

Editorial

The Christian Science Benevolent Association

It is our pleasure and privilege to announce to the field that preliminary steps have just been taken toward the formation of a new and important department of the organized work of Christian Science, to be known as The Christian Science Benevolent Association. We present herewith a statement of the aims and purposes of this new activity, together with a brief history of its development from the time of its inception by Mrs. Eddy to the present.

Those who were in personal touch with our Leader know that she recