scholars of American church history have only the slightest familiarity with Kenyon's theology, if indeed they have ever heard his name. Only a few academic journal articles referring to Kenyon have been published⁴, and there have previously been only two scholarly works that focus on his thought specifically. The first was Daniel R. McConnell's 1982 M. A. thesis. The second was Dale Hawthorn Simmons' 1990 Ph.D. dissertation.⁵ The scholarly attention to Kenyon

³We will consider Kenyon's significance in American religion later in this chapter. Popular works which briefly mention Kenyon include: Bruce Barron, *The Health and Wealth Gospel* (Downer's Grove, Ill: InterVarsity, 1987); Charles Farah, *This Cancer Kills: A Critical Analysis of the Roots and Fruits of 'Faith-Formula' Theology* (Portland: Charis Life, 1982); Judith A. Matta, *The Born-Again Jesus of the Word-Faith Teaching* (Fullerton, CA: Spirit of Truth Ministries, 1984); Hank Hanegraaff, *Christianity in Crisis* (Harvest House, 1993).

⁴See Dennis Hollinger, "An Historical/Sociological Profile of the Health and Wealth Gospel," *Trinity Journal* 9 (Fall 1988), 131-149; Terris H. Neuman, "Cultic Origins of Word-Faith Theology Within the Charismatic Movement," *Pneuma: The Journal of the Society for Pentecostal Studies* 12 (Spring 1990), 3-55.

⁵Daniel R. McConnell, "The Kenyon Connection: A Theological and Historical Analysis of the Cultic Origins of the Faith Movement." Master's Thesis, Oral Roberts University, 1982 (later published as *A Different Gospel: A Historical and Biblical Analysis of the Modern Faith Movement* [Peabody, Mass: Hendrickson Publishers, 1988]); Dale Hawthorn Simmons, "The Postbellum Pursuit of Peace, Power, and Plenty: As Seen in the Writings of Essek William Kenyon." Drew University, Ph.D. dissertation, 1990. Two others that at least make reference to Kenyon are Dale Hawthorne Simmons, "Heretic or Herald of God? A Theological and Historical Analysis of Kenneth E. Hagin's Claim to Be a Prophet," Master's Thesis, Oral Roberts University, 1985; James M. Kinnebrew, "The Charismatic Doctrine of Positive Confession: A Historical, Exegetical, and Theological Critique," Th.D. dissertation, Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary, 1988.

is expanding, however. In addition to this study, there are four other works on the horizon (three books and a thesis).⁶

The direction which much of the emerging scholarship is taking is decidedly different from that of this study and McConnell's. While Simmons and those writers who follow him portray Kenyon as basically orthodox or evangelical, McConnell refers to Kenyon's teachings as "A Different Gospel." In his book of the same title, McConnell argues that Kenyon absorbed his distinctive religious thought from metaphysical religion, particularly Christian Science and New Thought, most likely while enrolled at Emerson College in Boston. Insofar as mind-science is incompatible with historic, biblical Christianity as McConnell and most evangelicals claim,⁷ then Kenyon's system falls outside of evangelical Christianity. Until 1990, McConnell's position on Kenyon's relationship to metaphysical religion was largely undisputed in academic publications. The articles on Kenyon that appeared typically based their positions on McConnell's work.⁸

⁶Simmons is publishing a book on Kenyon based largely on his dissertation; Geir Lee is completing a master's thesis on Kenyon; Robert Bowman, formerly of Christian Research Institute, is publishing a book with one chapter specifically on Kenyon; and Joe McIntyre is releasing a book on Kenyon. McIntyre has privileged access to information and materials due to his connection to the Kenyon Gospel Publishing Society. All of the above-mentioned characterize Kenyon's distinctive doctrines as faith-cure instead of as mind-cure; the difference between the two will be explained in chapter four.

⁷For a good example of the evangelical claim that mind-science is incompatible with traditional biblical Christianity, see Dean Halverson, "Mind Power: A History and Analysis of the New Thought Movement," *SCP Newsletter* (Spring 1985), 1, 5-10.

The most commonly cited distinctions between New Thought and historical Christian theology include the former's propensity to interpret experience and sacred literature subjectively, emphasize God's immanence over his (or its) transcendence and personhood, characterize human beings as having literal divine potential in terms of essence and power, and focus primarily on mental forces/laws and states of consciousness as keys to self-realization and actualization.

⁸Though popular periodicals like *Charisma* and books like Bruce Barron's portray Kenyon as a faith-curist, such is not the case with academic journals. Interestingly, Barron's more recent position

Simmons et al, on the other hand, argue that Kenyon's teachings, although similar to mind-cure, are more properly categorized as faith-cure, which was championed by the divine healing movement in America. Hence Kenyon should be recognized among the Higher Christian Life advocates like Charles Cullis, A. J. Gordon and R. A. Torrey (see note 38 below). Simmons adds to our knowledge of Kenyon with a seemingly exhaustive biography (overcoming the serious hindrance created by Kenyon's insistence, later in life, that nothing biographical be written about him⁹).

Simmons asserts that Kenyon's enrollment at Emerson would have afforded Kenyon as much exposure to Higher Life as to Higher Thought (as New Thought was then sometimes called). Simmons explains the similarities between Kenyon and mind-science by arguing that mind-cure is really quite similar to faith-cure, hence the mistaken confusion of Kenyon with New Thought.¹⁰ He makes a persuasive case at least for Kenyon's *early* involvement in Higher Life and the traditional nature of many of Kenyon's teachings.

acknowledges that "Kenyon probably came into contact with metaphysical thought systems (often described as New Thought) that influenced his theology" at Emerson College, as McConnell claims. (Barron, "Kenyon, Essek William," in Daniel G. Reid, Robert D. Linder, Bruce L. Shelley, Harry S. Stout, eds., *Dictionary of Christianity in America* [Downer's Grove, Ill: InterVarsity Press, 1990], 611) Cf Robert Jackson, "Prosperity Theology and the Faith Movement," *Themelios* 15(October 1989), 16-24. One reference work disputes McConnell: see R. M. Riss, "Kenyon, Essek William," in Stanley M. Burgess, Gary B. McGee and Patrick H. Alexander, eds., *Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1988), 517-518.

⁹Kenyon's son-in-law related Kenyon's wishes to another scholar. See Norman Housworth, "Letter to the author," September 10, 1985, quoted in Kinnebrew, "Positive Confession," 262 n.34. Simmons' favorable relationship with Kenyon's Gospel Publishing Society has afforded him access to source material unavailable to other scholars outside of the Society.

¹⁰This paper takes the position that confusing mental healing with faith-healing does not provide an adequate basis for distinguishing Kenyon from mind-cure. Important distinctions between Kenyon and faith-cure, and between faith-cure and mind-cure, will be made in chapter four.

Clearly, the categorization of Kenyon's religious thought is a disputed issue among scholars. Upon the publication of much of the emerging scholarship, McConnell's position will no longer be the majority opinion. Our study fits into this dispute in the following manner. We will not take a normative, but a historical approach to comparative religion. That is, we will address neither the "orthodoxy" nor the truth-value of Kenyon, mind-cure or faith-cure. We will, however, argue that certain elements of Kenyon's (mature) thought are, indeed, best categorized within the realm of what has been historically considered "mental science." At the same time we do not claim that all of his teachings belong in this mold; only certain of Kenyon's later distinctives exemplify metaphysical religion, and these are precisely what made his message stand out among his contemporaries.

Given the contributions that both McConnell and Simmons have made, the value of this study lies in its further documentation of metaphysical religious elements in Kenyon's thought. In this regard, this work serves as evidential confirmation of many of McConnell's assertions. Nevertheless, we recognize much of Kenyon's world-view as theistic, even "evangelical," as Simmons contends.

Our thesis will demonstrate that in certain areas, Kenyon's thought is not merely similar to, but identical with that of metaphysical religion. In the course of this study, we will summarize Kenyon's thought (the remainder of this chapter), overview metaphysical religion (chapter two), explore its earliest historical links with Kenyon (chapter three), and conclude with comparisons between certain elements of the two (chapter four).

In preparation for this study, the remainder of this chapter will contain brief reviews of Kenyon's life, significance in American religion, and basic thought. To these we now turn.

A Brief Overview of Kenyon's Life

E. W. Kenyon displayed a keen mind but was never afforded the opportunity to pursue much higher education. This was apparently due to his family's meager financial means rather than a lack of ability or initiative on his part. He wanted, even from his childhood, to become well-educated. One reason for this ambition was undoubtedly that education might rescue him from the poverty of his slavish early existence. In 1936 he recalled desiring a quality education during his difficult period of child-labor in the local carpet mill.¹¹ Kenyon wanted not only to receive education, but to provide it for others as well.

He achieved much more in the latter than the former. Born April 24, 1867 in Saratoga County, N.Y., his family moved to Amsterdam, N.Y. when Kenyon was fairly young. He began work in a carpet mill at age twelve, and for awhile was deprived of even a secondary education, although he continued to study on his own at night. At about age eighteen Kenyon experienced conversion, forsaking his former "worldly" lifestyle. When he was nineteen he preached his first sermon, at a Methodist Episcopal Church. Kenyon was finally able to pursue his education, resuming study at the Amsterdam Academy.¹²

¹¹"I stood by the loom in the factory as a boy and vowed that I would become an educator." (Kenyon, *Sign Posts on the Road to Success* [Seattle: Kenyon's Gospel Publishing Society, 1966 (1936)], 10) Simmons notes that Kenyon lost a finger working at the carpet mill (Simmons, 3 n. 6).

¹²Biographical information on Kenyon is given in McConnell, 31-34, and in greater detail in Dale Simmons, 2-6, *passim*. On the subject of his conversion, Kenyon spoke very little. He tells us "it was a cold winter night in January. . . ." (*In His Presence* [Seattle: Kenyon's Gospel Publishing Society, 1969 (1944)], 130) On his conversion and early educational status, Kenyon says,

At the time I was Born Again, I was working in a factory. I had no education whatever. The third night when I came home from the service my mother asked me where I had been, and

New England ministry

At age twenty-one he undertook a full-time ministry paying about \$400 per year. Dale Simmons reports that Kenyon pastored various churches in New England over the following four years. Kenyon supplemented his income as a door-to-door salesman.¹³ This was also the time for him to pursue higher education, however briefly, at several schools. McConnell informs us that during this period Kenyon attended several educational institutions in New Hampshire, moving in 1892 to Boston, where he attended several more schools.¹⁴

He apparently found one with which he was satisfied in the fall of 1892; the only school in which Kenyon remained enrolled for more than a semester was Emerson College of Oratory in Boston.¹⁵ Although Emerson College was considered a prominent school of oratory, its students

I told her.

My brother, older than I, a witty fellow, said, 'Mother, that fool will be preaching next.' I ran upstairs to get away from him, for I dreaded his wit, but I said as I went, 'Eddie, you are right; I am going to have an education, and I am going to preach.' Eternal life had come into my spirit and my old life dropped away from me. At once I became a student. (*The Hidden Man* [Seattle: Kenyon's Gospel Publishing Society, 1970 (1955)], 144)

¹³Dale Simmons states that during the interim from ages 19-21, Kenyon supported himself by selling pianos and organs door-to-door. (Simmons, 4-5) Kenyon, however, gives the age of twenty-one for when he began selling: "I didn't know anything about the sales game when I went into it as a boy of twenty-one." (*Sign Posts*, 45)

¹⁴McConnell, 31.

¹⁵*ibid.*, 35. McConnell notes that Kenyon's attendance at Emerson was mentioned by his daughter in the memorial edition of his periodical following his death (Ruth A. Kenyon, "He is at Rest," *Kenyon's Herald of Life* 13 [April 1948], 1) and was verified by Emerson's archivist Bob Fleming.

Kenyon is also listed on page 46 in the *Emerson College Catalogue 1892-93* as a freshman. Had Kenyon earned a significant amount of credit elsewhere, he probably would not have been listed as a freshman. The questions of how influential one year of study at Emerson might have been for Kenyon, and why he did not continue there, will be taken up in chapter three.

were instructed in more than the fine art of elocution; the institution Kenyon enrolled in, attended, and participated in was saturated with elements of the new "metaphysical movement." This will be demonstrated in chapter three.

In 1893 Kenyon married Eva Spurling and forsook his studies at Emerson for a ministry position that could support a beginning family. They first settled in Worcester, Massachusetts, where Kenyon pastored two Free Baptist congregations. Kenyon then established an independent congregation in Worcester and another in Spencer.¹⁶ During this time, he traveled occasionally to undertake evangelistic campaigns.

Kenyon's "Bible Institute"

Kenyon hoped to save enough capital to someday open his own school. Then in 1899 John and Susie Marble donated a sizeable piece of farmland in Spencer, Massachusetts for Kenyon's use as a campus. Kenyon's boyhood dream became reality in April 1900 with the opening of the Bethel Bible Institute.¹⁷ The school was modeled after Charles Cullis' "Faith Works," charging no tuition to the students and paying no salary to the instructors.¹⁸ Over the course of Kenyon's presidency and superintendency, he also edited the school's periodical, first *The Bethel Trumpet* (1900-1903),

¹⁶Simmons, 19. After leaving Emerson, "Kenyon settled with his new bride in Worcester, Massachusetts where he pastored two Free Baptist congregations. . . . From the beginning, Kenyon ran into difficulties in his new charges as suspicions were raised about his 'strange doctrines.' Eventually, he was dismissed. . . ." (55)

¹⁷E. W. Kenyon, "The Re-opening of Bethel Bible Training School, September, 1904. Dedicated May 1, 1900," *Reality* (June 1904), 157-159.

¹⁸Simmons, 57-59.

followed by *Reality* (1903-1923).¹⁹ Except for its brief falter in 1903, the school remained strong through future relocations, mergers and renamings. After Kenyon left in 1923, it eventually became known as Barrington College, which later merged with Gordon College in Wenham, Massachusetts in 1985.

West coast ministry

Kenyon remained with the school he founded until 1923, when, after his previous successful evangelistic campaigns to the west coast, he moved to California.²⁰ He first based an evangelistic outreach in Oakland, and then pastored in Pasadena and Los Angeles, respectively. (It was here that something seems to have triggered his shift toward mind-science.) He became one of the first preachers to utilize radio evangelism. In 1931 Kenyon moved to Seattle, Washington, where he founded another independent Baptist church and continued his flourishing radio ministry. He remained in Seattle until his death on 19 March 1948. Kenyon was eighty years old, and active until the end.²¹

Kenyon had begun a new periodical on the west coast, called *Kenyon's Herald of Life*. He proved more prolific on the west coast: his radio broadcasts were heard daily in heavily populated

¹⁹Kenyon's very first periodical was *The Tabernacle Trumpet*, published apparently during his pastorate of the independent Tabernacle in Worcester (1898-1900), and renamed *The Bethel Trumpet* upon the opening of his Bethel Institute in 1900.

²⁰Simmons, 68-69.

²¹Simmons names Oakland as the first California location for Kenyon (70), McConnell gives Pasadena as the 1926 location and Los Angeles after that (33), while Riss reports Los Angeles as the first location in 1923 (517). Kenyon's daughter adds that upon arrival in California (1923) he first traveled in evangelistic work for a time before pastoring (Ruth Kenyon, 10), in contradiction to Riss' 1923 date for the L.A. church. They all agree on Kenyon's later settling in Seattle.

cities and became the basis for most of the fifteen books he had compiled before his passing. His daughter, Ruth Kenyon Housworth, continued the *Herald of Life* and compiled two more books from materials her father left. She also edited some of the books Kenyon had compiled. Her loyalty ensured that his influence would continue and even expand, despite his voice now being heard only in print.²² Every one of Kenyon's seventeen prose works are currently in print.

The Significance of Kenyon in American Religion

Essek William Kenyon affected the landscape of American religion significantly both during his lifetime and posthumously. This is evident in his contribution of charismatic and holiness/pentecostal distinctives, his role in the introduction of mind-science into conservative Christianity, and his contributions to American religious education.

Charismatic cornerstones: faith and confession

McConnell focused on Kenyon's posthumous influence, which is most evident in the modern charismatic movement within Christianity. Although Kenyon's associations and audiences were widely interdenominational, and while he never considered himself a Pentecostal, his literature has been seminal for many within the independent charismatic community (particularly Kenneth Hagin and Kenneth Copeland).²³ Perhaps it is due to the academy's disinterest in this movement's actual religious and philosophical thought that Kenyon's importance is only recently being noted. As it is,

²²Ruth Kenyon, 10.

²³Riss, 517-518; Barron, "Kenyon, Essek William," 611.

many scholars care little about what Hagin, Copeland, and their followers believe and teach, much less about where it originated--regardless of how many follow the teachings. This neglect has led to a surprising ignorance of a significant expression of American religion.

Kenyon's influence is found in the teaching pejoratively termed "name it and claim it," or "the health and wealth gospel." According to Kenyon and the modern leaders in this movement, believers can create perfect health and financial prosperity for themselves by believing in (having faith) and verbally affirming (confessing) the *present* reality or possession of the objects of desire. Hagin had been widely credited for originating this idea, but McConnell ably demonstrated Hagin's reliance on Kenyon. In fact, this "positive confession" philosophy, according to Simmons, appeared in Kenyon's writings (by 1929) before young Hagin had even become a Christian (1933). McConnell documented the line-for-line, even word-for-word plagiarisms of Kenyon which he found in several of Hagin's works.²⁴

Of course Hagin was not the first to appropriate Kenyon's distinctive message. Kenyon was accepted by, and moved freely among, both pentecostals and healing-revivalists from 1909 and on. This was due mostly to his teachings on faith and healing; Kenyon was not himself a participant in

²⁴McConnell, "The True Father of the Modern Faith Movement," chapter one in *A Different Gospel*, 3-13. To connect Hagin to Kenyon was only McConnell's first objective. He went on in the book to connect Kenyon to the nineteenth-century mental healing movement, based both on Kenyon's attendance at Emerson College and on parallels between Kenyon's and the metaphysical healers' teachings. For additional examples of Hagin's plagiarism of Kenyon, see Leon D. Stump, "Metaphysical Elements in the Faith Movement," (unpublished ms, Joplin Mo., 1987) 78-116, Addenda i-xxvi.

Kenyon was plainly teaching much of what is now known as "Word-Faith" or "Faith theology" by the late 1920s (see 22f below).

the glossolalia characteristic of many in those groups.²⁵ But Kenyon was not only appreciated in divine-healing circles; he was influential in them as well. His influence can be traced through several prominent channels of healing-revivalism.

Although it is not commonly known, Kenyon had found an admirer in John G. Lake (1870-1935), one of the major figures in American revivalism. By 1930 Lake was regularly receiving Kenyon's newsletter, in the margins of which he often scribbled approving notes and interactive comments.²⁶ The protégé of John Alexander Dowie, Lake was a missionary to Africa (1907-1912), after which he pastored large churches in Spokane (1914-1920) and Portland (1920-1935) while also

²⁵Kenyon seems to have accepted Pentecostals insofar as they appreciated him. In 1912 he was pleased Durham was popularizing Kenyon's own "Finished Work" teaching, but was still wary of pentecostalism (Simmons, 312-313). His attitude was still somewhat mixed in 1927: "The people are putting up with extravagances and fanaticism in order that they may get a little touch of the supernatural God." (*The Wonderful Name of Jesus*, Seattle: KGPS, 1964, 70) In the end, after decades of contact, Kenyon concluded, "Experiences based upon the senses have caused many dissensions. In that wonderful movement called the Tongues Movement, [some would] no longer fellowship with anyone who didn't have the same experience." (*Hidden Man*, 90-91)

While Pentecostals embraced many of his distinctive teachings, Kenyon did not, in return, adopt their primary distinctive. His view of "speaking in tongues" was quite different than that of the pentecostals. He considered the biblical meaning of speaking with "tongues" to be either "testimony. . . of deliverance and victory," or (as in 1 Corinthians 13) "linguistic ability," the "ability to master many languages." (*Jesus the Healer*, Seattle: Kenyon's Gospel Publishing Society, 1968 [1943], 71; *Hidden Man*, 54; *The New Kind of Love*, Seattle: Kenyon's Gospel Publishing Society, 1969 [1942], 88) Tongues were never to be sought as an experience: "They wish to speak with tongues. . . to see some physical demonstration of the Spirit's power. The Holy Spirit never gratifies them." (*Presence*, 125)

²⁶Kenyon's paper was then titled *The Living Message*. Leon Stump, who formerly promoted Kenyon, used Lake's old copies while researching his "Metaphysical Elements in the Faith Movement." (Phone conversation with author, 13 October 1994) The markings suggest Lake was reading directly from Kenyon in his sermons.

Like Kenyon, Lake deified believers as God-men: "Man is not a separate creation detached from God, he is part of God himself. . . . God intends us to be gods. . . . The inner man is the real governor, the true man that Jesus said was a god." (Gordon Lindsay, ed., *Spiritual Hunger, the God-Men and Other Sermons by Dr. John G. Lake* [Christ for the Nations, 1976], 20-21; cf. Kenyon, *Name*, 65)

heading healing crusades across the country. Lake was also directly influential for the prolific Gordon Lindsay, who in turn became the premier spokesman of post-war healing revivalism.²⁷ Lake's approval, then, was perhaps a factor in Kenyon's acceptance within the movement.

A more direct channel of distribution for Kenyon's teachings was provided by F. F. Bosworth. Although not evident in its first edition, Bosworth's famed volume *Christ the Healer* came to include much of Kenyon's religious thought, particularly on faith and positive affirmation. In the 1948 and later editions, Bosworth gives credit to Kenyon as a source.²⁸ This book became one of the most widely-circulated and highly-regarded volumes on divine healing. Many modern pentecostals and charismatics consider it a classic work on the subject, a fact which has undoubtedly secured Kenyon's status among them.

Another channel for Kenyon's influence was T. L. Osborn, one of the most enduring healing-revivalists (still currently active). His ministry was revolutionized when in 1947 Osborn came across Kenyon's books. He utilized Kenyon's teachings in his crusades in America and abroad, and his sermons often consisted of direct readings from Kenyon's books. In those sermons and in his books, Osborn always credited Kenyon as his source.²⁹ Osborn's wide-reaching and long-spanning ministry

²⁷David Edwin Harrell, Jr., *All Things Are Possible: The Healing and Charismatic Revivals in Modern America* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1975), 15-16, 53-54.

²⁸Fred Francis Bosworth, *Christ the Healer* (Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1973), 139-148 [ch. 10, "Our Confession"]. See also Simmons, 315ff.

²⁹For an example of Osborn's direct use of Kenyon, see T. L. Osborn, *Faith Speaks* (Tulsa: Harrison House Publishers, 1956), 91, wherein he properly identifies as an excerpt from *Jesus the Healer* (89). See also Simmons, 317-320; he notes that Osborn obtained permission to quote Kenyon from his daughter Ruth.

She encouraged the reading aloud of Kenyon books in general. "Ask your Sunday School teacher to read it aloud," she suggested. (See her closing editorial remarks in *The Two Kinds of Faith*, Seattle: Kenyon's Gospel Publishing Society, 1969 [1942], 115) Ruth Kenyon envisioned

effected the extensive dissemination of Kenyon's teachings on "faith and confession," not only among his vast audiences but among his revivalist peers as well.³⁰ Considering the widespread popularity of the healing-revivalists and, more recently, of Hagin and his imitators, Kenyon has quite an important legacy for which to be credited.

A holiness-pentecostal distinctive: "the Finished Work of Christ"

Simmons' dissertation reports a second avenue of Kenyon's influence: his teaching on the "Finished Work of Christ." This distinctive has typically been credited to William Durham's sermons on the topic--which admittedly were the most visible means of the promotion of the teaching--yet Durham apparently received this teaching from Kenyon. Thus the doctrine of the eradication of the sin nature as secured *at conversion* (instead of as a second work of grace)³¹ among

people everywhere forming "Reality Clubs" to study her father's distinctive teachings: "Get a group to come into your home and read the book to them, explaining it until their hearts are thrilled as yours has been." (*The Father and His Family*, Seattle: Kenyon's Gospel Publishing Society, 1964 [revised 1938; originally written 1916], 237) She was, however, probably expecting the public reading and written quotation of Kenyon's books to be accompanied by proper credit to him, a courtesy extended by Bosworth and Osborn, but not by Kenneth Hagin et al.

³⁰Osborn's appreciation of Kenyon was likely reinforced by his friendship with Bosworth; or, perhaps, the two became friends due to their mutual admiration of Kenyon. In any case, the Kenyon-inspired revision of *Christ the Healer* was issued the same year (1948) that Osborn's independent ministry (with the aid of Lindsay) took off, and that Kenyon died. For more on Osborn, see Harrell, 63ff.

³¹On the case for Kenyon's inspiration of Durham, see Simmons, 312-313. Durham did not break with the traditional pentecostal-holiness view until about 1910, at which time he "concluded that he had been in error; Christ had finished the work of both salvation and sanctification on the cross. The sinner could appropriate both by faith; hence there was no need for a second sanctifying work of grace." (J. Gordon Melton, *Biographical Dictionary of American Cult and Sect Leaders* [NY: Garland Publishers, 1986], 78)

It should be noted that the element of the borrowed teaching which Durham popularized (eradicationism at conversion) was really only a corollary of Kenyon's more far-reaching conception

Pentecostals "dominated--becoming a part of the doctrinal shibboleth of the General Council of the Assemblies of God, Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, and Assemblies of God in Great Britain and Ireland." Simmons showed that "Kenyon had been preaching on this theme for over a decade prior to Durham."³² Clearly, the lack of scholarly notice of Kenyon is due not to a shortage of influence, but to an unfamiliarity with his legacy.

The assimilation of mind-science in popular Christianity

Simmons concedes that Kenyon's philosophy "is a unique hybrid created from the grafting together of various faith-cure and mind-cure sources."³³ But whatever it is grafted with, the mind-cure element of Kenyon's teachings represents one of the earliest major penetrations of the conservative Christian masses with mental science. To be sure, the more liberal (and educated) sectors of Christianity had been penetrated by German philosophical idealism. Hegel's philosophical idealism grew from being a continental theology to widespread scholarly enthusiasm in America. While it was the basis for American mental science (as will be shown in chapter two), philosophical idealism was not received with open arms among many conservative churches before Kenyon's

of the "Finished Work of Christ." The deeper implications of this and other of Kenyon's teachings (which we will overview later in this chapter) did not enjoy *widespread* acceptance outside of his circle until after Kenyon's death.

³²Simmons, iii. "Despite opposition from most Pentecostal leaders," says Melton, "Durham built a sizable following for his teaching in L.A. and Chicago from 1911 to his premature death in 1912. His 'Finished Work' message created the first major theological division in Pentecostalism." "It was eventually accepted by most Pentecostals from non-Holiness backgrounds, and in 1914 it was accepted by the General Council of the Assemblies of God, the largest of the white Pentecostal bodies." (Melton, 78)

³³Simmons, iv.

impact.

It is also the case that mental science and Mrs. Eddy's Christian Science (along with their hybrid, New Thought) were accepted by a number of conservative Christians. However, the teachings at that time were not typically embraced by conservative churches themselves. The individuals from them who accepted the tenets of mental science did not typically stay in their churches, and those who did had little effect on their clergy at that time. Kenyon's mixture--of evangelical Christianity emphasizing divine healing with New England metaphysical idealism emphasizing mental healing--was one of mind-cure's earliest inroads into the conservative Christian masses.³⁴ Kenyon's influence was both immediate and interdenominational. As noted above, he pastored numerous churches of differing denominations in New England (prior to and following his attendance at Emerson), and spoke to large audiences in major cities from coast to coast beginning in his thirties and continuing until retirement.

We have discussed Kenyon's west coast ministry which included religious radio broadcasts. Many of Kenyon's books are simply the edited and compiled transcripts of his broadcasts or compilations of his correspondence courses. Through his speaking, broadcasts, courses, books, and his periodical, *Kenyon's Herald of Life*, Kenyon's scope of influence became wider and wider, all the while giving mind-cure deeper and deeper inroads into popular Christianity. A number of

³⁴"It is not to be thought that Kenyon was the sole messenger of this doctrine [affirmation] among evangelicals. His contemporary Elwin L. House promoted it in *The Psychology of Orthodoxy* [1913]." (Kinnebrew, 133) House was a pastor and lecturer on psychology of religion who introduced his metaphysical mixture of evangelical protestantism and mind-cure at least a decade before Kenyon. Kinnebrew did not, however, notice the interesting fact that the book by House to which he refers was quoted favorably by Kenyon (*Hidden Man*, 79-80). We will say more about the ideological relationship between Kenyon and House in chapter four.

religious figures of the time knew, admired, and entertained him.³⁵ Still, there remains another avenue of Kenyon's often unrecognized influence.

A lasting legacy: Barrington-Gordon College

The New England school Kenyon founded, which we discussed above, produced many clergy of wide interdenominational variety.³⁶ The Institute's periodicals only added to his influence. In the classroom and in print, Kenyon propagated his "unique hybrid" of religious philosophies. After Kenyon's separation from the Institute in 1923, the school eventually emerged as Barrington College in Barrington, Rhode Island. After developing a first-rate academic reputation, the school merged in 1985 with Gordon College in Wenham, Massachusetts, another highly reputable evangelical liberal arts college.³⁷ These developments occurred completely independent of him after his departure, but Kenyon's founding role may have been his highest contribution to American religion.

³⁵McConnell, 33. Some of these prominent personages included Aimee Semple McPherson, William Branham, and Ern Baxter--along with many other healing-revivalists, according to historian Joseph D. Mattsson-Boze (*ibid.*, 28, n. 23). Simmons adds Maria B. Woodworth Etter, F. F. Bosworth, William Durham, and Finis Yoakum to the list. (Simmons, 64, 312-314)

³⁶"[H]undreds of students who graduated. . . entered the pulpits of numerous denominations or embarked on missionary careers." (Simmons, ii)

³⁷McConnell, 32-33. Gordon College was founded by Kenyon's one-time pastor, A. J. Gordon. Originally known as the Boston Missionary Training School, the institution was begun in 1889 with the help of a gift from Charles Cullis. (Paul G. Chappell, "The Divine Healing Movement in America," Ph.D. dissertation [Madison, NJ: Drew University, 1983], 221)

Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary later grew out of the school, and is located in Hamilton, Massachusetts. The undergraduate institution now bears the official name, "The United College of Gordon and Barrington."

Summary of Kenyon's significance

We find that E. W. Kenyon merits significance in American religion for at least four reasons. First, as his teachings on positive confession and faith have come to be a charismatic cornerstone in the twentieth-century church (chiefly through Hagin, as McConnell has shown). Second, his central teaching, the "Finished Work of Christ" led to a holiness-pentecostal distinctive (as Simmons has shown). Third, his unique religious philosophy represents an early, major penetration of the conservative Christian masses by mind-science (as this study will show, in confirmation of McConnell). Fourth, on its own merits as well as through its merger with Gordon College, Barrington College represents a lasting legacy to the religious educational contributions of E. W. Kenyon (as McConnell and Simmons have shown). From the preceding it should be clear that Kenyon's obscurity within American church history is quite undeserved.

A Brief Overview of Kenyon's Thought

In this section we will consider only the basic components which form Kenyon's religious thought, focusing particularly on those elements which are most distinctive. This is intended to provide the reader with a general understanding of Kenyon's perspective before we enter into a more detailed analysis.

Kenyon's thought developed over time. Many of the ideas we present in this section were not held at the outset of his career. Before his shift toward mind-cure surfaced in the late 1920s, Kenyon

could have been classed within the Higher Christian Life movement, for the most part.³⁸ But afterward, his orientation was noticeably modified; even his first book, *The Father and His Family*, was eventually revised (1938) to include the distinctive concepts-- described below--which were lacking in the original edition.³⁹

Although our thesis is that Kenyon eventually adopted certain elements of metaphysical religion, his overall world-view retained much of Christian theism. The fact that he incorporated elements of both religions is precisely what makes Kenyon's teaching a "metaphysical mixture." Hence, in the following review we will notice much in the overall backdrop of his thought which is quite theistic, even "evangelical." Because our study is especially concerned with Kenyon's view of human potential, it may be helpful to approach his thought in anthropological categories:

³⁸Simmons says Kenyon did not stress "positive confession" until about 1929 (telephone conversation with author, 13 Oct 1994), and that even that development is not adequate to justify placing Kenyon in the category of mind-curist.

Simmons contends that Kenyon "is best placed within the Keswickian/Higher Life tradition," a branch of the Holiness movement which emphasized personal victory over sin and sickness, and included proponents such as Charles Cullis, A. J. Gordon and R. A. Torrey. (Simmons, 332) While that may apply to Kenyon's earlier ministry, we will argue that much of his later teachings are better identified with metaphysical religion. In chapter four we will document Kenyon's own references to his development beyond (and often disavowal of) many crucial Higher Life teachings.

³⁹Even in the earlier phase of Kenyon's development, however, we find him teaching the deification of believers: "When I say incarnated, I mean Born Again, for every person who receives Eternal Life becomes God Incarnate." ("Incarnation," *Reality* 9 [February 1914], 39; cf. *Reality* 6 [December 1911], 49)

Also, Kenyon was already teaching that Jesus died spiritually and went to hell: in Jesus' substitutionary death, "there was something more than mere physical identity. It was Christ's soul that was being made an offering for sin, and . . . passed into the realms of torment. . . ." ("Identification," *Reality* 3 [January 1906], 4 [notice Kenyon does not yet distinguish soul from spirit]; cf. also "The Only Ground of Divine Justice," *Reality* 2 [October 1904], 7) Kenyon probably held the view even earlier, as he offered a tract he wrote entitled "Did Jesus Go to Hades?" in his *Bethel Trumpet* 2 (May-June 1901), 35. It is difficult to say precisely when Kenyon began to couple Jesus' spiritual death with a corresponding spiritual rebirth, and made this the basis for believers' divinity.

humanity's origin, fall, redemption, deification, and resultant abilities.

Humanity's origin

According to Kenyon, Adam's creation in God's image entails that humanity be essentially a spirit being like God (this places humans in "God's class"). Human beings *are* spirits who *have* a soul (intellect/reason) and *live in* a body.⁴⁰ As spirits, Adam and Eve were as close as possible to actually being God. They were, in the beginning, neither mortal nor immortal; their nature was such that they could have partaken of God's nature.⁴¹ Even without partaking of divinity, Adam and Eve in their original state had complete power over their physical environment; their dominion extended even over the laws of nature.⁴² They enjoyed a state of sovereign mastery in their earthly paradise, but this was, unfortunately, short-lived.

⁴⁰"You understand that man is in God's class of being. When he was created in the Garden he was made in the image and likeness of God. He had to be a spirit being because God is a Spirit." (*Hidden Man*, 7); "Man is a spirit and possesses a soul and has a body. . . . Above this soul is he, himself, spirit. This is the real man. This spirit operates through the soul, and it in turn operates through the physical body." (*Father*, 46; cf. *Two Kinds of Righteousness* [Seattle: Kenyon's Gospel Publishing Society, 1965 (1941)], 3) Unless otherwise noted, all of the references in this section are from Kenyon's writings in their current editions.

⁴¹"When man was created, "he was made as near like Deity as it was possible for Deity to create him." (*Father*, 32) "He was neither Immortal nor Mortal." (33) "Adam had the privilege of becoming God's child; he forfeits it. . . ." (38) "He was created so that, by partaking of God's nature, he might become a child of God." (*Hidden Man*, 7) "There is no doubt but what he could have had this nature in the Garden of Eden if he had eaten of the tree of life instead of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil." (*What Happened from the Cross to the Throne* [Seattle: Kenyon's Gospel Publishing Society, 1969 (1945)], 142)

⁴²"God gave this wonderful being. . . dominion as far reaching as Heaven and with authority over every planet and star of the Universe. This man's voice was like the voice of God to creation." (*Father*, 110, cf. 32) "God gave him authority over all the laws of nature. . . . This same authority was evidently given to Jesus." (*Hidden Man*, 7)

Humanity's fall

In the Genesis account of the "fall" of humanity, the serpent deceives Eve who then entices Adam to disobey God. Kenyon interprets Adam's action as "treason" against God. The consequences of this treason are disastrous indeed. Immediately, Adam loses his sovereignty over the earth, and all the powers connected with dominion.⁴³ This is because Adam has now experienced spiritual death, which means taking on the spiritual nature of Satan.⁴⁴

Of course this results in lost fellowship with God; Adam becomes, for the first time, sin-conscious. This condition is one of the terrible bondages under which lost humanity now labors.⁴⁵ The other condition is that humans are now sense-ruled; having lost direct contact with God, they are dependent on the five senses for gaining knowledge. The problem is that the senses can only report about the material world, leaving one without knowledge of Reality (the spiritual world). All that can be known naturally is what the body's senses report and what the soul (intellect) reasons

⁴³"The sin of Adam was the crime of High Treason." (*Father*, 36) "First, it was the thwarting of God's plan. Second, it was the separation of God and Man. Third, it gave Satan universal dominion over God's creation. Fourth, it incurred a complete bondage of the Human to the Devil." (ibid) "His [Adam's] spirit lost dominion the moment that he became spiritually dead, a partaker of Satan's nature." (*New Creation Realities* [Seattle: Kenyon's Gospel Publishing Society, 1970 (1945)], 140-1) Spiritual Death "seized the sovereignty, the dominion, the lordship over creation." (*The Bible in the Light of Our Redemption* [Seattle: Kenyon's Gospel Publishing Society, 1969 (ca. 1937)], 29)

⁴⁴"Sin, then, is spiritual death. It is union with the devil." ("Only Ground," *Reality* 2 [October 1904], 5) "Man was actually Born Again when he sinned. That is, he was born of the Devil. He became a partaker of Satanic Nature. . . ." (*Father*, 48; cf. 37, 41, 141) "That Spiritual Death becomes the nature of every man born into the world." (*Bible*, 29; cf. 30)

⁴⁵"Man felt immediately after his treason his inability to stand in God's presence uncondemned. A sin consciousness, a sense of unworthiness, and an inferiority complex were the products of spiritual death that ruled his life." (*Father*, 219) "To sin consciousness can be traced the reason for practically every spiritual failure. It destroys faith. It destroys the initiative in the heart. It gives to man an inferiority complex." (*Righteousness*, 11; cf. 9-13)

about these reports.⁴⁶

The human spirit, the "real man," is left without a true source of knowledge, and consequently loses its rightful mastery over the soul and body. Once this occurs, humanity can no longer master his circumstances, and Satan can (indirectly, through deceit) put disease on or in the body.⁴⁷ Humanity's condition, then, is the result of the loss of righteousness (especially the consciousness of righteousness) and of knowledge (of Reality). But Kenyon believed that he could reveal the full extent of the redemption God had provided to fallen humanity.⁴⁸

⁴⁶"When man died spiritually, that is, became alienated from God, he was left without a channel through which he could know God." (*Father*, 16) "From that moment on he lived under the domination of his senses. These senses became his master." (*The Two Kinds of Knowledge* [Seattle: Kenyon's Gospel Publishing Society, 1965 (1941)], 140; cf. 11, 16, 19, 32, 43-48, 59) "The limitations of Sense Knowledge are apparent to every thinking man. He cannot know beyond the contacts that he makes with these five senses." (*The Two Kinds of Life* [Seattle: Kenyon's Gospel Publishing Society, 1971 (1943)], 8; cf. 23, 101)

⁴⁷"God had conferred on him [Adam] the legal authority to rule the Universe. . . . Adam turned this Legal Dominion into the hands of God's enemy, the Devil." (*Father*, 36) The fall of humanity "changed man's spirit nature, made his body mortal, and made that body the master of his spirit. Man became the servant of the senses; the spirit no longer ruled him." (*Life*, 51)

While Kenyon often claims that disease can be "put" on one by Satan (see *Healer*, 50; *Advanced Bible Course* [Kenyon's Gospel Publishing Society, 1970 (1945)], 265), he explains that *without the believer's permission*, the "adversary cannot put his old diseases back on him or in him. . . . He can so camouflage them [diseases] that they become a reality to us and we lose the consciousness of our healing. . . ." (*Cross*, 107-108.) So it is really a matter of one's consciousness; Satan's role is limited to deception via Sense Knowledge. The dynamics of mind and disease will be described further in chapter four.

⁴⁸Kenyon viewed himself as the bearer of a long-hidden gospel. Kenyon often remarked on the troubled condition of the church, and eventually came to characterize his teaching as *the* solution to the modern church's problems. In fact, he considered his teachings to contain the key to unfolding the Bible (*Father*, 13, 45; cf. back cover), as they revealed previously hidden, unknown truth (*Name*, 3). This truth "has never been clearly taught by the Church" (*Love*, 83)--in fact some of it "never dawned upon the church" (*Healer*, 86)--but it would bring about a "new type of Christianity." (*Life*, 125) This was supposed to go far beyond what Luther, Calvin and Wesley had ever envisioned (*Presence*, 24, 40, 115). In one sense, it has.

Humanity's redemption

Because of the fallen condition of humanity, God sent his Son, Jesus Christ, to redeem those who would believe from sin, sickness and spiritual death. Kenyon viewed Jesus as a revelation to the senses (on the level of fallen humanity) and to the spirit (the level of Reality). The Gospels are a revelation to the senses, and they record how sense-ruled man responds to Jesus. The disciples, apparently, did not really know Jesus during his earthly ministry except through the physical evidences he offered them. This sort of knowledge is secondary at best, but it is an example of God reaching down within their limits of understanding. The disciples, then, experienced a revelation to the senses, and that is really all one can gain from their writings.⁴⁹

However, Paul's writings exhibit God's revelation to his spirit. It is in Paul's epistles that one finds the Reality of Jesus' spiritual death and rebirth, as opposed to the merely physical aspects revealed in the Gospels. The Pauline literature, therefore, contains a revelation to the human spirit.⁵⁰ The reason the church is so weak is that it has not grasped this deeper truth; Christians would be

⁴⁹"Jesus had broken into the realm of sense knowledge, had been manifest among them as the Son of God for three and a half years. . . ." (*Creation*, 19) Yet, the "four Gospels give us a sense knowledge view of the Man." (4) This is because the

apostles who were in close companionship with the Master knew nothing of the real mission of the Man. . . . They did not know what happened at the Incarnation, the fact is they did not know it was an Incarnation. . . . who He was, why He came, what He was to suffer, and what they were to gain by His suffering, was all unknown to them." (*Cross*, 11-12; cf. 113f)

⁵⁰"You cannot be guided by the teachings of John the Baptist and of Jesus . . . unless that teaching of the four Gospels is confirmed, explained, elucidated in the Pauline Revelation, or with Peter and John's unveiling in their epistles." (*Hidden Man*, 91) In his Gospel, "John had a Sense Knowledge conception of Jesus. God had given to Paul a Revelation of Jesus." "No one knew Him [Jesus]. Paul was the first person who ever really knew Jesus." (*Cross*, 116, 117) "The Pauline Revelation is the unveiling of that [hidden] Redemption. We do not find that unveiling in the four Gospels, or the book of Acts. It is only in Paul's Revelation." (*Righteousness*, 53) Kenyon used this hermeneutical dichotomy to justify his often novel textual interpretations.

spiritual "supermen" if they would enter into the realm of Reality.⁵¹

Kenyon explains the dynamics of redemption in terms of the "Finished Work of Christ" and of believers' "Identification" with Christ and his work. The finished work of Christ is Kenyon's concept of the nature and extent of Jesus' substitutionary sacrifice on our behalf. Kenyon claims that Jesus' physical death (on the cross) is not the basis of redemption. He reasons that since sin is spiritual, affecting our true self, the spirit, then anything the material Jesus did in terms of the physical body would not reach the problem.⁵² Hence Kenyon postulated that Jesus must have died spiritually (which means, to Kenyon, to partake of the nature of Satan). By suffering in his spirit in hell, Jesus could redeem humanity spiritually. Since this reaches the very spirit (which, when duly recreated, can then rule the body and all circumstances), the work of Christ is finished on our behalf.⁵³ Christ no longer needs to do anything for us in terms of soul and body since the recreated

⁵¹The believer "is really an Incarnation." "He is taking Jesus' place in the world. And if this isn't a superman, then I don't know the meaning of the term. The church has kept this 'Sampson' imprisoned by false teachings and by creeds and doctrines. . . ." But the "bonds of false [i.e., traditional] teaching are going to be broken, and this child of God, this superman, is going to come into his own." (*Presence*, 61, 62; cf. *Father*, 235) When this realization occurs, one has graduated out of "lower class" Christianity. (*Identification* [Seattle: Kenyon's Gospel Publishing Society, 1966 (1941)], 61)

⁵²"It is not the physical sufferings of Jesus of Nazareth that propitiate for sin. . . . that put sin away." ("The Only Ground," 7) "Sin is basically a spiritual thing, so it must be dealt with in the spiritual realm." (*Cross*, 47) Kenyon clearly stated his reasoning:

If the physical death of Jesus paid the penalty of man's transgression, then sin is but a physical fact. If Jesus' physical death could pay the penalty of Sin as some contend, then why is it necessary that a Christian die? If a Christian dies physically, does he not pay the penalty of his own sin? If physical death is the penalty for sin, then why do not the whole human race pay their own penalty and save themselves, for all die? (*Father*, 118)

⁵³"But we hold that the physical death of Jesus did not touch the sin issue at all; it was only a means to an end, and the real suffering of Jesus, the Substitute, must be spiritual as well as physical." (*Father*, 118) "Then God must take our sin nature, that hideous. . . spiritual death, and lay it upon

human spirit can master soul, body, and environment.

The work of Christ in redemption is finished, but its appropriation is the responsibility of human beings. If one will believe in Christ, the human spirit will be recreated; this is the new birth. This "New Creation" is "identified" with Christ's substitutionary work.⁵⁴ This identification includes Jesus' death on the cross and his rebirth in hell. Not only did Jesus die in his spirit, but he was *reborn* spiritually as well. Because spiritual death means to take on the nature of Satan, Jesus' spirit became Satanic; after the allotted time of suffering in hell, then, it was necessary for Jesus to overcome spiritual death by spiritual rebirth. Thus Jesus was the first person to be born again.⁵⁵

Spiritual death is partaking of Satan's nature. Spiritual rebirth is, literally, partaking of God's nature. Jesus was God manifest in the flesh, God incarnate; then he voluntarily died spiritually, becoming Satanic in nature. Thus he took on our sin nature (lost humanity has the nature of Satan),

the Spirit of this Holy Eternal Son." (117) "But this work was not finished on the cross. . . . Into his spirit, Satan now poured his own nature." (*Cross*, 60; cf. 31-33, 47, 60-63, 137; cf. also *Father*, 159, 195; *Righteousness*, 10, 15, 34) Since Jesus' spiritual death provides for believers' spiritual rebirth,

"it is necessary that we grasp the significance of the finished work of Christ; for in His finished work is the recreation of the spirit, and a revelation of the vast possibilities [mastery]. . . such as man has never yet been conscious of." (*Hidden Man*, 51, cf. 16, 31, 51-53, 82-83)

⁵⁴"But if we doubt the efficacy of His finished work, every phase of our life will show it. . . . When we have the proper estimation [consciousness] of the finished work of Jesus Christ. . . we need no one to pray for us." (*Righteousness*, 63) "He [Jesus] became one with Satan when He became sin, as we now become one with Him when we are recreated." "But when He was made Righteous, He became the dominant master and ruler of Hell. If He was made righteous, then all of us who accept Him as our Savior. . . can dominate. . . ." (*Identification*, 23, 30; cf. "Identification," 3f)

⁵⁵It "was necessary that He [Jesus] become identified with our union with the devil, that He actually die spiritually and become a partaker of Spiritual Death. . . . [Paul] says that when Jesus was raised from the dead that He was begotten of the Father." (*Father*, 137; cf. 48, 133, 135f) "Jesus was the first person ever born again." (*Righteousness*, 23; cf. *Life*, 53; *New Creation*, 39, 54; *Cross*, 63-64, 89)

but he overcame spiritual death when, in hell, he was restored to partake of the divine nature. This is how we "identify" with Christ's finished work: our spiritual death (sin nature) is removed by our partaking of the divine nature.⁵⁶

Humanity's deification

This scheme of redemption imparts to humanity not only a forensic justification, but an actual, literal partaking of the divine nature. As one might infer, Kenyon's concept of redemption entails the deification of humanity. Let us retrace the logical progression of his thought: Jesus is God manifested in the flesh--God incarnate; Jesus died spiritually on behalf of humanity, but overcame spiritual death (sin nature) via the new birth, partaking of the divine nature; humans can identify with this process in the new birth; thus humans can partake of the divine nature *as did Jesus in his rebirth*. Remember that it was Jesus' rebirth that restored his divinity. Even Adam in his original state did not partake of God's nature, and he was created as close to being God as possible.⁵⁷

⁵⁶"Identification," 3-5. Kenyon argues that one cannot have the nature of God and the nature of Satan simultaneously (*Righteousness*, 7-8, 26; *Bible*, 35). That, he says, would make one a spiritual schizophrenic, which he finds "absurd." He does not state the conclusion, but given Kenyon's premises, it is logically inescapable that Jesus could not have retained the divine nature, while simultaneously partaking of the sin nature at his spiritual death. The "Dual Theory" that the divine and sin natures can coexist in one individual is specifically repudiated by Kenyon's central teaching, the "Finished Work" of Christ. (*Father*, 153f)

⁵⁷"Jesus Christ [was] Deity and humanity united in the Incarnation." (*In His Presence*, 196)

Jesus was the first person ever born again. . . . He was made sin with our sin, as our Substitute. Then after He had satisfied the claims of justice [in hell], He was justified in spirit, made righteous in spirit, and made alive in spirit. This was the new birth. . . . He was born again out of death, recreated and becomes a partaker of Eternal Life. (205)

"The new creation man is a partaker of God's nature. He is really an Incarnation. . . . If this doesn't constitute a superman, then I don't know what a superman is." (61) Adam "could have had this

It is not necessary to reach this conclusion by inference, since Kenyon makes his deification of humanity quite clear. He explicitly compares the believer's new birth with Jesus' Incarnation.⁵⁸ Kenyon explains this process not in a forensic, nor merely existential, but an ontological sense. It is God's actual substance, the part of God that makes him God, that is imparted to the new creation.⁵⁹ From this it follows for Kenyon that Christians are (like Jesus), God-men. Kenyon makes it as plain as he can when he says that the "believer is as much an Incarnation as was Jesus of Nazareth."⁶⁰

Humanity's abilities

For the new creation, the benefits of redemption are truly astounding. The Christian has the ability of God *at his disposal*. If the new creations recognize their potential, they can be "Super-

[divine] nature in the Garden of Eden if he had eaten of the tree of life. . . ." (*What Happened*, 142); Adam "was made as near like Deity as it was possible for Deity to create him." (*Father*, 32)

⁵⁸"The Son, by taking a human body, forever linked humanity with Deity, proving that Deity can partake of humanity just as much as humanity can partake of Deity." (*Life*, 37); "The New Creation is a God-man, born of heaven. He is like the sample, Jesus. He is God's superman." (25); "That New Creation is a part of God. . . . Just as the angel said in Luke 1:35: "That holy thing that shall be born shall be the Son of God.'" (131); "You are now an actual child of God *just as Jesus was* in His earth walk." (126, emphasis added)

⁵⁹"We know that. . . the very substance and being of God has become a part of our spirits." (*ibid.*, 17); "You are one with Him just as that bay is one with the ocean, because the tides flow into the bay. God's Nature flows into you. You are linked with God. God and you are identified." (18);

When you received Eternal Life you received the very thing that makes Jesus what He is. You received of the Father His very Nature; so. . . you have received into your spirit that which makes God what He is. . . . That is what made Jesus Omnipotent. (*Advanced*, 311)

⁶⁰*Father*, 100; cf. "Every man who has been born again is an Incarnation. The believer is as much an Incarnation as was Jesus of Nazareth." (*Bible*, 151)

men."⁶¹ One's recreated spirit regains mastery over one's soul (intellect), body and circumstances (in that order). Dominion is thus restored, with might and mastery attending.⁶²

The new creation can master the body, so that disease must leave on command. The human spirit no longer partakes of spiritual death (which physically manifests itself in the body as disease or sickness), partaking instead of the nature of God. Therefore the real man, the spirit, cannot be sick; it can only manifest health.⁶³ If Satan attaches sickness to one's body, then the human spirit can take its rightful dominion and command the sickness to leave the body.⁶⁴

⁶¹"His ability is your ability." (*Success*, 70); cf. "We know that the ability of God has become ours." (*Faith*, 67); hence "His ability is at our disposal." (*Love*, 43; cf. *New Creation*, 70, 143); "What Jesus did you can do, because you have His nature and ability." (*Love*, 66); The believer has "the ability that Christ had in His earth walk. This makes him a superman." (*Presence*, 63); Jesus "was a super-man. He was a Master. . . .by the New Creation we became. . . . the masters." "If [only] the believer knew [what] he was. . . as Jesus knew [what] he was. . . ." (*New Creation*, 121, 122); "We are going to see spiritual giants, supermen. . . . They are in the Jesus class. They have graduated from the lower class." (*Identification*, 60-61)

⁶²"The human mind and body begin to lose their place of dominance in our consciousness and the spirit comes to the front and actually begins to take over the rest of the man." (*Hidden Man*, 37); Mastery "is a recreated spirit gaining the ascendancy over the reasoning faculties and ruling the whole man." (82); "You are the master of your own body. You rule it." (*Healer*, 36); You "are a master of circumstances." (*Identification*, 57)

⁶³"We understand that sickness is spiritual. It is manifested in our physical bodies as disease." (*Identification*, 15); "We are healed by becoming partakers of His divine nature. Disease and sickness do not belong to the New Creation." (19); "Now you see yourself perfectly healed in your spirit. . . . as you believe, you possess your perfect emancipation from disease, sickness and pain." (*Knowledge*, 65)

⁶⁴Satan "can so camouflage them [diseases] that they become a reality to us and we lose the consciousness of our healing. . . ." (*Cross*, 108); knowing that "disease has been put on him by the adversary, the believer "commands it to leave him. . . . The disease has to go. . . ." (*Life*, 83); "the disease and its symptoms may not leave my body at once, but I hold fast to my confession" of health. (*Hidden Man*, 99)

The attainment of such mastery for the Christian is simply a matter of consciousness. One must realize the facts of one's redemption, and recognize one's spiritual identity in Reality.⁶⁵ The problem is often that the new creation remains sin-conscious and sense-ruled. This is inappropriate and unnecessary for one who has been delivered from spiritual death and become a partaker of the divine nature. Christians who remain sin-conscious lack consciousness of "who they are" and, hence, the Reality of their privileges and powers. One must have a mastery-consciousness.⁶⁶

Likewise, as long as one is sense-ruled, one will believe that the senses' report of sickness in the body is Reality. Kenyon does not deny the existence of disease as a physical reality, but he considers the physical world to be secondary. The spiritual world is primary, causative, Reality; it can manifest itself physically.⁶⁷ If one accepts the testimony of the senses, one has mere sense-

⁶⁵"The diseases that afflict man are spiritual. When our reasoning faculties are convinced of these realities, disease is defeated." (*Life*, 148); "As long as we think disease is purely physical, we will not get our deliverance. But when we know it is spiritual. . . then healing becomes a reality." (*Healer*, 31); "Now instead of praying for healing, you simply look up and say. . . 'My spirit is free from sin and disease.'" (*Cross*, 130)

⁶⁶"We must become New Creation conscious. Before we were sin conscious and failure conscious. Now we become God conscious and Son conscious." (*Life*, 17); "There is no sin-consciousness for you. There is no inferiority complex for you." (123); "If we realized what we were. . . our lives would be transformed in a week." (125); "It is an unhappy fact that the church, instead of destroying sin-consciousness with the truth, has developed sin-consciousness by preaching sin." (*Hidden Man*, 36); "There is no room for sin-consciousness when we know that we are New Creations. . . ." (119); "We are masters. . . . We are overcomers. The moment we get that mental attitude of victors, instead of being conquered, we are going to take our place." (*Righteousness*, 47); This "has given us a new consciousness of superiority over disease and pain." (65)

⁶⁷"We know that spiritual things are superior to physical things, for God, a spirit, created physical things. We know that spiritual forces are stronger than physical forces." (53)

We have learned that the dominant forces in the universe are spiritual. They manifest themselves in the physical. . . . man--the real man--is a spirit and manifests himself through his physical body. . . . The mind is not cognizant of them [diseases] until the body is affected and the senses have communicated the fact to the brain. Back behind all this, however, that

knowledge. In order to be a master, one must know that spiritually, one is healthy, contrary to sense-knowledge's claims.⁶⁸ With spiritual knowledge, one can manifest this spiritual Reality by making affirmations of health ("positive confessions"). As long as one accepts sense-knowledge, affirmations will not be made with "faith" (consciousness of spiritual Reality), and sickness stays.⁶⁹

disease had fastened itself upon the spirit before it was communicated to the body. (*Life*, 83)

⁶⁸Kenyon argues that we have just as much grounds for accepting revelation knowledge as for accepting sensory knowledge:

The very same doubt and criticism that is applied to this revelation [knowledge] may be applied to the knowledge of natural man. We could not prove that our knowledge was accurate. At the very basis of our knowledge of the outward world is the assumption that our senses and memory do not deceive us. . . . We believe in the external world, because **to do so works**. (*Bible*, 297-8)

"You refuse to give place to any other thought that would contradict His Word. You refuse to take the testimony of your Senses. There is pain in your back, but you refuse to accept that as evidence that you have not been healed." (*Faith*, 106) "As long as we think that disease is purely physical, we will not get our deliverance. But when we know it is spiritual. . . then healing becomes a reality." (*Healer*, 31); The key is to make verbal affirmations of your health, despite empirical evidence to the contrary:

But you say, 'Would it not be untrue for me to say that I am healed, when I am not?' No, you see there are two kinds of truth. There is Revelation Truth, the Bible, especially the Pauline Epistles, with which we are dealing, and then, there is sense knowledge truth. I find that Revelation Truth teaches me that my swollen ankle is healed." (*Cross*, 109)

⁶⁹Kenyon occasionally interchanges the terms "affirmation" and "confession." (See for example *Faith*, 104-105; *Presence*, 44, 99, 129; *Hidden Man*, 95-111) It is the affirmation/confession that brings about manifestation:

Faith holds the confession that he has the thing he desires before he actually possesses it. Sense Knowledge faith confesses that he is healed when the pain leaves and the swelling goes down. There is really no faith in that. Faith declares you are healed while the pain is still racking your body. Let me state it again, possession comes with confession. Possession stays with continual confession. You confess that you have it. . . then realization follows. (*Hidden Man*, 102)

The Senses believe in what they can hear and see and feel. The spirit believes in the Word,

Summary

There are other aspects of his religious thought that could be added for a comprehensive study of Kenyon, but we have presented a sufficient overview for our purposes. We will, in the course of our study, elaborate on many of these points as well as others which will be mentioned in their relevant context.

Having introduced some of the current scholarship on Kenyon, and briefly reviewed his life, significance, and basic thought, the next chapter will be a discussion of a religious movement which would eventually influence Kenyon significantly: the mental science of nineteenth-century America.

regardless of seeing, hearing or feeling. The people who are prayed for again and again but do not get their healing, have Sense Knowledge faith. (*Faith*, 50)

CHAPTER 2

METAPHYSICAL RELIGION

The purpose of this chapter is to present an overview of metaphysical religion, a basic comprehension of which is prerequisite to the larger task of analyzing E. W. Kenyon's view of human potential. A general understanding of metaphysical religion will be achieved by surveying the background sources that contributed to its conception, and the figures and circumstances surrounding its birth and early ideological development. The emphasis will be on the religious philosophy generated by the movement, particularly as it relates to human potential. In conclusion a summation of the salient features of metaphysical religion will be given, which will later serve as a basis for comparison with Kenyon's thought. To begin the task of adequately describing this religious world-view, a working definition is needed.

Nomenclature

Referring to a religious philosophy as "metaphysical religion" or the "new metaphysical movement" is cumbersome and sometimes unclear. For purposes of philosophical analysis, the term "metaphysics" typically refers to that branch of philosophy which was placed "after physics" in ordering Aristotle's works. In classical western philosophy, metaphysics concerns theories of causes

and first principles of the universe.¹

But the mental healers of postbellum America used the term metaphysics more specifically, namely, in reference to their causative view of mind (primary cause) and its control over matter (secondary effect). This relationship of mind and matter, if properly understood, was believed to enable one to experience bodily healing. This was the original emphasis of "metaphysical religion," though it later sought to extend to humanity dominion over all circumstances, internal and external.

While the mental healers of that time employed the term "metaphysics," they did not always refer to themselves as part of the "new metaphysical movement."² The early practitioners and adherents gave to their philosophy a variety of labels. In the literature of the period one finds the terms mental science, mind science, spiritual science and Christian Science; mental healing, spiritual healing, and metaphysical healing; Science of the mind, science of health, and science of thought; mental therapeutics, metaphysical Christianity, practical Christianity, and the Religion of the Spirit. The most popular designation may have been "the mind-cure," often invoked in contradistinction to the "faith-cure" of traditional religion.³ The phrase "New Thought," though not first applied until

¹Aristotle describes his venture as "a science that studies being as being and the properties characteristic of it. . . . we are after first principles and ultimate causes." (*Metaphysics* IV. 1) See I. 1 for Aristotle's definition of substance/essence, and V. 2 for his discussion of types of causes.

²Eddy spoke of "metaphysical healing" early on (*Science and Health, passim*); by 1902 what was "somewhat vaguely known as New Thought" was called "the new metaphysics," or "the metaphysical movement of today." (Paul Tyner, "The Metaphysical Movement," *The American Monthly Review of Reviews* 25 [March 1902], 312)

³For the most part we agree with Gottschalk on this point:

It is difficult to find an adequate term for this movement as it existed in the 1880s. Only in the mid 1890s did the term 'New Thought' come into general use as the name of the metaphysical groups opposed to [Eddy's] Christian Science. . . . Some of them preferred to be known as 'mental scientists.' But 'mind-cure' is the single term which was most often

the mid-1890s, eventually became an umbrella designation for the overall movement in its broader development. Despite the distinctive emphases they often carried for different individuals, these labels are in many respects interchangeable, and will be treated as such in this study.

There is one exception: the term Christian Science will normally be employed in reference only to the Mary Baker Eddy organization and doctrine. Some citations of older primary sources, however, will not observe this specification, since the term Christian Science was used by many mental healers outside of Eddy's organization up until the 1890s. These usually were former students of Eddy's (like Emma Curtis Hopkins) or students of those students (such as Annie Rix Militz and the Fillmores).⁴

Before expounding on the ideological and geographical development of various branches of the movement, a survey of the diverse sources which made up the religious climate of nineteenth century New England--and which contributed to the birth of the new metaphysical movement--awaits discussion.

for their movements and which seems most satisfactory. (Stephen Gottschalk, *The Emergence of Christian Science in American Religious Life* [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973], 99)

Eddy especially contrasted herself with faith healers. (Mary Baker Eddy, *Miscellaneous Writings: 1883-1896* [Boston: Trustees Under the Will of Mary Baker G. Eddy, 1896], 20; idem, *No and Yes*, [Trustees Under the Will of Mary Baker G. Eddy, 1891], 29)

⁴As John Kent Simmons notes,

Many students who studied with her only to leave her. . . felt that they had every right to use the term and often advertised their healing practices as 'Christian Science.' It was only after Eddy managed to commandeer the term legally that it simply became too much trouble for other groups and/or private practitioners to continue to use the name. (Simmons, "Annie Rix Militz and the Homes of Truth: Perfection Meets Paradise in Early Twentieth Century Los Angeles" [Ph.D. diss., University of California, Santa Barbara, 1987], 273 n. 16)

Background sources

Philosophical Idealism

Perhaps the most basic characteristic of Metaphysical Religious philosophy is that it is founded on philosophical idealism. To some extent, every proponent of mind-cure bases his or her therapeutic theory on an assumed relationship between mind and matter. Their basic belief is that matter, if it has any reality at all, is predicated in its very nature on a condition of mind. As mind changes, matter follows. Sometimes this is spelled out syllogistically (especially when the literature emphasizes bodily healing) and sometimes it is simply assumed. Sometimes it is not mentioned directly and must be extrapolated by the thoughtful reader (particularly in the later and broader New Thought period).

In any case, the claims of mind-science are generated by a commitment to an idealistic view of mind and matter. The individual writers vary in their idealism nearly as much as do the numerous idealistic philosophers throughout history. One can find within the metaphysical movement anything from absolute monism to careful objective idealism.⁵

Historically, philosophical idealism can be traced to at least Plato (427-347 BC), who held that in addition to the world of sensible objects, there exists a world of ideas or *forms* (not merely ideas in minds, but Ideas which exist objectively or absolutely). These forms, the archetypes of the materials in the physical world, have a greater reality than their corresponding sensible objects (which are copies of their forms). The same can be said of intangibles like Beauty, which is the

⁵For examples of this variety, see C. Alan Anderson, "Elements of Metaphysical Idealism in New Thought." Unpublished monograph, 1991. Available from the Society for the Study of Metaphysical Religion, Milton, Massachusetts.

abstract form for the quality of beauty attributed to things in the physical world. For Plato, the worlds of Reality (the form) and Appearance (the material) are separated by degrees of reality; the higher forms were said to have absolute *being*, while images and sensible objects were understood as *becoming*.⁶

Plato's view is roughly that of objective idealism: the theory that things (ideas) exist apart from one's perception of them. The alternate branch of idealism is known as subjective idealism: the theory that things (ideas) depend on their being perceived for their existence. In this view, "to be is to be perceived," *esse est percipi*, as George Berkeley put it. Berkeley was reacting to the epistemological dualism championed by John Locke which described ideas as the objects of knowledge (a strong distinction between subject and object). By removing Locke's "notorious" distinction between primary and secondary qualities, Berkeley in effect removed the distinction between ideas/perceptions and matter. Thus all things are ideas. Accordingly, Berkeley argued that since ideas exist only in minds, then all things exist only in mind (he did, however, attempt to distinguish between ideas and spirits/persons). An object's existence depends on its being perceived. There needn't be any particular individual perceiving everything to ensure external reality; God perceives all in Berkeley's scheme.

There are many variations of both objective and subjective idealism, but one feature of idealism in general stands out in metaphysical religion: matter is based on or grounded in mind.

⁶Plato's world of Reality or Being was a transcendent world. See especially *The Sophist*, 237b-251a on the worlds of Reality and Appearance. Of particular import to mental science was Plato's belief that the forms are the causes of things that exist in the material world. Moreover, "Plato learned to fix his attention not on the fluctuating objects of sense experience, but on the fixed and abiding *essence* of things as the only possible objects of true knowledge," a practice mind-curists believed would harmonize the physical with the perfect Ideal. (Ed L. Miller, *Questions that Matter: An Invitation to Philosophy* [NY: McGraw-Hill, 1992], 75)

Mind is primary, matter is secondary. From this position, mental healers take one step further: mind's relation to matter is causative--hence, "mind over matter." Their argument was: if the mind is the greater reality, and if conditions of mind can be changed, then matter can be changed accordingly.

Given this philosophical basis, the rest of mental science is simply a matter of discovering the inner laws of mind and their applications. (This will involve some dynamic psychology, but more on that with Quimby, below.) Berkeley had circulated his idealism by the 1730s, but his theory only asserted the *primacy* of mind over matter--it implied nothing about mind being *causative* over matter. But as far as it went, it was used as a stepping stone to mind-cure, as were the Hegelian and Emersonian versions of idealism.⁷ The idealistic tradition, in all its diversity, served as a viable part of the ideological background from which the metaphysical movement developed. This is demonstrated by the ample references to Hegel, Berkeley, and Emerson in early mental science literature.⁸

⁷Hegel's idealism flourished in Germany through 1800, after which it picked up again in English-speaking countries, first via poets and men of letters, "of whom Coleridge and Carlyle in Britain, and Emerson in America, may be mentioned as outstanding examples." English philosophers of mind caught on in the last third of the 1800s, and idealism became the "dominant type of philosophy" by the early 1900s. (John Macquarrie, *Twentieth-Century Religious Thought* [London: SCM Press, Ltd., 1971]) 23, 25) Most notable among American idealist philosophers was Josiah Royce (Harvard professor from 1882-1916) who once lectured before the International Metaphysical League (the largest organization of mental science advocates).

⁸Warren Felt Evans, the earliest mind-curist to publish extensively, often made particular reference to Hegel and Berkeley in his expositions of the relationship of philosophical idealism and metaphysical healing. (Charles S. Braden, *Spirits in Rebellion: the Rise and Development of New Thought* [Dallas: Southern Methodist University Press, 1963], 100-101) On Emerson's importance for New Thought, see n. 44 below.

Swedenborgianism

A sect born out of the mid-eighteenth century also had notable impact on later mind-cure proponents.⁹ Swedenborgianism, or the Church of the New Jerusalem, grew out of the mystical experiences and writings of Emmanuel Swedenborg (1688-1772). Though he had been a noted scientist, honored for his works on metallurgy by his homeland Sweden, in later life his interests shifted to the spiritual world. This "Swedish seer" claimed to have angelic visitations and visions (the experiences of which he relates passim as "Memorable Relations"), wherein he received special knowledge concerning the true meaning of Scripture.¹⁰ Most of this was a corrective to orthodoxy.

Having been chosen by God as the bearer of deeper revelation, much of his subsequent writing (done in Latin) is concerned with giving the "spiritual" interpretation of the Bible. This was later to become a common feature of mind-cure: the correction of the traditional, literal, sense-derived interpretation of Scripture by a deeper, spiritually-perceived understanding of revelation.¹¹

⁹Two of the most prominent figures in metaphysical religion were deeply imbued with Swedenborg. Warren Felt Evans was a Swedenborgian minister when he first visited Quimby. Applying the philosophy of Swedenborg to healing, he went on to publish the first books on mental science (which were widely read into the 1900s). Horatio W. Dresser, whose parents were disciples of Quimby, became a leading proponent and historian of New Thought. Without giving up his emphasis on spiritual healing, he became a lecturer at the Theological Seminary of the New Church (1907) and then was ordained by the New Church (1919). Thus Swedenborg was seen variously as the origin or the culmination of mind-cure. (Braden, 160-164)

¹⁰*The Gist of Swedenborg; Compiled by Julian K. Smyth and William F. Wunsch* (NY: Swedenborg Foundation, Inc., 1920), i-v. Beyond his devotion to communication with departed spirits, his teachings fell outside of traditional Christianity most conspicuously on account of his rejection of trinitarianism, of salvation *sola fide*, and of redemption via the cross; his revision of the traditional Canon of Scripture; and his characterization of heaven and hell as *primarily* interior states of consciousness.

¹¹The work most directly related to Swedenborg's unfolding of the "internal sense" of Scripture was his series of volumes entitled *Arcana Coelestia*, or Heavenly Arcana, published from 1749-1756. Therein Swedenborg argued that "the mere letter of the Word" does not reveal the "deep

By giving entirely new "revealed" meanings to words in Scripture, a non-traditional prophet could claim biblical authority for new teachings however different they were from the historical interpretations. Swedenborg claimed that the spiritual sense of Scripture, though hidden from the traditional (and impotent) church, would be fully revealed by him alone.¹²

Besides the spiritual interpretation of Scripture, another outgrowth of Swedenborgianism that later became characteristic of metaphysical religion was the doctrine of Correspondence. According to this idea, the material world corresponds to the spiritual world, so that physical existence is more or less a reflection of spiritual reality. Here one may notice proximity with the Platonic view of the ideal and material worlds, to which Swedenborg then incorporated the functions of angels and spirits in this other realm. But more importantly, he saw the two realms as existing in a cause-and-effect relationship: the natural world springs from the spiritual world.¹³ Humans have both a natural and

secrets of heaven. . . . there are internal things which never appear at all in the external things." (1 [Numeration for Swedenborg refers not to pagination but to standard section numbers.]) Some of the mental healers' Scripture interpretations "are patterned after Swedenborg, whose writings have been somewhat extensively read by New Thought teachers." (H. W. Dresser, "The New Thought and the New Church" [Philadelphia: New Church Theological School, n.d.], 8)

¹²Swedenborg explained biblical "arcana which have never yet been revealed" by anyone, including the "Christian world [which] is as yet profoundly unaware" of the true internal meaning of Scripture. (Swedenborg, *Arcana Coelestia*, 4, 2) The church's "profound" ignorance was the reason it was in a state "of spiritual devastation and impotency," a condition for which Swedenborg thought he had the remedy. (Swedenborg, *Gist*, iv) All of this is characteristic of New Thought and Kenyon, as will become clear.

¹³In Swedenborg's view,

The whole natural world corresponds to the spiritual world. . . and as a consequence every thing in the natural world that springs from the spiritual world is called a correspondent. It must be understood that the natural world springs from and has permanent existence from the spiritual world, precisely like an effect from its effecting cause." (Emmanuel Swedenborg, *Heaven and Its Wonders and Hell: from Things Heard and Seen* [1758], 89)

a spiritual mind, the outer mind perceiving what is natural or external, while the inner mind receives from the spiritual realm. The flow of divine truth and life into the world and into humans is called "divine influx." Of course spiritual knowledge is considered preferable to natural sensory perception, the latter of which obscures the former.¹⁴

The doctrine of Correspondence is most related to the mental healing movement as regards the relation of the human body to the spiritual world. Swedenborg taught that the physical body is the projection of the spiritual or inner man, and that changes in the internal mind are the causes of changes in the external man.¹⁵ Although he apparently did not apply this premise to theories of health or therapeutic practice, the connection was later made by the pioneers of mind-cure.

This "New Church" contributed a number of features to metaphysical religion. Swedenborg supplied another rung in the ladder from idealism to metaphysical healing, as well as a version of allegorical hermeneutics that was more modern and accessible than ancient models like Philo and

Later, mental-science theorists would build on this proposed causal relationship, and claim that the ability of mind to correspond to the true spiritual reality could effect the corresponding material reality--especially the physical body.

¹⁴"The mind of man is his spirit. . . . his inner mind is spiritual, but the outer natural; wherefore by his inner nature he communicates with [the spiritual], and by his outer being with men." Man's light "is obscured by the fallacies he is induced to believe by the external bodily senses." (Swedenborg, *The True Christian Religion: Containing the Universal Theology of the New Church* [1771], 475, 473) The unreliability of the physical senses and the superiority of the spiritual or intuitive faculties were emphasized in metaphysical religion and by Kenyon.

¹⁵Swedenborg held that "all things that take place and come forth in the external or natural man take place and come forth from the internal or spiritual man." (Swedenborg, *Heaven and Hell*, 92) Again, "everything of man's life is from the spiritual world; wherefore, if his spiritual life sickens, there is also evil derived thence into his natural life, which then becomes diseased." (Swedenborg, *Arcana Coelestia*, 8364) For more along these lines, see Dresser's reference to an obscure volume titled *Divine Healing* by Rev. C. Broomell, a collection of quotations from Swedenborg related to health and healing. (H. W. Dresser, *Handbook of the New Thought* [NY: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1917], 94 n)

Origen.¹⁶ There is also the psychic phenomena and spiritism that later fascinated the mid-nineteenth century (stories of Swedenborg's experiences in that realm were quite popular). And finally there is the indignant anti-orthodoxy that characterized Swedenborg and, to some degree, much of nineteenth century religious liberalism.

Mesmerism

We arrive next at a most important place in the background history of mental healing. Franz Anton Mesmer (1734-1815) was a German physician who held doctorates both in philosophy and in medicine. In 1774 he, like some other practitioners in Europe, undertook the use of the magnet in medical cure. While the prevailing theory of magnetic cure explained its therapeutic agency in terms of the realigning of bodily electricity, Mesmer attributed its healing efficacy to "animal magnetism"--his own discovery.¹⁷ His theory postulated the existence of a universal permeating fluid which conveyed animal magnetism to the patient via magnetic direction.¹⁸ Mesmer considered the universal fluid to be physical in nature; he practiced the "scientific method," and applied

¹⁶The allegorical method of Philo Judaeus of Alexandria sought to reconcile the Old Testament with hellenistic philosophy (see especially his *Legum Allegoriae*). "Philo believed that hidden meaning lay behind numbers and names. More ingeniously, he also found it by playing with the same word and re-grouping the words of a biblical passage." (W. W. Klein, et al, *Introduction to Biblical Interpretation* [London: Word Publishers, 1993], 26) His debates with Celcus prompted Origen to formulate an allegorical hermeneutic for "expression of Christian Alexandrian philosophy." (Moises Silva, *Has the Church Misread the Bible?* [Grand Rapids: Academie Books, 1987], 73; cf. 58-63) Swedenborg's allegorical method was adapted early on by mind-science, beginning with Quimby and Evans.

¹⁷ See especially extracts from Mesmer's "Precis Historique des Faits Relatifs au Magnetisme Animal Jusqu'en Avril 1781," Appendix I in Bloch, 135-137.

¹⁸Of this "universal fluid," Mesmer said "It is more than likely that all of the bodies and elements of nature are penetrated by this elemental matter." (Bloch, 34, 35)

magnetic cure only to functional, rather than organic, ailments.¹⁹

Nonetheless, Mesmer's theory of *magnetisme animal* drew considerable opposition from the traditional ranks of medical practice of his day. He was officially rejected by the Royal Commission on medicine, which led him to form a secret society of followers, the Society of Harmony. It was this group of colleagues/disciples who continued to hammer out the theory of magnetism even after Mesmer's passing. The two schools of thought that flowed from Mesmer's pioneering work were those who held the "fluidistic" theory of Mesmer, and those who held the "animistic" theory.²⁰

The most significant of the fluidists was Count Maxime de Puysegur, who replaced the use of magnets with verbal commands and touch. In 1784 he discovered, through mesmeric experimentation, two of the central elements of hypnosis: artificially induced somnambulism and posthypnotic amnesia.²¹

Among the proponents of the animistic theory was Chevalier Barbarin, who believed that magnetism was a mental, rather than physical, force. The magnetizer's will, he claimed, influenced

¹⁹As Stanford psychologist Ernest R. Hilgard observed, Mesmer explained animal magnetism in terms of physical science: "Mesmer's basis involved nothing outside of naturalistic science." If Mesmer

found evidence of a familiar organic [identifiable] disease or ailment, he sent the patient to a physician practicing the accepted methods of contemporary medicine. Only if the difficulty appeared to be a 'nervous' [functional] condition would he accept the patient for treatment. (ibid, xix)

²⁰The fluidists held that magnetism resulted from "a universal fluid of electrical nature" (ibid, xx), while the animists explained magnetic influence as "a purely mental effect of of the magnetizer's will upon the subject's consciousness." (Stephan Zweig, *Mental Healers: Franz Anton Mesmer, Mary Baker Eddy, Sigmund Freud* [Garden City, NY: Garden City Publishing, 1932], 97-98)

²¹Zweig goes so far as to say that "the modern science of psychology was born. . ." with Puysegur's discoveries. (Zweig, 72)

the patient's mental state, with a change in consciousness then affecting the nervous condition remedially. This premise was to become the foundation for the theory of suggestion in modern psychology. The theory of subjective mental suggestion was given lengthy experimental proof nearly thirty years after Mesmer's death in James Braid's landmark work, *Neurypnology* (1843).²² In the first half of the nineteenth century, a number of mesmerists brought their theories and practices to America.

Though Mesmer inspired these concepts, he is not considered the founder of mind-cure (which would later combine suggestive therapeutics with a metaphysical idealism). Yet there is much in mesmerism that would later become foundational for modern psychology as well as for the metaphysical healers. From Mesmer's experimentation arose perhaps the first scientific practice of "mental" healing. Mesmer not only uncovered principles of mental suggestion, but also employed mental laws for physical healing. Mesmerism was, after all, the vehicle for introducing P. P. Quimby to mental healing, and it is not too much to say that everyone in Christian Science, mental science, the occult sciences, and the psychotherapeutic sciences owes a great deal, directly or indirectly, to Mesmer.²³

²²Barbarin claimed "that the so-called magnetic influence was exercised by a purely mental effect of the magnetizer's will, upon the subject's consciousness. . . . an outlook which is obviously transitional to Christian Science, mind cure, and Coueism." (ibid, 97; cf. 98)

²³Says Zweig, "it is undeniable that all the psychotherapeutic methods of today [1931] derive by one route or another from the discoveries of Franz Anton Mesmer." Likewise,

Mesmerism was equally creative in its influence upon the religious and mystical movement of mind cure, and upon the development of autosuggestion. . . . besides Eddyism, Coueism, and Freudism. . . . [all] the 'occult' sciences, all the telepathic and telekinetic experiments. . . owe much to Mesmer. (ibid, 96, 98-99)

Unitarianism

Nineteenth century America, particularly New England, was a land of growing religious diversity. Although Calvinism had largely dominated Protestant Christianity since the New Divinity of Jonathan Edwards, the Congregational stronghold on New England had weakened significantly by 1800. By that year a number of Massachusetts churches had already become Universalist, and while remaining within the denomination, some Congregational ministers had adopted anti-trinitarian and Arminian doctrinal positions.²⁴ From among those "liberal Christians,"²⁵ as they liked to be called, developed the Unitarian schism from Congregationalism.

The Unitarian movement in America was ignited by the election of Henry Ware to Harvard's Divinity chair in 1805. Rev. Ware's Christology was openly Arian, and although the orthodox (led by Dr. Jedidiah Morse) put up a fight, Ware was installed. The orthodox reaction was not too long in coming; by 1807 Andover Seminary was established to train men in divinity--a task for which the orthodox considered Harvard no longer fit.²⁶

It goes without saying that Unitarianism exuded a strongly anti-orthodox attitude, and this was certainly a starting point for mental healers. The impact of Unitarianism in America was evident across the entire spectrum of theology, including theology proper, christology, soteriology, and

²⁴James Freeman of Kings Chapel in Boston had done so by 1785. (Conrad Wright, ed., *A Stream of Light: A Short History of American Unitarianism* [Boston: Unitarian Universalist Assoc., 1975], 4f)

²⁵Notice, for example, the titles of some of the earliest Unitarian periodicals, such as *The Liberal Preacher*, a Boston monthly begun in 1827, and *The Liberal Christian*, begun in Brooklyn, Connecticut, 1828. (George Willis Cooke, *Unitarianism in America: A History of Its Origin and Development* [Boston: American Unitarian Association, 1902], 447)

²⁶The result of this revolutionary turn of events was that "the liberals were found to be in control of the college that had been a veritable cornerstone of Calvinism . . ." (Wright, 8; cf. 9-10)

bibliology. The philosophical currents which drove their theological revisions were basically the outcomes of Enlightenment thinking: a deistic outlook in general, utilitarian ethics, and an epistemology combining empiricism, rationalism, and skepticism. These emphases, in varied manner, would impact the later mental science movement.²⁷

Deism was only partially palatable to mental healers, who, while rejecting the idea that God was removed from creation in favor of an immanent view, shared the deistic disdain for supernatural theology. "Miracles," in this view, had been misunderstood by traditional religion to be violations of natural law, while they were all the time really just events brought about by previously unknown laws.²⁸ For mental science, the explanation and reproduction of so-called miracles was simply a matter of discovering and making use of new-found laws of the universe.

Utilitarianism, too, was at least partly desirable to mind-cure due to its pragmatism. Mental science savored what was practical and applicable in metaphysical theory. The test of truth was always "does it work?" or "does its benefit outweigh its detriment?" The only thing they found detrimental about mental healing was rejection by scoffers and traditional religionists--a small price to pay. Perhaps even more transitional to mind-science, however, was the way utilitarianism defined goodness in terms of happiness.²⁹ New Thought was often (and appropriately) billed as the religion

²⁷Gaius Glen Atkins, *Modern Religious Cults and Movements* (NY: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1923), 220-222.

²⁸For examples of the deistic belief that miracles are explainable by natural laws, see Peter Gay, ed., *Deism: An Anthology* (London: D. Van Nostrand Co., 1968), 78-79. For one of the most forceful and lucid Unitarian presentations of this view, see Minot J. Savage, *Belief in God: An Examination of Some Fundamental Theistic Problems* (Boston: G. H. Ellis, 1881), 78-79, 122-123.

²⁹"Utilitarianism defined goodness in terms of happiness. . . supposing itself to have discovered the true secret of well-being. . . ." (Atkins, 220)

of health, harmony, and *happiness*.

In terms of epistemology, the Unitarian influence on mental science was both derivative and reactionary. Mind-cure advocates readily agreed with the aspect of rationalism that emphasized enlightened knowledge as the key to mental power, yet application was always the end for mental scientists. Their skepticism was theological rather than philosophical, for they were more than willing to accept speculative metaphysical claims about human potential. New Thought did not, however, have any affinity towards empiricism; the five senses were deemed largely if not altogether untrustworthy. Metaphysical healers (following Transcendentalism) reacted strongly against the sensational epistemology of the day, many citing it as the major obstacle to bodily healing. There remained, however, a compelling desire to characterize mental healing as "scientific" by virtue of its repeatability--despite the apparent fact that verification of such claims could only come via the physical senses.

Unitarianism, then, served as a background source for metaphysical religion in several ways: it nurtured an anti-orthodox attitude, a deep reverence for natural law, and emphasized the employment of reason in the inner life. It is not surprising that a good number of the leading figures in mind-cure were Unitarians or Universalists, or came from that background.³⁰

³⁰In New Thought "the tendency on the whole is to adopt a Unitarian view," theologically. (H. W. Dresser, "New Thought, New Church," 7; cf. Atkins, 226) Among the most prominent leaders in the metaphysical movement were Rev. L. B. MacDonald (Unitarian minister), Dr. J. W. Winkley (former Unitarian minister), Albert C. Grier, and Henry Victor Morgan (former Universalist ministers). Additionally, Rev. C. A. Bartol, Mrs. Julia Ward Howe, and Rev. M. J. Savage (all Unitarians) each spoke at various metaphysical religious meetings. Moreover, in chapter three we will demonstrate the affinity that Charles W. Emerson (former Unitarian and Universalist minister) had to New Thought.

Transcendentalism

Unitarianism produced, by way of reaction, the mystical movement known as Transcendentalism. Many of its participants were Unitarians or had passed through Unitarianism before abandoning organized religion altogether. Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882), its chief proponent and one of the pioneers of idealist teachings in America,³¹ was a Unitarian minister for three years. Finding the doctrinal positions of Unitarianism too restrictive, he left the pastorate (at Boston's Second Church) in 1832.³² In 1836 Emerson published *Nature*, "the manifesto of Transcendentalism," and took part in the first meeting of the Transcendentalist Club in Boston.³³ This leaderless group included a number of individual literary talents (Henry David Thoreau, Margaret Fuller, William Channing, Theodore Parker, etc.); corporately it produced little more than conversation and an obscure journal circulated mostly among its members.³⁴

³¹"There can hardly be any doubt that German idealism impinged markedly upon the thought of those who came to be designated Transcendentalists in America." (Robert Wilson Lawrence, "Essays on Epistemology in American Transcendentalism." [Ph.D. diss., University of Nebraska--Lincoln, 1990], ii) On Emerson's importation of idealism from European Romanticism, see Norman A. Britin, "Emerson and the Metaphysical Poets," *American Literature* 8 (1936), 1-21.

³²He found Unitarianism to be "corpse-cold." While Emerson's

early faith was quite orthodox [in Unitarian terms], the elements of Transcendentalism became a part of his theology during his ministry, replacing orthodox, sectarian religion. . . [which] could not hold him in the pulpit once his life experiences and intellectual progress began directing him toward a radically liberal theology. (Richard Eugene Hoffman, "Ralph Waldo Emerson: His Reasons for Leaving the Ministry" [Ph.D. diss., Bowling Green State University, 1989], ii)

³³John Farina, "Transcendentalism," in Daniel G. Reid, ed., *Dictionary of Christianity in America* (Downer's Grove, Ill: InterVarsity Press, 1990), 1183.

³⁴*The Dial* (1840-1844), first edited by Margaret Fuller, never reached a circulation of over three hundred.

Transcendentalism brought together several elements which became central to metaphysical religion. With philosophical idealism it combined the mystic/monist character of eastern philosophy; a deified view of human potential; an intuitive/ subjective epistemology; and the Swedenborgian doctrine of correspondence or cause/effect.³⁵

Emerson and Thoreau, especially, drank from the wells of eastern wisdom, often referring to the Brahmins and citing oriental sacred literature such as the *Bhagavad-Gita* and the *Upanishads*.³⁶ While most mind-curists were not fully monists, the majority held to a panentheism that emphasized the immanent nature of the divine. This feature was provided by Transcendentalism--at least in part (some mental scientists read eastern philosophy on their own).³⁷

³⁵In *A Participant's Definition* (1852), William Henry Channing gave one of the best summaries of the movement by one of its own:

Transcendentalism was an assertion of the inalienable integrity of man, of the immanence of Divinity in instinct. . . . On the somewhat stunted stock of Unitarianism--whose characteristic dogma was trust in individual reason as correlative to Supreme Wisdom--had been grafted German Idealism. . . and the result was a vague yet exalting conception of the godlike nature of the human spirit. (Perry Miller, ed., *The American Transcendentalists: Their Prose and Poetry* [NY: Doubleday & Co., 1957], 36-37)

³⁶Not only did they read "the Hindu and Buddhist holy books" (Reid, 1184), but they considered them equivalent or supplementary to the Christian Bible. "That day shall be rich indeed. . . when the Vaticans shall be filled with Vedas and Zendavestas," said Thoreau, adding that exclusivist Christians should "commune with Zoroaster then, and through all the liberalizing influence of all the worthies, with Jesus Christ himself, and let 'our church' go by the board." (Henry David Thoreau, *Walden* [NY: New American Library, 1960], 75, 77) Likewise, "'Hamatreya' is a good illustration. . . [of] appropriating the wisdom of the Orient. Emerson's poem is a free rendering of a passage in the *Vishnu Purans*. . . ." (Miller, 219) See also Thoreau's "Brahma."

³⁷Emerson's world-view might be "classified as a qualified monism, which has been also characteristic of the metaphysical sects," one of the chief qualifications being the retention of individual selfhood. (J. Stillson Judah, *The History and Philosophy of the Metaphysical Movements in America* [Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1967], 32) The division within the movement concerning monism can be represented by two of its outstanding leaders: Warren Felt Evans, who generally guarded both individual and divine personality, and Emma Curtis Hopkins, who through

Emerson, for example, speaks of the resolution of all into One and of God within nature. His concept of the Over-Soul encapsulates the mystical connection of self with nature and divinity.³⁸

Such a view entails, to some degree, deification of humanity.

The essence of the soul was blended with the divine, and any distinction was found in degree only. The Transcendental philosophy was thoroughly optimistic; the human spirit was credited with virtually unlimited potential.³⁹ This is clearly similar to the New Thought view of human potential, as will be shown later in this paper.

Transcendentalism, like New Thought, disparaged the role of the physical senses as revealers of Reality. While sensory perception was unreliable, truth could be known immediately by the inner perception of the spirit. Thus revelation knowledge for the Transcendentalist was gained by direct influx of divine wisdom from the Over-soul to the individual soul.⁴⁰ Revelation knowledge would

her study of eastern religion maintained a straightforward monism.

³⁸"This is the ultimate fact. . . the resolution of all into the ever-blessed One." (Ralph Waldo Emerson, "Self-Reliance," in *Essays of Ralph Waldo Emerson* [Garden City, NY: Book Club Associates, n.d.], 24) "God reappears with all his parts in every moss and cobweb. . . . Thus is the universe alive." "Essence, or God, is not a relation or a part, but the whole. . . . swallowing up all relations, parts and times within itself." ("Compensation," in *Essays*, 35, 42) "[T]hat great nature in which we rest as the earth lies in the soft arms of the atmosphere [is] that Unity, that Over-Soul, within which every man's particular being is contained and made one with all other." ("The Over-Soul," in *Miller*, 91)

³⁹"The soul refuses limits, and always affirms an Optimism, never a Pessimism." (Emerson, "Compensation," in *Essays*, 42) There is "no bar or wall in the soul, where man, the effect, ceases, and God, the cause, begins." "One mode of the divine teaching is the incarnation of the spirit in a form--forms, like my own." ("The Over-Soul," in *Essays*, 92, 94) To consciously "become divine," Emerson instructs, "Place yourself in the middle of the stream of power and wisdom which animates all whom it floats. . . . Then you are the world, the measure of right, of truth, of beauty." ("Spiritual Laws," in *Essays*, 48)

⁴⁰"Swedenborg, Emerson and the metaphysical leaders believed that intuition rather than the senses revealed a spiritual reality. . . transcending the natural science of the physical world." (Judah,

later be similarly explained by mind-science (and E. W. Kenyon).

The Transcendentalist view of "divine influx" is distinctly Swedenborgian. Emerson, in particular, freely credited the Swedish seer and drew heavily from his mystical expositions.⁴¹ Emerson related divine influx to human potential, while also making use of Swedenborg's doctrine of correspondence and his spiritual hermeneutic.⁴²

Transcendentalism did retain several tenets of Unitarianism: a generally anti-orthodox disposition, a naturalistic view of miracles, and an emphasis on the universality of natural law (which was then related to laws of mind).⁴³ Each of these outlooks, along with the aforementioned elements

26) Emerson's concession of "utter impotence to test the authenticity of my senses, to know whether the impressions they make on me correspond with outlying objects. . . ." was basic to his idealism and epistemology. ("Nature," *Essays*, 352) "The soul is the perceiver and revealer of truth. We know truth when we see it, let skeptic and scoffer say what they choose." "We distinguish the announcements of the soul. . . by the term *Revelation*. . . . For this communication is an influx of the Divine mind into our mind." ("The Over-soul," *Essays*, 95, 96)

⁴¹Emerson, plainly a champion of the inner life, confessed that "Swedenborg's mythus is so coherent & vital & true to those who dwell within, so arrogant or limitary to those without." (Alfred R. Ferguson, ed., *The Journals and Miscellaneous Notebooks of Ralph Waldo Emerson*, [Cambridge, Mass: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1964], 7:409-410) "The influence of Emmanuel Swedenborg cannot be underestimated as one source for the seeds of idealism that blossomed forth in transcendentalism and in the metaphysical movements." (Judah, 26)

⁴²Divine influx was a means of deification: "The simplest person who worships God, becomes God; yet for ever and ever the influx of this better and universal self is new and unsearchable." ("The Over-soul," *Essays*, 100) In his explanation of "correspondence," Emerson says "Swedenborg saw gravity as an external of the irresistible attractions of affection and faith." ("Poetry and Imagination," in Miller, 204) Emerson also lauds "the opening of the eternal sense of the Word, in the language of the New Jerusalem Church." ("The Over-soul," *Essays*, 96)

⁴³As was the attitude of mind-science, Transcendentalism considered itself to be the restorer of Jesus' religion (which orthodoxy had buried in creeds): "The true Christianity--a faith like Christ's in the infinitude of man--is lost." (Emerson, The Divinity School Address, in Reginald L. Cook, ed., *Ralph Waldo Emerson: Selected Prose and Poetry* [NY: Rinehart and Company, Inc., 1954], 84) The "word Miracle, as pronounced by Christian churches, gives a false impression; it is Monster. It is not one with the blowing clover and the falling rain." (ibid., 75) A correct view would recognize

(idealism, mystical monism, Swedenborgianism, and subjectivism), was bequeathed to later pioneers of mind science. Indeed, mind-cure has been called the "Transcendental Gospel" by one religion scholar. The very first writer of the movement subtitled one of his books on metaphysical healing, in part, "Transcendental Medicine." Many if not most of the mental scientists cited Emerson as a foundation for their metaphysical speculations.⁴⁴ Although he apparently did not apply his mystical idealism to healing, Emerson (and other Transcendentalists) directly influenced the New Thought movement.⁴⁵

the universality of (natural and mental) Law, "for whenever you enunciate a natural law you discover you have enunciated a law of the mind." (Emerson, "Poetry and Imagination," Miller, 204)

⁴⁴See Sydney Ahlstrom, *A Religious History of the American People* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1972), 1030. See also Tyner, 315, and Warren Felt Evans, *The Primitive Mind-Cure: the Nature and Power of Faith; or, Elementary Lessons in Christian Philosophy and Transcendental Medicine* (Boston: H. H. Carter and Co., 1885). Evans "united idealistic philosophy and practical mysticism, thus extending one species of American romanticism, rooted in the Transcendentalist movement, into the latter half of the nineteenth century." (John F. Teahan, "Warren Felt Evans and Mental Healing," *Church History* 48 [March 1979], 63)

For examples of mind-curists crediting Emerson or Transcendentalism, see "Emerson's Idealism," chapter 13 in Charles M. Barrows, *Facts and Fictions of Mental Healing* (Boston: H. H. Carter and Karrick, 1887), 217-240; various contributors in Horatio W. Dresser, ed., *The Spirit of the New Thought* (NY: T. Y. Crowell Co., 1917), 33, 89, 164; Solon Lauer, *Life and Light from Above* (Boston: Lee and Shepard, 1895), passim; H. Emilie Cady, *How I Used Truth* (Kansas City, MO: Unity School of Christianity, 1939 [1894]), 34. A lengthy list of examples could be generated, but it is enough to say that "no other earlier writer is more quoted in New Thought literature than Ralph Waldo Emerson." (Simmons, "Annie Rix Militz," 68)

⁴⁵Emerson did imply, at least, that the real self (spirit) could not be sick--which became a premise for metaphysical healers. "The soul will not know either deformity or pain." "For it is only the finite that has wrought and suffered; the infinite lies stretched in smiling repose." (Emerson, "Spiritual Laws," *Essays*, 45) But Transcendentalist Jones Very (1813-1880) stated outright the connection between inner states and bodily health:

Not from the earth, or skies, Or seasons as they roll,
Come health and vigor to the frame, But from the living soul. . . .
Then will the body, too, receive Health from the soul within. . . .
the body's health depend[s] Upon the living soul.

Modern Spiritism

The practice of communication with spirit beings, departed or otherwise ascended, has probably existed nearly as long as religion itself. As mentioned above, Swedenborg described in great detail his conversations, via supernatural visions, with great spirits of history. But modern spiritism (or spiritualism, as some called it) had as its most visible pioneer New Yorker Andrew Jackson Davis (1826-1910). He had his start in 1843 when, as the subject of mesmerist William Levingston, Davis began to diagnose disease while in a trance state.⁴⁶ But it was the following year that Davis, in a hypnotic state, communicated with departed spirits--one of which was Swedenborg.

From the spirits he learned about magnetic (mesmeric) healing, which he, with another magnetizer, began teaching to others. The pair, along with a scribe, opened a clinic in New York City dedicated to healing through spirit-medium instruction. When they were not practicing spiritist therapy, they recorded the dictations Davis gave under trance. Published in 1847 as *The Principles of Nature*, the volume was decidedly more anti-orthodox than Davis' non-trance teachings.⁴⁷

Davis subsequently discovered, in 1847, that he could enter at will the trance state without the aid of a mesmerist. Apparently immune to the typical condition of posthypnotic amnesia, Davis claimed he could recall his trance experiences for later recording.

("Health of Body Dependent on the Soul," in Miller, 284)

⁴⁶Leslie A. Shepard, ed., *Encyclopedia of Occultism and Parapsychology* (Detroit: Gale Research Co., 1978), 1:213. This practice was similar to Quimby's, as we will see later.

⁴⁷J. Gordon Melton, *Biographical Dictionary of American Cult and Sect Leaders* (NY: Garland Publishers, 1986), 65. The subtitle of Davis' work was *Her Divine Revelations, and a Voice to Mankind*. It contained an exposition of mystical philosophy, challenged the inerrancy of the Old Testament especially, and promoted an Arian view of Jesus. Interestingly, the book "for the most part, expresses Swedenborg's views." (Shepard, 214)

It was also at this time that Davis announced that he no longer relied on spirit-mediumship for *dictation*. He continued, however, to promote spiritism in general for the remainder of his years, and was influential for many other mediums. In 1886 Davis earned a medical degree from the U. S. Medical College in New York. Afterwards, he moved to Boston and opened an office for the practice of traditional and alternative medicine.⁴⁸ He died in 1910 at age 84.

A number of spiritist churches sprang up across the country; organization commenced in 1893 with the formation of a Spiritualist Association in Chicago.⁴⁹ As it developed, modern spiritualism became a springboard for some into mental science. The spirits, it seems, would often expound a world-view similar to that of New Thought.⁵⁰ A number of leaders in the metaphysical movement entered through spiritistic experiences (seances and/or personal mediumship).⁵¹ For those

⁴⁸See Melton, 66. "He disclaimed dictation by the spirits and said that he could write them [articles] by some process of inner perception." He and some followers began the periodical *Univercoelum* (1847-1849) "coined apparently from Swedenborg's 'universum coelum.'" (Shepard, 215)

⁴⁹The "oldest and largest of the Spiritualist churches is the National Spiritualist Association of Churches (NSAC) formed in 1893 at Chicago. Among its leaders were Harrison D. Barrett and James M. Peebles, both former Unitarian clergymen. . . ." (J. Gordon Melton, *Encyclopedia of American Religions* [NY: Garland Publishers, 1988], 703)

⁵⁰See for example, Lloyd Kenyon Jones, *The World Next-Door: Based on Teachings Received in the Seance-Room. . . Dealing with Conditions in the Spirit-Sphere, and with Natural Law, and the Nature of Matter, Ether and Energy* (Chicago: Charles T. Powner Co., 1919), 4-25, 69-72. One spiritist, offering his view on why traditional Christianity rejects spirit-mediumship, observed: "I have had what purported to be hundreds of messages from the other side; and I have never had a single one that was soundly orthodox." (Minot J. Savage, *Life Beyond Death* [NY: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1901], 188)

⁵¹W. J. Colville drifted from spiritism into mental science in the mid-1880s (see his *The Spiritual Science of Health and Healing* [Chicago: Educator Publications, 1888]). Colville was later heralded by New Thought publisher Elizabeth Towne as "the most prolific of new thought writers." (*Nautilus* [April 1905], 20) Unity co-founder Charles Fillmore's early writings show an interest in spiritism (see *Modern Thought*, April 1889). Despite official denial, Mary Baker Eddy attended seances and

who migrated from spiritism to mental science, the voyage was no doubt aided primarily by the mutual faith in the supremacy of spiritual reality and inner perception over the material world and the physical senses--as well as both movements' appreciation of Swedenborg.⁵²

Summary of Backgrounds

A number of religious and philosophical elements combined to create the intellectual atmosphere of nineteenth century New England. To summarize, the most outstanding of those characteristics that would unite in mind-cure included: (1) a metaphysical idealism stressing the primacy and causative power of mind over matter; (2) a subjective epistemology aimed at the ascendancy of inner spiritual perception over external physical sensation (with application both to bodily conditions and word meanings); (3) the discovery and application of universal laws governing mind and matter (with application to bodily healing and spiritual enlightenment); (4) a mystic-monist tendency concerning the nature of mind and matter and their underlying harmony, which tended to deify humanity; (5) an ongoing connection to the world of paranormal/occult knowledge, and spiritism in particular.

was for a time a spirit medium before she met Quimby. Editor B. O. Flower's involvement in spiritism preceded and mixed with interest in New Thought, as was seen in the pages of his prominent periodical, *Arena*; the same was true for Rev. R. Heber Newton, sometime contributor to *Arena* and *Mind* magazines, and speaker for the International Metaphysical League. Another example is Sydney Flower, editor of the Chicago-based *New Thought* magazine (1902-1910), who also ran the Psychic Research Company in Chicago.

⁵²Some reversed the trend and moved from mental science to spiritism. One example was Susie Clark, who was formerly a successful practitioner and author on mental healing. (H. W. Dresser, *Spirit of the New Thought*, 173) Most importantly, the eminent Horatio W. Dresser followed suit to some degree, advocating psychic phenomena and spiritistic visions/encounters (see his *The Open Vision* [NY: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1920]; actually, he moved from New Thought to Swedenborgianism first, and then to paranormal-spiritism).

Other lesser characteristics could be added, and each of the above five points would later be emphasized *in varying degrees* by individual branches, leaders, and adherents of mind-science. Although all of these elements were present in the religious climate of New England by the middle of the nineteenth century, they were not combined into one world-view until the advent of the mind-cure pioneers, Warren Felt Evans and Phineas Parkhurst Quimby. It is true that Mesmer practiced a scientific form of mental healing much earlier, but it was not wedded with the conceptual components summarized above; conversely, both Swedenborgianism and Transcendentalism contained much of the above theory, yet without therapeutic application or practice. With the union of theory and practice in the work of Quimby and Evans, metaphysical religion finally emerged. A brief overview of the figures and circumstances surrounding the beginnings of the new movement follows.

Quimby and Company: The Birth of Mind-Cure

It has been customary in many reviews of the metaphysical movement to oversimplify its historical origins by attributing to Quimby the status of "founder." While he was a major, maybe even the most significant, figure in the genesis of mind-cure, Quimby should not be considered its lone founder. Current scholarship recognizes the interdependent streams of influence in the development of this religious movement.⁵³ Yet out of all the cast of contributing characters, it seems

⁵³In contrast to the traditional view of Quimby as founder, some scholars

see Warren Felt Evans, Quimby's student and pioneer New Thought writer as the source of the movement (see Ahlstrom 1974; Anderson 1963). Still other opinions find Swedenborg, the Swedish seer (Larson 1986), or the organizational genius and great teacher of the

that two should be given foremost billing for pioneering roles. Although Quimby may have been the first to practice genuine "mind-cure," Evans, also a mental healer, was the first to publish these ideas extensively. This section will discuss the ideas of these two individuals as well as those of Mary Baker Eddy (which three comprise "Quimby and company"), and review the earliest development of the metaphysical healing movement.

Phineas Parkhurst Quimby (1802-1866)

As mentioned above, religious historians have typically characterized Quimby as the father of mental science. This view was no doubt aided by the fact that the first major historian of the movement, Horatio W. Dresser, was himself a second-generation Quimby disciple (his parents, Julius and Annetta Dresser, had been two of Quimby's most devoted followers). Quimby's background and biography have been amply discussed in numerous scholarly and popular publications, so the following treatment of his role will neglect many interesting, but nonessential, details in an effort to achieve a brief review.⁵⁴

movement, Emma Curtis Hopkins (Melton 1987) to be the correct choice." (John Kent Simmons, "Annie Rix Militz," 27)

It has also been argued that Quimby is the *forefather*, not founder, of New Thought (see Gail M. Harley, "Emma Curtis Hopkins: Forgotten Founder of New Thought" [Ph.D. diss., Florida State University, 1991], 77-79)

⁵⁴See Julius A. Dresser, *The True History of Mental Science* (Boston, n.p., 1887); Annetta G. Dresser, *The Philosophy of P.P. Quimby* (Boston, n.p., 1895); H. W. Dresser, *Health and the Inner Life: with an Account of the Life and Teachings of P. P. Quimby* (NY: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1907 [1906]), 29-45, 109f; idem, *A History of the New Thought Movement* (NY: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1919), 15f., 44f. Although H. W. Dresser later recognized others' roles, some scholars now qualify his historical investigations:

Dresser recorded groups that were familiar to him and his family. . . . the position that he

"Park" Quimby was a relatively uneducated common man, a clock-maker, from Belfast, Maine. While still in his thirties, an experience of illness convinced him of the unreliability of conventional medical practice.⁵⁵ Subsequently, in 1838, Quimby saw a public demonstration of mesmeric healing; he became so enthralled with the theory and practice that he studied and, by 1840, took up mesmerism himself. Quimby employed a subject who, while in the mesmeric state, would diagnose patients' diseases and prescribe remedies.

Eventually Quimby determined that it was not the clairvoyant insight of his subject, Lucius Burkmar, but the mental state of his patient, which effected the cure. The patients, Quimby postulated, were healed by their confidence in Burkmar (which reversed their sickness-consciousness) instead of by the absurd remedies that were prescribed. He concluded that just as one's erroneous beliefs cause disease, right thinking brings about healing. Hence the cause and cure of disease was a subjective state of mind.⁵⁶

assumed from his father Julius, that Quimby actually founded New Thought, became standardized. . . . because Julius Dresser pushed the idea in an attempt to discredit Eddy. (Harley, 88)

All the above works give accounts of Quimby. We base the historical aspects of the following account primarily on Judah, 149f., and Braden, 47-88.

⁵⁵Quimby came to believe that "the priest and the medical faculty have assumed sway, and one pretends to look after the body and the other the soul. So between both they have nearly destroyed soul and body. . . ." (H. W. Dresser, ed., *The Quimby Manuscripts*. Second Edition. [Secaucus, NJ: Citadel Press, 1969 (1921)], 232; hereinafter referred to as *QMSS*.)

⁵⁶The "cure is not in the medicine, but in the confidence. . . [in] the doctor or medium." (*QMSS*, 47) "Quimby is shown to have progressed gradually *out* of mesmerism into a knowledge of the hidden powers of minds. He soon found. . . . that disease was primarily an erroneous belief of mind." (H. W. Dresser, *Health*, 30-31) See Dresser's demarcation of Quimby's development: the mesmeric period (1836-1847), the intermediate period (1847-1859), and the mature period (1859-1866) in *QMSS*, 36-85 (cf. Martin A. Larson, *New Thought, or a Modern Religious Approach: the Philosophy of Health, Happiness and Prosperity* [NY: Philosophical Library, 1985], 101).

Armed with this discovery, in 1847 Quimby parted ways with Burkmar, and began experimenting with his new theory (or "Science") of health. His new method of healing eventually came to consist of verbal suggestion and limited touch. Quimby would explain the reason for a patient's illness (a false belief in sickness, originating from medical or religious opinions), and the cure (changing the belief to reflect the Truth--humanity's perfect health in Reality). He would articulate this theory in order to change the patient's mind, believing that *the truth is the cure*.⁵⁷ It was not necessary to make affirmations of health; patients needed only to change their thinking to realize their health. It was, however, Quimby's suggestion that produced belief in health.

The theory was fairly straightforward, but Quimby next had to face the question that all subsequent mental scientists would encounter: if one is, in Reality, perfectly healthy, why doesn't it show? If disease is merely an illusion, why do persons (who are perfect in Truth) believe they experience sickness?⁵⁸ Quimby resolved the dilemma by developing a form of metaphysical idealism which gave primacy to the spiritual realm and then placed blame for sickness on the ignorance of the mind of the senses.⁵⁹

⁵⁷Quimby said "my explanation is the cure. If I succeed in correcting his errors. . . [I] establish the truth, or health. The truth is the cure." (Quoted in Dresser, *Health*, 32)

⁵⁸Quimby was not the first or the last thinker to face this dilemma:

Without realizing it, he [Quimby] was standing at a famous philosophic crossroads. On one side, objective idealism beckoned to the belief that matter is a form of the same ultimate reality that is expressed on a higher level in mind. On the other side, subjective idealism tempted with its restriction of reality to God and spirits emanating from Him or created by Him. Quimby, of course without putting the problem in these philosophic terms, hesitated. . . . (Ernest S. Bates and John V. Dittmore, *Mary Baker Eddy: The Truth and Tradition* [NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 1932], 83)

⁵⁹Quimby had fully developed this theory by 1859, as the dated entries in *QMSS* demonstrate. This was about a decade prior to the divine healing movement in America; likewise, literature on

The physical senses, according to Quimby, were not reliable monitors of Reality since they could report only about external conditions. But these bodily conditions are themselves the result of wrong thinking. For Quimby, there are three aspects of the human dynamic to consider: (1) spirit/soul/wisdom, which governs the mind; (2) the medium of spirit, the mind, which is a moldable substance called spiritual matter; and (3) the physical body, which is condensed matter, and its sensations. If a thought enters the mind, the spirit molds the mind to the image of the thought, and the mind forms the corresponding condition in the body.⁶⁰

Whether the thought is of sickness or health, the phenomenon is produced in the body. Thoughts of sickness Quimby called "opinion," while thoughts of health he called "knowledge." The senses erroneously report the effect as the cause of disease, and as the true condition.⁶¹ To free one

healing from the latter group did not appear until after several of W. F. Evans works on mental healing had been published.

⁶⁰Quimby gave an illustration:

A thought is sown in the mind while asleep or ignorant, it grows and comes forth [as idea]. The curiosity tastes; it [mind] produces a strange sensation in the throat. The spirit inquires, the answer comes, Bronchitis. The spirit is disturbed. . . .

Mind is a spiritual matter, which, being agitated, disturbs the spirit. . . . [False opinion] is communicated to the spirit and sets it [mind] to work to form disease, after the form the spirit gives the mind. The mind being the matter under the control of the spirit, is capable of producing any phenomenon. (*QMSS* [October 1859], 181, 182)

⁶¹Quimby explained:

You see the deception. Your knowledge is the emancipation of the error, and all that followed it, the Truth sets you free. . . . Now sensations can be learned [understood as deceptive] before they affect the body or produce disease, so that they fall harmless at your feet. (*ibid.*, [November 1859], 184)

The "phenomenon exists in the natural world, while the causes originate in an invisible world. Doctoring is confined to the natural world, and [attributes] the causes of the disease to the natural

of opinion's effect (disease), the knowledge of the Truth of one's identity is necessary. The real man, said Quimby, is not material but spiritual. The natural man is physical, but this is only the form or expression of the real man. One who is wise, or "Scientific," sees beyond matter to the causative realm of Science which produces the material effect.⁶² The higher or real self was deified.

Based on his view of the spiritual realm's primacy, Quimby proceeded to interpret the Bible somewhat after the manner of Swedenborg. He never claimed to have reached his conclusions by studying Scripture, but after his healing hypotheses were developed he sought to show that the Bible, spiritually interpreted, confirmed his message.⁶³ His explanations of passages typically sought to

world." The "evidences in the body are the effects of the belief. . . . The doctors [wrongly] take the bodily evidence as disease." (ibid., [January 1860], 190, 191)

⁶²Quimby postulated:

The natural man is made up of flesh and blood; Science is. . . . Wisdom or God. When you give it all its qualities, what kind of person is it? It is the Scientific man, not of flesh and blood, but of the world where error never comes. . . . The natural man is nothing but an idea [of] Science. . . . (ibid., [August 1860], 229)

Man is not developed enough to see outside of his idea 'matter'. . . . I have developed this wisdom, which is the real man, till I have broken through the bars of death. . . . The wise man in like manner knows that the light of the body or the natural man is but the reflection of the scientific man. (ibid., 236)

⁶³Quimby complained that if "you do not believe the Bible as they explain it then you are an infidel," in the eyes of traditional religion. "I do not throw the Bible away, but throw the explanation away, and apply Jesus' own words as he did and as he intended they should be applied, and let my works speak for themselves." (*QMSS*, 169) Julius Dresser, a follower of Quimby, recalled that Quimby's discovery "was not made from the Bible, but from the study of mental phenomena and as the result of searching investigations; and after the truth was discovered, he found his views portrayed and illustrated in Christ's teachings and works." George Quimby said that his father "was a great reader of the Bible, but put a construction on it thoroughly in harmony with his train of thought." (Quotes from H. W. Dresser, *Health*, 32, 45) Though Swedenborg had set an example, the "custom of interpreting the Bible in accordance with mental-healing principles began with Quimby. Many of his manuscripts are devoted to these efforts to bring out the inner or spiritual meaning of the Bible." (H. W. Dresser, *Handbook*, 69)

justify his virulent anti-orthodoxy, gnostic distinction between Jesus and the Christ (principle of Science), and mental healing principles and practices.

Quimby's thought brought together Mesmerism's mental suggestion, Transcendentalism's idealism, Swedenborgianism's spiritual-material correspondence, Unitarian-Universalism's emphasis on natural law, and (early on) Spiritism's clairvoyance.⁶⁴ This marked the birth of metaphysical religion in America. Quimby came in contact with several individuals who soon became the premier heralds of the new movement. His therapeutic treatment of Warren Felt Evans, Mary Patterson (Eddy), and Julius and Annetta (Seabury) Dresser led to the wide dissemination (and modification) of Quimby's theories.

Yet, unlike the others, Evans came to Quimby with a highly developed idealist philosophy of his own, which leaned most heavily on Swedenborg. What Evans found in Quimby was someone who seemed to be putting into practice his own understanding of Swedenborg's theory. Evans' contributions to mental science are considered next.

Warren Felt Evans (1817-1889)

While Quimby had been writing manuscripts since at least 1859, their circulation was extremely limited and none of them were published until 1895; Evans, however, began publishing his views on mental healing in 1869.⁶⁵ He had already published four books (1860-1864) related in

⁶⁴It is during this period, "roughly 1830-1860, that the direct religio/psychological roots of New Thought converge [in Quimby]: Swedenborgianism, Mesmerism, Transcendentalism, Universalism and Spiritualism." (Simmons, "Annie Rix Militz," 54-55)

⁶⁵Quimby's manuscripts were first reproduced in part in Annetta G. Dresser, *The Philosophy of P. P. Quimby* (1895). The complete *QMSS* were first published by her son H. W. Dresser in 1921. Evans' first book on mind-science was *The Mental Cure: Illustrating the Influence of the Mind on*

varying degrees to Swedenborgianism, to which he had converted after a career as a Methodist Episcopal minister. About the time he was said to have met Quimby, Evans officially joined the New Church, in which he remained active as a leader for several years (1864-69). After Quimby reportedly treated him, Evans opened his own mind-cure practice, first in Boston (1867-69), then in Salisbury.⁶⁶

Evans' basic view of healing was closely allied with Quimby's. Both operated from a similar idealistic premise wherein matter was a manifestation of mind. Evans more clearly based his idealism on Swedenborg's doctrine of correspondence which explained the natural world as a reflection or expression of the spiritual realm.⁶⁷

the Body, Both in Health and Disease, and the Psychological Method of Treatment (Boston: Colby and Rich, 1869). Evans "was the first American mental healer to publish his ideas extensively." (Teahan, 63)

⁶⁶See Teahan, 64; Judah, 162-169; Braden, 89-128. Gottschalk argues that Evans was practicing mind-cure before meeting Quimby:

Historians . . . have generally portrayed Evans as a Quimby disciple whose own work in mental healing was launched after he was supposedly cured by Quimby of a long-standing ailment in 1863. The only direct evidence bearing on the question, however, leads to no such conclusion. In fact it fully supports Evans' view formed after two brief visits with Quimby and reported by mind-curer A. J. Swartz in 1888, that Quimby's methods were 'like those he [Evans] had employed for some years, which was a mental process of changing the patient's thinking about disease.' (Stephen Gottschalk, "Christian Science and Harmonialism," in Charles H. Lippy and Peter W. Williams, eds., *Encyclopedia of the American Religious Experience* [NY: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1988], 2:903-904)

⁶⁷"Matter and mind, in their underlying reality, or substance, are one and the same. Matter is only a phenomenal manifestation of mind or spirit." (Evans, *The Divine Law of Cure* [Boston: H. H. Carter and Co., 1881], 157) Following Swedenborg, he explains that "as the whole universe is a crystallization or ultimatum of spirit, so the external body in man is derived from the soul, and is an evolution of it, and life is imparted to it by influx, and received according to a law of correspondence." (Evans, *Soul and Body* [Boston: H. H. Carter and Co., 1875], 40)

While God was, for Quimby, a metaphysical abstraction, Evans generally attributed personhood to God (although the Holy Spirit was characterized as a principle or influence, and Jesus was divine in an immanent sense only). Humanity is distinct, but not separate, from the Infinite source of all life. The mind is the medium between soul and body, although Evans often interchanged the terms spirit, soul, and mind. The central issue was the inner (or real) self's creative power over the external body.⁶⁸

Disease is said to be the result of wrong thinking. A spiritual or mental state is the inner cause of outer effects on the body. Evans postulated thought as a creative principle which produced material manifestations. Since sickness originates with mental images, a change in consciousness results in the cure.⁶⁹

The healthy state of consciousness Evans called "faith," and its opposite was "fear." The enemy of faith is sensory testimony, which is in conflict with spiritual truth and generally unreliable. While fear produces disease, faith is the law of health. Faith is not mere expectation of future good,

⁶⁸Evans, *Soul and Body*, 23, 70, 111, 113, 130. "He postulated the belief in distinction but not separation of the human soul from God. Man differed from God through his finitude [but] there was only one Being. . . multiplied in manifested existence as many." (Judah, 163) "Everything in this volume," said Evans,

is based on the fundamental truth, that man, as to his interior being, is a *spirit*. This inner nature is the real manhood, the body, the mere physical organism, constituting no essential part of his being and existence. The soul, the mind, the spirit--which terms we use interchangeably, though not absolutely identical in meaning--is the primary source of life in the body." (Evans, *Soul and Body*, 8-9)

⁶⁹"I affirm that all bodily conditions are simply effects, of which some state of thought is the cause." Thus "every diseased condition of the body is wrong *thinking*. Change that false belief, that wrong state of the consciousness which is the inmost life, and the disease is cured from the root." (Evans, *Soul and Body*, 48, 45) Evans held "that thought was the creative principle of God and man, the power of mind over the appearance of matter." (Judah, 164-165)

but the consciousness of health's *present* Reality--one is already healthy *now*.⁷⁰

Realization of this spiritual truth requires transcending the arena of sense knowledge, and affirming one's health in Reality. Evans claimed he was merely reinstating the practice Jesus used in healing--positive verbal affirmation. This concept of the power of spoken words, which Evans was the first to promote, became a major feature of mind-science.⁷¹

The positive affirmation is based on faith, which is the creative power that God used to bring the universe into existence. This same God-faith, the spiritual substance or Reality of all things, is meant to be exercised by humanity for the creation of desirable conditions.⁷² Such a faith has a saving effect, because it makes one whole; harmony between the spiritual and the material, the soul

⁷⁰A "spiritual idea" is "acquired independently of the testimony of the external senses, and sometimes in direct conflict with their fallacious appearances. To think spiritually is to elevate the thoughts. . . above the sensuous degree of the mind." (Evans, *Soul and Body*, 12) "You are not to get it [faith] in any way, but *use* it. We are looking for what we already possess. . . . Faith is only the action of the mind above the plane of sense, with its false and deceptive appearances." (Evans, *The Primitive Mind-Cure*, 10) Fear produces "the image which. . . becomes the seminal idea of the disease," but "faith is the spiritual principle of health." "It may exist as an expectation, that. . . recovery will be consummated. But the highest degree of faith is where there is a divinely inwrought conviction that we are saved [whole, healed], or being saved *now*." (Evans, *Soul and Body*, 24, 59, 69)

⁷¹"To cure ourselves or others of disease we must rise in our conceptions out of the sphere of the senses to the realm of reality, to the spiritual perception of things that *are* and as they are." (Evans, *Soul and Body*, 46) Evans said Jesus "comprehended the potential spiritual force of words. . . . He employed certain formulas or expressive sentences into which he concentrated and converged his whole mental force. . . ." (Evans, *The Mental Cure*, 306) Here "appeared for the first time the prototypes of the positive formula prayers which have dominated the practice of all later New Thought healing groups." "With Evans begins the New Thought reliance upon affirmative prayer or positive thinking--the affirmation of the condition desired." (Judah, 162, 167; cf. Braden 121-123)

⁷²"We are told by Paul that it [faith] was an element in God's omnipotence, and that by it he created the worlds. (Heb. xi. 3)" "Christ commanded his disciples to 'have the faith of God.' (Mark xi. 22)" "For, as Solomon has said, 'As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he.' Such a faith is the *reality* of things, or, as Paul affirms, it 'is the *substance* of things. . . ." (Evans, *Soul and Body*, 58, 59, 60)

and body, is achieved. This restores to humanity the potential for mastery or dominion of their world.⁷³

Evans held essentially the same view as Quimby regarding healing: disease was caused and cured mentally, with (right or wrong) thinking as the fulcrum on which bodily conditions rested. Yet Evans must be recognized for his original applications of Swedenborgian correspondence and verbal affirmation to healing, as well as his position in history as the first mind-cure author.

While Julius and Annetta Dresser were followers of Quimby's philosophy of health and also made important contributions to the development of the metaphysical movement, their teachings were purely derived from and faithful to Quimby's thought. As it would be repetitious to expound on that system again, we now turn to one from this group whose innovations summoned a new level of attention to this newborn movement.

Mary Baker Eddy (1821-1910)

One of Quimby's patients and disciples eventually became the best-known name and dominant organizational force in metaphysical religion. Mrs. Patterson, as she was known to Quimby and his other followers, had already tried a number of remedies for her ill health--from the water-cure to homeopathy to spiritistic aid.⁷⁴ But she became enthused by the teachings of Quimby,

⁷³"The Christian idea of salvation includes something more than the pardon of sin. . . . It is the restoration of the soul to union and harmony with God, and of the body to correspondence with the redeemed spirit." (ibid., 57) Evans saw Christ's principles as an "an intelligent mastery of nature by the soul. Man's former dominion over nature was recovered through Jesus, who brought the disturbed world order back to its original harmony." (Judah, 165)

⁷⁴In 1862 Eddy entered a water-cure sanatorium, "Dr. Vail's Hydropathic Institute in New Hampshire." (Eddy, *Miscellaneous*, 378) "While there she heard of Dr. Phineas Parkhurst Quimby, a mental healer in Portland, Maine. In October she travelled to meet him." (Melton, *American Cult*

and stayed for some time discussing his theories and reading his hand-copied manuscripts on healing. At the time, and for awhile after his death, she was avidly devoted to Quimby's spiritual "Science"--but eventually she distanced herself from him and came to see herself as the discoverer and unique revealer of Christian Science.⁷⁵

Eddy had an inauspicious beginning as a mental scientist. Claiming to have discovered Christian Science in 1866 (the year of Quimby's death), she gathered a small student following around her first manuscript, *The Science of Man*, in 1870. By 1875 she had completed the official Christian Science textbook, *Science and Health*. That same year, after excommunication from her childhood Congregational Church, Eddy began holding Sunday services in Lynn, Massachusetts that attracted only a dozen or two worshippers. But in 1876 she organized a fellowship of students, followed by the Church of Christ, Scientist in 1879. Her Massachusetts Metaphysical College opened in 1881 and operated through 1889 in Boston. The *Christian Science Journal* began in 1883.⁷⁶

and *Sect Leaders*, 80) On her practice of homeopathy and spiritism, see Martin A. Gardner, *The Healing Revelations of Mary Baker Eddy* (NY: Prometheus Press, 1993), 121.

⁷⁵We will not enter into the debate over the extent of Eddy's indebtedness to Quimby. For critical views see Julius Dresser, *True History*; Annetta Dresser, *Philosophy*; and H. W. Dresser, ed., *QMSS*; for more charitable views see Braden, *Spirits*; Melton, *American Cult and Sect Leaders*; and Gottschalk, *The Emergence of Christian Science*, 1973. There are a number of official replies, including Norman Beasley, *The Cross and the Crown: The History of Christian Science* (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1952). Although it is often claimed that Eddy is indebted to Quimby for the phrase "Christian Science," Evans first used it in 1860 before meeting Quimby. (Teahan, 77 n. 62)

⁷⁶"I discovered, in 1866, the momentous facts relating to Mind and its superiority over matter." (Eddy, *Miscellaneous Writings*, 379) See Melton, *American Cult and Sect Leaders*, 80-81, on her early organization. "In 1875, seldom more than twenty persons gathered for Sunday services in a small, rented hall in Lynn, Massachusetts." (Beasley, *Cross*, v)

Before the turn of the century Eddy had built a religious empire in which she was the highest authority. In a 1902 letter she was so confident as to predict that Christian Science would someday take the place of all the other religions and cures in the world. Eddy's organizational, if not theological, genius had finally paid off.⁷⁷

Eddy's ideological originality has been the subject of much controversy--which is beyond the scope of this paper--but it must be granted that her system was not a carbon copy of Quimby's thought. At the very least she modified his views and added some of her own. The most apparent distinction between the Quimby-Evans position and that of Eddy was her bold assertion of the unreality or nonexistence of matter. While mind-cure granted at least provisional existence to matter as a product of mind, Christian Science held that materiality was an illusion or error of the mortal mind.⁷⁸

The mortal mind needed to be conquered by the only reality: Divine Mind. God was the totality of existence; since matter was not God, it had no true existence. If there was no reality in the physical realm, then there could be no physical body or accompanying disease.⁷⁹

⁷⁷"It is undoubtedly true that Christian Science is destined to become the one and only religion and therapeutics on this planet." (Eddy, *The First Church of Christ Scientist and Miscellany* [Boston: Trustees under the Will of Mary Baker G. Eddy, 1913], 266)

⁷⁸Mrs. Eddy regularly contrasted her views with those of mind-curists, whom she sometimes called "mind-quacks."

"This question of the reality of matter constitutes a metaphysical dividing line between Mrs. Eddy's teaching and that of almost all New Thought writers. When she declared that matter was completely unreal, the erroneous sense of true substance, they maintained that it was real but susceptible to thought control." (Gottschalk, *Emergence*, 121)

⁷⁹"In Science, Mind is *one*, including noumenon and phenomena, God and His thoughts. . . . As Mind is immortal, the phrase *mortal mind* implies something untrue and therefore unreal. . . that which has no real existence." Christian "Science shows that what is termed matter is but the

Spiritual man, as an idea in the Mind of God, is perfect spirit. Any evidence to the contrary is the deception of the mortal mind; the recognition of this fact is the basis for healing. Regardless of the testimony of the senses, one must deny the existence of illness in order to enjoy health.⁸⁰ Eddy's doctrine is fairly straightforward; the complications arise as a result of her attempts to distinguish Christian Science from pantheism, justify her teachings Scripturally, and explain the need for healing techniques in the absence of anything real to heal.⁸¹

Like Quimby, Eddy's hermeneutic went beyond the allegorical. She attached to biblical words "inner meanings" that revealed the spiritual truth hidden for so long to material-minded humanity. To her textbook she appended a glossary of terms to help the reader spiritually interpret the Bible. This became a common practice within metaphysical religion, which became problematic upon the proliferation of various dictionaries of spiritual word-meanings--each of which conflicted

subjective state of what is termed by the author *mortal mind*." (Eddy, *Science and Health: with Key to the Scriptures* [Boston: Trustees under the Will of Mary Baker G. Eddy, 1934 (1875)], 114) "If God is Spirit, and God is All, surely there can be no matter; for the divine All must be Spirit." (Eddy, *Unity of Good*, [Boston: Trustees under the Will of Mary Baker G. Eddy, 1936 (1887)], 31) "Disease. . . is a human error, a constituent part of what comprise the whole of mortal existence--namely, material sensation and mental delusion." (Eddy, *No and Yes*, 4)

⁸⁰"Spirit is the only creator, and man, including the universe, is His spiritual concept." (Eddy, *Unity of Good*, 32) Man is "God's spiritual idea, individual, perfect, eternal." (Eddy, *Science and Health*, 115) "According to the evidence of the so-called physical senses, man is material, fallen, sick, depraved, mortal. Science and spiritual sense contradict this. . . ." "Health is the consciousness of the unreality of pain and disease; or, rather, the absolute consciousness of harmony and of nothing else." "The spiritual senses. . . deny the testimony of the material senses." (Eddy, *Rudimental Divine Science* [Boston: Trustees under the Will of Mary Baker G. Eddy, 1936 (1891)], 7, 11, 5)

⁸¹See Eddy, *Christian Science versus Pantheism* (Trustees under the Will of Mary Baker G. Eddy, 1926 [1898]); "Key to the Scriptures" (containing spiritual interpretations of the books Genesis and Revelation, as well as a metaphysical glossary) in *Science and Health*; and "Questions and Answers" in *Miscellaneous Writings*, 49, 58, 60.

with the others.⁸²

Faith, for Eddy, was consciousness of one's true *spiritual* identity. In reality, one is perfect and therefore healthy. God does not need to do anything to heal the body; the Divine Mind is All, is whole, is harmonious. Faith then is not, as for the faith-healers, a request for God to intervene and change one's condition, but the realization that one is already healthy. Thus faith is not the exertion of will-power--which is of no avail in Science.⁸³ God-consciousness allows one to triumph over the material world, and exercise dominion over the physical body and its senses.⁸⁴

Much more could be said concerning the unique concepts behind Christian Science, but considering the purpose of this paper and the substantial literature on the subject,⁸⁵ the following

⁸²Her textbook was renamed *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*. Eddy's glossary came from the Swedenborgian *Dictionary of Correspondences*. (Gardner, 129; he refers to Hermann S. Fricke, "The Sources of *Science and Health*," *Bibliotheca Sacra* [October 1928], n.p.) Spiritual interpretation of Scripture passed from Quimby to Eddy "and thence to New Thought in general. As a result, we have so many interpretations that the reader of works on mental healing is bewildered. When Scripture is said to mean so many things, it hardly means anything at all," as one leader admitted. (Dresser, *Handbook*, 69) Some complicated the situation further by giving spiritual interpretations to the leaders' spiritual interpretations (e.g., Augusta E. Stetson, *Vital Issues in Christian Science* [NY: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1917 (1914)], 356)

⁸³"That we exist in God, perfect, there is no doubt. . . . and with that basic truth we conquer sickness, sin, and death." Is it wrong to pray for the recovery of the sick? "Not if we pray Scripturally, with the understanding that God *has* given all things to those who love Him; but pleading with [God] to restore health and harmony. . . is the prayer of doubt. . . ." (*Miscellaneous Writings*, 6, 59) "The Scriptures are clear on this point, declaring that His work was *finished*. . . ." so God need not act again. Neither should one expect to heal by will-power, which "is not Science. Human will belongs to the so-called material senses, and its use is to be condemned. Willing the sick to recover is not the metaphysical practice of Christian Science." (*Science and Health*, 206, 144)

⁸⁴Bondage will cease when humanity recognizes its "God-given dominion over the material senses. Mortals will some day. . . control their own bodies through the understanding of divine Science." (*Science and Health*, 228)

⁸⁵See n. 75 above for additional reading. No one had a higher view of her uniqueness than Eddy herself. She viewed Christian Science alone among the mental healing groups as truly Christian and

distillation will suffice.

While insisting on the utter nonexistence of matter--the reality of the Divine Mind alone--Christian Science holds to some of the basic principles of mind-cure, namely: (1) the unreliability of the physical senses, which serve only as an obstacle to truth and health; (2) the practice of "realization" of one's spiritual identity and corollary perfection; (3) the view of faith as consciousness of that divine truth; and (4) the spiritual interpretation of the Bible in accordance with given metaphysical principles. It was her popularization of this body of beliefs, along with her distinctive emphases, that helped along the early development of mental science--however inadvertently on the part of Eddy.

Boston and beyond: early growth of mind-cure

From the time of Quimby's death in 1866 until 1882, Warren Felt Evans and Mary Baker Eddy were practically the only mental healers to speak of, and Eddy's was the only organization. After Quimby's passing, the Dressers had gone on with other interests; it was not until Eddy had become successful that the Dressers decided to move to Boston and take up again the study of metaphysical healing.⁸⁶

By that time some of Eddy's students had rebelled against her strict authority and, voluntarily or otherwise, had left her organization. To the unending irritation of Eddy, some of these even

biblical. "She did believe that Christian Science represented an advance beyond orthodoxy. . . . Yet she always saw her teaching as within the mainstream of Christianity." (Gottschalk, *Emergence*, xxi; see "Christian Science in Tremont Temple," in *Miscellaneous Writings*, 95-98)

⁸⁶The following synopsis integrates facts gleaned from a number of sources, often from historical tidbits revealed by the primary sources. For a broad overview, see "The Developing Movement," in Braden, 130-145.

continued teaching "Christian Science" on their own. Armed with copies of some of Quimby's manuscripts, the Dressers publicly charged that Eddy had taken her ideas from Quimby without crediting him, and, moreover, had corrupted them with her misconceptions.⁸⁷

Among the earliest mental healers outside of Quimby and company, the majority were former students of Eddy, "apostates" from Christian Science, who retained use of that name (eventually Eddy commandeered the legal use of the name, and other monikers were substituted). A few of these took their views of mental science westward in the early and mid-1880s, but for a number of years Boston was truly the hub of metaphysical religion. In 1885 there were already three schools of mental healing in Boston besides Eddy's. By 1895 a half-dozen more local groups had formed and their membership had grown exponentially.⁸⁸

In the mean time mind-science had spread geographically. In the north it was quite strong in New York, which featured more than a half-dozen sizeable groups or practices by 1900.⁸⁹ This

⁸⁷Gottschalk, "Christian Science and Harmonialism," 909. For more on the Dressers' charge, and Eddy's responses, see the sources given in n. 75 above.

⁸⁸"Few apostates from Christian Science till around 1890 ceased calling themselves Christian Scientists just because they had broken away from Mrs. Eddy. Further, some who had never studied with her at all made free use of the term." Eddy wished to "distinguish Christian Science as clearly as possible from the mushrooming 'mind-cure' movements in Boston. . . . [By 1885] there were at least four schools of mental healing in Boston. Within a few years there would be several more." (Gottschalk, *Emergence*, 114, xxii-xxiv) The most prominent groups in Boston included the Dressers' following (which began in 1882); E. J. Arens' University of the Science of Spirit (1886); J. W. Winkley's Church of the Divine Unity (1886); Luther Marston's Boston College of Metaphysics (1886); Helen Van Anderson's Church of the Higher Life (1894); and the all-embracing Metaphysical Club of Boston (1895).

⁸⁹H. Emilie Cady, who would later become the most popular writer for the Unity School of Christianity, integrated mental healing with her homeopathic practice by 1892; three groups, Eugene Del Mar's League of the Higher Life, Hugh O. Pentecost's Mental Science Temple, and J. B. Hazzard's School of Primitive and Practical Christian Science were established in the early 1890s; Leander E. Whipple opened the American School of Metaphysics in 1895; and by 1900 we find

does not include the numerous amount of private healers and teachers who advertised in various mind-cure periodicals (see especially the directories in early issues of *Unity* or *Modern Thought* magazine). But an even stronger showing was present in the midwest, which produced some of the most enduring figures among the next generation of mental healers. As mentioned above, most of the mind-curists were former Christian Scientists; in the mid-1880s Eddy lost several students who would soon detract massively from her stronghold on mental healing.

The first was Clara Choate, who left Boston and founded the Institute of Christian Science in Chicago in 1884. She authored some books on mind-cure, but later returned to Eddy's fold. About this time A. J. Swartz, who had studied under Eddy when she came to Chicago to teach a class in 1884, opened the Illinois Christian Science College. Similarly, the Illinois Metaphysical College was founded by George B. Charles, who also edited the well-circulated periodical *Christian Metaphysician* (1887-1897).⁹⁰ Although they were a menace to Eddy, their long-range effect was manageable.

A more enduring challenge to Eddy was the loss of the editor of the *Christian Science Journal*, Emma Curtis Hopkins. An 1883 student of Eddy's, Hopkins was expelled in 1885 by her beloved mentor after expressing too much independence and originality in the formation of her views on mind-healing. She then established the Emma Curtis Hopkins College of Christian Science (1886) which became known as the Christian Science Theological Seminary (1888). The students Hopkins taught would later become the most prominent leaders in metaphysical religion, and some

Elizabeth Walton's Circle of Divine Ministry (later the New Thought Centre) and Richard Ingalese's Metaphysical Alliance of New York.

⁹⁰See Gottschalk, *Emergence*, 100.

would organize groups still operating today. She was truly the metaphysical "teacher of teachers."⁹¹

Two of Hopkins' students, Charles and Myrtle Fillmore, founded what is perhaps the most prominent New Thought group today, the Unity School of Christianity--best known for their well-circulated periodical *Unity* (1891-present). The Fillmores began their metaphysical studies in 1886, and their Kansas City-based group contributed greatly to the midwest's status as a mind-cure mecca.⁹²

A similar situation existed on the West Coast. The first mental healer to arrive was Miranda Rice (1882), who had been a student of Eddy's. By 1887 Annie Rix Militz, who with her husband had been trained by Hopkins, had opened the Christian Science Home (and later College) in San Francisco. Afterwards known as the Homes of Truth, her organization soon spread up and down the West Coast.⁹³ In 1888 another of Hopkins' students, Malinda E. Cramer, moved to San Francisco to begin Divine Science--an organization which soon spread to the midwest and survives today.⁹⁴

⁹¹The best recent work on Hopkins is Harley (op cit). Hopkins' students included organizational leaders like the Fillmores (*Unity*) Annie Rix Militz (Homes of Truth), Malinda Cramer (Divine Science), and Ernest Holmes (Religious Science), as well as the writers Helen Wilmans (*Wilmans' Express*), Josephine Barton (*The Life*), Elizabeth Towne (*Nautilus*), and H. Emilie Cady (*Unity*).

⁹²Much more has been written about Unity than about many of the other groups discussed in this section--the reader is referred to James Dillet Freeman, *The Story of Unity* (Lee's Summit, MO: Unity School of Christianity, 1954), and Hugh D'Andrade, *Charles Fillmore: Herald of the New Age* (NY: Harper and Row Publ., 1974).

⁹³See John Kent Simmons, "Annie Rix Militz."

⁹⁴Denver natives Nona Brooks and Alethea Brooks Small, who had been devout Presbyterian Sunday School teachers, first took a class under Hopkins in 1887, the same year Cramer began her Home College of Divine Science in San Francisco. After Cramer visited and taught in Denver in 1889, the sisters realized their full agreement with Cramer and began teaching Divine Science in Denver. A third sister, Fannie Brooks James, joined with them. (Louise McNamara Brooks, *Early History of Divine Science: An Informal History, 1896-1922* [Denver: First Divine Science Church, 1963], 3-6, 90-96)

Although it was much later, it merits mention that in 1917, Ernest Holmes--who later studied under Hopkins--began his Metaphysical Institute of California, in Los Angeles. Today this group is known as Religious Science or--after the title of its still-popular textbook and periodical--Science of Mind.⁹⁵

Outside of Christian Science itself, the largest metaphysical groups operating today--Unity, Religious Science, and Divine Science--were founded by Hopkins' students. Through Hopkins, Eddy greatly influenced the development of mind-cure; while Eddy did not want her students to break out and explore the boundaries of mental science theory, Hopkins trained her students for that purpose. The Quimby/Evans/Dresser tradition (which gave matter provisional status) and the Eddy/apostates lineage (which tended to deny physical realities) eventually flowed together to form what is known as New Thought; Quimby's view of matter largely prevailed. As distinct as Christian Science is from mind-cure in some respects, all of these groups belong under the banner of metaphysical religion.⁹⁶

⁹⁵Fenwicke Lindsay Holmes, *Ernest Holmes: His Life and Times* (NY: Dodd, Mead and Co., 1970), 112, 149-160. In addition to attending spiritist seances "on unnumbered occasions," Holmes read and studied other idealist and metaphysical writers before Hopkins, including R. W. Emerson, Elbert Hubbard, Leland and Carol Powers, Mary Baker Eddy, Christian D. Larson, R. W. Trine, Thomas Troward, George L. Burnell, and Malinda Cramer--the latter of which ordained Holmes in 1917. (69-70, 83-87, 90-97, 126-136, 154f) In the same year his brother Fenwicke resigned from his Congregational pastorate to help Ernest found their new endeavor. (156)

⁹⁶New Thought expanded the early emphasis on healing to include mystical harmony, personal power, and prosperity. Rather than attribute its origin or genesis to one individual or group,

it is methodologically safer to view the beginning of New Thought as a dynamic merging and separating of three streams: the prophetic teachings of Phineas P. Quimby, as interpreted and elaborated by Warren Felt Evans and Julius and Horatio Dresser; Mary Baker Eddy's organizational genius. . . [and] the apostates from the Christian Science movement, particularly Emma Curtis Hopkins. (Simmons, "Ascension," 74)

Conclusion

This chapter has explored and overviewed the major background sources that served as the seeds for mental science. We have also briefly charted the birth and early stages of development of the metaphysical healing movement, up to the twentieth century. Through this process, we have established what constitutes the basic components that make up that world-view. That is not an easy task given the diversity of the movement, but the fruit of our labor can be distilled into several general principles or elements that capture the essence which permeates metaphysical religious thought in general. The following summary of the basic elements of mind-science, culled from this chapter's investigation, will serve as the basis for the larger task of analyzing E. W. Kenyon's view of human potential.

A six-fold summary can be constructed. Metaphysical religion (1) embraces a metaphysical idealism which stresses the causative power of mind over matter, especially as it relates to bodily healing⁹⁷; (2) typically identifies the mind (not the intellect) with the spirit or real self which is ultimately divine; (3) adopts a subjective epistemology by which one may distinguish between faulty external sensory evidence and inner spiritual Reality; (4) attempts to harmonize mental states with the underlying perfection of Reality by conscious realization of one's true spiritual identity; (5) defines "faith" in terms of right thinking or consciousness of that identity; and (6) based on that faith-consciousness practices the verbal affirmation of the present spiritual possession of desired external conditions.

⁹⁷Again, it should be remembered that the mind/spirit is also the source for generating (or "demonstrating" as the jargon is often used) any and all external manifestations—healing, wholeness, wealth and circumstantial harmony.

Proceeding from this understanding, historical links between metaphysical religion and particular features of the religious thought of E. W. Kenyon can now be identified. The following chapter documents the presence of each of the above elements in Kenyon's "Emerson Experience."

CHAPTER 3

THE EMERSON EXPERIENCE

Much has been made of E. W. Kenyon's Boston education. Dan McConnell was the first critic to note Kenyon's attendance (for the academic year 1892-93) at Emerson College of Oratory (ECO) in Boston. Many writers have followed McConnell's conclusion that Emerson College was, at the time of Kenyon's enrollment, saturated with the basic elements of metaphysical religion--and that his experience there served as an initiation into New Thought.¹ McConnell and Simmons have both proffered evidence of Emerson College's mind-science background, basis, and environment.²

¹See Terris H. Neuman, "Cultic Origins of Word-Faith Theology Within the Charismatic Movement," *Pneuma: The Journal of the Society for Pentecostal Studies* 12 (Spring 1990), 53-54; Dennis Hollinger, "An Historical/Sociological Profile of the Health and Wealth Gospel," *Trinity Journal* 9 (Fall 1988), 142-145. Kenyon's metaphysical religious orientation is also discussed in James M. Kinnebrew, "The Charismatic Doctrine of Positive Confession: A Historical, Exegetical, and Theological Critique" (Th.D. diss., Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary, 1988), 131-132. The similarity of the larger Faith movement with mind-science was noted previous to McConnell's work (e.g., Joe Magliato, *The Wall Street Gospel: Who Says. . . God Said Health or Wealth?* [Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishers, 1981], 107).

²See Daniel R. McConnell, *A Different Gospel* (Peabody, Mass: Hendrickson Publishers, 1988); and Dale Hawthorn Simmons, "The Postbellum Pursuit of Peace, Power, and Plenty: As Seen in the Writings of Essek William Kenyon" (Ph.D. diss., Drew University, 1990). Both glean most of their knowledge of Emerson College from John M. Coffee and Richard L. Wentworth, *A Century of Eloquence: The History of Emerson College, 1880-1980* (Boston: Alternative Publ., 1982). Dale Simmons also refers to Donald E. Heady, "Charles Wesley Emerson: A Theory of Oral Interpretation" (Ph.D. diss., Wayne State University, 1982), and discusses Henry Drummond's role in the Emerson experience. Simmons claims faith-cure was also a feature at Emerson.

We will discuss their contributions while providing additional information and details gleaned from the College archival primary documents of the period.³ With the introduction of the new evidence in this chapter, it will become clear that Emerson College was definitely a haven for teachers (and students) with New Thought inclinations, and that any denial of this atmosphere's influence on Kenyon is highly unreasonable.

Form of argument

The reason the "Emerson experience" is significant is that it establishes one early personal link between Kenyon and metaphysical religion. This chapter's historical evidence forms an inductive argument for the probability of Kenyon's interaction with New Thought personages and principles at ECO (his later connections may well be even more significant; we are focusing on ECO alone, here). This argument, when combined with the next chapter's comparison of the writings of Kenyon and mind-curists, completes an overall inductive argument for identifying some of Kenyon's *distinctive* beliefs as essentially New Thought.

The historical evidence for Kenyon's association with metaphysical religion, when taken alone, does not prove that Kenyon's key teachings came from mind-science. But the combination of this chapter's historical evidence with the next chapter's literary evidence supports our thesis that certain elements of Kenyon's teaching are best classified as metaphysical religion.

³Hollinger finds McConnell's work in this direction "quite persuasive," but suggests that "Kenyon's link with the New Thought movement needs further historical investigation" still. (Hollinger, 145) In keeping with that invitation, this author had the opportunity to review archival magazine issues, catalogues, student records and notebooks, and stenographed lectures at length in person during two visits to the Emerson College Library's Archives, with the patient assistance of Archivist Bob Fleming.

So this chapter is not intended to stand alone. Otherwise, it would merely be a guilt-by-association attempt to make Kenyon culpable for the teachings of his associates. One could rightfully object to that approach by noting that familiarity does not entail culpability--one can encounter a view without accepting it.

Yet it is important to remain consistent in this regard. If it is not permissible to characterize Kenyon as a practitioner of mind-cure based solely on his association with mind-curists, then it is also unacceptable to characterize Kenyon as a traditional faith-healer on the merits of his traditional associations.

To be more specific, one may not justifiably object to coloring Kenyon's inclination as "metaphysical" due to the metaphysical orientation of his education, and then proceed to defend Kenyon's "orthodoxy" based on the presence of orthodox elements in his education. Such a double standard would be a case of special pleading. One may not categorize Kenyon's teachings on the basis of his associations alone, since the latter were quite diverse.

What, then, is the value of exploring his associations in this chapter? Although conclusions cannot stand solely on the grounds of who influenced Kenyon, those sources do provide a context for understanding him and are part of a comprehensive inductive argument. That is, given the similarity of his teachings with those of mental healers, historical links between them and Kenyon offer confirmatory evidence--they are what we would expect in the case of Kenyon as a mind-cure proponent. With this understanding, we begin our historical investigation of Kenyon's experience while at Emerson College.

C. W. Emerson's mission and method

There were sixteen faculty members and five additional lecturers and readers at ECO during the 1892-93 school year. The greatest proportion of the classes, however, were conducted by the President of the College, Charles Wesley Emerson.⁴ His world-view will be considered shortly, but let us first note the intention of Emerson to promote his religious philosophy through the curriculum. McConnell demonstrated that quite beyond training in mere oratory, Emerson's intent clearly was to promote his world-view.⁵ Yet to really influence a student, there must be more than intent on the part of the president. The question is, would a student likely be reached by Emerson's efforts?

We should, then, note the interaction with peers and faculty expected of an Emerson student. McConnell fairly speculated about Kenyon's personal interaction with his peers.⁶ We can, however, be more definite about the question. The 1892-93 catalogue, under the heading "*INDIVIDUAL ATTENTION*," specifies not only that students necessarily interact in various exercises, but that each and every student receives private instruction on a regular basis.⁷ This indicates that a regular

⁴The proportion was such that the faculty was referred to as somewhat of a dichotomy, ". . . the president and *assistant* teachers." (*Emerson College of Oratory Catalogue 1892-93*, 30, emphasis added; it appears that there were two editions of some catalogues, the only difference being pagination.)

⁵See Emerson's statements of purpose (to "be an open channel" for God, to "lead the student to God"), basis ("the Kingdom of God" on which "we have built our very technique"), and goal ("trying to make you ministers" of the "real gospel"), quoted in Coffee/Wentworth, 39, 68, cited in McConnell, 38-39.

⁶"Kenyon probably interacted with *many* of his professors and classmates, both in and out of the classroom." (McConnell, 37) He notes that Kenyon at the very least received religious instruction at C. W. Emerson's Saturday lectures (53 n. 23).

⁷"All have the benefit of what each is doing, and in many exercises all can engage at the same time; still each pupil has, in addition to what he obtains in common with all, *special and personal teaching*; hence, each and every student has all the advantages of both class and private instruction.

student at Emerson College would experience more than passive lecture periods, and more than typical discussion-oriented classes for that matter. Attendance at Emerson meant personal interaction with peers and faculty,⁸ especially with President Emerson. The importance of this as an influence on Kenyon derives from an understanding of the school's world-view.

The backgrounds of C. W. Emerson and his school

We should begin our analysis of the intellectual climate at Emerson with attention to the school's founder and president, Charles Wesley Emerson (1837-1908). Expanding on the information given by McConnell, Dale Simmons provides a multi-dimensional perspective on Emerson's religious and philosophical eclecticism.⁹ C. W. Emerson was born at Pittsfield, Vermont, and was ordained as a Congregationalist minister in 1860. By 1866 he had, like a number within his denomination at the time, moved towards Universalism and Unitarianism. Emerson served as a minister for each group, 1866-1871 and 1871-1875, respectively. Also not uncommon to many within those groups was an interest in the "new" mental healing movement, an interest he perhaps

All have the daily attention of the president and assistant teachers." (*Catalogue 1892-93*, 30; emphasis in original.)

⁸This was possible due to the intimate size of the institution. At the time of Kenyon's enrollment at Emerson College, the student body numbered 534. This includes the Saturday Pupils (those who attended the President's Saturday lectures alone, which all regular students also attended), the Special Students, and the Summer Students along with the regular first through third year students. During the week (all regular classes were held every day) from fall to spring, the number of regular students would have been 373. Including Saturdays (on which all regular students attended), the number would be 406. Kenyon's most common peer interaction, however, would be best reflected by the number of Freshmen for 1892-3, 205. (*Catalogue 1892-93*, 53)

⁹McConnell, 35-39; Simmons, 20-31. We base this section mainly on Simmons and on Coffee and Wentworth.

already shared, as the title of his lecture on "Science and Health" may suggest.¹⁰

Emerson resigned the ministry to study law at Boston University in 1875, and the following year began teaching oratory at Charles Cullis' Faith Training College in Boston. He soon thereafter resumed ministry at the Unitarian church in Chelsea Massachusetts,¹¹ continuing his teaching and adding oratory to his studies at B. U. Although he discontinued his studies in law in 1877, the aggregate demand on Emerson still took its toll on Emerson, whose health temporarily broke in 1878. Forced by his illness to resign his pastorate, he took a brief rejuvenative vacation, after which he was given a faculty position at the Monroe School of Oratory at Boston University. This he was able to accomplish due to his oratory experience and his newly acquired credentials--an M.D. from the Eclectic Medical College of Pennsylvania (which from all accounts was a degree mill).¹²

The Boston University oratory school's founder, Dean, and central figure, Lewis B. Monroe, died the next year and the School of Oratory was closed. Yet with some help, Emerson was able to

¹⁰Simmons, 29 n. 49. His 1875 lecture shared its title with Mary Baker Eddy's newly released *Science and Health*; the phrase was also used by Quimby and his other associates like Evans and the Dressers. It could also refer to the phrenological phrase "science of health," since he was also lecturing on "Phrenology."

¹¹Simmons has claimed that C. W. Emerson, based mostly on his eleven-year affiliation with Cullis' College, must have become somewhat orthodox and probably absorbed a significant amount of Cullis' world-view (particularly in terms of faith-cure). But his association with Cullis must have had few doctrinal implications, considering that Emerson resumed pastoring at a Unitarian church. It was easier, on doctrinal grounds, for a Unitarian to associate with a traditional religionist than the converse. There is no indication that any faith-curists taught at ECO during the period in question.

¹²Coffee/Wentworth, 17. Emerson's oratory experience included preaching and lecturing. Simmons speculates that since Emerson lectured in Vineland, New Jersey, a popular center of Higher Life teaching, Emerson could well have been speaking at Higher Life gatherings--which would indicate Emerson's attachment to that religious perspective. In fact, the only known instance of Emerson speaking in that locality was when he "delivered a course of lectures" at "the Unitarian Church in Vineland, New Jersey," in the summer of 1879. (P. P. Fields, "Reminiscences of Charles Wesley Emerson, M.D.," *Emerson College Magazine* [December 1910], 109; emphasis mine.)

re-open the school privately in 1880 as Monroe School of Oratory. It was eventually renamed the Emerson College of Oratory.¹³

As President, Emerson used the school to promote his own system of verbal expression and his philosophy of religion. For Emerson, the two were interrelated. Verbal expression was not merely about vocal mechanics and gesture, but was fundamentally rooted in harmony with the inner perception revealed by spiritual intuition. This became a practical way of life, for the "cultivation" of individuals' spiritual evolution.¹⁴

Emerson's religious eclecticism is readily apparent: a former Congregational, Universalist, and Unitarian clergyman; rooted in the idealism of Plato, Swedenborg, and Ralph Waldo Emerson along with the mysticism of Delsarte and Swedenborg;¹⁵ and perhaps himself a lecturer on mental science. This latter interest will be expanded by examining some of Emerson's own works, shortly. We will now survey Charles Wesley Emerson's religious thought in terms of his general ideology and, specifically, his views on human potential and healing.

¹³Monroe was replaced at B. U. by another oratory instructor and former Monroe student, Samuel Silas Curry. "This position he held until 1888 in spite of his having organized his own private school five years earlier." (Edyth M. Renshaw, "Three Schools of Speech: The Emerson College of Oratory; the School of Expression; and the Leland Powers School of the Spoken Word" [Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 1950], xii) For a brief account of Emerson College, see Cecil Harper, "The Emerson College of Oratory: Its History, Methods of Teaching and Courses of Instruction," *Emerson College Magazine* (May 1893), 108f.

¹⁴As Simmons points out, "that the proper study of oratory was seen as essential to individual growth can be seen in the motto of Emerson College--'Expression Necessary to Evolution.'" (Simmons, 30; cf. 26-29)

¹⁵Simmons notes in Emerson "the influence of Plato, Swedenborg, [Francois] Delsarte, Ralph Waldo Emerson, and [Lewis B.] Monroe." (ibid., 28) Emerson encountered Swedenborg through Delsarte, who was the basis for Emerson's teacher, Monroe. See C. W. Emerson, "Delsarte's Philosophy," *Emerson Lectures* (February 11, 1893); Cecil Harper, "Francois Delsarte," *Emerson College Magazine* (February 1894), 56-58.

C. W. Emerson's religious thought

As was the case with many other Unitarian/Universalists, Emerson generally subjugated theological dogma to personal experience and ethical considerations. It was not an individual's doctrinal orthodoxy that was important so much as sincerity in moral actions. Divine judgment (a present, ongoing activity instead of a future judiciary) was based on one's treatment of one's fellow man, without any questions about one's view of the trinity, for example.¹⁶

Also in keeping with his Universalist background was Emerson's pluralism. Regardless of the particular religion or denomination to which one belonged, a relationship with God was possible; anyone who practiced the golden rule was considered a Christian by Emerson.¹⁷ He also appreciated biblical criticism. This did not reduce Emerson's reverence for Scripture, which he simply reinterpreted in a non-literal fashion. Believing that "the letter killeth," Emerson often manufactured

¹⁶Quotes in this section are from C. W. Emerson unless otherwise noted.

Do I believe in the judgement day? When will that day be? It never began and it will never end. . . . Judgement is proceeding now. . . . What are the questions which are asked [in judgement]? 'Are you a Mohammedan?' This is not the test. 'Do you believe in the theory of the Jews?' This is not the test. . . . 'Are you a Baptist, are you a Congregationalist, are you a good Hallelujah Methodist; are you a Universalist, are you a Unitarian?' Never such a question. . . . Here is what the Scripture says, is the final test. 'Inasmuch as you have done it unto one of the least of my brethren, you have done it unto me'. . . . 'But,' you reply, 'I love Him; I think highly of Him, I think He is the Christ, the Son of the living God, the second person in the Godhead, the Trinity'. . . . But this is not the final test. The question is, what have you done [for] man? ("Divine Love and Its Relation to Oratory," reprinted in Coffee and Wentworth, 530-531)

Another characteristic of Unitarians was to claim that the idea of divine trinity was taken from ancient pagan religions. Emerson points to the "father, mother, son, the holy trinity" in Egyptian religion. ("The Colossal Period of Art," *Lectures* [January 14, 1893], 8)

¹⁷"What is religion? Come right down to this one thing. Do you do in the name of the Lord all the good you can for your fellow beings? If you do, then you are a Christian." ("Divine Love," 532)

allegorical interpretations of passages, the meanings of which then fit his purpose.¹⁸ As we saw in chapter two, this was a characteristic of both Swedenborg and mind-cure in varying degrees.

C. W. Emerson's anthropology offered divinity and dominion as human potentials. All individuals are part of the Over-soul, with which they differ not in essence but in degree only. Humans are part of deity just as the bay is part of the sea. It is not surprising, then, that everyone was meant to exercise dominion over themselves and their circumstances. The human spirit has the power to rule the body and is what makes one a master, potentially.¹⁹

Mastery is possible based on Emerson's core principle: the primacy of mind over matter. It follows from his idealism that matter, while it does exist, is subordinate to mind. Sometimes

¹⁸"You have read the spiritual and poetic description of creation [in Genesis]." ("The Human Brain," *Lectures* [April 28, 1894], 354)

There is a man, and, in the language of Scripture, 'All things were brought to him to be named.' That is the poetic way of saying that man can classify everything. . . . God brought the man in contact with the things, and the things awakened the activities of his mind." ("The Evolution of Expression," *Lectures* [October 21, 1893], 8)

"Some of its letters have been thrown across the path of human freedom, but the spirit of the Bible has cleared the way. The letter killeth, but the spirit maketh alive. . . . I have read every skeptical work, and I thank God I have, for they have polished the great truths revealed here." ("Bible Reading," *Lectures* [April 22, 1893], 2)

¹⁹. . . when a child crosses my path I say, 'There is a potential God.' Touch the human mind with a thought and there is a God." ("Influence of the Mind," *Lectures* [January 2, 1892], 33) "Tell me where the human soul leaves off and the over-soul begins; tell me where the Atlantic Ocean leaves off and Boston Bay begins. Tell me and I will tell you where God leaves off and man begins. The soul of Almighty God merges into the souls of men and women." ("Mind is Cause: Form is Effect," *Lectures* [March 18, 1893], 15) God "made man the lord of creation, but creation does not stop now. God has rested. . . . Creation goes forward, but it goes on now through man, and not outside of him. God's energy is going forward just as before, but through a new channel. . . ." ("The Brain," *Lectures* [November 18, 1892], 1) "It is useless for you to go on working here. . . unless you accept this proposition (for it is the rock-bottom on which this College is built), that mind rules the body." ("Philosophy of Gesture," *Emerson College Magazine* [December 1893], 92-93)

referred to as soul or spirit, the mind is the ruler of the body--this is Emerson's most basic proposition.²⁰ It is not a large step from the mind's mastery of oratorical gestures to the healing power of the mind, and Emerson definitely made the connection.²¹

Life, as he saw it, could not be abundant apart from health. Therefore, Emerson extrapolated bodily health from Jesus' offer of abundant life; he even interpreted "redemption" and "resurrection" to mean physical healing.²² Philosopher Theodore E. Romberg has concluded, based on his study of the primary documents, that C. W. Emerson viewed the mind as shaper of the body, and health

²⁰"Emerson's belief [was] that spirit controls matter. . . . [In] affirming the central importance of mind and of regarding reality as essentially spiritual, he was an idealist." "To Emerson. . . spirit, mind and soul were synonymous." (Renshaw, 5-6, 26) "Mind controls. . . . Matter subordinates." "Is not the body a mental product? Present theory [is] that each of us is one being having its expression physically and mentally." ("Mind, Matter, Self, Ego," Emerson College Summer School student notebook [July, 1891], 1, 3) "Right states of mind produce right effects, wrong states of mind produce wrong effects. . . . Mind is cause; form is effect." "I have announced the fundamental principle. Deal with the mind as a cause." ("Mind is Cause," 1, 2)

Mind is the cause of the entire visible universe. . . . Religion has for its basis the consciousness of the Divine mind that stands behind all things. . . . everything in nature is an expression of mind. . . . the soul is first, and the material world is but an expression of it. ("Philosophy of Gesture," 92-93)

²¹The relationship between Emerson's system and physical healing was an advertised feature of the College. Although man's "soul is imprisoned in his body," spiritual expression through the body creates health. This was billed as a "philosophy of curing all forms of chronic diseases, giving power to the weak, and greatly increased strength to the well, which is the wonder of all who are acquainted with this college, and for which it has ever been so justly famous." (*Emerson College Catalog 1892-93*, 11-12)

²²"There is no limit to man's possibilities. But that you may realize that possibility, you must have health. . . . [Christ] said, 'I am come that ye might have life, and that you might have it more abundantly.' It is abundant, pulsating health that you want, and that you must have. Talk about inspiring thoughts of health." ("Introduction to the Physical Culture," *Lectures* [October 28, 1893], 6) "We wait for the redemption of the body. The body redeemed by the spirit. Be determined to be well physically." ("Graduation Talk," *Lectures* [May 6, 1893], 2) Use the mind "for the resurrection of the body," that is, the health of the body. ("The Brain," *Lectures* [November 18, 1892], 8)

as a part of the Kingdom of God.²³ Looking into the primary documents further, we find ample confirmation of this interpretation. For Emerson, health was available to all; it surrounded everyone, and was just waiting to be partaken of. For those who opened themselves to its permeating presence, health was within reach. If one could--by right thinking--achieve a right relationship or harmony with the universe, which was filled with health, then bodily healing would result.²⁴

He did acknowledge definite parameters to the availability of health, and Emerson disclaimed the notions that medical science was useless (however dubious the source, he did hold an M.D.) or that perfect health could be guaranteed everyone.²⁵ Emerson began his argument for healing by giving recognized examples of psychosomatic conditions. In some cases emotions plainly cause

²³Romberg quotes Emerson's assertion that there is a "relation between right states of mind and right states of body," and that "health is a part of the kingdom of God," and one should "say to himself, 'The Kingdom of Health is within me.'" We should "believe in an ever present, omnipotent God of Health. . . . We need more faith in a health-giving God." (Coffee and Wentworth, 30-31)

²⁴"The world is full of health. The universe is full of health. The universe is wrapped about with a divine presence. . . . Feel a trust in the possibility of health." ("The Mind," *Lectures* [November 21, 1891], 14) An alumna and classmate of Kenyon's noted this emphasis: "'We have so much health to think about here, there is no time to think of sickness,' Dr. Emerson would say. . . ." (Mary Ann Greely, "The Spirit of Emerson College," *Emerson College Magazine* [December 1910], 106) "We want to contemplate the fact that we are breathing in an ocean of health. It is boundless. God [invites man to] open the channels that God has given him, and let health flow through him." "It is time we changed our thoughts, and brought ourselves into right relations with the universe." ("Conductors of Health," *Lectures* [October 22, 1892], 2, 5) Emerson's use of the phrase "in touch with the Infinite" ("Graduation Talk," *Lectures* [May 6, 1893], 7) is strikingly similar to the title of Emerson instructor R. W. Trine's New Thought classic, *In Tune with the Infinite* (1897).

²⁵"I know of no royal road upon which a man can walk and always shun disease and avoid all physical ill." Greater health "will come, not from a radical turning about, ignoring and despising the medical men past and present, but it will come as an outgrowth of the studies of the past, the present, and the future." "There are laws of physiology. . . . None of these must be set aside." "I do not claim (perhaps I may, someday, when I get the faith) that we shall be actually exempt from disease. . . . but I can tell you one thing, I shall not look for it." ("Relation of Psychology to Health," *Emerson College Magazine* [March 1895], 93-94, 94, 102)

bodily changes (anger causes blush, anxiety causes loss of appetite, etc.), and of even greater significance, expectancy of illness could bring about disease.²⁶ The next step for Emerson seemed obvious: if states of mind could cause disease, could not other mental states be curative? In that proposition he (along with mental scientists) found nearly unlimited potential for the advancement of healing by the mind's effect on the body. Emerson specifically expressed his openness to the prospects of "mind cure."²⁷

Emerson taught that one could get in touch with healing forces by utilizing laws of mind. His healing methodology was basically the same as that of mind-cure. The most important factor was expectancy of health--one must not worry about being sick. This was not just optimistic chatter for Emerson; to expect health *only* was to remove any place for negative thoughts.²⁸ He instructed

²⁶"Have you ever experienced, when. . . eating, bad news comes and instantly your appetite is gone. Again you contemplate something, and you are cold and shiver; again your face is flushed and you sweat in agony." ("The Brain," *Lectures* [November 18, 1892], 11-12; cf. "Mind," student notebook, 2) "When the imagination sees before it the ruddy cheek and the flashing health, then it is that it reacts upon the body. . . . it gives you strength and health." ("The Relation of the Imagination to Gesture," *Lectures* [November 28, 1891], 19)

²⁷There is an unexplored field "from which we shall gain the most that has ever been gained in the prevention of disease and the promotion of health--and that is in psychical research, the influence of states of mind upon the body." "Certain states of mind produce disease. This is an accepted fact. Now is it not easy to argue that if certain states of mind will produce disease, certain other states will produce health?" "The question is, how to induce this state of mind. . . . There may be foolish things said by those who advocate it, or there may be wise things said, but I dare not say what this power may some day accomplish." "Far be it from me to take away one jot of hope in this direction." ("Psychology," 94, 97, 96) "There are many mind cures today. I wish there were a thousand where there are one." ("The Mind," *Lectures* [November 21, 1891], 14)

²⁸We must "study the laws of the soul because the right disposition of mind will keep a man healthy." ("Psychology," 96)

Is the attitude of health in the mind? Look for *health* in yourself. 'Well, I have a pain in my. . . left side.' Does your right side feel well? Keep thinking of that side then. . . . if we would keep watch of the health that is in us, and rejoice in it, it would expand. . . . until it would

his audiences to think only on health, since entertaining thoughts of disease would cause illness. Right thinking would bring an influx of health, due to the operation of mental "currents." For Emerson, faith in this context meant right thinking--the consciousness of desired conditions.²⁹

He went so far, like some within both mind-cure and faith-cure, as to claim that the physical senses could not always be trusted to accurately report organic health. In the case of those who expect disease, even if they do not actually become ill their senses will report symptoms of illness. When these "lying nerves" are recognized for what they are, realization of health will resume.³⁰

The power of mind over body was, according to Emerson, nearly unlimited. As humanity unfolds the laws of mind and properly applies them, previously unimaginable advances in health will be made. Overcoming wrong thinking with right thinking could potentially bring in a paradisiacal

crowd out all our ailments. (ibid., 100)

"Cultivate expectancy of good. A general state of expectancy of good keeps one healthy." (Student notebook, 2; cf. "Mind," *Lectures* [November 21, 1891], 14)

²⁹"Fear produces disease. Cholera and Consumption [are] brought upon people by them constantly thinking, 'it is in the family'. . . . turn the mental powers the other way. Think of health and growing strong, that you are strong." ("Mind," Student notebook, 2) Diphtheria is not really contagious. "But you have been thinking it was and have been looking for it, and I think action of mind helps to make it so. . . . There are currents in the mind, just as there are currents in the circulation." "Faith comes. . . from placing the mind upon the right objects and subjects of thought. Here we go back to the one idea which underlies all our work here--that [of] thinking rightly upon the right subjects. . . ." ("Psychology," 101, 98)

³⁰By wrong thinking, "we can even educate our nerves to report imaginary troubles." As an example he recalls his treatment of one woman: ". . . when she asked me what I thought her disease was, I named it, 'lying nerves.' I said, 'Your nerves lie. By some means you have taught your nerves to report a pain where none is there.'" She believed, and recovered. ("Psychology," 100, 101) Notice that Emerson gives a psychosomatic/physiological explanation of this phenomena. In contrast, ignoring or denying the senses was a purely epistemological issue within the metaphysical movement, while faith-curists explained lying symptoms as direct supernatural deception by the devil. Notice also that Emerson's anecdote reveals he was practicing mental therapeutics.

state for humanity wherein the earth would "bloom like the early Eden with health and beauty."³¹

Along with the power of mind, the power of spoken words was important for Emerson. For him the two naturally went together, for mind or spirit expresses itself in the spoken word. Emerson taught that words were divine things that were forms of the spirit--words were spiritual.³² He did not, apparently, develop the concept of the creative power of words to the extent that New Thought (and later Kenyon) did; metaphysical religion taught that verbal affirmations had causative power to change physical reality. But that was a fully developed theme for another faculty member, as we shall see next.

Ralph Waldo Trine

As emphatic as he was about the possibilities of mind over body, C. W. Emerson was not the most outstanding proponent of mind-cure that Kenyon encountered at Emerson College. One of the

³¹"Disease will grow less as the human mind unfolds." We must "take into consideration the tremendous power of the mind over the body." "Oh, there are resources of health in your soul you do not dream of!" "Let us all say that we will not be sick any more. Let us say that we will. . . not look for sickness. You say that is too radical. It is not half radical enough. If we are going to be well, we must turn our minds toward health." ("Psychology," 94, 95, 97, 101) "Wrong thinking has not brought all the disease into the world, but right thinking will help to get over it. The right direction of the mind will cause this earth to bloom like the early Eden with health and beauty." ("The Brain," *Lectures* [November 18, 1892], 11) Significant, perhaps, in its possible impact on Kenyon, Emerson related right thinking on health with Mark 11:24: ". . . believe that ye have it, and ye will have it." ("Mind," Student notebook, 3)

³²"In the Bible, the Word is Truth, Creative Energy, and the Being of God Himself, Emerson explained. In man, his word is an expression, a moving out upon the world. . . the creative energy of his soul. 'Words. . . are formed by the soul,' said Emerson. 'I would never teach. . . elocution, if words were not, in their true estimate, divine things--if they were not forms of the spirit and of the soul.'" (Renshaw, 7; quotation of Emerson, [Untitled], *Lectures* [January 12, 1895], 128) I am indebted to Ken Lightner for pointing out the obvious connection between Emerson's theory of expression and the power of words.

instructors there authored, shortly after Kenyon's departure, the most widely read New Thought work of all time. McConnell and Simmons have both pointed out that Ralph Waldo Trine, best known for his book *In Tune with the Infinite*, taught a literature composition course at Emerson during Kenyon's enrollment.³³

Based on his faculty position (and on the fact that Trine was simultaneously enrolled as a freshman for the year 1892-1893), most have speculated that Kenyon probably came in contact with Trine at some point or another. But if we look further into the primary documents, we find that this conclusion is more than just probable --it is nearly certain.

First, the 1892-93 College Catalogue makes it clear that the course in Rhetoric was a freshman requirement (Kenyon had to take it). Second, the course descriptions specify that Trine was the only regular instructor for this class. Third, although this class apparently met once a week, the College was structured in such a way that each course continued throughout the entire academic year, fall through spring.³⁴ Therefore E. W. Kenyon sat under the master expositor of New Thought,

³³ McConnell, 41; Simmons, 48. Trine embraced metaphysical religion sometime in the 1890s (*My philosophy and my religion*, 9). It would be futile to argue that he did not yet advocate New Thought while at Emerson College: his first full-length book was a *fully developed expression of mental science*, published in 1896--just three years after his instruction of Kenyon. Therein Trine suggests that the subject is anything but new to him, saying "my soul has ever longed to express itself upon this endless theme." (Ralph Waldo Trine, *What All the World's A-Seeking, or, the Vital Law of True Life, True Greatness, Power, and Happiness*. Revised edition. (Boston: G. H. Ellis, Inc., 1899 [1896]), v) His masterpiece, *In Tune with the Infinite: the Fullness of Peace, Power, and Plenty*, was released the next year.

³⁴Although John W. Dickinson was listed together with Trine as comprising the Rhetoric department, Dickinson only gave a series of lectures; the "regular class instruction in Rhetoric is given by Prof. Ralph Waldo Trine." (*Emerson College Catalog 1892-93*, 28) For a listing of Rhetoric among the courses all freshmen took, see "Course of Instruction" for "First Year." (*ibid.*, 10)

It is helpful to understand that schedules were generally uniform for students, depending on what year (first, second, third) they were. All the freshmen, for example, stayed together for most

Ralph Waldo Trine, on a regular basis.

Since Trine's metaphysical religious orientation is already well-established,³⁵ we will not belabor that point. We turn instead to two Emerson College faculty members whose metaphysical religious perspectives have escaped notice in previous Kenyon scholarship.

Solon Lauer

Born in humble surroundings in northern Ohio, Lauer was consigned early on to hard labor in order to survive. Yet, with his natural love of learning, he made his way through prep school. Around 1884, recurring ill health cut short his college career at Western Reserve in Cleveland, but Lauer never relinquished his personal literary pursuits. He wrote for the press and lectured, and in 1887 resumed his studies at ECO. He was ordained as a Unitarian minister, and joined the faculty of ECO in 1890.³⁶

of the class periods except for private instruction and general (school-wide) lectures. "The college opens each morning during five days of every week in the scholastic year, at 9 A.M., and closes at 1 P.M." Additionally, the "work on Saturday morning [constitutes] a most important part of the regular course of the college." (ibid., 35)

³⁵See McConnell, 41-42; Simmons, 47-55; Charles S. Braden, *Spirits in Rebellion: The Rise and Development of New Thought* (Dallas: Southern Methodist University, 1963), 164-169.

³⁶Solon Lauer, *Social Laws* (Norwood, Mass: Norwood Press, 1901 [1900]), ix-x, xiii. Lauer attended ECO from 1887-89, and lectured there from 1890-93. (Coffee and Wentworth, 65, 561) Kenyon sat under Lauer since all of the regular students attended the same lectures. (*Emerson College Catalog 1892-93*, 4, 10) Lauer led a Unitarian parish in Chicopee, Massachusetts during the time that he taught Kenyon at ECO (this fact was confirmed to me by John Hurley of the Unitarian Universalist Association in Boston). Lauer's mind-science writing was well-received among Universalists, including the editors of the Boston periodicals *Christian Leader* and *The Unitarian* (see the frontpiece ad in *Social Laws*), as well as C. W. Emerson himself (see n. 48 below).

As "Lecturer on Thoreau and Emerson" at Emerson College, Solon Lauer was an avid disciple of the Transcendental gospel. He fully believed in humanity's relation to the Over-soul, and followed in the mystic-monist footsteps of Transcendentalism. Like Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau, Lauer emphasized the primacy of mind and the ideal, and sought to achieve harmony with nature through higher spiritual consciousness.³⁷

Though he never became a major figure in New Thought, Lauer clearly taught the core concepts of mind-science. In fact, he was a lecturer at the International Metaphysical League's convention in 1899. Lauer's religious thought can best be described as mystical mental science from the Transcendentalist perspective, with emphasis on human potential (humanity's divinity, dominion, and bodily health).³⁸

Lauer's main religious work was a volume of prose and poetry titled *Life and Light from Above*. Although it was not published until 1894, the book chronicles his thought over the period

³⁷ECO *Catalog 1892-93*, 4. He said of R. W. Emerson:

He, outside all churches, has revealed the truth on which all churches rest or, resting not, fall. . . . The stone that the builders rejected has already become the head of the corner." (Lauer, "Ralph Waldo Emerson: The Man and His Philosophy," *Emerson College Magazine* 4 [January 1896], 52-59)

Interestingly, Lauer remarked that the "relation of the philosophy of the great sage of Concord to the work of the Emerson College of Oratory is too apparent to need any statement" to ECO students. (52)

³⁸J. Stillson Judah, *The History and Philosophy of the Metaphysical Movements in America* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1967), 178. Lauer later broadened his interests to include political and economic issues. In contrast to his otherwise progressive religious thought, he wrote "an anti-socialist book" which defended capitalism and championed "the dominant white," while retaining mind-science principles. (*Social Laws*, xii, 119-120, 153 cf. 107, 229-239; see also idem., *Mark Hanna, A Sketch from Life, and Other Essays* [Cleveland, OH: Nike Publishing, 1901])

from June 1892 through August 1893³⁹--which, significantly for our purposes, encompasses the time of Kenyon's enrollment at Emerson. Thus Lauer's teaching during Kenyon's attendance is accurately reflected in this book. Following is a short summary of Lauer's metaphysical religious orientation as shown in *Life and Light*.

Lauer shares R. W. Emerson's idealism in full. All is mind, and death is merely an illusion. Like his Transcendentalist elders, Lauer is deeply indebted to eastern philosophy, often identifying himself as a lover of the Brahmic wisdom.⁴⁰ He exudes a strongly anti-orthodox attitude concerning traditional Christianity. Lauer rejects the "accepted dogmas" and grants authority only to his "higher self." If human beings are fallen in any sense, it is that they have fallen out of touch with nature and hence with their true (divine) selves. Sin and disease are really the results of ignorance of one's true identity; in "Reality," everything and everyone is perfect already.⁴¹

Although mind is said to be all, Lauer does not go so far as to deny the existence of matter. The world is real; in fact he declares it was created by God. Mind is primary and matter is

³⁹He apparently had been composing the material for some time: "I trust that I have been in no haste to publish what I have written." (Solon Lauer, *Life and Light from Above* [Boston: Lee and Shepard, Publishers, 1895 (1894)], 109) The poetry section "Soul-Voices" at the end of the book gives 1892 dates for most of the verses. (213f) The middle of the book is comprised of journal entries, dated from June 1892 through August 1893, recorded during nature hikes and vacation wilderness travels. (174, 200)

⁴⁰"I saw that all is Mind, and that there is no death." (ibid., 7) "I am the only Real; all things [are] but pictures of me. . . ." (poem, "Nirvana," 235) Lauer is "a lover of the Stoic and Hindu wisdom." "The Hindu Brahmana, bright with the Brahmic splendor, is the type of what every man should be." (142)

⁴¹"The methods of the church are precisely the reverse of the divine ones. . . . I cannot promise to teach the accepted dogmas." (ibid., 84-85; cf. 44-45, 96, 130) "This is all I mean by the fall of Man; a descent below nature. . . ." "I think that man is lost when he has forgotten his true nature, that it is divine. . . . In this sense, most of us are lost." (192, 194; cf. 186-188) "Men deceive themselves. . . and in every way conceal the Real Self which is a manifestation of the Supreme." (27; cf. 19-20)

secondary, so the body is simply the form of the ideal. Thoughts are formative or causative in their relation to material existence. Intuitive knowledge is superior to the testimony of the physical senses, on which material-minded humanity relies too much.⁴²

The core of Lauer's thought is that humanity is intrinsically divine, and only ignorance stands in the way of manifesting this Reality.⁴³ Humans are blinded by materialism and empiricism so that they are not in tune with the spiritual laws of the Infinite realm. The solution is to achieve harmony with Reality through spiritual consciousness. Then human nature will be recognized in its true estate, as the "Divine Man" within. One becomes God *manifest* in the flesh upon realization of one's true identity as an incarnation of deity.⁴⁴

⁴²"God did not make the world in vain. . . Let us then be materialists when dealing with matter, and idealists when dealing with ideas. Idealism is the philosophy of the subjective, materialism the science of the objective. There should be no discord between the two." (ibid., 79) Thoughts "are creative energy; they will at length embody themselves and become flesh; and as a man thinketh in his heart, so is he in outward appearance." "I perceive that this body and brain of mine are products of that same Infinite Life and Intelligence which shapes these beautiful forms around me." (65, 13) "Life overreaches the bounds of the senses. . . Soul is the only Reality amid infinite appearances." Live "in this Light, not in the darkness of the senses." (84, 11)

⁴³Lauer said it was a mistake to worship Jesus Christ as the unique incarnation of deity; such mentality "has drawn millions of men into a personal devotion that has hid them from the divine nature of themselves." (Lauer, "Emerson," 59) True spiritual consciousness avoids such exclusivist notions; to "lift the mind into the region of Spirit, and hold it there in a persistent consciousness of that Presence in which we all live and move and have our being, must result in harmony." "Why not put on the seamless robe of divinity, and be the gods we really are?" (Lauer, *Life*, 29 cf. 169; 7)

⁴⁴One "looking in the mirror of Truth perceives his real nature, that it is Divine, All-Perfect, one with the All-Perfect Life of God." "So thinking, man becomes God, and divine power is his. Could he but hold that divine mood and make it constant, there should be another Christ, God made manifest in the flesh. . . ." "If I would preach God, I must represent God; must be God, as Jesus was. This Word must become flesh, and God must be *born again* in human form." (27, 32, 56-57, emphasis mine; cf. 58, 203) These teachings may have been seminal for Kenyon's view of deification, wherein one can become just as much an Incarnation of God as was Jesus of Nazareth, and which process is identified as being born-again (cf. chapter 1 ns. 51-60 above, and chapter 4 n. 71 below).

Consciousness of the true self allows humans to exercise dominion over their world. One becomes "master" by claiming one's rightful belongings or divine inheritance. One must realize that one already possesses the object of desire in Reality *now*.⁴⁵ The first condition is faith--a spiritual consciousness of divine ownership. The second condition is verbal affirmation of the fact that the desired object is already in one's possession.⁴⁶

Lauer specifically taught that human beings need never be sick. The reasons are that nature is surrounded by and saturated with health, and the universe operates on laws of health. Disease is simply the result of ignorance of one's spiritual identity and the laws of health. The real man is not the physical body; the higher self should rule the outer material self by manifesting divine health.⁴⁷

⁴⁵A tree that Lauer hugged "whispered" the instruction to call upon the inner Divine Man, "and thou shall stand a god in time and space; ruling the earth and all things therein. . . . Claim thy possibilities, and they are realized." "This is the philosophy of Power; the divine philosophy which converts Man from a subject to a king." "Why not put on the purple robe of royal mastery, and be the lords of life we were designed to be?" (ibid., 6, 9, 10; cf. 24) "Waste not thy breath in idle asking, nor thy strength in vainly seeking; but know that all is thine." "What wouldst thou have, aspiring soul? Claim it, for 'tis already thine." (23, 249)

⁴⁶"Faith [is] the consciousness of Spiritual Life." (ibid., 27)

Faith is the elevation of the soul into the realm of Divine Truth. There it perceives Reality. . . . I will not plead or petition; I will claim my own, and yield it not. When I can see [visualize] my own, I possess it. . . . To pray believing is to pray perceiving; and perception is possession. This is the law of Prayer. (34-35)

As "a monarch on his throne command thou the elements of thy life, and they shall obey thee. Speak, and thy will shall be accomplished." "My weapons are right affirmations of the nature of the Self." "A single firm word. . . sends [disease] trembling back to the shadows whence he came." (34, 35, 74)

⁴⁷"It seemed to me that I need never be sick. . . ." It "seemed to me absurd that any creature should be sick or unhappy in the wide world. With laws of beauty and health permeating the universe, how does man contrive to evade them [?]" "Health permeates it [the world] everywhere. . . . And yet poor, weak, foolish man [is] ignorant of the presence all around him of that which he

Much of what we have discussed in Lauer's thought can be found in Kenyon's teachings: humanity's deification/incarnation, dominion /mastery, and perfect health, through faith/affirmation. Mind, might, and mastery were strong themes in Solon Lauer's teaching.⁴⁸

Leland Powers

Another previously unnoticed example of metaphysical religion among the Emerson faculty is that of Leland Todd Powers (1857-1920), who had studied, along with C. W. Emerson, under Lewis B. Monroe at Boston University. Powers also studied oratory under Monroe's replacement Samuel S. Curry. Afterwards he taught at Emerson College from 1885-95 and 1901-04. Powers married another ECO faculty member in 1895, and they both officially joined Mary Baker Eddy's Boston church. He opened his own school in 1904, the Leland Powers School of the Spoken Word.⁴⁹

lacks. . . ." Recognize "these laws of physical harmony. . . . We are here in the world, and certain laws of life are here. Let us get on good terms with them." (ibid., 7, 6, 72, 64; cf. 177) "We are not this body. . . ." "The man of earth is but a manifestation, complete or partial, of the spiritual man, who is the son of God." (7, 32)

⁴⁸It is interesting to note that Lauer's book was highly praised by C. W. Emerson, who said:

Surely it [the book] is from above: for it speaks to the soul, and awakens spiritual courage, hope, faith, and insight. It is my companion, and converses with my inmost thought. I feel that I can never lay it aside. . . for every time I read it (and I have already read a large portion of it many times) it seems more new, interesting, inspiring, helpful and profound than at first. It is one of the few books born for immortality. (*Emerson College Magazine* [February 1895], 53)

These sentiments were shared by other faculty members (ibid., 53-54), and excerpts of the book were printed in the ECO magazine (idem., "The New Philosophy of Life and Education," *Emerson College Magazine* [April 1895], 108-110), evidencing the extent of ECO's metaphysical orientation.

⁴⁹See Renshaw, xv-xvi; Coffee and Wentworth, 566; *Emerson College Catalog 1892-93*, 3. Powers' evidently remained loyal to Monroe (Leland T. Powers, ed., *Practice Book, Leland Powers School* [Boston: Thomas Groom and Co., 1911 (1905)], 3) and to Delsarte (Leland Powers and Carol

This was the school that developed Ernest Holmes' interest in metaphysical religion; Holmes afterwards founded one of the largest of the enduring mind-science groups, Religious Science.⁵⁰

There is no record of Powers' thought dating from the actual time of Kenyon's enrollment at ECO, but he did publish some of his class lectures later. For the most part, Powers' religious thought is very similar to that of C. W. Emerson.

Powers taught a form of idealism which emphasized the embodiment of the ideal in physical expression. Form is an idea (which is in Reality spiritual) in the mind of man. His was a mystic idealism that recognized spirit as the only reality. Life was considered spiritual rather than material, with the mind as its central conductor.⁵¹

Hoyt Powers, *Talks on Some Fundamentals of Expression* [East Aurora, NY: Roycrofters, 1909], 26 [notice this volume was published by the Powers' New Thought former student, Elbert Hubbard--see pp. 124-131 below]. See also, Bertha Shafter, "A Tribute to Miss Hoyt: Married--In Somerville, Dec. 24th, 1895, Leland T. Powers and Daisy Carol Hoyt," *Emerson College Magazine* (February 1895), 80. According to the Church History department of the First Church of Christ, Scientist, Boston, the Powers' formal membership was initiated 11 June 1901.

⁵⁰Those who shared Holmes' enthusiasm for metaphysical discussions "were found especially among the group of young men and women he met in the Powers School of Expression" in 1908. Many of those students, including Holmes, attended Eddy's church regularly to hear Carol Hoyt Powers, who, as "second reader in the Mother Church of Christ, Scientist, in Boston," inspired Holmes to buy Eddy's text, *Science and Health*. "Soon he could quote from it as he quoted from [R. W.] Emerson." (Fenwicke L. Holmes, *Ernest Holmes: His Life and Times* [NY: Dodd, Mead and Co., 1970], 83, 84 cf. 87) Since Hoyt taught "Steps in Evolution of Expression," an integral part of the overall ECO emphasis, it is possible that she taught Kenyon at some point. (*Emerson College Catalog 1892-93*, 3)

⁵¹The universe "is an expression of its Cause and. . . reflects or indicates a certain method in this expression. . . [also] manifested in our own minds or thought processes and their expressional activities. . . ." In right expression, "the mind recognizes only *embodiment of idea*." "Form, in reality, is an idea in the mind. . . ." "Real form is spiritual and is outlined only by God himself. One's spiritual understanding must conceive of forms as being, in reality. . . always whole and harmonious." (Leland T. Powers, *Talks on Expression* [Bos: Thos. Groom, 1917], 66-67, 32, 71, 72) "Obviously Powers was an extreme idealist and mystic. For him the only reality was spirit." Powers' philosophy "awakens man's consciousness to the truth that life is not organic or material, but divine

Right expression is of the latent ideal. The recognition of the ideal awakens one's spiritual sense. This allows the body to express spiritualized thought. Correct consciousness, essential to ideal manifestation, is based on spiritual thought and is free of fear and sensory interference.⁵²

The physical senses are obstacles to true expression because they report only material facts instead of spiritual ideas. There is a gnostic dualism wherein the struggle is between the material and the ideal; the physical body is a prison to the spirit and its expression. One must become a "master" by making sensory knowledge disappear and letting the ideal manifest itself. The mind must recognize only the embodiment of the idea, and not the physical body with its senses. Thought must master the material, to which it is always opposed.⁵³

and infinite." (Renshaw, 380, 365) "It is all there in mind; everything that ever was, is or ever will be." (Powers, 103-104; cf. passages from idealist-transcendentalists like Browning and R. W. Emerson in his *Practice Book* (Powers, ed., 58f, 63f).

⁵²The ideal is not really absent in a person, "just dormant and undeveloped." One must "be capable of interpreting or inspiring spiritualized thought." When one "awakens his spiritual sense," the body becomes "an interpreter of spiritualized thought." "Fear, either conscious, unconscious, or subconscious, is the fundamental basis" for wrong expression. (Powers, 22, 37, 40, 43, 38)

All good art manifestations have their causation in mind, spirit, and are addressed to mind, spirit. . . . All bad art manifestations have their causation in sensation and speak in terms of flesh, or sensation. Good art awakens consciousness to a realization of spiritual inheritance and kingdom. Bad art puts to sleep the consciousness of spirit, and awakens the consciousness of the senses. (Powers and Powers, 12)

⁵³"This body, this prison-house," serves only as a "blockade of the five senses to the thought on the other side." The task is "to make transparent the muddy avenues of the flesh. . . so transparent that the sense and consciousness of the body disappear and the idea, the truth. . . as they exist in one's thought, are seen in their own fitting embodiment." (Powers, 51, 59, 101-102)

Mind does not recognize the material body in right expression; the material senses recognize it but the mind recognizes only *embodiment of the idea*. The body becomes the embodiment when it absolutely obeys the command of thought and does not allow its sensations and nerve excitements to be in any way its masters. (32)

Another interesting aspect of Powers' teaching is his view of the relationship between human and divine expression. Like Delsarte and Swedenborg, he posits a correspondence between spiritual ideals and the body. From there Powers goes on to claim that human expression is equivalent to or corresponds to God's creative expression. Right expression reflects what God does in his creative acts--the manifestation of divine ideas.⁵⁴ Thought, then, has a divine creative quality (but not to the same extent, nor as fully developed, as the theme of causative creative power of mind in C. W. Emerson, mind science, or Kenyon).

In summary, Powers shares (not surprisingly) C. W. Emerson's idealism and basic view of the mind/matter relationship. Also similar is Powers' emphasis on mastery of mind over body and senses, and on the divine, creative nature of spiritual thought.⁵⁵ The religious orientations of Powers

"Every thought. . . is obliged to overcome and master material in some form or another. Thought in its expressive act. . . does so *in spite of material, never with its willing aid.*" (27; cf. Powers and Powers, 8, 13-14)

⁵⁴In expression,

man is reflecting what God does in His creation. [It] is man's word, the bodying forth of his idea. Let us apply John's statement [Jn. 1:1-2] to the expressive act of man's mind, which is art: In the beginning--the inception--of my thought dwelt its expression, and the expression was with my thought, and the expression *was* my thought, the same was in the beginning--the inception--with my thought. (Powers, 101)

"The desire for expression. . . we have in common with the Father. God's expression is The Word spoken of in the first verses of John. It is the Life and Light of men. Our expression is the recognition of brotherhood." (73-74; cf. 49-51) Powers' reworking of John 1 is a fine example of New Thought's "spiritual interpretation." See also Powers' description of expression as "revelation of the higher self," which is unfolding its divinity. (Powers and Powers, 56-59)

⁵⁵There was a great deal of continuity between the major schools of oratory in Boston at the turn of the century, due to the influence of Delsarte through Lewis B. Monroe. This was especially true for Emerson, Curry, and Powers, who all opened schools of oratory in Boston: "Powers and Emerson taught that excessive and base emotions must be avoided because they bring on disease. . . . [and] that noble thought and emotion can create health. Curry was always sympathetic to this second idea.

and Lauer only reinforce McConnell's thesis that the faculty at ECO was saturated with the elements of New Thought during Kenyon's stay. As we shall see, there is also evidence that the student body was equally permeated by metaphysical religion at the time.

Christian Science and the Emerson student body

McConnell has already noted that several of Kenyon's classmates became prominent Christian Scientists.⁵⁶ In addition to his list, a comparison of ECO's catalog listing of students with the Christian Science membership rolls enumerates several more of Kenyon's classmates who became committed members of Eddy's organization. Since The First Church of Christ, Scientist did not offer official membership until late 1892, it is impossible to know if any of Kenyon's classmates had previously attended Eddy's church or another branch--or if any attended without joining officially. Yet it can be shown that at least a half-dozen who attended ECO in 1892-93 or just the year before soon became official members of The Mother Church of Boston.⁵⁷ Unfortunately, there is no way to know about Emerson alumni who moved out of the area, since the early membership rolls of other Christian Science branches are not extant.

In his later years he came to believe the first." (Renshaw, 454)

⁵⁶Laura Carey, Albert Connant, and Irving Tomlinson attended ECO in 1892-93 and later joined Christian Science. (McConnell, 54; he derives the list from Coffee and Wentworth, 63) McConnell also notes that C. W. Emerson eventually joined Eddy's church (1903) as had his wife. (53 n. 22)

⁵⁷These include: Florence Cobb (ECO 1892-93), joined First Church of Christ, Scientist (FCCS), March 31, 1894; Mary E. Evans (ECO 1891-92), joined FCCS April 6, 1895; Mary H. Howard (ECO 1891-92), joined FCCS October 6, 1894; Mary Johnson (ECO 1891-92), joined FCCS June 30, 1894; John W. Reeder (ECO 1891-92), joined FCCS October 6, 1894; Mary E. Stambaugh (ECO 1891-92, 92-93), joined FCCS March 31, 1894. Compare Emerson College catalogues for 1891-92 and 1892-93 with *Church Manual of The First Church of Christ, Scientist in Boston Massachusetts* (Boston: Christian Science Publishing Society, 1895).

Although it is known that New Thought luminary Horatio W. Dresser was an early student of Emerson's,⁵⁸ it would be difficult to determine how many other mind-science advocates, practitioners, and authors studied at ECO over the years. In any case, the most important finding would be any New Thought authors (besides Trine) who were actual classmates of Kenyon's. This is, significantly, just what we discover upon surveying the student list for 1892-93.

William A. Spinney

Spinney attended Emerson with Kenyon and was also an exponent of metaphysical religion. He held an A.B. from Harvard and was later supervisor over the Newton Centre (Mass.) public schools. Long after his departure from Emerson, Spinney expressed fond recollections of the school and its inspirational qualities.⁵⁹

Spinney incorporated much of C. W. Emerson's teachings into his own, developing a religious philosophy combining psychological and physiological principles. His major work, *Health Through Self-Control*, is recommended New Thought reading according to the movement's premier early historian, Horatio W. Dresser.⁶⁰ Spinney advocates a method of health based on mental states

⁵⁸McConnell, 54 n. 38; Dresser is listed as a first-year student in the *Emerson College Catalog 1883-84*, 16.

⁵⁹See *Emerson College Catalog 1892-93*; cf. Spinney's application for admission (Oct. 22, 1892). In an undated letter to ECO (ca. 1902), Spinney wrote: "How I wish I could attend the College again. It was a great uplift to me. . . . I love to uplift as I was uplifted by your College work."

⁶⁰William Anthony Spinney, *Health Through Self-Control, In Thinking, Breathing, Eating*. Fourth edition (Boston: Lothrop, Lee and Shepard Co., 1908 [1906]). Spinney had been thinking along these lines for some time; he says his book is based on "lectures given over several years to public and private students in connection with courses" he offered. (ii) Perhaps it was for improving his lectures that he studied oratory at ECO. See his book in the New Thought bibliography in H. W. Dresser, ed., *The Spirit of the New Thought: Essays and Addresses by Representative Authors and*

or right thinking. He bases much of his thought on the writings of other mind-science writers, to whom he makes numerous references. There is also a substantial amount of occultic material and some eastern religious elements included.⁶¹

Spinney approached religion with an anti-orthodox attitude. Clearly non-trinitarian, he rejected the personhood of the Holy Spirit (which he defined in terms of states of consciousness) and worship of Jesus the person (instead of following the Christ-principles). He disparaged traditional Christianity's emphasis on human depravity because it seemed to contribute to low self-esteem. Spinney had little use for traditional methods of biblical hermeneutics, preferring interpretations that he found positive and health-inspiring.⁶²

Leaders (NY: T. Y. Crowell Co., 1917), 293.

⁶¹Mind-science writers that Spinney names as sources (*Health*, iii) include Horace Fletcher (best known for his *Menticulture*; see Dresser, *Spirit*, 294), Thomas Jay Hudson (*The Law of Psychic Phenomena*), William G. Jordan (*The Kingship of Self-Control*). He also cites R. W. Emerson (136) and well-known New Thought writers Paul Tyner (19) and Ella Wheeler Wilcox (41). Although he does not name Trine, he uses the phrase "in tune with the Infinite" throughout (78, 144, 206, 214). Spinney endorses telepathy-clairvoyance (94), spiritist-mediumship (228, 296), the Theosophical conception of astral bodies (91), and reincarnation (50, 73, 228, 238). His depiction of Jesus as a "Buddhistic religious" practitioner is based on Nikolai Notovitch's *The Unknown Life of Jesus Christ* (212, cf. iii).

⁶²"It used to be taught, and possibly is so taught now, that the Holy Spirit is some individual entity. . . . It is scientific to believe that one can be filled with the Holy Spirit only by a transforming process of the states of consciousness. . . ." "When we worship or dedicate ourselves to a personal Jesus, rather than to the principles he lived," we are mistaken. (ibid., 209, 154) Spinney finds the hymn "At the Cross" especially guilt-inducing and negative, such that the listener "by God's law is reduced in his threefold health." "Give practical, healthful meanings to Scriptural writings, applicable to every-day needs." For instance, he interprets "resurrection" to mean bodily health *now*. (143-144, 160, cf. 232, 282)

His view of God was panentheistic, and he often equated God with universal energy, the "Law" of spiritual causality, mental vibration, consciousness, or one's ideal thinking.⁶³ There was no room for miracles, only the (sometimes hidden) scientific operation of universal Law. It is humanity's task to achieve harmonious relation with this God-Law.⁶⁴

Spinney explains human potential in terms of mastery through ideal thought forces and positive affirmation. The power of thought is unlimited, for thought is omnipotent. Our subjective mind, by its thoughts, creates our heaven or hell.⁶⁵ Hence the importance of right thinking; the desires of the heart/spirit determine expression in the material realm--of physical health and prosperity. Positive affirmations of one's spiritual thoughts aid the manifestation of ideals. Right states of consciousness are maintained by the habit of affirmation, which Spinney recommends practicing especially in the morning.⁶⁶

⁶³"God is in a chair as in a friend." Get "in tune with the Infinite, to vibrate electrically, magnetically with the universal energy, God-consciousness." "We impress our desires upon the universal energy, God, in the midst of whom we are." (ibid., 198, 78, 94) "Physicality, mentality, morality, spirituality are vibrations of different quantity, dimension, quality, in the infinite ether and energy of 'God with us.'" "God is our ideal thinking." (ibid., 97, 146)

⁶⁴"Daniel in the lion's den exemplifies "not a miracle, but definite results by exact law." "There is no miracle in all this; it is natural, universal, uniform kindly law for all who think it." (ibid., 71, 77, cf. 292) "We must work out our salvation by relating ourselves correctly to the law. . . . God is law. The only Satan there is, is our ignorance of law, and our non-adaptedness to it." We must "relate ourselves harmoniously to eternal law, God. . . . 'Seek first the kingdom of heaven (harmony), and all these things will be added to you.'" (150, 151)

⁶⁵Experience "proves the law of vibration, thought, to be almighty." "In every thought is possible heaven or hell." "The subjective mind. . . is heaven or hell." (ibid., 102, 150, 72)

⁶⁶Spinney applies Mark 11:24 ("Whatsoever things ye desire, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them") to physical strength, saying the results of one's state of mind are that "what is desired comes." When harmony between the ideal and one's state of mind is achieved, "riches will naturally follow. . . . This way of harmonious wealth is godlike. . . . Happiness, health, and competency come" automatically. (ibid., 160, 162-163) There are "two ways of inhibiting wrong

The main benefit of right thinking according to Spinney is physical. After all, he defines religion in terms of healing, and claims his is a "gospel of health." The spirit/body connection, the relationship of mental states to bodily conditions, is asserted throughout his work. One's health corresponds to one's thinking.⁶⁷ The typical mind-cure position--that disease is caused wholly by wrong thinking, and health results from right thinking--is presented repeatedly. He articulates mental healing premises and practices, and openly recognizes the value of various metaphysical religious groups' teachings.⁶⁸ Spinney's thought, as H. W. Dresser noted, unquestionably falls under the New Thought umbrella. But this is not the only example of Kenyon's mind-science classmates.

thinking." One is "denial" of negative conditions. A "better way" is affirmation of desired conditions. "It is very healthful to form a habit of speaking and thinking in positively worded sentences wherever possible." "Affirming [grand] states of mind in the early morning. . . assists to carry out these conditions during the day." (112-114, 239)

⁶⁷Spinney said religion should be the integration of physiology and psychology. Hence, "Christianity should be health and the means of escaping from disease," or the "gospel of health." (ibid., x, 175) He quotes New Thought author Paul Tyner as saying that one's bodily condition "will indicate his spiritual condition also. . . development of the ego itself determines the composition of the body." "The whole body can be built to the spiritual tune of the mind, soul." One's "thinking should be the recognized leader" among health factors. A "physical cold and a mental cold are two sides of the same vibration." (19, 232 cf. 238, 4, 162)

⁶⁸The beginning of disease "is a wrong emotional state of mind. . . . Bacteria only show the mental and physical condition, they do not primarily cause the disease." "Wrong thinking will produce unhealthy bodily and mental results, and just as surely. . . right thinking will bring forth healthy bodily and mental results." "To think health. . . is to get it, keep it, give it to mind and body. . . . To think disease, unease, weakness, is to induce it or increase it." (ibid., 64, 137-138, 104) "It is said that 'fear catches disease.' Change 'catches' to 'produces' and it is a scientific statement. 'The thing I greatly feared has come upon me.'" "'For as a man thinketh in his heart (. . . subjective state) so is he.'" (66-67 cf. 196, 70 cf. 85) Spinney extols the virtues of Christian Science specifically, and an unnamed metaphysical writer's twelve lessons. (151, 207)

Elbert Hubbard

Another of Kenyon's classmates who was well-known in the metaphysical religious community, and in public life in general, was businessman/motivational speaker/author/publisher Elbert Green Hubbard (1856-1915). Best known for his monthly series, "Little Journeys to the Homes of the Great," he also reached the public with his "positive thinking" gospel of health through nationwide lecturing and a little magazine entitled *The Philistine*.⁶⁹ Although as a "philosophical anarchist" Hubbard would never confine himself to any one movement, he definitely fits in the New Thought category.⁷⁰ Mind-science author Paul Tyner listed Hubbard alongside the biggest names in the metaphysical movement such as Helen Wilmans, Henry Wood, Thomas Sheldon and H. W. Dresser.⁷¹ Hubbard even hosted New Thought conventions at his East Aurora, New York

⁶⁹Hubbard began a quality-oriented print shop called the Roycrofters. Hubbard had "his own health-is-natural brand of nature worship." (Freeman Champney, *Art and Glory: The Story of Elbert Hubbard* [NY: Crown Publications, 1986], 118)

He preached a health-and-salvation gospel of his own that featured fresh air, honest toil, individualism and positive thinking. . . . Thousands of people heard him lecture, in nearly every major and minor city in the country. . . . His monthly magazine. . . was a torch flaring in the murk of orthodoxy. . . . (4)

⁷⁰One historian even identifies Hubbard with the New Thought *leadership*, some of which, he specifies,

devoted themselves increasingly to magazine advertisements of short cuts to business success, health and culture, or to pseudoscientific, pseudoreligious lectures with one eye on the door receipts. The most famous of such prophets was Elbert Hubbard. . . . (Harold U. Faulkner, *The Quest for Social Justice 1898-1914*, in Arthur M. Schlesinger and Dixon Ryan Fox, eds., *A History of American Life* [NY: Macmillan Co., 1943], 11:215)

⁷¹Paul Tyner, "The Metaphysical Movement," *The American Monthly Review of Reviews* 25 (March 1902), 316. Hubbard's philosophy combined much of what was basic in mind-science and Christian Science; for example, his statement, "Man is only the tool or vehicle--Mind alone is immortal--Thought is THE THING" combines keynotes of H. W. Dresser, Mary Baker Eddy, and Prentice Mulford, respectively. (Elbert Hubbard, *White Hyacinths* [East Aurora: The Roycrofters,

commune/shop. *The Philistine* magazine, which he began just two years after he and Kenyon left Emerson College, carried New Thought pieces nearly from its beginning.⁷² The magazine inspired Religious Science founder Ernest Holmes in direct proportion as it infuriated evangelist Billy Sunday.⁷³

While Hubbard was at Emerson College, he worked for the Boston periodical *Arena* (somewhat inclined to mental science), which also printed some of his articles and published two of his books.⁷⁴ Although romance was probably a major factor in his initial enrollment at Emerson (his mistress attended ECO), Hubbard nonetheless gained much of future elocutionary value as well as fond memories from his studies there. Hubbard's saying, "Expression is necessary to life" is

1907], 108)

⁷²The magazine was first issued in June 1895 (Champney, 55).

The group that came closest to him [Hubbard] in temperament and doctrine was probably New Thought. . . . New Thought conventions were held at [Hubbard's shop in] East Aurora. *Nautilus*, the New Thought journal, was a regular *Philistine* advertiser, and many of the New Thought leaders were closely associated with Hubbard. . . . (Champney, 145)

Those leaders included Elizabeth Towne, O. S. Marden, Horace Fletcher, Edwin Markham, and Hugh Pentecost. L. E. Whipple also advertised his mind-science journal *Intelligence* in *Philistine*. (ibid., 64; cf. Felix Shay, *Elbert Hubbard of East Aurora* [NY: Wm. H. Wise and Co., 1926], 191 cf. 386; 219 cf. 389; 385; 388)

⁷³Holmes came in contact with the writings of R. W. Emerson and Hubbard about the same time. (Holmes, 69-70, 74) Sunday said, "The *Philistine* is doing more to blight faith than any other publication in America," and compared Hubbard with Voltaire, Hume, Paine, Huxley, and Ingersol. (Champney, 112; cf. Shay, 401)

⁷⁴"Hubbard, Elbert," in Stanley J. Kunitz and Howard Haycraft, *Twentieth Century Authors: A Biographical Dictionary of Modern Literature* (NY: The H. W. Wilson Co., 1942), 677; cf. Champney, 49. The mind-science orientation of *Arena* is discussed below in the section on Minot J. Savage, pp. 135-136.

reminiscent of Emerson College's motto, "Expression necessary for Evolution."⁷⁵ Even before he achieved fame as a platform lecturer, Hubbard was invited back to Emerson College as a faculty member; he lectured there from 1896-1900.⁷⁶

An inclination toward mental science is apparent in Hubbard's thought well before his attendance at ECO. One of his biographers sums up Hubbard's early thought with the statement, "Health is of the mind. . . . Death is similarly a product of wrong thinking."⁷⁷ Hubbard had long been an admirer of Ralph Waldo Emerson's transcendentalism, to which he added frequent discussions of Ernst Haeckel's monism.⁷⁸ In time, Hubbard became quite eclectic, springboarding from the idealists and transcendentalists (Carlyle, Emerson, Thoreau) to the mind-scientists (Lilian Whiting,

⁷⁵See *Hyacinths*, 11. Notice also Hubbard's nostalgia for his Boston days in his recollection of meeting Oliver Wendell Holmes at Emerson College in 1893. (Elbert Hubbard, Jr., ed., *The Note Book of Elbert Hubbard* [East Aurora, NY: Roycrofters, 1927], 143) One of Kenyon's and Hubbard's ECO classmates observed that "In the [Hubbard] Scrap-book many of the lines are reminiscent of Dr. Emerson's teaching." (Clare Louise Plummer Dresser [class of 1892], letter to Mrs. C. E. Fraser [ECO registrar], 18 March 1957, p. 2)

⁷⁶Coffee and Wentworth, 127, 559. See editorial reports on Hubbard's yearly lectures by Frances Holbrook (*Emerson College Magazine*, 5 [1897], 118-119; 6 [1898], 112; 7 [1899], 153).

⁷⁷Champney, 39. He says that the "principal" message in one of Hubbard's books (1891) "has to do with making full use of the subconscious mind. . . ." (40)

⁷⁸"Metaphysics reaches its highest stage when it affirms, 'All is One,' 'All is Mind'. . . ." (*Hyacinths*, 97)

For several years he had been taken with the naturalistic monism of Ernst Haeckel. . . . Hubbard announced that monism was the thing. He boiled it down to 'All is one; all is Good; and all is God. . . . God is the Whole, and every man is a necessary part of the Whole.' (Champney, 144, cf. 27)

As one listener reported, these ideas--especially the claim that all is good--came across clearly in his lectures at ECO: "We are almost tempted to believe with him also [that] all the world is good." (Frances Holbrook, "Elbert Hubbard," *Emerson College Magazine*, 6 [1898], 112)

James L. Allen, Sydney A. Weltmer, O. S. Marden) to the mystics and occultists (Annie Besant, Maria Montessori, Emmanuel Swedenborg).⁷⁹

Hubbard also found much of value in Christian Science, although as a "free-thinker" he rejected the authority of Mary Baker Eddy and her textbook, *Science and Health*. Despite his criticisms of revelatory and authoritarian claims by any religion, Hubbard agreed with a number of concepts behind Christian Science, especially what he interpreted as its monism and mind-over-matter emphasis.⁸⁰ Eddy was even the subject of one of his "Little Journeys to the Homes of the Great," wherein Hubbard identified with the psychosomatics he saw behind Eddy's metaphysical speculations.⁸¹

Hubbard's outspoken anti-orthodoxy had brought him notoriety, but his success/motivation literature brought him new respectability with big business. Hubbard had a strong sales and business

⁷⁹See respective quotations from the above in Elbert Hubbard Jr., ed., *Elbert Hubbard's Scrap Book: Containing the Inspired and Inspiring Selections, Gathered During a Lifetime of Discriminating Reading* (NYC: Wm. H. Wise and Co., 1923), 33, 215, 225; 26, 29, 146; 63, 65, 222; 55; 228; 156; 27; 50, 68; 64; 214.

⁸⁰Hubbard quotes Eddy: "Keep your minds so filled with Truth and Love that sin, disease, and death cannot enter them." "Divine Principle is the Life of Man." "Science says: All is Mind and Mind's idea." (ibid., 177, 182, 180) See also Champney, 146-147.

⁸¹"Even the most bigoted and prejudiced now agree that the cures of Christian Science are genuine. People who think they have trouble have it, and it is the same with pain. Imagination is the only sure-enough thing in the world." "Fear has congested the organs--love, hope and faith place them in an attitude so Nature plays through them. The patient is healed. In it there is neither mystery or miracle. It is all very simple." ". . . no system of religion has ever offered a working formula for health, happiness and success equal to that launched by Mrs. Eddy." "This is the quintessence of Christian Science. Your mental attitude controls your body. Happiness is your health. There is no devil but fear. As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." (Elbert Hubbard, "Mary Baker Eddy," in *Little Journeys to Homes of the Great* [NY: Wm. H. Wise and Co., 1916 (ca. 1903)], 10:336, 373, 375)

background and was already teaching salesmanship by 1894.⁸² His most popular essay, "A Message to Garcia," was written in 1899 and catapulted his lecture touring career. Hubbard was immediately and thereafter in great demand with the corporate world, and commanded substantial speaking fees for his motivational sales talks.⁸³ He fit in the "success" literature genre along with New Thought author O. S. Marden, but Hubbard also served a healthy dose of crafty business sense arising from his own experience.⁸⁴

Hubbard's mistress and later second wife, Alice Moore, was also a student at ECO at the same time as Hubbard and Kenyon.⁸⁵ Moore completed graduate studies there and wrote for the school periodical.⁸⁶ Hubbard found in her a kindred soul and like-minded thinker. As an educator,

⁸²Champney, 50.

⁸³"A Message to Garcia" first appeared in the March 1899 issue of the *Philistine*. "Success was very much in the foreground of the American Dream then, and the *Message* became one of the showpieces in the onward-and-upward literature of the time." (ibid., 89) Just eight years after its original printing, Hubbard said that the article "has now been translated into eleven languages and been reprinted over twenty-four million times, attaining a wider circulation, I believe, than any article or book has ever attained in the same length of time." (Elbert Hubbard, *Hyacinths*, 13-14) The essay brought him great success; eventually "fronting for business became central in Hubbard's activity." (Champney, 121)

⁸⁴"As a businessman himself, he introduced some very cute tricks into direct-mail merchandising, and he had a large share in turning advertising from stodginess to the foxy sell." (ibid., 4)

⁸⁵Alice Moore was a teacher at East Aurora High School in 1889 when she met Elbert Hubbard. Moore left for Boston in 1890 to study at ECO; in 1892 Hubbard sold his share of a profitable partnership and left for Boston in 1893. He told his wife Bertha that he was going to Harvard, but he actually went to ECO to be with Moore (who had registered as Mrs. Alice Moore Hubbard). For some time the two led a double life; Hubbard was back and forth from Boston to East Aurora, and his wife and Moore each bore him a daughter in 1894. After Hubbard's wife left him, he and Moore married. (ibid., 5, 35-50, 97-103; cf. Leah C. Scott [ECO Alumni Secretary], letter to W. Brittin Pleadwell, 22 January, 1957, p. 1)

⁸⁶*Emerson College Catalog 1892-93*, 34; cf. Leah C. Scott, letter to Freeman Champney, 25 April 1957. See also articles by Moore in *Emerson College Magazine*, 1 [1893], 94-98; 4 [1896], 82-84.

Moore embraced Froebel's concept that all truth was within and that learning was a process of unfolding one's divinity. (The deification of humanity was emphasized by Alice and Elbert both.⁸⁷)

She was an early feminist, which is most apparent in books *Woman's Work* and *Life Lessons*.⁸⁸

Moore viewed religion much like Hubbard did, and along those lines compiled *An American Bible*, which replaced the traditional revelators with nineteenth-century prophets such as Walt Whitman, Robert Ingersol, and Ralph Waldo Emerson.⁸⁹ After they married, she and Hubbard began a second magazine, *The Fra*, in 1908, which ran a memorial article upon the death of C. W. Emerson. The Hubbards remained devoted alumni of Emerson College until their untimely death.⁹⁰

Alice and (especially) Elbert Hubbard taught a health-and-wealth gospel which was

⁸⁷"Froebel believed in the divinity of the child." (Elbert Hubbard, *Hyacinths*, 73) "Alice had been an admirer of Friedrich Froebel and his opening-flower approach to education." She asked, what can "overcome one who recognizes his divinity?" (Champney, 132) Alice claimed the kingdom of heaven was an "unfolding" of "the spirit Divine which is the ego of every human being." (Alice Moore, "Education," *Emerson College Magazine* [February 1896], 83) "One large segment of Hubbard's gospel--and his appeal for many of his followers--grew from this new glorifying of Man." (Champney, 148) He related how "the divine current surges through. . . [when] placing ourselves in receptive mood, and from the Unknown the ideas come." (Hubbard, *Hyacinths*, 15) His wording here is especially like that of New Thought.

⁸⁸Her former editor at *Emerson College Magazine* and close friend, Frances Holbrook Pfeiffer, summarized and cited from the two books mentioned above in *Alice Hubbard: Her Books* (East Aurora: Roycrofters, n.d.)

⁸⁹This was billed as "Practical truth concerning every-day life, from the writings of eight Americans." (Alice Hubbard, ed., *An American Bible* [East Aurora, NY: The Roycrofters, 1918], 2)

⁹⁰See Alice Hubbard, "Charles Wesley Emerson," *The Fra* (March 1910), reprinted in Coffee and Wentworth, 514-519. The Hubbards even published a book for two of their former ECO instructors: see Leland T. Powers, *Talks on Some Fundamentals of Expression* (East Aurora, NY: The Roycrofters, 1909). The book advanced basic mental -science principles shared by Powers and C. W. Emerson, as shown above. Elbert and Alice were drowned in 1915 when the passenger ship *Lusitania* was sunk by the Germans.

supported by positive-thinking (replacing fear with health-consciousness⁹¹), transcendental-mysticism (seeking "cosmic consciousness"⁹²), and a qualified monism (describing God and humanity as "divine energy"⁹³). He was not afraid of being identified as an adherent to New Thought, and defended that movement's distinctive doctrines.⁹⁴ Hubbard openly embraced core elements of metaphysical religion; as we saw, this was apparent even before he and Kenyon became classmates.

It is clearly the case that through his interaction with such classmates and instructors, Kenyon encountered metaphysical religion to an extensive degree. Before we summarize the nature of the impact of his eclectic Boston education, we shall consider another personality who contributed to Kenyon's "Emerson Experience."

Minot J. Savage

Although he was in no way connected to Emerson College, Rev. Minot Judson Savage (1841-1918) pastored a church that Kenyon attended while in Boston. McConnell was the first to

⁹¹"Health is the most natural thing in the world. It is natural to be healthy because we are a part of Nature--we are Nature." "People who dread disease have disease. The recipe for good health is this: Forget it. What we call diseases are merely symptoms of mental conditions." (Elbert Hubbard, *Health and Wealth* [East Aurora: The Roycrofters, 1908], 16, 17)

⁹²Elbert Hubbard, Jr., ed., *Note Book*, 111.

⁹³*ibid.*, 11, 37-38; cf. *Hyacinths*, 96.

⁹⁴"New Thought is founded on the laws of your own nature, and its shibboleth is 'Know Thyself.'" "And these laws are divine, therefore you yourself are divine just as you allow the divine to possess your being. New Thought allows the currents of divinity to flow through you unobstructed." "New Thought. . . works for a healthy circulation, and tends to health, happiness and well-being now and here-after." (*Hyacinths*, 111, 111-112, 112)

document Kenyon's reference to sitting under Savage, who, he discovered, was one of New England's most prominent (and liberal) Unitarian ministers.⁹⁵ As surprising as Kenyon's regular attendance of a Unitarian church is, further investigation reveals that Savage, a powerful and rather prolific thinker, was also deeply involved in spiritism and, to some extent, metaphysical religion.

Savage received a strict (and apparently Calvinist) Congregationalist upbringing, and began his ministerial career in that denomination. Upon graduation from Bangor Theological Seminary in 1864, he moved to California and served as a missionary. He then pastored two Congregational churches, first in Framingham, Massachusetts (1867-69), then in Hannibal, Missouri (1869-73).⁹⁶ It was during this pastorate that Savage began to express his doubts about orthodox Christianity. By 1870 he had fully accepted Darwinian evolution, and in 1872 he publicly embraced Unitarian thought.⁹⁷ He soon accepted a call to the Third Unitarian Church, Chicago, where he ministered for

⁹⁵Kenyon said "I used to attend his [Savage's] services in Boston." (*Reality* [October 1904], 4) Savage was president of the National Unitarian Conference (1895-99) and authored *Unitarian Catechism* in 1889 (McConnell, 34). He was also a member of the more radically liberal group of Unitarian clergy, the Free Religious Association (Wright, 81). This "great pulpit orator [was] one of the most popular and influential Unitarian figures of the late nineteenth century." (Henry W. Bowden, "Minot J. Savage," in *Dictionary of American Religious Biographies*. Second edition, revised and enlarged [London: Greenwood Press, 1993], 470)

⁹⁶See H. N. B., "Minot J. Savage, D.D." *Christian Register* (June 1918), 70. Savage often expressed disgust with his past orthodoxy: "I was brought up to believe so vividly and earnestly in these [Calvinistic] ideas that, when I was thirteen and fourteen years of age, I passed through such horrors as a thousand deaths would not match, crying myself to sleep night after night, getting up in the darkness alone and praying to God to show me the way, to help me, to let me find out whether I had been saved or not--weeks and months of horror and fear." (Minot J. Savage, "Why Unitarianism Is Needed," *Unity Pulpit* [April 14, 1893], 14)

⁹⁷Savage did not question his seminary training at first, but "by the year 1870. . . having had time to devote myself fully to the study of the subject, I became an earnest, out-and-out evolutionist and Darwinian." (Savage, "The Irresistible Conflict Between Two World-Theories," *Unity Pulpit* [February 5, 1892], 5) Yet he always argued, on scientific and philosophical grounds, for a somewhat deistic world-view (without supernatural revelation or miracles). See his *Belief in God*:

two years (1873-74).

After quickly making a name for himself in Chicago, Savage moved to Boston to pastor the Church of the Unity (1874-96).⁹⁸ It was here that Kenyon sat under Savage (we do not know exactly when or for how long, but since Kenyon moved to Boston sometime in 1892 and left in May 1893, his attendance falls within that range). Savage's sophisticated exposition of liberal theology gained for him a large audience and wide respect, but he was just as outspoken concerning his other personal interest: spiritism.⁹⁹

Savage was first drawn to psychic phenomena as a boy, but his interest in communication with the dead grew such that in 1885 he joined the Society for Psychical Research.¹⁰⁰ More dramatically, in 1891 he helped *found* the American Psychical Society--of which he was the first president. One of the most interesting aspects of his involvement with this latter group is that another of the three co-founders was Benjamin O. Flower, a speaker for the International

an Examination of Some Fundamental Theistic Problems (Boston: G. H. Ellis, 1881); *Evolution and Religion, from the Standpoint of One who Believes in Both* (Philadelphia: G. H. Buchanan and Co., 1886).

⁹⁸H. N. B., "Savage," 70. His weekly sermons were published while he was in Boston (in the *Unity Pulpit*) and afterwards in New York (*Messiah Pulpit*).

⁹⁹Although Savage's occult involvement has escaped the notice of all Kenyon scholars and nearly all Unitarian and biographical accounts of Savage, this characteristic was known to his contemporaries: one Unitarian historian duly recognized "Minot J. Savage's excursions into spiritualism." (Wright, 108)

¹⁰⁰Savage relates that the Society of Psychical Research, which included thinkers like Josiah Royce and William James, "was organized in England in the year 1882. It was organized in this country--and I was one of its corporate members, having studied facts that it proposed to investigate for years before it was organized--in the year 1885." (Savage, *Life After Death. . . Whether It Can Be Demonstrated as a Fact* [NY: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1901], 251, cf. 252) Notice also Savage's boyhood paranormal experiences, later physical levitations, and seances held in his study at his Boston church (295-296, 301, 321).

Metaphysical League.¹⁰¹ Flower was best known as editor of *Arena*, a popular journal of social, literary, and religious issues which was broadly eclectic (discussions included spiritism, theosophy, eastern religion, Christian Science, mesmerism, palmistry, astrology and the like) and in fact leaned strongly toward a mind-science perspective.

Arena swallowed up mental-science periodicals like H. W. Dresser's *Journal of Practical Metaphysics* and Paul Tyner's *Temple*, and its editorial staff occasionally included New Thought leaders like Dresser and C. B. Patterson. Articles about mind-cure regularly appeared, often by recognized leaders in the movement. Flower himself read and recommended metaphysical literature.¹⁰² He published articles in *Arena* by Savage on spiritism and the transcendental poets on a fairly regular basis beginning with the very first issue in 1889.¹⁰³ Through his close association with Flower, Savage would surely have become familiar with basic mind-science concepts.

¹⁰¹Frank Luther Mott, *A History of American Magazines: 1885-1905* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1957), 407-408. Flower lectured at the 1900 convention of the I. M. L. (H. W. Dresser, *A History of the New Thought Movement* [NY: T. Y. Crowell, 1919], 198)

¹⁰²Mott, 404, 407-408, 414, 416. For New Thought examples, see: Henry Wood, "Healing Through Mind," *Arena* 4(1891), 530-542, and "Auto-Suggestion and Concentration," *Arena* 8(1895), 136-144; Edward P. Sheldon, "The Music of the Soul," *Arena* 5(1892), 241-242; C. A. Bartol, "Faith in God," *Arena* 5(1892), 50-60; Ella Wheeler Wilcox, "Theosophy," *Arena* 6(1893), 472-480; Paul Tyner, "Sixth Sense," *Arena* 7(1894), 36-49. Flower especially recommends books by Dresser and Lilian Whiting (*Arena* 8[1895], 351f, 165f). Hence *Arena* was "a New Thought periodical." (Martin Gardner, *The Healing Revelations of Mary Baker Eddy* [NY: Prometheus Press, 1993], 165)

¹⁰³See Savage, "Agencies That Are Working A Revolution In Theology," (*Arena* 1[1889], 1-15); "Psychical Research, Some Interesting Cases," (*Arena* 5[1892], 405-416); also his articles on "Browning," "Lowell," and "Whitman," (*Arena* 7[1894], 273-288, 433-445, 705-718).

In fact we know that during Kenyon's stay in Boston, Savage preached on Transcendentalism, Spiritism, and Mind-Cure.¹⁰⁴ In the latter respect (although he evidently did not *practice* mental healing), Savage openly communicated his enthusiasm for the prospects for mind-cure (in its more rational forms) and even gave expositions of its basic concepts. In one sermon, Savage quotes from Warren Felt Evans, whom he recognizes as one of the most prominent and sensible writers on mental healing. The passage Savage renders from Evans is especially direct in its explanation of mind-cure on the basis of metaphysical idealism. Evans' position is that since the body is formed in the likeness of one's spiritual image, disease is simply a manifestation of one's state of consciousness; change the idea and healing results. Savage applauds this approach to mental healing in contrast with Eddy's Christian Science.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁴On the transcendentalism of Browning, Lowell, Whitman, Whittier, and Tennyson, see Savage, "The Lately Dead Poets as Prophets of the Larger Faith," *Unity Pulpit* (November 18, 1892), 1-16. On his spiritist views, see "Possible Conditions of a Future Life," *Unity Pulpit* (April 7, 1893), 1-13. On his mental-science views, see "Mind Cure," *Unity Pulpit* (November 11, 1892), 1-15.

¹⁰⁵This passage from Savage's lecture captures his view:

One of the most prominent writers on the subject, and one of the most sensible, it seems to me, is Dr. W. F. Evans, author of 'The Divine Law of Cure.' I wish to read to you just a word as setting forth what he regards as the basic principle of his teaching:

The present volume is an attempt to construct a theoretical and practical system of phrenopathy, or mental cure, on the basis of the idealistic philosophy of Berkeley, Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel. Its fundamental doctrine is that to think and to exist are one and the same, and that every disease is the translation into a bodily expression of a fixed idea of the mind and a morbid way of thinking. If by any therapeutic you remove the morbid idea, which is the spiritual image after the likeness of which the body is formed, you cure the malady.

You see very plainly, then, the nature of the claims that are made. These, in light of some of the claims put forth by Mrs. Eddy, seem very calm and sensible. (Savage, "Mind Cure," *Unity Pulpit* [November 11, 1892], 4)

As sermon preparation, he took care to personally consult with a local mental healer, whose views he concluded to be reasonable. He was especially pleased with her explanation of human potential in terms of dominion and mastery of one's physical condition, wherein mind is "king." Without endorsing her officially, Savage remarked that, (again) in contrast with Eddy's Christian Science, the views of the mental healer were "extremely satisfactory," even "magnificent."¹⁰⁶ He felt that the power of mind-cure was unlimited and predicted that it had the potential, when finally realized by humanity, to some day rid the world completely of disease.¹⁰⁷

Beyond his explicit references to mental healing, Savage also shared, by virtue of his Transcendentalist leanings, metaphysical religion's view of health via harmony with nature as well as its panentheistic/immanent view of God and nature.¹⁰⁸ Savage also emphasized, like New

¹⁰⁶Savage gives an especially lucid account of Christian Science, which he rejects on the basis of its denial of the existence of matter. To this he adds,

It would not be fair to the representatives of mind cure to leave this description of the beliefs of Mrs. Eddy as an accurate representation of them. During the last week I had a long and careful conversation, with this sermon in view, with one of the best and most rational representatives of the mind cure; and I assure you that it was in almost every respect extremely satisfactory. . . . she makes the magnificent claim that, though these [matter, disease] exist, mind is king. . . of these physical conditions, above all health and disease, and that the mind has the power to cut off the supply of these morbid conditions, and to rally and call back the healthful forces of the system, and so dominate and rule all this kingdom of the physical. (ibid., 5-6)

¹⁰⁷"What limit is there to this power of the mind over its kingdom, the body?" "What is the limit of the power that can be exercised under this condition [mental suggestion]? It is apparently unlimited." "But I believe that the mind has power such as we are only beginning to dream of as yet. And by and by. . . that day shall come when the inhabitants of the earth shall no more say, I am sick. . . ." (ibid, 8, 9, 15)

¹⁰⁸"Let me obey the universal laws perfectly, and. . . I am in perfect health. Let me come into perfect accord with it mentally. . . . Let me come into right relations with it spiritually [too]." (Savage, *Pillars of the Temple* [Boston: American Unitarian Assoc., 1904], 22 cf. 26) "And, when I look out on this universe. . . why should I not in some large way think of it as the body of God, who

Thought, the potential incarnation of the divine in all humanity.¹⁰⁹

In addition to expressing his appreciation of mental science in his sermons, Savage was an early speaker for the Metaphysical Club of Boston in 1895.¹¹⁰ By sitting under Savage's preaching, Kenyon undoubtedly ingested heavy doses of Transcendentalism, Spiritism, and even mind-science.

Some objections considered

In this chapter we have surveyed the intellectual environment in which E. W. Kenyon labored while in Boston, documenting the many avenues of influence through which metaphysical religion reached Kenyon. Despite the overwhelming evidence of Kenyon's historical connection to mind-science, there are two particular objections to our assertions that must be considered.

is everywhere, omnipresent?" (ibid., 30) We "no longer hold to the old dualism between God and the universe. We do not say God *and* nature, God outside and the creator of nature. We say God *in* nature and through the universe. . . ." (Savage, "The Death of Unitarianism," *Unity Pulpit* [April 18, 1890], 5) In appreciation of Tennyson's "The Higher Pantheism," Savage finds "God in the clouds, God in the brooks, God in the leaves, God in the mountain." ("God Out of Doors," *Unity Pulpit* [June 14, 1895], 12 cf. 14)

¹⁰⁹If clergy "mean something else by that use of the word 'Christ,' why do they not publicly explain it? . . . The Christ that is talked about by the Christian Scientists and by nine-tenths of the people means simply the great ideal of the perfect humanity. . . ." (Savage, "Dr. Gordon's Book, 'The Christ of To-day,'" *Unity Pulpit* [November 22, 1895], 19) Every "man that ever lived was a child of God, and revealed and incarnated just so much of God as he had grown into the ability to appreciate." (Savage, "God's Incarnation In the World and In the Human Race," *Unity Pulpit* [December 27, 1895], 10)

Again, we do not accept that dualism which makes a break between either God or man and Jesus. Jesus is of like nature with God, and he is also of like nature with man. We do not believe there is any difference in kind--so far as spiritual nature is concerned--either between us and Jesus or between Jesus and God: it is only a difference of degree." (Savage, "Death," 6)

¹¹⁰Dresser, *History*, 182.

(1) Objection: The fact that Kenyon only stayed at Emerson for one academic year may indicate that he did not approve of the teaching he was receiving. After all, why did he leave after his freshman year?

In answer to this, we can offer several replies. First, Emerson College was only a two-year school; Kenyon went through half of their program. The program was intense so that it could be completed in a shorter time than in other schools (classes were every morning, Monday through Saturday). There were three semesters in an academic year at ECO; after the fall semester Kenyon willingly returned for the winter and spring sessions.¹¹¹

Second, a great proportion of students only took half of the program, and did not return for a second year. This was especially the case for Kenyon's class; in 1893 the school suffered a degree controversy that brought about terrible media repercussions. It was made public that the "bachelor" degrees ECO awarded were not truly equivalent to those of accredited academic institutions, and a substantial amount of public scorn was directed at the college. This had a very practical effect on the value of an ECO diploma, deterring many students from returning for the 1893-94 year.¹¹²

Third, and probably the most significant factor in his case, Kenyon married in May 1893. Now responsible for supporting a new bride, Kenyon immediately relocated to accept a pastorate at a church in Worcester Massachusetts. This factor alone more than accounts for Kenyon's failure to

¹¹¹*Emerson College Catalog 1892-93*, 10, 35. There was a third year offered for "graduate" studies.

¹¹²In a comparison of enrollment lists, for instance, we find that 123 of the freshmen in 1891-92 returned to ECO the following year while 96 did not. So over 43% of the freshman class did not return for 1892-93. The situation worsened the next year: see "The Great Degree Controversy," chap. 8 in Coffee and Wentworth, 97-109.

re-enroll at ECO the following year.¹¹³

(2) Objection: Just because Kenyon went to Emerson College, it does not follow that he accepted their teachings. Even if there was intense interaction between faculty and students and Kenyon was influenced somewhat at the time, isn't it possible that after leaving the school Kenyon renounced it and all it stood for, and had nothing more whatsoever to do with its persons or principles?

There is evidence to the contrary. After Kenyon opened his own school, he made one of his former Emerson classmates, Francis Bernauer, president of his institution. Moreover, Kenyon developed an elocution department at Bethel modeled after Emerson's, to which he gave a central place in his curriculum.¹¹⁴ He hired Margaret Koch, a graduate of ECO's sister school, Columbia College of Expression in Chicago (founded by ECO alumni and recommended by Emerson himself¹¹⁵), to run his oratory department. Koch refers approvingly, in articles in Kenyon's magazine,

¹¹³The bride, Kenyon's first wife, was Eva Spurling (Simmons, 55). She died in February 1914 "after being ill for several years and in continual and increasingly severe pain," and Kenyon was remarried, to Alice M. Whitney, in November of the same year (*Reality* [February 1914], 31; [December 1914], 100).

¹¹⁴Bernauer also studied at Columbia in Chicago (see n. 115 below). Kenyon was proud of his Oratory department: "Bethel stands alone in this Department among the educational Institutions of the Country. We have the strongest course of Oratory or Expression of any Institution outside the regular schools designed for that Study." (*Reality* [midsummer 1913], 81) His school "has placed at the basis of all its work, a very fine system of Expression, Physical Culture and Voice Culture." [Notice Koch is using the same monikers as Emerson. Physical Culture, as we have noted, was Emerson's system based on the mind's mastery of the body for health.] (Margaret Koch, "New Department at Bethel," *Reality* [February 1912], 94-95)

¹¹⁵Columbia was "really an outgrowth of Emerson College." (*Emerson College Magazine* [February 1893], 50) An official historian of Columbia reported that its founders, ECO alumni Mary A. Blood and Ida Morey Riley, "were eager to establish a school patterned after" ECO, and that the "school's curriculum closely followed that of the founders' Alma Mater," ECO. (Theodore V. Kundrat, "Columbia College in Retrospect: Part One" *Columbia College Alumni News* [n.d., ca.

not only to former ECO faculty but to the writings of Charles Wesley Emerson himself. In fact, Koch *specifically mentions Kenyon's high view of Emerson College*. Simmons, noting these facts, acknowledges that nowhere does Kenyon ever speak a word against Emerson College or his studies there.¹¹⁶ All of this demonstrates that Kenyon did nothing to distance himself from his "Emerson Experience."

Finally, the fact that metaphysical thoughts taught at ECO later surfaced in his own writings indicates Kenyon's acceptance of those ideas. This last point will be the subject of chapter four.

Conclusion

We have seen that instructors at Emerson College, including C. W. Emerson and R. W. Trine--as well as newly considered faculty such as Rev. Solon Lauer and Leland Powers--were not only in the position to influence Kenyon, but indeed taught (in various stages of development) the core elements of metaphysical religion. Even the student body, particularly Kenyon's previously overlooked classmates William Spinney and Elbert Hubbard, was inclined towards mental science--and a number of them officially became Christian Scientists. We have also documented the new

1986], n.p.)

Blood's oratory text was "inspired by the Emerson system," and was recommended by C. W. Emerson (*Emerson College Magazine* [December 1893], 32). Blood in turn used Emerson's text in conjunction with hers at Columbia (*Emerson College Catalog 1891-92*, 54). Blood's sister, Hattie, also an ECO alumna (1890-2), joined the Columbia College faculty in 1901. (Kundrat, "Part Two," n.p.)

¹¹⁶Simmons, 43, 209. Koch quotes Mary Ann Blood, co-founder of Columbia and former ECO instructor, in "New Department," 95. Koch herself refers to reading "Dr. Emerson." (Margaret Koch, "Expression," *Reality* [May-June 1913], 92) She remarked, "Six years ago I met Mr. Kenyon. He had studied at the Emerson College of Oratory and knew the value and power in the work. He asked me to come to Bethel to teach." (Koch, "An Outside and Inside View at Bethel," *Reality* [February 1912], 106-107)

discovery of the transcendental mind-cure leanings of Kenyon's one-time pastor, Minot J. Savage.

Given the historical evidence, we arrive at the conclusion that E. W. Kenyon was introduced, while at Emerson College, to many of the core components of mind-science. These included the concepts of (1) the causative, creative nature of mind, and to some extent, of spoken words; (2) the might of mind in relation to body; (3) the essentially divine nature of humanity, consciousness of which defines faith; (4) and human potential as mastery or dominion over one's world.

It is not a matter of coincidence that these were the very concepts that Kenyon subsequently claimed he rediscovered as supposedly lost doctrines of early Christianity. In terms of historical probability, the burden of proof now lies squarely on the shoulders of whomever would claim that he was not influenced by mind-science while at Emerson College.¹¹⁷ It is plainly the case that metaphysical religion was *an integral part* of E. W. Kenyon's "Emerson Experience."

During this time seeds were planted, deep and dormant. While it is unclear what subsequent events or encounters ultimately drew it to the surface, later in life a metaphysical growth overtook his theological garden.

In the next chapter, we will show that Kenyon's aforementioned historical associations correspond with core areas of his mature religious philosophy, particularly in relation to human potential. The seeds had taken root, and inevitably they bore fruit.

¹¹⁷Kinnebrew states our point very well:

To believe that Kenyon remained uninfluenced by New Thought philosophy during this time would require an immense amount of credulity. . . . Undoubtedly, Kenyon's being in the haven of New Thought at the turn of the century had much to do with his recovering this 'vital' doctrine [positive affirmation] for the church at large. (James Kinnebrew, 131)

CHAPTER 4

HUMAN POTENTIAL AND E. W. KENYON

Our purpose in this chapter is to show that E. W. Kenyon's view of human potential is essentially identical to that of metaphysical religion in certain areas. As a follow-up to the previous chapter's historical case, we will compare Kenyon's publications with the mind-science literature to demonstrate the human potential concepts shared by both. Kenyon's own explanations of his views, when compared to those of mind-cure, reveal an underlying identity.

In combination with the historical evidence, this approach provides an overall inductive argument for the classification of Kenyon's religious thought. We contend that the evidence, both historical and literary, requires that Kenyon cannot be classed neatly within either evangelical Christianity or metaphysical religion. Kenyon does not fully embrace either traditional faith-cure or metaphysical mind-cure; his is a unique blend of the two.¹

This chapter will consist of five parts: (1) evidence that Kenyon continued the "Emerson example" by reading metaphysical literature; comparisons of Kenyon's and mind-science's view of human potential in terms of (2) mind, (3) might, and (4) mastery; and (5) considerations of potential objections to our thesis. We now turn to part one, in which we document a few examples of how Kenyon's historical connection to mental science appears in some of his references to other writers.

¹The implications of such a characterization of Kenyon in terms of the truth-value of his claims is beyond our scope. Our approach to religious classification is historical rather than normative.

Beyond Boston: the Emerson Example Continues

We have already shown in the previous chapter that Kenyon never renounced his "Emerson Experience," and in fact even gathered others who had this type of background around him. We also discussed Emerson's mission and method (to produce preachers of the "real gospel" of health); it was this single purpose--the promotion of a superior expression of religion--that came to characterize Kenyon.

Kenyon's literary references

Kenyon felt it was his mission to produce and promote a "new type of Christianity" that met the real needs of real people. He was aware that this was the appeal of mental science, and did not mind claiming superiority in this regard. Sometimes this tendency showed up in his literature. For instance, in a possible allusion to one of his mind-science competitors, Kenyon refers to his teachings as the genuine "practical Christianity" (to which the Unity School of Christianity was presumably a pretender).² If Unity really was his intended reference, it might imply that he saw his teachings supplementing what faith-cure lacked with mind-cure.

Kenyon referred to mental healing groups, but he usually did so for the purpose of shaming

²Kenyon said *his* magazine would be "practical Christianity," (*Reality* [May 1903], 24), although that had been the subtitle of one of the largest circulating mental science periodicals, *Unity*, since 1895. The phrase had become popularly associated with Unity by 1902 (Tyner, 315), and the Unity Society of Practical Christianity had been incorporated earlier in the same year that Kenyon made this reference. See "What is Practical Christianity?" in *Unity* (April 1897), 346-347. Additionally, a Society of Practical Christianity (St. Louis, Mo.), founded in 1898 by Dr. H. H. Schroeder, circulated a magazine with the subtitle "Practical Christianity" (Louise M. Brooks, *Early History of Divine Science* [Denver: First Divine Science Church, 1963], 125; cf ad in *New Man* March/April 1898, 32).

the church at large, and often attempted to distance himself from them. With the exception of Mary Baker Eddy, he never referred to mental healers by name; all references to such groups were ultimately critical.³ (To what extent such disclaimers actually distance Kenyon from mind-cure will be discussed in the conclusion of this chapter.) Kenyon almost never cited his sources, and on the rare occasion he did they were names that his evangelical audience would be comfortable with.⁴ He never approvingly quoted writers who were *well-known* as mind-scientists in any of his writings.

Occasionally he slipped. Although the connections were probably unknown to his audience, at least two of the authors Kenyon *approvingly* quoted had affinities to metaphysical religion.

E. Stanley Jones

Although the popular mainline writer E. Stanley Jones (1884-1973) is not typically recognized as an advocate of mental-science, at least one major religious studies scholar has

³This is true of Kenyon's *published* statements; McConnell gathered testimony from acquaintances of Kenyon's who reported that Kenyon privately acknowledged indebtedness to Christian Science in particular (McConnell, 25-26). One former follower reports that Kenyon privately "admitted that he freely drew the water of his thinking from this well [Christian Science]." (John Kennington, "E. W. Kenyon and the Metaphysics of Christian Science" [letter dated 8 July 1986], 1) Kennington recalls Kenyon's view of the ideal-thought realm: "In conversation [Kenyon] described. . . demons and angels in general as thoughts rather than as personalities." (idem, "An addendum to my brief comments on E. W. Kenyon" [letter dated 24 August 1994], 1) This explains why Kenyon said disease was caused by demons on one hand, and by negative thinking on the other.

⁴In his periodicals Kenyon occasionally referred to "Higher Life" faith-healers (see n. 87 below) but usually without quoting them. References were most rare in his books. In the second edition (1938) of his first book, *The Father and the Family*, Kenyon prefaced each chapter with quotes from various religious writers like A. J. Gordon, George Campbell Morgan, and Henry Ward Beecher. In his first correspondence course, *The Bible in the Light of our Redemption*, Kenyon quotes from Charles Urquhart (95), Henry Clay Trumball (65f., 95), Nathan Wood (249) and other evangelicals. Yet Kenyon also quotes approvingly therein from thinkers outside traditional Christianity like Unitarian Richard A. Armstrong (298), John Langdon-Davies and Edward H. Cotton (293).

categorized him as such.⁵ Jones had studied the Hindu Ashrams while in India and, due to his deep appreciation of eastern wisdom, afterwards established a Christian Ashram in America. He was best known for his devotional-inspirational works.⁶ The passage from Jones that Kenyon quotes is completely unrelated to mind-cure,⁷ but the reference at least indicates that Kenyon read Jones' material--much of which had strong metaphysical religious overtones. Jones clearly taught the concept of mind's causative power over the body in healing, and stressed the importance of positive

⁵As a result of Ralph Waldo Trine's presentation of New Thought, or Harmonialism, "a new genre of American religious literature had been created. . . . Between 1900 and 1960 writer after writer found himself 'in tune with Trine' [and in]. . . . the stream of this optimistic inspirational literature." One of the most significant examples Ahlstrom identifies as E. Stanley Jones. (Sydney Ahlstrom, "Harmonial Religion since the Later Nineteenth Century," in *A Religious History of the American People* [New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1972], 1031) Jones took a "careful, liberal, positive thinking approach" and "stood in the tradition of Protestant liberalism." ("Eli Stanley Jones," in Charles H. Lippy, ed., *Twentieth-Century Shapers of American Popular Religion* [NY: Greenwood Press, 1989], 206, 207)

⁶Although associated with the Methodist church, Jones is most often recognized as an "interdenominational, itinerant teacher-evangelist." He was so impressed upon meeting Ghandi that Jones considered the Mahatma a "nearly pure expression of the virtue of the very Christ whom he [Jones] preached in his ministry." (Lippy, 205) His first book, accordingly, was *The Christ of the Indian Road* (1925). Jones

was by no means merely an 'inspirationalist,' yet [his]. . . works have proved beyond a shadow of a doubt that liberal theology, deep respect for other religions (especially modern Hinduism), strong ecumenical interests, and active participation in Methodist church life by no means need keep a man from publishing a large literature on personal peace and power. (Ahlstrom, 1032)

This "personal power" genre Ahlstrom classifies as a tributary of harmonial religion or New Thought (1031).

⁷E. W. Kenyon, *The Father and His Family*, 96. Though absent in the 1916 edition, the printings from 1938 and after include short passages from various writers at the beginning of each chapter identifying the author but not the reference.

thinking and affirmation.⁸

Like Kenyon, Jones tended to replace prayer (especially the petitionary type) with autosuggestion. Faith was typically defined as expectancy of desired conditions; also like Kenyon, Jones taught that God had faith and that humans could tap into that force for creative power. The result was mastery of one's world.⁹

Aside from the lack of faith (fear), the greatest obstacle to achieving this potential mastery was said to be failure to recognize one's true spiritual nature. One must especially overcome negative thinking and inferiority images. The real man was not the body; the kingdom of God was within, so that one's power became virtually unlimited. Upon realization of this Reality, potential could be actualized.¹⁰ Yet, with all their similarities, Kenyon is not as remarkably aligned to Jones

⁸To relate negative thinking to disease, Jones pointed to a biblical verse that mind-curists often used: "'The thing which I greatly feared is come upon me,' said Job; and that was not chance, but cause and effect." Many "are passing on their mental and spiritual sicknesses to their bodies." (Jones, *Abundant Living* [NY: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1942], 66, v) "The life of Jesus is revealed in our bodies as health. The life of anger and fear and self-centeredness is revealed in our bodies as disease." (Jones, *A Song of Ascents: A Spiritual Autobiography* [NY: Abingdon Press, 1968], 339) Jones was healed of "nervous exhaustion" in 1917, but did not claim all sickness must be cured in this life. (330, 336)

⁹Jones recommends various positive autosuggestions, the practice of which is "a healthy thing, for you are suggesting to yourself the highest instead of the lowest." (*Abundant*, 227; cf. 31, 79, 104) Autosuggestion is said to be a means of divine healing because "God works in the area of the subconscious." (Jones quoted by reviewer in *Pastoral Psychology* 2 [February 1952], 7)

"Faith is expectancy." Jones instructs his readers to use their faith "with God's faith. Your faith and God's flow together, and hence can do anything." "Very often when I can't have faith in my faith, I have to have faith in His faith. He makes me believe in myself and my possibilities." "You and I are made in our inmost being. . . to master our circumstances, to create." (*Abundant*, 40, 78, 79, 101)

¹⁰"The real man is the man with the Kingdom of God written within him." All "the powers of the Kingdom center in you--a Universe speaks when you speak; a Universe acts when you act." One must "realize that all negativism and inferiorities are unnatural. . . . Don't admit, even to yourself, let alone to anyone else, that you are inferior." (*ibid.*, 208, 112, 104; for numerous references to the

as he is to the next figure we will consider.

Elwin L. House

A more significant example is Kenyon's approving quotation of Elwin L. House (1861-1932). After pastoring Methodist Episcopal churches in New England from 1883 until 1892, House entered the Congregational ministry. From 1893-1902 he served churches in New England, followed by churches in the Pacific Northwest from 1902-1913. House earned degrees from Harvard, Boston University School of Theology, and Furman. From 1913 and onward, he was a writer and lecturer on psychology of religion, while remaining involved in denominational leadership.¹¹

As we mentioned above, it was rare for Kenyon to mention his sources, even rarer to provide a reference, and almost never was such an occasion attended with an approving remark (this was perhaps due to his view of himself as the unique bearer of a superior religious approach). Nevertheless, Kenyon quoted a passage from House on the nature of the subconscious mind and added, "Here he comes very close to the real truth of the subject,"¹² which is perhaps the highest compliment Kenyon (in his later, metaphysical stage of thought) ever paid to another writer outside

spiritual realm as "Reality" [mind-science and Kenyon used the term the same way--*Reality* was Kenyon's magazine], see 85, 195, 205, 214, 326)

¹¹"House, Elwin Lincoln," in *Who Was Who in America: A Companion Volume to Who's Who in America 1897-1942* (Chicago: The A. N. Marquis Co., 1942), 1:592.

¹²House, *The Psychology of Orthodoxy* (NY: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1913), 62, quoted in Kenyon, *The Hidden Man: The New Self, an Unveiling of the Subconscious Mind*. Compiled and edited by Ruth Kenyon Housworth. 15th ed. (Seattle: Kenyon's Gospel Publishing Society, 1970 [1955]), 79-80. The passage Kenyon quotes from House makes reference to the Proverb, "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he," which was a favored proof-text among New Thinkers--e.g., Kenyon's classmate Elbert Hubbard (cf chapter 3 n. 81).

the apostle Paul.¹³

It is significant that Kenyon read House, and especially that Kenyon appreciated his philosophy of mind. House defined the human trichotomy as Kenyon did, relegating the body to the status of the mere house for the soul and spirit.¹⁴ The intellectual mind (psyche or soulish mind) was also contrasted with the mind of the spirit (pneuma or real self) which is divine.¹⁵ Like Kenyon, House viewed his own writings as a revolutionary recovery of Jesus' forgotten teaching--which, when fully realized, would elevate the believer to a state of divine mastery.¹⁶ House likewise was

¹³As noted in chapter one, Kenyon claimed that even Luther, Calvin, Wesley, etc., had only part of the truth; Kenyon fully restored the remainder.

¹⁴One "has a body, soul (mind), and spirit." (House, *Psychology*, 46, cf. 77) One's "mind is a trinity, conscious, subconscious, and superconscious." (55)

What makes the reality of man? It is not the body, which is. . . . [only] the house he lives in. It is not the soul, which is the rational part of man, and which involves the purely intellectual processes of life. It is the spirit that makes the reality of man; that which is the unchanging divine part of man's being. Body is the seat of sense-consciousness; soul is the seat of self-consciousness; while spirit is the seat of God-consciousness. (*Face*, 36)

"Man has a body, but he is a spirit; a spirit in prison." (38)

¹⁵"This superconscious mind. . . . is the 'pneuma' (spirit) mind, as over against the 'psyche' (soulish or mental) mind. . . ." (House, *The Mind of God* [NY: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1917], 13) "The superconscious mind is the mind of the spirit. It is God in you." (House, *The Drama of the Face, and Other Studies in Applied Psychology* [NY: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1919], 232) "The spirit is the image of God, one in essence with the Infinite Spirit." (*Psychology*, 46) "Man is. . . part of the very being of God." (195) "We may call it the God principle, the Christ within us, the divine principle, the spirit force. But I prefer to call it the superconscious mind." (77, cf. 89)

¹⁶"Startling, indeed, are some of the new truths brought forth in this volume!" (House, *Mind*, 7) "Hence the truth seeker will find a disposition to enter new fields of theological inquiry, and will change and modify creeds for the betterment of the race." (*Psychology*, 34) "Turning to the methods of Jesus' healing, we find that Jesus used a touch, a word of command, telepathy and suggestion." (*How to Heal Ones Self and Others* [NY: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1924], 119) These truths have been obscured in modern times. "Our age has become INTOXICATED WITH MATERIALISM, and we do not know it. . . . What can save us? Nothing but reality. THE MAN OF REALITY is the call of the hour." (*Face*, 35-36) The "man of reality will gain the mastery over the material." (40) We "recognize that

highly conversant (and sympathetic) with New Thought principles¹⁷ and described metaphysical religion as a competitive challenge through which lost truth was being restored to the church.¹⁸

House offered the same distinctions as Kenyon did in order to avoid being labeled a mind-curist.¹⁹

The means of personal power--might and mastery--were also explained by House as higher self-

we can be sovereigns--that we are not worms of the dust or inferior beings. We are to walk triumphant; we are to be masters of the body." (*Heal*, 196)

¹⁷House refers to mind-science writers like Thomas J. Hudson, John Brooks Leavitt, and Ella Wheeler Wilcox (*Psychology*, 56, 105, 172). No doubt due to House's grasp of metaphysical religion, one Christian Scientist offered to recommend House as a lecturer for the Mother Church in Boston (*Heal*, 147). House hoped that "the doctor of the future will be a metaphysician. . . ." (56), and that application of his teaching will make one "a master mind in metaphysics." (197) House identified his own teaching as an explanation of metaphysics: "This is one of the laws of metaphysics: Get your mind upon a thing, and you will attract it to you, as well as create it." (*Face*, 234-5)

Metaphysics, then, teaches how we may operate the law by the thoughts we think. It tells us that thoughts become things. It also shows that by using the law rightly and working in harmony with it, we can be freed from many limitations that are now upon us. (*Heal*, 187)

¹⁸The new metaphysical healing movement

has the well-being of the body among its particular teachings. The Church has been slow to note this, and its effects upon certain classes of people and Church members. Instead of helping to solve and direct this new movement, the Church has opposed it or been indifferent. It takes no prophet to see if the Church does not awake to the situation, there will come another exodus out of the Church and that God will raise up a new movement as He has in the past. (*Heal*, 47)

House endeavored to meet this challenge by incorporating the forgotten truths of New Thought into orthodox Christianity; this would be "spiritual metaphysics." "To teach Spiritual metaphysics, the New Testament was written, telling us. . . . how one may control and use the mind in its wholeness for healing and happiness today." (199, cf. 191) The title of one of House's booklets, *Tuning to the Infinite* (1913) was a take-off on R. W. Trine's New Thought bestseller, *In Tune with the Infinite* (1897).

¹⁹We will argue that these are "distinctions without a difference" in the last section of this chapter wherein we consider objections to our identification of key elements of Kenyon's thought with those of mental science.

consciousness and positive affirmation.²⁰

All of this--and more--is found in House before it is reflected in Kenyon. In fact, there is so much in House which parallels (and historically precedes) Kenyon, it is quite possible that House served as the catalyst for Kenyon's later shift in religious thought. In House, Kenyon encountered a thinker with traditionally acceptable religious affiliations who was able to combine mind-cure and faith-cure; House's metaphysical mixture certainly uses many of the same ingredients as Kenyon's.²¹ Whether Kenyon read House *before* developing his own syncretistic system or afterwards, the parallels in their writings are remarkable and abundant.

We now turn to an analysis of Kenyon's view of human potential in terms of his concepts of mind, spiritual power or might, and human mastery or dominion. Within these three categories--mind, might, and mastery--we will explore Kenyon's "metaphysical" emphases.

²⁰"I like affirmation because it is positive. . . . Jesus always speaks in the affirmative." (House, *Psychology*, 219) He claimed that "Jesus used affirmations. . . . Affirmation is a statement of your possibilities in oneness with God. It is recognizing the ideal to be made real. It is seeing the perfect man, the healthy man you are reaching after in your thought." (*Face*, 235) "Your achievement will never rise higher than your real self-faith." (236) House gives a list of suggested affirmations, as Kenyon often does. "I am in harmony with God; the Infinite Health is mine; the Infinite Substance is my constant supply." (*Psychology*, 232) Affirm "that there is no such thing as sickness in the spirit mind. Say over and over again: 'I am well in spirit'. . . . hold to the fact that the self you are trying to realize is not your conscious self, but your spirit self." (*Face*, 242, cf. 240)

²¹It should be noted that House was more open about his debt to New Thought and adopted extreme elements of mind-science which Kenyon did not share. These include a Theosophical view of "auras" (*Face*, 110), an acceptance of paranormal activity such as mental telepathy and "absent" treatment (*Mind*, 74, 84; *Face*, 111, 240), and a characterization of God as both person and principle (*Mind*, 111, 123, 126; *Heal*, 178). House did not accept the traditional view of the Trinity (*The Supreme Christ* [NY: Fleming H. Revell, 1928], 90-91).

Mind

Contrary to what some have implied, the association of Kenyon with mental science is not founded merely on surface semantic similarities.²² It is not a case of his thought being confused with metaphysical religion merely on account of their use of the same phrases. On the contrary, Kenyon sometimes attempts to distinguish himself from his competition by the use of different terms--but it is his meaning that is the same as mind-cure. Although they use different words, mind-curists and Kenyon often convey the same basic message. Therein lies the identity between mind-science and Kenyon. We can demonstrate the meaning of words by the definitions given by the writers.

A case in point is the word "mind," which can have diverse meanings in various contexts. Kenyon uses the term mind in two distinct ways: (1) as referring solely to the human faculty of reason and rationality; and (2) as referring to the larger consciousness of spirit and the spirit-ideal realm (Reality).

Mind and rationality

When referring to the purely rational cognitive aspects of mind, Kenyon is always critical of mere "mental assent."²³ This, he says, is an inadequate substitute for true faith, which is a product

²²Barron has remarked that Kenyon's religious thought, as expressed by contemporary "Faith" teachers like Kenneth Hagin and Kenneth Copeland, is too hastily identified with Christian Science by critics who ignore the distinctions the teachers themselves make between their thought and Eddy's. (Bruce Barron, *Health and Wealth*, 65, cf. 61, 71) We consider those proposed distinctions and answer this objection at length at the end of this chapter.

²³See "Mental Assent," subtopic in "Some Enemies of Faith," chapter 6 in Kenyon, *Two Kinds of Faith: Faith's Secret Revealed* (Seattle: Kenyon's Gospel Publishing Society, 1969 [1942]), 32-33; cf. "Mental Assent," subtopic in chapter 7 in Kenyon, *The Wonderful Name of Jesus* (Seattle:

of the spirit.²⁴ The "natural man," or unbeliever, has only this avenue of knowledge: the testimony of the senses and what the mind reasons about said data. Belief based on sensory evidence is "sense knowledge," faith in which is the natural outcome of limited human reason.²⁵ This epistemological schema is identified by Kenyon as the major problem facing Christianity. He also offers this as an explanation of his competitors' means of "mental" and/or "sense knowledge" healing.²⁶

Mind and spirit

Kenyon rests the distinction between mind and spirit on the rational-sensory characteristics of cognition described above in contrast with the transcendent-divine potentialities of the (reborn) human spirit. Yet Kenyon has another meaning for "mind" beyond the faculty of reason. He develops a duality of mind in terms of its sources of knowledge and objects of consciousness.

Kenyon's Gospel Publishing Society, 1964 [1927]), 54-55.

²⁴"You will never have faith until you act on the Word of God. You may have Mental Assent. . . but it does no good. You must act on the Word. Step out of the realm of failures into the realm of the successful. Become a dominator of circumstances." (Kenyon, *The Two Kinds of Life: The Biological Miracle of the Age. The Solution of the Social and Economic Problems Facing the Nation* [Lynwood, WA: Kenyon's Gospel Publishing Society, 1971 (1943)], 115)

²⁵"Sense Knowledge is limited to what the Senses are capable of assimilating. . . . [Natural man] can only know what he has experienced through these five channels from the outer world to his brain." "To walk by the Senses is to walk by reason, yours or someone else's." (*The Two Kinds of Knowledge*. [Seattle: Kenyon's Gospel Publishing Society, 1966 (1941)], 24, 54; cf. *Life*, 8)

²⁶"Sense knowledge philosophy has gained the control of the Church. . . ." (Kenyon, *Name*, 53) "Civilization has failed because the type of Christianity we have given it has failed. It was a sense-ruled type. . . ." (Kenyon, *Life*, 1) "Sense Knowledge religions. . . form wonderful philosophical and metaphysical conceptions. . . but back of it there is no reality. They are the product of the knowledge of the senses." (Kenyon, *Knowledge*, 25-26) "The metaphysical religions. . . are born of the senses. . . ." (Kenyon, *New Creation Realities: A Revelation of Redemption* [Seattle: Kenyon's Gospel Publishing Society, 1964 (1945)], 30) Actually, metaphysical religion typically proceeds with the same epistemology as Kenyon proposes here.

Upon spiritual regeneration, the human spirit is recreated but the mind is left in its natural state. The natural mind continues to receive sensory impressions and think accordingly--this is the mind of the senses.²⁷ But if the recreated spirit is allowed to dominate and supply "revelation" knowledge (Reality) to consciousness, the mind is renewed--this is the mind of the spirit.²⁸ The believer's growth is psychological: as the mind realizes the true nature of spirit, it is conscious of Reality.

The recreated human spirit is the heart, the inner man, the real self; but it is also defined by Kenyon as the subconscious mind.²⁹ In fact, the spirit shares a number of characteristics of "mind." The spirit is said to have memory and intuition.³⁰ The spirit and the "mind of the spirit" are both

²⁷"Receiving Eternal Life recreates our spirits, but our minds still receive all their impulses and knowledge through the avenue of the senses." (Kenyon, *Life*, 43) Note Kenyon's reinterpretation of Romans 8:

I saw that the word "flesh" means "Senses". . . . Now read it this way. "For they that are after the Senses have the mind of the Senses, but they that are after the spirit have the mind of the spirit." It is not speaking about the Holy Spirit. It is speaking about our spirit. Seventh verse, "The mind of the flesh (that is the thinking that derives its evidences from the Senses) is at enmity against God." (Kenyon, *Knowledge*, 44)

²⁸"When the mind of the recreated human spirit gains "ascendancy over the renewed mind of the senses, then God can think through us." "Some of us have never known that there were two minds in the believer. There is the Sense Knowledge mind that has dominated us for so long. Then there is the New Mind--the Mind of Christ--the Mind of the recreated spirit." (Kenyon, *Life*, 69)

²⁹"The word 'heart' is another term for 'spirit.' These words are used synonymously." (Kenyon, *The New Kind of Love: The Solution of the Love Problem*. 15th ed. [Seattle: Kenyon's Gospel Publishing Society, 1969 (1942)], 22) "We heard much in psychological discussions about the subconscious mind. . . . Then we discovered that it was nothing but our own spirit." (Kenyon, *Hidden Man*, 25-26) "The psychologist told us that we had a subconscious mind, but it was the spirit, the real man." (Kenyon, *Life*, 90, cf. 100)

³⁰"Memory is of the spirit." (Kenyon, *Life*, 92) "The spirit has a voice. . . . called intuition. We get a hunch and if we follow it we do not make a mistake." (Kenyon, *Faith*, 48)

described by Kenyon as having consciousness.³¹ The key to success is repeatedly explained as a matter of *consciousness* of "who you are," the realization of one's true spiritual identity.³² Consciousness is identified with thinking, and the spirit is characterized as entertaining thoughts.³³ Thus Kenyon's distinction between the spirit and the spirit-mind is blurry at best.³⁴ In fact the mind of the spirit is contrasted not with the spirit but with the mind of the senses.³⁵

Mind and body

The mind's relation to the body must be understood in terms of the sources of knowledge and the objects of consciousness. The diagram contained in figure 1 below outlines Kenyon's correlation

³¹"It is the Word of faith that. . . is being built into my spirit-consciousness." (Kenyon, *In His Presence: The Secret of Prayer. A Revelation of What We Are in Christ*. 28th ed. [Seattle: Kenyon's Gospel Publishing Society, 1969 (1944)], 40, cf. 126) The spirit must have consciousness in order to believe ideas; Kenyon urges Christians to "believe with the spirit." (Kenyon, *Faith*, 49)

³²"It is of the first importance that the child of God know what he is." (Kenyon, *Hidden*, 151) "If we realized what we were. . . our lives would be transformed in a week." (Kenyon, *Life*, 125) "Stepping out of sin-consciousness into son-consciousness is stepping out of failure into success. It means stepping out of that inferiority complex that has held us prisoners for years." (Kenyon, *Sign-Posts on the Road to Success*. 17th ed. [Seattle: Kenyon's Gospel Publishing Society, 1966 (1938)], 62) Kenyon's teaching "will put us over, make us conscious of who we are." (Kenyon, *Love*, 34)

³³"Until we *know this in our spirits*, there will be no great development of faith. . . ." (Kenyon, *Hidden*, 50, emphasis added) The spirit can have "assurance," (Kenyon, *Knowledge*, 34) or be "convinced," (*Hidden*, 118), can be "educated" (Kenyon, *Life*, 103; cf. *Hidden*, 61), can be "the source of thoughts" (25), and can "recognize" truth (Kenyon, *Jesus the Healer*. 25th ed. [Seattle: Kenyon's Gospel Publishing Society, 1968 (1943)], 87).

³⁴Kenyon sometimes seems to identify the human mind (of the spirit, presumably) with the human spirit: "It is the undeveloped resources in your mind, in your spirit, in that inward man that counts." (Kenyon, *Success*, 12)

³⁵"Mental assent is the voice of the senses, the mind of the senses, or the mind of the flesh. Faith is from the mind of the spirit. . . ." (Kenyon, *Presence*, 137)

of spirit-mind-body. It is important to note the poles of being represented in the diagram: Reality, which is internal and part of the spirit-ideal realm of consciousness; and Manifestation, which is external and belonging to the material-physical realm.³⁶

The dynamics of the spirit-mind-body relation can perhaps best be explained by tracing the cause and remedy of disease in an individual. Figure 1 places a dividing line between the realm of Reality (which contains the spirit and mind) and the realm of Manifestation (which includes the physical body). Beginning in the lower right-hand corner of the diagram, we find that Kenyon defines Sense Knowledge as a product of the physical body which is received by the mind of the senses. This is the root of the problem of health; mental consciousness of external evidence (which is unreliable) instead of Reality.³⁷

The mind of the senses then allows Sense Knowledge to gain "ascendancy" (control) in consciousness and verbally confesses the claims of the senses as truthful (though the senses may falsely report illness). A negative confession creates spirit disease, which manifests itself in the body as sickness.³⁸ As long as Sense Knowledge is in ascendancy (held in consciousness), the process is perpetuated.

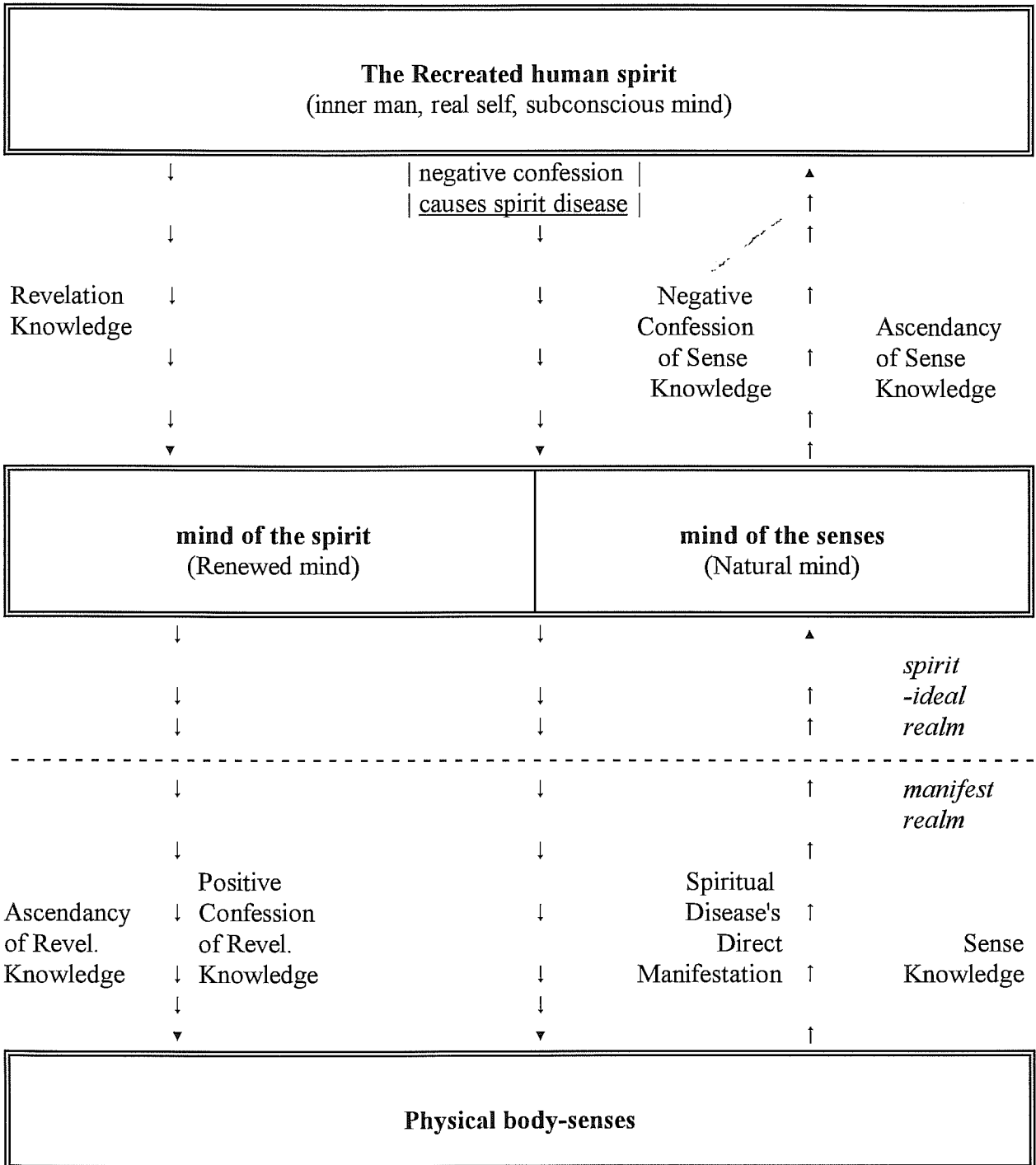
³⁶The problem, says Kenyon, is that believers do not recognize that there are two realms; both are real, but one is greater. "When we come to recognize that spiritual things are as real as physical things, then we will be able to understand the background of the faith life." (Kenyon, *Presence*, 176) In fact, "spiritual things are superior to physical things, for God, a spirit, created physical things." (Kenyon, *Faith*, 53)

³⁷See "Two Kinds of Knowledge," chapter 36 in Kenyon, *The Bible in the Light of Our Redemption: Basic Bible Course*. Compiled and edited by Ruth Kenyon Housworth. 15th ed. (Seattle: Kenyon's Gospel Publishing Society, 1969), 289-295; cf. "The Three Witnesses," and "What the Word Says about Sense Knowledge," chapters 9 and 10 in Kenyon, *Knowledge*, 40-49.

³⁸Negativity causes "a real spiritual disease. Now the body becomes helpless. The mind where disease and fear grow is under dominion" of Sense Knowledge. (Kenyon, *Name*, 76)

Fig. 1. Kenyon's correlation of spirit-mind-body

internal - Reality - inner



external - Manifestation - outer

How does healing take place? The spirit must gain ascendancy over the senses. The recreated spirit provides Revelation Knowledge about one's condition in Reality (one is actually healthy, in the spirit-ideal realm). Upon the acceptance of Revelation Knowledge by the mind of the spirit, one achieves consciousness of one's true identity and condition: divine and healthy. As Revelation Knowledge gains ascendancy, one verbally affirms that one is already healed (which is true spiritually).³⁹ With the positive confession of this fact of Reality the body responds to the mind of the spirit.⁴⁰ Health then is a matter of consciousness. The only role the transcendent God has in the process is the provision of Revelation Knowledge to the spirit; sickness and recovery is a matter of wrong vs. right thinking.⁴¹

Let us recapitulate. Sense Knowledge is the principal enemy. If one accepts its claims, then the senses gain ascendancy in consciousness, and spiritual disease results. Spiritual disease manifests itself as physical sickness. Although disease is really spiritual, it originates in the mind of the senses.⁴² *Therefore the origin of disease is mental.* Satan cannot directly put disease on one, but one can be deceived into accepting Sense Knowledge--causing spiritual disease.⁴³ *The cure is*

³⁹"I do not ask Him to heal me, because I am healed. I simply stand by my confession that I am what He says I am." (Kenyon, *Presence*, 123)

⁴⁰"Now you see yourself perfectly healed in your spirit." "We find that as soon as . . . the mind comes to agree with the spirit, healing is inevitable." (Kenyon, *Knowledge*, 65, 33-34) "Your body will respond to your mind. . . . Your body will obey your confession." (Kenyon, *Life*, 61)

⁴¹See "Right and Wrong Thinking," in Kenyon, *Knowledge*, 55f.

⁴²"All their diseases are sense made." (Kenyon, *Realities*, 14)

⁴³"Satan cannot put diseases upon you without your consent. It may be a consent of ignorance, but it is a consent." (Kenyon, *Healer*, 74) "Satan rules them [sick Christians] through the senses." (Kenyon, *Realities*, 14) "The hour will come when you will awaken to the fact that he cannot put disease upon you, that he cannot give you pain and anguish in your body." (Kenyon, *Life*, 118) The

also mental: one must harmonize the mind with the spirit--giving ascendancy to Revelation Knowledge. Health is a matter of one's state of mind, and is determined by ignorance vs. knowledge of spiritual Reality.

Mind and metaphysics

Kenyon's concept of mind and its relation to spirit and body is generally the same as that of metaphysical religion. In mind-science, the origin of disease is explained as mental⁴⁴--the result of considering sensory data instead of remaining conscious of one's true spiritual identity.⁴⁵ As

believer should

never allow the adversary to do that. The adversary cannot put his old diseases back on him or in him. . . . [but] the adversary camouflages our diseases and holds us in bondage. He can so camouflage them that they become a reality to us and we lose the consciousness of our healing, and Satan becomes our master. (Kenyon, *What Happened from the Cross to the Throne* [Seattle: Kenyon's Gospel Publishing Society, 1969 (1945)], 107-108)

⁴⁴False opinion "is communicated to the spirit and sets it to work to form disease, after the form the spirit gives the mind. The mind being the matter under the control of the spirit, is capable of producing any phenomenon." (H. W. Dresser, ed., *The Quimby Manuscripts*. 2nd ed. [Secaucus, NJ: Citadel Press, 1969 (1859 ms)], 182) "The disease is, in a certain sense, only a false seeming, a wrong belief, a fallacy of the senses, a confirmed wrong thinking. . . . every diseased condition of the body is a wrong thinking." (W. F. Evans, *Soul and Body: The Spiritual Science of Health and Disease* [Boston: H. H. Carter and Co., 1875], 44-45) Diseases "are simply reflections or registers of wrong thinking." (L. M. Marston, *Essentials of Mental Healing: The Theory and Practice*. 2nd ed., revised. [Boston: privately printed, 1886], 64)

⁴⁵The "testimony of the senses and of our feelings is generally, if not always, fallacious, and they give us only apparent truth. . . . This fallacious testimony of the senses is the obstacle to faith in the cure of disease." (Evans, *Soul*, 45) "All sensation, when first made, contains no direction, but. . . . Error puts a false construction or opinion upon it, and speaks disease into existence." (Dresser, *QMSS*, 220) We ought to "withdraw attention from the illusions of material sense, and grasp with firmer faith and the clearer vision eternal realities and spiritual truth." "The spiritual is the real man. . . . [not the] sick and dying creature that our senses recognize. . . ." (Marston, *Mental Healing*, 8, 38)

discussed in chapter two, mind-cure likewise explains healing as the harmonization of mind with the spirit--consciousness of divine health regardless of the testimony of the senses. Sense knowledge is the culprit, and spiritual knowledge is the cure.⁴⁶ According to the metaphysicians, changing one's consciousness directly causes physical healing.⁴⁷ A correct understanding and application of "mind," then, was seen as fundamental to tapping full human potential by Kenyon and mind-science alike.

Might

For the believer, human potential includes the availability of enormous might over inner and outer circumstances. The Christian's consciousness is the basis of mental and spiritual power according to Kenyon; one's state of mind and verbal affirmations determine one's power.

Right and wrong thinking

The mind produces "might" through right thinking about one's spiritual identity and unlimited potential. If one realizes who one truly is (the inner, "real man" is divine), and thinks in accordance

⁴⁶A "sound mind and a sound body depend on an adequate knowledge of scientific Christianity." (Marston, *Mental Healing*, 20) "Knowledge is the destruction of opinion or disease. Disease is what follows an opinion, it is made up of mind directed by error, and Truth is the destruction of this opinion." "You see the [sensory] deception. Your knowledge is the emancipation of the error, and all that followed it. . . ." (Dresser, *QMSS*, 181, 184)

⁴⁷We "come into the consciousness that we are spirit, immortal, not subject to disease or weakness. . . ." (Edward A. Pennock in H. W. Dresser, ed., *The Spirit of the New Thought: Essays and Addresses by Representative Authors and Leaders* [NY: Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1917], 106) "Change that false belief, that wrong state of the consciousness which is the inmost life, and the disease is cured from the root." (Evans, *Soul*, 45) "With a ruling spiritual consciousness, disease would finally disappear." (Henry Wood, *God's Image in Man: Some Intuitive Perceptions of Truth* [Boston: Lee and Shepard Publishers, 1892], 28)

with that identity, one can practically become all-powerful.⁴⁸ Conscious states are to be harmonized with Reality. The cause of failure in the Christian life is simply wrong thinking. Those who think of external boundaries are conscious of limitations and thereby fail to actualize their potential. As long as one remains sensory-bound, the divine might available to all believers will not be released.⁴⁹

Real faith looks not at external conditions, but instead is a continual consciousness of inner spiritual Reality. Right thinking gives the human spirit the dominant place in one's consciousness. Because of the "finished work of Christ" with which believers identify, the recreated spirit is made all-sufficient as a source of knowledge and power.⁵⁰ Hence one should give the human spirit ascendancy over the claims of the mind of the senses, and might will flow accordingly.⁵¹

⁴⁸You "may never have been conscious that. . . you had the ability of God in you. . . . Limitless power and authority are given to the individual" believer (Kenyon, *Healer*, 75-76).

⁴⁹"Most of us have been brought up to court our weaknesses and failings and to think of our lack of ability." (Kenyon, *Name*, 77) "As long as we are weakness-conscious and sickness-conscious, faith will have no place in our lives." (Kenyon, *Love*, 33) "Faith holds fast to the confession of the Word. Sense Knowledge holds fast to the confession of physical evidences." (Kenyon, *Healer*, 93)

⁵⁰"I have come to believe that. . . after a bit the human spirit can become a perfect guide." (Kenyon, *Life*, 103; cf. Kenyon, *Hidden Man*, 61) "Someone says, 'It does not seem credible that we should have perfect knowledge.' Why shouldn't we? We have a perfect Revelation of His will. . . . We are perfect New Creations. . . . If this is true, I don't know why we cannot have complete knowledge." (Kenyon, *Identification: A Romance in Redemption*, 20th ed. [Seattle: Kenyon's Gospel Publishing Society, 1968 (1941)], 52) This goes for knowledge and power: "There is no limit to what we can do." (Kenyon, *Two Kinds of Righteousness: The Most Important Message Ever Offered to the Church*, 13th ed. [Seattle: Kenyon's Gospel Publishing Society, 1965 (1941)], 57)

⁵¹The "very wisdom of God belongs to our spirits. How few mistakes we would ever make if we followed this inward monitor that is so often silenced by the senses and held a prisoner when it should sit upon the throne." "As our spirits gain the ascendancy, our minds become emancipated. . . [and no longer] let our reasoning faculties, that receive all their impulses from the physical body, dominate us." (Kenyon, *Life*, 70)

Positive confession

Not only is "right thinking" important, the believer must also speak the right words. Verbal affirmation of one's spiritual condition will always be positive, since the "inner man" is divine and full of untapped potential. The positive affirmation, or "positive confession" as Kenyon often labeled it,⁵² is a verbalized expression of internal perfection. Christians who make negative confessions are basing them on external conditions revealed by Sense Knowledge rather than on inner Reality revealed by Revelation Knowledge. A negative confession (Kenyon's explanation for the ineffectiveness of modern Christianity) keeps one weak, while positive affirmation produces might.⁵³

Not only should affirmations be positive, they must be worded in the correct verb *tense*. For Kenyon, positive confession is effective only if it affirms the *present* possession of a spiritual Reality that *already* exists in the spirit-ideal realm.⁵⁴ Since Reality already exists, praying for God to

⁵²Although initially he seems to have avoided mind-science terms, Kenyon later used the word "affirmation" interchangeably with "confession." (See Kenyon, *Presence*, 44, 99, 129; cf. Kenyon, *Hidden Man*, 106, 108)

⁵³"Every time you confess weakness, you become weaker. Every time you tell people about your sickness, you grow worse. Every time you tell people about your lack, you have more lack." (Kenyon, *Love*, 38) "The confession of weakness will bind you and hold you in captivity. Talk poverty and you will have plenty of it. Confess your lack of money all of the time, and you will always have a lack." (Kenyon, *Hidden Man*, 108) "A positive confession dominates circumstances, while a vacillating confession permits circumstances to govern one. . . . your confession heals you or keeps you sick." (Kenyon, *Healer*, 24)

⁵⁴"They have not been in your possession, but it is just as real as though they were. Faith counts the things that are not as though they were." Faith "is bringing into the present tense things which were in the future for us." (Kenyon, *Presence*, 116, 121) "Begin to act as though you already possess it, make your confession that you do possess it, that it is yours now." "This is present tense consciousness." "But you say, 'Would it not be untrue for me to say that I am healed, when I am not.?' No, you see there are two kinds of truth. There is Revelation Truth. . . and then, there is sense knowledge truth." (Kenyon, *Cross*, 102, 107, 109)

miraculously create it is unnecessary.⁵⁵ It is the dynamic of the individual spirit-mind that causes the external manifestation (as shown above), so God has no role in materialization either. (This is a crucial feature of Kenyon's view of affirmation which distinguishes it from spoken confessions found in faith-cure.)

One must believe that the desired condition already exists spiritually and must verbally affirm that it is now in one's possession in order for it to actually manifest physically. Therefore one should not claim, "I *will* have my supply," for that is a future-tense expression. It is correct to declare that "I *have* my supply now," a declaration grounded in the spiritual fact that the possession *already* belongs to one in Reality (the spirit-ideal realm).⁵⁶

The believer must be conscious of the fact that the object of desire already exists spiritually--that is true faith based on Revelation Knowledge. Backed by this conscious realization, or "faith" as Kenyon terms it, the verbal affirmation of present possession will bring the object into material manifestation.⁵⁷

⁵⁵"It is not good taste to ask Him to heal us, for He has already done it. . . . The only problem now is to get in perfect harmony with His Word." "It is not necessary that we pray, or ask the Father to heal us." "Did you ever realize that healing belongs to you, that you need not pray for it?" (Kenyon, *Healer*, 20, 38, 78) "This is something I possess. I need no faith to obtain it. Prayer is not necessary, for it is mine." (Kenyon, *Presence*, 99; cf. Kenyon, *Life*, 148; Kenyon, *Realities*, 103)

⁵⁶"Faith holds the confession that he has the thing he desires before he actually possesses it." "I did not need to have faith for what already belonged to me. . . ." (Kenyon, *Hidden*, 102, 198)

If I say I have been prayed for and I am waiting now for God to heal me, I have repudiated my healing. My confession should be. . . . that I know the thing is done. . . . I have it. I am not going to *get* the money I need. . . I *have* it. It is just as real as though it were in my pocket. (100)

⁵⁷Hence Kenyon's oft-repeated phrase, "Confession brings possession."

Hence faith-consciousness has literal creative power.⁵⁸ It is the recreated human spirit that produces faith and which acts on the mind which in turn causes external manifestation. The creative power of the mind offers the potential of great might to believers who realize their spiritual identity, remain conscious of spiritual Realities that already exist, and verbally affirm their present possession of conditions they want made manifest. Mind brings might.

Might and metaphysics

In the nineteenth century, mind-scientists were the first to define faith as a state of consciousness (or a mental force) instead of reliance or dependance on a superior transcendent Being.⁵⁹ Although Kenyon's insistence upon denying the claims of sensory perception may have some parallel in traditional divine-healing movements, his definition of faith originated in metaphysical religion. Consciousness of one's true (divine) spiritual identity *in order to create desired materializations* is the teaching of mind-cure, not faith-cure. Kenyon's view of "right

⁵⁸"Creative faith, Dominating faith, Healing faith, and Saving faith, are all in the spirit." (Kenyon, *Hidden*, 29) "Faith is the mightiest force in the universe. It is the creative ability of God. It is the creative ability of man." God speaking the universe into existence "is faith's creative ability through words." (Kenyon, *Presence*, 114, 198)

⁵⁹"There are two opposite mental states, which, more than any others, are the body's health or malady. The inmost principle of health, according to his [Jesus'] system, is faith. . . . The principle of fear" is the opposite mental state. (Evans, *Soul*, 57-58) The New Thought view of faith is consciousness "of ones unity with God and the realization of his divine nature, which is perfect." (J. Stillson Judah, *The History and Philosophy of the Metaphysical Movements in America* [Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1967], 182) "Faith. . . is really concentrated spiritual and psychical momentum, and this momentum has tremendous potential force." (Henry Wood, *The New Thought Simplified: How to Gain Harmony and Health* [Boston: Lee and Shepard, 1903], 69) Faith is "a real creative force, a force which produces." (O. S. Marden, *How to Get What You Want* [NY: T. Y. Crowell, 1917], 141)

thinking" is distinctively New Thought.⁶⁰

The concept of affirming or decreeing the possession of objects or the manifestation of external conditions *in the present tense* based on realization of their existence in the ideal realm belongs historically to metaphysical religion.⁶¹ To confuse this concept with the traditional Christian understanding of faith and expression is, as Kenyon himself said, to let "the tenses whip us."⁶²

Mastery

According to Kenyon, the enlightened believer--through proper consciousness and affirmation--can actualize the full potential latent in the recreated spirit.⁶³ Mind and might produce

⁶⁰As one of Quimby's disciples put it, "Many are healed through the practice of right thinking." (Annetta G. Dresser in H. W. Dresser, *Spirit of the New Thought*, 202) "The New Thought is a science, the Science of Right Thinking." (Ella Wheeler Wilcox, *The Heart of the New Thought* [Chicago: The Psychic Research Co., 1902], 8) A survey of some New Thought titles reflects this common emphasis: *The Miracle of Right Thinking* (O. S. Marden, 1910), *Right and Wrong Thinking* (Aaron Crane, 1905), and *Practical Utilization of the Power of God by Right Thinking* (F. L. Rawson, 1915).

⁶¹"We are not to expect something later, but to realize that the Presence is with us *now*. This brings us conscious Reality." (Wood, *New Thought*, 37) "The very form of affirmation in which we clothe our petition implies our perfect faith that all good things are already ours--that is, in the deeper realities of our being." (E. M. Chesley in Dresser, *Spirit*, 233) "But having decreed or affirmed that health is ours. . . let us accept health as a *reality*, and be done forever talking about disease and inharmony of every kind." (Eleanor S. Moody, *All Power Is Given Unto You* [Holyoke, Mass: E. Towne Co., 1921], 76) With W. F. Evans "appeared for the first time the prototypes of the positive formula prayers which have dominated the practice of all later New Thought healing groups." (Judah, 162)

⁶²See "Why the Tenses Whip Us," chapter 17 in Kenyon, *Cross*, 103-109; cf. n. 54 above.

⁶³"The ability of God is at your disposal. It is there with you. The fact is, in a very large measure it is in you, but it lies dormant. . . . awaken in you the hidden forces that you already possess, and begin to draw them out." (Kenyon, *Hidden Man*, 138)

mastery. Upon realization of this, any believer can graduate from the "lower class"⁶⁴ of Christians and become master of all internal and external conditions. This is the birthright of believers, all of whom, because of identification with the finished work of Christ, have been recreated as a "new species" never before known to humanity.⁶⁵ With such mighty potential within, Christians should step forward and claim the divine rights hidden so long by sense-knowledge.

Supermen

Believers who learn who they really are, what belongs to them, and how to get it through faith and confession, become Supermen. This new class of Christian masters all circumstances. One need no longer be limited to the bounds of sense-knowledge.⁶⁶ When the mind is renewed by Reality it operates as the mind of the spirit and rules over the body and all external conditions (see above). The "Superman" Christian is not weak like those in the lower class who still follow traditional

⁶⁴"We are going to see spiritual giants, supermen. . . . They have graduated from the lower class." (Kenyon, *Identification*, 60-61)

⁶⁵"The New Creation. . . is a representative of the new race of men." "We become a new type, a new species." (Kenyon, *Life*, 18, 33) "I wonder if we have realized who we are? . . . Jesus dared to say that he represented a new order, a new type of man." "We are a new type, a new class of men. . . masters of every force outside of God." (Kenyon, *Realities*, 27, 116)

⁶⁶"He is taking Jesus' place in the world. And if this isn't a superman, then I don't know the meaning of the term. The Church has kept this 'Sampson' imprisoned by false teachings. . . ." "The bonds of false teaching are going to be broken, and this child of God, this superman is going to come into his own. . . . The problem is this: how long are we going to be held in bondage by Sense Knowledge?" (Kenyon, *Presence*, 61, 62) "The Sense-governed mind is limited. Your spirit has practically no limitations. You can develop your spirit life until you dominate circumstances." (Kenyon, *Life*, 93)

Christianity.⁶⁷ True Supermen know their divine nature, carry out their divine role, and exercise divine dominion, as we shall see.

Divine nature of believers

Kenyon literally deified Christians. Sharing in the divine nature means, for Kenyon, becoming part of God's very Being.⁶⁸ To have divine nature means to have the same substance and being as God.⁶⁹ This is a teaching that Kenyon never attempted to qualify in any manner whatsoever--he meant it literally. Deification was the natural and necessary outcome of spiritual identification with Christ.⁷⁰ (In the process of redemption, Christ literally took on sin nature and was

⁶⁷"If it [the spirit] were developed, it would make this recreated man a superman." "You will discover His ability gaining the ascendancy over your faculties, until after a while you will live in the realm of the superman." (Kenyon, *Hidden Man*, 138, 200) "It makes you a conqueror over circumstances and a master of the laws of nature when it is necessary. . . . you have become God's superman." (Kenyon, *Cross*, 153)

⁶⁸The believer "comes out of the very womb of God. . . . Just as truly as Jesus came out from the Father, so we have come out of God. . . ." "Every attribute in Jesus that made Him beautiful is in the New Creation. . . . 'He that hath seen me hath seen the Father.' What a confession Jesus made to the world, and what a confession we have the privilege of making today." (Kenyon, *Realities*, 26, 34) "You are the very Son of God. . . ." (Kenyon, *The Blood Covenant*. Compiled and edited by Ruth A. Kenyon. 28th ed. [Seattle: Kenyon's Gospel Publishing Society, 1969 (1949)], 60; cf. Kenyon, *Hidden*, 33, 211) "You are one with Him just as the bay is one with the ocean, because the tides flow into the bay. . . . God and you are identified." This "leads us into the realm of the Supernatural where man actually becomes a Super Being." (Kenyon, *Life*, 18, 39)

⁶⁹Believers "have received His own nature, His own substance and Being." (Kenyon, *Cross*, 196; cf. Kenyon, *Presence*, 206) "We know that. . . the very substance and being of God has become a part of our spirits." We "become partakers of the Divine Nature, the very essence and substance of Deity." (Kenyon, *Life*, 17, 82)

⁷⁰"We are as much a part of Jesus as He and the Father are a part of each other. His very substance and being is in us." (Kenyon, *Cross*, 150) "God wasn't any more His Father than He is ours. . . . He was Deity. You are a partaker of the Divine Nature, that is Deity." (Kenyon, *Presence*, 22)

then reborn to divine nature; believers "identify" with this and are transformed from satanic nature to divine nature *as was Christ*.)

Kenyon emphasizes the ontological nature of deification by his explanation of the incarnation of Jesus Christ. Careful to explain the humanity *and* divinity of Jesus in traditional terms, Kenyon asserts that Christ was God manifest in the flesh. With this understanding clearly established, he then makes the claim that (via "Identification") *all* believers are Incarnations of God *in the same sense as was Jesus*.⁷¹ Thus, for Kenyon, Christians are spiritually part of the essence or substance of God.

Divine ability of supermen

Divinity is a characteristic of all believers by definition, but only the Superman Christian understands this and its implications. The "master" employs the "might" earlier discussed. It is important, for a correct understanding of Kenyon, to relate this might to *God's* ability. As we explained concerning the dynamics of mind, external manifestation is a result of interior *mental* causation. This is plainly described by Kenyon. Yet besides the believer's own independent powers,

⁷¹"The Incarnation is really a prophecy of a superman, a man who has partaken of the Nature of God. . . . Can't you see the limitless possibilities in this New Creation." "The New Creation is a God-Man, born of heaven. He is like the sample, Jesus. He is God's superman." (Kenyon, *Life*, 38, 25)

The Son, by taking a human body, forever linked humanity with Deity, proving that Deity can partake of humanity just as much as humanity can partake of Deity. If God has taken over a human body, then men can take over God's Nature and God's Spirit. If Jesus is the union of Deity and humanity--the two forms of life mingling and becoming one--then man can partake of God's Nature. . . . (37-38)

Your human spirit is united with Deity, as Deity was united with humanity, in Christ. . . . The Vine is a Divine Human Being; the branches are human Divine Beings. God was incarnate in the flesh in the person of Christ. We are incarnate in the spirit in Christ. (101)

Divine dominion of supermen

Believers who know they are essentially divine and know how to use their divine ability can exercise mastery or *dominion* over their world.⁷⁵ The Superman carries out God's *role* on earth. To be sure, Kenyon still speaks of the miraculous and supernatural, and talks about bringing "God on the scene."⁷⁶ But what does he mean by that? If the Superman masters his own world through mental might (as we have shown above), then what place is there for God's intervention? If God did intercede it would certainly be on behalf of the "lower class" Christians who have not been enlightened by Reality.⁷⁷ The "masters" have taken God's place by virtue of their own divine status and accompanying might.

This is clearly the case for the Superman who exercises dominion; one "brings God on the scene" by taking God's place on earth.⁷⁸ The Superman, an incarnation of God, literally represents God on earth in the flesh. This is explained as God "reproducing Himself" in human beings.⁷⁹ In

⁷⁵This dominion is of the same magnitude as Adam's and Jesus': "They [supermen] were to rule the laws of Nature. They were to dominate the laws of nature as Jesus did in His earth walk." (Kenyon, *Life*, 144)

⁷⁶"When we boldly make our confession. . . we bring God on the Scene." (Kenyon, *Faith*, 65)
"The Living Word in your lips brings God on the scene. . . ." (Kenyon, *Healer*, 72)

⁷⁷Kenyon apparently allows for God's intervention, as in classical divine-healing systems, but only in the case of "carnal" (sense-ruled) believers who have not advanced in the Christian life. This lower type healing is exemplified by the "prayer of faith" (e.g., Charles Cullis) or by laying on of hands (see "God's Method of Healing Babes in Christ," chapter 7 in Kenyon, *Healer*, 27-29). The superman simply affirms mastery.

⁷⁸"We bring God to man, just as He came to us. We boldly say, 'Look on us.'" (Kenyon, *Identification*, 65) "Being what we are, we can act for Him. We can take His place here on earth among men." (Kenyon, *Righteousness*, 66; cf *Realities*, 34)

⁷⁹"The Father's dream is to reproduce Himself in us. . . . the New Creation has received the nature and the life of the Father. . . . The Father wants to reproduce Himself in us." "His plan for building

fact this is the only way God could be brought "on the scene," since Kenyon asserts that God can *only* work through believers--we literally limit God in this way.⁸⁰ Believers, according to Kenyon, take Jesus' place by doing His work. One can take God's place by becoming a master.

Metaphysical mastery

Mastery of metaphysical laws (faith and affirmation) is the key to divine dominion for Kenyon and mind-science. After all, Jesus himself used positive confession and God had to exercise faith in order to create the universe.⁸¹ The idea that personal power is achieved by concentrated positive thinking and verbal decrees arose from nineteenth-century mental healers (see above and chapter two). Superman status, defined as mastery over external conditions and maintained by correct states of consciousness, was a feature of mind-cure from the beginning.⁸² Mind and might

Himself into us is striking. We must take Jesus' place. We must learn to act in His stead." (Kenyon, *Realities*, 71, 72)

⁸⁰"God cannot touch the human today except through the Church." "God's hands are tied until He can use ours. . . . God is big only where some man *makes Him big*, by using this divinely given authority." (Kenyon, *The Father and His Family* [Seattle: Kenyon's Gospel Publishing Society, 1964 (1916)], 194, 199, emphasis added; cf. Kenyon, *Bible*, 269) "Without transmitters, God in all His ability is helpless. . . . We limit Him or allow Him to be limitless." (Kenyon, *Identification*, 65)

⁸¹"We are told by Paul that it [faith] was an element in God's omnipotence, and that by it he created the worlds. (Heb. xi. 3.)" (Evans, *Soul*, 58) Jesus "comprehended the potential spiritual force of words. . . . He employed certain formulas or expressive sentences into which he concentrated and converged his whole mental force. . . ." (idem., *The Mental Cure* [Boston: Colby and Rich, 1869], 306) "In each of the instances above quoted (from Genesis), creation was quickly and naturally accomplished upon the speaking of the word by. . . God." (E. S. Moody, *All Power*, 71) "The visible universe was created by the 'word' of God, and you, as a perfect expression of all that God is, can create in the same way." (Paul Ellsworth, *Direct Healing* [Holyoke, Mass: E. Towne Co., 1922 (1914)], 96)

⁸²For Evans, dominion "appeared as an intelligent mastery of nature by the soul. Man's former dominion over nature was recovered by Jesus, who brought the disturbed world order back to its

produce mastery--in the teachings of metaphysical religion first, and Kenyon later.

Conclusion

In this section, we will propose a summary of Kenyon's development, and then answer some potential objections to our position. We will conclude with a summary of our findings.

Kenyon's mission and method

Kenyon found the traditional expression of Christianity to be weak and lifeless. Although he had for a time sought satisfaction in the "higher Christian life" teachings, this eventually proved inadequate for his vision. His familiarity with the metaphysical healing groups--which he viewed as his competition--convinced him that they had more vitality than any current expression of orthodoxy. Kenyon developed his distinctive theology accordingly.

Although he apparently believed that he had (re)discovered hidden/lost truths from Scripture⁸³ that could be distinguished from similar doctrines of mind-science, his effort at

original harmony." (Judah, 165) Trine said Jesus taught that "man is a spiritual being, born to have dominion, and that, by recognizing the true self and by bringing it into complete harmony with the higher spiritual laws. . . they will respond at every call and bring him whatsoever he wills." (R. W. Trine, *What All the World's A-Seeking*. Revised ed. [NY; T. Y. Crowell Co., 1899 (1896)], 140-141) Another taught that the "advent of the new man, Nietzsche's super-man, is near at hand, the man who shall enter into a universal, a cosmic consciousness, and look out on all life as a ruler, a king having dominion and power over all things, holding in his own hands the keys of life." (C. B. Patterson quoted in H. C. Sheldon, *Theosophy and New Thought* [NY: Abingdon, 1916], 170) We should "become broadly self-masterful. . . with a sense of dominion over all." (Dresser, *Spirit*, 8)

⁸³Kenyon had long remarked on the troubled condition of the church, but eventually he came to characterize his teaching as *the* solution to the modern church's problems. He considered his teachings to contain the key to unfolding the Bible (*Father*, 13, 45, cf. back cover), as they revealed

revitalizing Christianity involved the incorporation of metaphysical religious concepts. (True, Kenyon saw himself as still under the umbrella of Christianity--but then again, Mary Baker Eddy viewed herself the same way.⁸⁴)

Kenyon's mission was the revitalization of the church, but his method was to offer personal power--a nearly unlimited human potential. His method ultimately (whether knowingly or innocently) produced a metaphysical mixture. The very concepts which Kenyon claimed to rediscover and which were most distinctive in his religious thought were essentially identical to those of New Thought: ontological deification of humanity, faith as mastery-consciousness, and creative positive affirmation.

Some objections answered

Our thesis, that many aspects of E. W. Kenyon's distinctive thought are essentially identical to those of metaphysical religion, is objectionable to some defenders of Kenyon's orthodoxy. This is because New Thought is regarded as cultic and theologically incompatible with historical Christianity by most evangelicals (who, generally, comprise both the critics and the defenders of Kenyon).

previously hidden, unknown truth (*Name*, 3). This truth "has never been clearly taught by the Church" (*Love*, 83)--in fact some of it "never dawned upon the church" (*Healer*, 86)--but it would bring about a "new type of Christianity." (*Life*, 125) This would unleash a Christianity far beyond what Luther, Calvin and Wesley had ever envisioned (*Presence*, 24, 40, 115).

⁸⁴See Stephen Gottschalk, *The Emergence of Christian Science in American Religious Life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973), xxi.

Whether or not the religious concepts in question are true or are logically compatible with historical biblical Christianity is beyond our scope⁸⁵; but we have demonstrated that Kenyon's view of human potential is decidedly indebted to mind-science. Our case for Kenyon's "metaphysical mixture" can be defended against the typical line of objections forwarded by his defenders. Following are replies to some of the most common (by no means all) objections to comparisons of Kenyon's thought to New Thought.

(1) Objection: much of Kenyon's distinctive teaching can be traced to faith-cure as well as mind-cure. Since faith-cure is a product of historical biblical Christianity, Kenyon does not fall outside of traditional Christianity.⁸⁶

While Kenyon's status as "orthodox" is beyond the scope of this work, the premise of this objection must be challenged. Our second chapter dealt extensively with the religious thought of metaphysical healing and its historical development. We can glean from that discussion some important points. First, if faith-cure really does share said elements, then it in turn could be argued that faith-cure is historically indebted to the mind-cure movement which *first* developed the concepts; Quimby was practicing mental healing well before Charles Cullis and company developed their distinctive brand of divine healing in America.

⁸⁵Evangelical critiques of Kenyon's theology (and its contemporary manifestations) usually charge that his teaching is incompatible with the traditional Christian doctrines of: God's sovereignty (God is manipulated by external laws under the control of human beings); Christology (Jesus, by implication at least, lost his divinity when he became satanic in nature); Soteriology (Christ's physical death on the cross was inadequate for atonement, since sin is spiritual and not physical); Revelation (the subjective nature of Revelation Knowledge--from the human spirit--in practice overshadows any objective biblical hermeneutics); and Anthropology (one literally becomes divine upon spiritual birth, and can exercise all the powers of deity). For examples of such critiques, see chapter one, notes 1-3 (see especially McConnell, 186).

⁸⁶This is Dale Simmons' view of Kenyon.

But second, it is simply not true that orthodox divine healing groups (even those following Cullis) share core concepts with metaphysical healing groups. Other than the denial of sensory evidence regarding health (and this for different reasons), the two movements have little in common. Faith-cure allowed for the direct, miraculous, intervening action of the transcendent God in physical healing.⁸⁷ Faith was the required condition, but it was a "prayer of faith," believing that God would willingly act on one's behalf to restore health. This is apparent in the works of prominent faith-curers such as Charles Cullis⁸⁸, those he influenced (including A. J. Gordon⁸⁹), and others, whether they taught divine healing in the 1870s (like Cullis), the 1880s (like Carrie Judd Montgomery⁹⁰ and

⁸⁷"The faith healing or 'faith-cure' movement," according to one of the top scholars on the subject, is comprised of "that group of persons who maintain the belief that physical disease or illness is cured by the supernatural intervention of God when the prayer of faith is prayed." (Paul G. Chappell, "The Divine Healing Movement in America" [Ph.D. diss., Drew University, 1983], v)

⁸⁸For Cullis (who began healing in 1873), the prayer of faith meant "claiming the promise in James v.15" that the sick one will recover after being prayed for. (Charles Cullis, *Faith Cures: Answers to Prayer in the Healing of the Sick* [Boston: Willard Tract Repository, 1890], 19) Faith in this context meant believing God *would* heal one--not that one is *already* healed: "Faith is given me to believe that it *will* be done." (ibid) Healing is the result of God's response to prayer: "The very moment we cry [out in prayer], the answer comes back." "God will just as surely as you are living answer your petition, if you ask and believe that He hears you." (Cullis, *Tuesday Afternoon Talks* [Boston: Willard Tract Repository, 1892], 51, 53)

⁸⁹The prayer of faith was "the kind of prayer we are discussing in this volume, and no other" in one of the most popular books on divine healing (A. J. Gordon, *The Ministry of Healing: Miracles of Cure in All Ages*. 5th edition, revised. [NY: Fleming H. Revell Co., n.d. (1882)], 221). The "prayer of faith" was "the very highest attainment of the Christian life" for Gordon (224), while Kenyon deprecated it as "sense knowledge" faith practiced by the immature (see notes 77 and 95). Gordon's qualification runs contrary to the teaching of Kenyon and mind-cure: "Let us not make undue haste to declare that he [the sick one] will certainly be restored if we carry his case to God." One should always pray "believing strongly but asking submissively," that the "will of the Lord be done." (213, 216) Kenyon simply affirmed he *was already* healthy.

⁹⁰Montgomery taught that one must believe that healing occurs immediately upon praying for healing. She held that Mark 11:24 was "an injunction to believe the immediate conferring of the blessing and promise, though the possession may be in the future." (Chappell, 239-240) Persistent

Christian Missionary Alliance founder A. B. Simpson⁹¹) or at the turn of the century (R. A. Torrey⁹²).

In contrast, mind-scientists simply defined faith as realization that one was already healed, and affirmed the present possession of health; they, along with Kenyon, left no room for

symptoms of illness were "the devil's lies." (240) She urged Christians "to believe that we *have* the blessing for which we pray; not that we shall have it at some indefinite future time, but that it belongs to us *just as soon* as we have fulfilled the condition, and asked for it in Jesus' name." "We are not, of course, to say we feel better, unless we do, but we may state the fact that we are being made whole. . . ." (Carrie Judd Montgomery, *The Prayer of Faith* [Oakland: Office of Triumphs of Faith, 1917 (1880)], 104, 106) Clearly, Montgomery did *not* teach that one must claim that one is *already* healthy, instead of asking God to heal. Moreover, faith for her involved the "holiness" practice of consecration or surrender of one's whole life--a practice Kenyon derided (see n. 95 below).

⁹¹Like Montgomery, Simpson was seen as a radical in the movement because he rejected the use of medicine and physicians (Chappell, 275). Similarly, Simpson denied the reality of symptoms of illness *after the prayer of faith*, and likewise did *not* teach that one should claim healing was *already* a reality instead of praying for it: Claim "and believe that He [God] does touch you now and begin the work of healing in your body." (Simpson "The Gospel of Healing," *Triumphs of Faith* [November 1883], 257; quoted in Chappell, 274) So even radical faith-curists did not teach Kenyon's view of positive affirmation.

⁹²While Kenyon defined faith in terms of mastery-consciousness, Torrey, like most Higher Life teachers, related faith to surrender to God or consecration (R. A. Torrey, *How to Obtain Fullness of Power* [Springdale, PA: Whitaker House, 1982 (1897)], 92) Healing results when "the person prayed for has really made a full surrender of himself to God." (R. A. Torrey, *Divine Healing: Does God Perform Miracles Today?* [NY: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1924], 18) Torrey held Cullis' view of healing by the prayer of faith: James 5:14-15 "is one of the clearest, plainest, fullest and most explicit passages in the Bible on this subject [healing]" (11); for Kenyon, James 5 was for lower-class Christians who had not realized their divine powers. While healing is to be expected from the prayer of faith, Torrey allows that it "is not always the will of God to heal His saints when they are sick." (18) Kenyon taught that one must maintain faith (consciousness of the spiritual-ideal realm) to continually manifest health, but Torrey said that the kind of healing that is

dependent on the continued faith of the one healed is not *Divine* healing, not God's healing, but it is. . . a purely psychological process, closely akin to what is called 'Mind Cure'. . . substituting a mental process for the work of the Holy Spirit on the body. (29)

pleading/petitionary prayer.⁹³ This is a monumental distinction between faith-cure and Kenyon's mind-cure: in one view God willingly responds to the believer's request, in another the body responds to the believer's mind. The difference is plain.

Likewise, neither Cullis, Gordon, Simpson, Torrey, nor *any* of the other Higher Life leaders ever taught that believers were essentially divine. A. J. Gordon did provide Kenyon with the initial model of believers' "identification,"⁹⁴ but Kenyon later modified that into a justification of his view of deification. Faith-curists never claimed believers were part of God, in the sense of sharing God's

⁹³See n. 61 above. "Within New Thought circles the view of prayer which generally prevails is that it consists simply of claiming the thing promised by God, or desired by man, and acting as if it were already in hand. . . ." (James M. Campbell, *New Thought Christianized* [NY: T. Y. Crowell, 1917], 61)

⁹⁴See A. J. Gordon, *In Christ: The Believer's Union with His Lord* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1964 [1872]), 11, 19. Gordon's view of "identification" did not literally deify the believer. In deep contrast, Kenyon held that Christians were part of deity based on his belief that partaking of the divine nature entailed the departure of the sin nature at conversion. Gordon explicitly rejected that position: "Not that the root of sin has been eradicated. This is entwined with every fibre of the carnal nature." (172) Kenyon claimed the two natures could not reside together in one person; the "Dual Theory" was untenable to Kenyon:

If man is not a New Creation but simply receives a New Nature plus the old Nature, we are led into a strange dilemma. We know that this old Nature is Satanic Nature, Spiritual Death; then the man who has received this New Nature has two Natures, the Nature of God and the Nature of the Devil. . . . To follow this out logically, one half of man can go to Hell, and the other half, to Heaven. . . . The problem is, when does man get rid of this Satanic nature? Their answer is, at Death. We know that Death is of the Devil; this leads us into a still worse dilemma. . . . God is obliged to seek the Devil's assistance in order to perfect Man." (Kenyon, *Father*, 157-158)

As if in direct reply to Kenyon, Gordon remarked,

"Is Death then the great sanctifier?" it is impatiently asked. "Is his cold hand endowed with a skill and cunning to do the work for us in a moment which the Spirit and the Word and the ordinances have failed to perfect in a lifetime?" Nay, death is but the letting go of a hand that has been constantly hindering that work. (Gordon, *In Christ*, 176)

essence or substance, nor that Christians are incarnations of God, as did mind-science and Kenyon.

It is unfair to characterize the entire faith-cure movement as essentially identical to mind-cure; the two movements view the dynamics of healing, as well as human potential, quite differently. Kenyon eventually sided with the views of mental healing as opposed to those of traditional divine healing. Although for a time his views fit basically in the mainstream of faith-cure, it is clear that Kenyon himself repeatedly and purposefully distanced himself from those "Higher Christian Life" teachings.⁹⁵

(2) Objection: Even the great defenders of Christian orthodoxy like Irenaeus and Athanasius taught that salvation entails deification for believers;⁹⁶ as a part of traditional historical Christian doctrine, the concept of the deification of believers was not a product of metaphysical religion, hence Kenyon should not be accused of incorporating mind-science into his theology on these grounds.⁹⁷

⁹⁵Kenyon criticizes many beliefs that were central to Higher Life teaching throughout his writings: *Life*, 128; *Father*, 159f.; *Presence*, 34f., 146-147, 178; *Cross*, 96, 104, 11, 147, 183-184; *Hidden Man*, 13-14, 110, 179, 180f.

⁹⁶"Irenaeus of Lyons is by far the most important of the theologians of the second century." (Johannes Quasten, *Patrology*, [Utrecht-Antwerp: Spectrum Publishers, 1975], 1:287) Athanasius "was the steadfast champion and great defender of the faith of Nicaea, 'the pillar of the Church,' as St. Gregory of Nazianzus calls him. . . . The Greek Church called him later 'the Father of Orthodoxy'" (Quasten, 3:20) Hence the significance of the primary statement in question, "For He [Christ] was made man that we might be made God." (Athanasius, "Incarnation of the Word," in Archibald Robertson, ed., *St. Athanasius: Select Works and Letters*, in Philip Schaff, et al, eds., *A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*. Second series [Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1991 (1891)], 4:65)

⁹⁷For a list of Kenyon's followers who use this defense, and a response from an evangelical Christian perspective, see Robert M. Bowman, "'Ye Are Gods?' Orthodox and Heretical Views on the Deification of Man," *Christian Research Journal* (Winter/Spring 1987), 18-22. Some who argue for the compatibility of New Thought and traditional Christianity (e.g., Michael Leach, "New Thought Catholicism: An Idea Whose Time Has Come Again," *America* [May 2, 1992], 384-387) also quote Athanasius in their defense.

Not only did such an idea find no place among the faith-curists, Kenyon's concept of deification of humanity was also foreign to the theology of the church fathers. By "deification" patristic theologians did not mean that believers are of the same essence or substance as God⁹⁸ (as Kenyon clearly taught). We arrived at an understanding of Kenyon's concept of deification by analysis of the context, and it is equally important to consider the context in which the fathers' statements were made.

To begin with, it would be incredible to find Irenaeus proposing that believers are literally divine beings, since that idea is an example of the gnosticism that he labored so strongly against. Irenaeus' main work was titled *Detection and Overthrow of the Pretended but False Gnosis* (or, *Against Heresies*), and he is careful to preserve the distinction between the divine godhead and the human creature.⁹⁹

Athanasius did not view salvation as imparting the metaphysical qualities (such as omnipotence) of the One true God to human beings; deification to the fathers was not ontological. Their idea, unlike Kenyon's, was that believers are deified in the sense of (1) the divine indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the believer,¹⁰⁰ and (2) the future divine life guaranteed the believer through the

⁹⁸Robertson and Adolf Harnack (to whom Robertson attributes the best summary of the issue [Robertson, 65 n. 5]) both use the words "deified" or "deification" to describe the anthropology-soteriology of the fathers, but as we will show, none of them mean the same thing Kenyon means.

⁹⁹According to patristic scholars, redemption in Irenaeus' view "has effected the reunion with God, the adoption by God, and the assimilation to God. But Irenaeus avoids the word 'deification' (*θεοποίησις*) in this connection. He uses the terms 'to be attached to God,' 'to adhere to God,' '*participare gloriae Dei*,' but he avoids effacing the boundaries between God and man, as was customary in the pagan religions and in the Gnostic heresies." (Quasten, 1:311, cf. 288f)

¹⁰⁰The church fathers and the Eastern Orthodox "teach that men are deified in the sense that the Holy Spirit dwells within Christian believers. . . ." (Bowman, 19) For Athanasius, "we are divinized by intimate union with the Holy Spirit, Who unites us to the Son of God, and through Him to the

resurrection--immortality.¹⁰¹

Kenyon meant much more than this, and he specifically distinguished between present possession of personal divinity and the indwelling of God.¹⁰² In keeping with his "here-and-now" religious motif¹⁰³, Kenyon never related *deification* to future life in heaven (he rarely spoke of heaven at all). The church fathers, however, meant only that the resurrection would bring immortality--a truly divine benefit--to believers. Divine life in the present was simply a reference to God's *presence in the believer*--not to God as *part of the believer*.

In summary, the patristic view was simply that believers are indwelt by the Holy Spirit and will gain immortality (become imperishable like God) in their future resurrection. The church fathers never taught that believers were literally divine, that is, deity-in-substance. The distinction between believers' humanity and Christ's ontological divinity was always maintained,¹⁰⁴ so that no

Father." (J. N. D. Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*. Revised ed. [San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1978], 379)

¹⁰¹Harnack says salvation in the patristic view is "adoption into the divine sonship, which is assured to the believer, and is completed in participation in the divine nature, or more accurately, in the deification of man through the gift of immortality." (Adolf Harnack, *Dogma*, trans. Neil Buchanan [NY: Dover Publications, Inc., 1961], 3:164)

¹⁰²"You have forgotten that you are tied up with God, that you are a partaker of the Divine Nature. . . . and you have at your side the great Paraclete, the Comforter, the Holy Spirit." (Kenyon, *New Creation*, 18) Hence possessing the Divine Nature (that which makes believers incarnations of God) is distinguished from the Holy Spirit's presence in the believer (cf. Kenyon, *Faith*, 44; Kenyon, *Presence*, 61; Kenyon, *Healer*, 68).

¹⁰³See Kenyon, *Righteousness*, 6, 38-39; Kenyon, *Presence*, 83ff.

¹⁰⁴"We have, however, to notice that this deification, as understood by the Greek Church, did not by any means signify roundly 'Becoming like God'. The Greeks in the main did not connect any clear conception with the thought of the possession of salvation (felicity) further than the idea of imperishableness; and this very fact was their characteristic feature. . . . The interval between Christ--who was born, and did not become, Son of God--and the sons by adoption is always very strongly

patristic basis is provided for the deification concept shared by Kenyon and metaphysical religion.

(3) Objection: mind-science practices "mental" healing, while Kenyon practices "spiritual" healing. Kenyon can thereby be distinguished from New Thought.¹⁰⁵

The distinction between mental and spiritual healing is unfounded in Kenyon's case for several reasons. First, as explained above, the distinction Kenyon makes between the human "spirit" and the human "mind of the spirit" is blurry at best. Functionally, they are hard to separate.

Both the human "spirit" and the human "mind of the spirit" reside in the spirit-ideal realm, both are characterized primarily by consciousness (knowledge, realization, thinking); the spirit is called the subconscious *mind*, and the mind of the spirit ultimately determines external manifestations. Metaphysical healers made the same distinctions between the mind of the senses/intellect and the mind of the spirit.¹⁰⁶ In fact, Kenyon's model of the correlation of spirit-

emphasized." (Harnack, 3:165)

¹⁰⁵This is Kenyon's own line of defense:

You must have seen as you have studied this book that healing is spiritual. It is not mental as Christian Science and Unity and other metaphysical teachers claim. Neither is it physical as the medical world teaches. When God heals, He heals through the spirit. When man heals, he must either do it through the mind that is governed by the physical Senses, or he does it through the physical body. (Kenyon, *Healer*, 90)

This same reply is given almost verbatim by Kenneth Hagin ("Spirit, Soul and Body; Part Three: God Heals through the Spirit of Man," *Word of Faith* [December 1977], 5; quoted in McConnell, 10; cf. Hagin, *New Thresholds of Faith* [Tulsa: Faith Library, 1980], 24).

¹⁰⁶See also n. 110 below. Note Clark's contrast of mind with spirit: "Mind alone is wholly inadequate to express the idea of an immortal essence. Spirit is the breath of Life, the only reality, the unconquerable power. Mind is dependent upon the senses and the outer nature for its excitation and unfoldment." (Susie Clark in Dresser, *Spirit*, 174)

Like Kenyon, Mulford posited a mind of the senses and a mind of the spirit (both distinct

mind-body is basically the same as that of mind-science (compare figure 1 above, p. 138, with figure 2 below). To remove Kenyon from New Thought on this basis is to make a distinction without a real difference.

Second, there were many metaphysical healers who described their practice as "spiritual" healing, as opposed to mere "mental" healing.¹⁰⁷ Sometimes they use both descriptions, and Kenyon himself acknowledged that the body responds to the *mind* in healing. Since Kenyon and mind-scientists both promoted a "spiritual science," it is inaccurate to distinguish Kenyon from New Thought on these grounds.¹⁰⁸

from the human spirit itself): "There is a mind of the body--a carnal or material mind--a mind belonging to the instrument used by the spirit. It is a mind or thought lower or cruder than that of the spirit. But this mind of the body. . . . can through demand of the Infinite be made in time to act in perfect accord with the spirit." ("Love Thyself," in Prentice Mulford, *Your Forces and How to Use Them* [NY: F. J. Needham, 1902 (1892)], 6:7-8)

The founder of the Atkinson School of Mental Science in Chicago also taught that "Spiritual Mind is above the plane of Intellect." (Yogi Ramacharaka, *The Science of Psychic Healing* [Chicago: Yogi Publication Society, 1909], 175) On L. Marston's view of mind, see figure 2, p.164 below.

¹⁰⁷Dresser acknowledged that some practice mere "mental" healing, but that it is lower than true "spiritual" healing (this is Kenyon's view precisely). "Hence the term 'spiritual healing' is inclusive of all that is meant by 'mental healing,' although exclusive of some of the conditions of hypnotism." (H. W. Dresser, *Health and the Inner Life* [NY: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1907], 194)

Dresser says that Quimby and Evans practiced the higher, spiritual type of healing. For Quimby, the "treatment was spiritual rather than mental. . . ." Likewise Evans saw "clearly that disease springs from the inner life in general, not from mere belief; hence the cure must touch the whole spirit." (Dresser, *History*, 53, 87-88; cf. Evans, *Soul*, 9, 15, 39, 48-50, 61)

Atkinson devoted an entire book to contrasting suggestive, mental, and metaphysical healing with the superior "Spiritual Healing" which *he* practiced. (Yogi Ramacharaka, *Psychic*) Fillmore also characterized his view as "spiritual healing." (Charles Fillmore, *Christian Healing* [Lee's Summit, MO: Unity School of Christianity, 1954 (1909)], 3)

¹⁰⁸Kenyon characterizes his mode of healing as a "spiritual science." (Kenyon, *Knowledge*, 31-32) Fillmore taught "spiritual science" or "science of Spirit" (Fillmore, *Christian*, 9, 7), as did E. J. Arens at his University of the Science of Spirit (Buckley, 247) See also W. J. Colville, *The Spiritual Science of Health and Healing* (Chicago: Educator Publishing Co., 1888); Evans, *Soul and Body: The Spiritual Science of Health and Disease* (1875).

(4) Objection: unlike the faith-idealism of Kenyon, Christian Science teaches that mind is God, and that God is impersonal. Therefore Kenyon's teaching should not be identified as mind-science.¹⁰⁹

This objection is similar to the previous one in that it centers on Kenyon's concept of mind. We should first point out that it is not true that Christian Scientists believe "mind" is God, technically. Actually they believe that Divine Mind is God, but that mortal mind is carnal. But to compare Kenyon's concept of mind with Eddy's would not settle the issue; Christian Science is only one expression of metaphysical religion.

Like Kenyon, New Thought does not teach that the mind, technically, is God. The mind, as Kenyon sometimes uses the term, can refer merely to the intellect (as noted earlier); mind-science teaches that it is not the rational mind but the spirit which is divine.¹¹⁰ This is precisely the view of Kenyon.

¹⁰⁹Modern proponents of Kenyon's theology often defend themselves in this way: "They [Christian Scientists and mind-scientists] think that their mind is God." (Kenneth Hagin, *Bible Faith Study Course* [Tulsa: Faith Library, n.d.], lesson seven, p. 6) Kenyon distinguished his views from those of mind-cure similarly: "Christian Science, Unity, and the other Metaphysical and philosophical teachers of today do not believe that God is a person." (Kenyon, *Faith*, 17) They "boldly declare the non-existence of a personal God. . . ." (Kenyon, *Knowledge*, 26) "Mrs. Eddy, copying Hagel [*sic*], boldly declares that God is not a person. . . . [But] God is." (Kenyon, *Righteousness*, 9)

¹¹⁰See n. 106 above. Quimby complained that "mind" was taken to mean "intelligence" by many. "All use the word [mind] applied to man's intelligence. As the word mind has never been applied to any spiritual substance or any substance at all, it strikes the reader strangely to hear it as I have to use it." So the rational mind is not the real man; we should have "knowledge of ourselves as spiritual beings." (*QMSS*, 233, 202) W. F. Evans also distinguished between spiritual consciousness and rationality: Faith and fear "are not purely intellectual states or acts, but are. . . stirrings of the inmost life-principle of man. The faith of which I speak is not a mere belief of the intellect." (Evans, *Soul*, 61)

Likewise, not all New Thought teachers characterized God as impersonal. From the beginning (W. F. Evans), to the turn of the century (H. W. Dresser), to the present (C. Alan Anderson), segments of the mental science movement have preserved God's personality to some degree at least.¹¹¹ Thus Kenyon's concept of mind (and its relation to God) cannot be so easily distinguished from that of metaphysical religion.

(5) Objection: while Christian Science uses many of the same biblical verses as Kenyon does, they depend on their will-power rather than the Word of God to bring things about. Hence Kenyon's teaching differs in terms of the dynamics of faith and confession.¹¹²

The first point to be made in response to this type of objection is to question the "coincidence" of Kenyon's interpretation of Scripture running so closely parallel to that of Christian Science and the larger metaphysical movement. A survey of church history demonstrates that no one in the entire history of traditional Christianity has arrived at such interpretations of the Bible as are

¹¹¹Evans "repudiates Mrs. Eddy's ideas about the [non] personality of God, and says: 'It is not necessary to deny the personality of God. . . . Neither is it necessary to deny the personality and persistent individuality of the human spirit.'" (J. M. Buckley, *Faith-Healing, Christian Science, and Kindred Phenomena* [NY: The Century Company, 1900 (1892)], 258) H. W. Dresser raises "safeguards against a pantheistic obscuration of divine personality Moreover, he advises against thinking of the Divine Presence as impersonal." (Sheldon, *Theosophy*, 152-153) Anderson explains, "when people say that God is *impersonal*. . . I think what they mean is *impartial*." "God is the infinite person." (Ron and Randy Nelson, "A Philosopher Talks about God: An Interview with C. Alan Anderson, Ph.D.," *Science of Mind* [August 1988], 82) Anderson emphasizes the relation of Process Theism to New Thought.

¹¹²"No, it [positive affirmation] isn't Christian Science. Over in the realm of Christian Science and the science religions, they use some of the same scriptures we use and they make confessions but they make them based upon their own wills, their own ability to make it good. . . . But we're making confessions based upon God's word." (Hagin, *Bible Course*, lesson seven, p. 6) "Their faith. . . is, after all, faith in themselves and what they inherently have within themselves." (Kenyon, *Faith*, 18)

shared by mind-cure and Kenyon.¹¹³ It seems strange that the ideas and interpretations of Scripture supposedly rediscovered by Kenyon are found previously only in metaphysical religion.

Second, both Eddy and mental scientists denied that will-power is the key to actualization. The leaders of metaphysical religion did not explain the dynamics of spirit-mind-body in terms of will-power as the objection asserts.¹¹⁴ As we have seen, the concepts of faith and affirmation are actually the same in Kenyon and mind-science.

Third, if it is insisted that New Thought *really* employs will-power despite its claim to the contrary, the same charge can also be applied to Kenyon's teaching. Mind-science relies on will-power no more than Kenyon does. Their views of faith (unwavering positive thinking) and affirmation (in the face of contrary evidence) amount to will-power in equivalent degrees.

(6) Objection: unlike Christian Science, Kenyon's teaching does not deny the existence of disease or matter, only the right of such things to be in one's way. Since Kenyon does not share their idea of disease or external reality, he should not be identified with mental healing groups.¹¹⁵

¹¹³Just such a study has been done (James Kinnebrew, Ph.D. diss., 282).

¹¹⁴"Never use will-power, mistaking it for divine truth." (Kate Taylor quoted in Buckley, 255-256) "Thought may shake or strengthen faith: it cannot produce it. Is its origin in the will? No." (Ellen M. Dyer in Dresser, *Spirit*, 101) "The human will which maketh and worketh a lie, hiding the divine Principle of harmony, is destructive to health, and is the cause of disease rather than its cure." (Mary Baker Eddy, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* [Boston: Trustees under the Will of Mary Baker G. Eddy, 1934 (1875)], 445)

¹¹⁵"*It's not Christian Science. . . . I don't deny the existence of the mountain. I deny the right of it to exist in my way. I don't see it as being in my way.*" (Charles Capps, *The Tongue: A Creative Force* [Tulsa: Harrison House, 1976], 27)

I never went around saying I didn't hurt when in fact I did hurt. If you do that you're getting over into the realm of Christian Science and the mind science religions. You're saying the thing doesn't exist. We're not saying sickness and disease don't exist. I've never said it [disease in his body] wasn't there. . . . I didn't say anything about it at all. I ignored it. I only

It should be clear by now that Kenyon does indeed share the same view of the mental dynamics of healing and disease with mind-cure. But regarding this specific objection, we offer two additional replies. First, while Eddy and some mental scientists deny the reality of matter and physical disease, that is by no means a characterization of metaphysical religion in general; others in this movement regard Eddy's views as being too radical.¹¹⁶

Second, admitting the existence of disease while denying its Reality according to the human spirit, is a characteristic common to New Thought and to Kenyon. The physical senses are said to give unreliable data because they do not report the condition of the divine spirit which is healthy. Revelation knowledge, spiritual self-realization, produces health-consciousness. When the mind harmonizes with the spirit, the body responds accordingly and one is physically healed. So New Thought and Kenyon share the same view of disease after all.

Summary

Thorough research points to two allegiances in Kenyon's world-view: evangelical Christianity, and transcendental mind-science. This prevents us from placing him neatly in either category--fairness to others in each tradition as well as to Kenyon himself requires us to recognize his uniqueness and the diversity of his religious thought. It would be inaccurate to fail to admit both the "evangelical" and the "metaphysical" elements in Kenyon's thought, keeping in mind the

talked about what I believed. And I said, "I believe I am well." (Frederick K. C. Price, *How Faith Works* [Tulsa: Harrison House, 1976], 62)

¹¹⁶The question of the reality of matter represented a "metaphysical dividing line between Mrs. Eddy's teaching and that of almost all New Thought writers. Where she declared that matter was completely unreal. . . they maintained it was real but susceptible to thought control." (Gottschalk, *Emergence*, 121)

conceptual opposition of the two categories. Whichever element is focused on, one must neither deny the presence of the other, nor minimize the real differences between the two.

Otherwise, one falls into one of at least two fallacies. It would be special pleading to use one descriptive methodology to reach a favorable conclusion and then reject that same method when it leads to an opposing conclusion. Also, to ignore or deny the possibility of more than one descriptive category's application to Kenyon would be an example of the black/white or either/or fallacy. An individual thinker can certainly incorporate diverse sources into one world-view; consistency is another matter altogether.

Although his diversity prohibits broadly classifying Kenyon as a New Thought teacher, we must conclude that certain elements of his distinctive teachings are best classified as metaphysical religion. To summarize:

E. W. Kenyon developed a view of human potential that was supposed to *revolutionize Christianity* (chapter 1). He did so through his distinctive concepts of deification, faith-consciousness and positive affirmation all of which *originated in nineteenth-century metaphysical religion* (chapter 2) with which he had *ongoing historical connections*, primarily through his education and later reading (chapter 3). Kenyon's solution for the church was *personal mastery through mind and might* (chapter 4); the outcome was a "metaphysical mixture" of mind-cure and faith-cure. In terms of mind, might, and mastery, Kenyon's view of the believer's potential was essentially that of metaphysical religion.

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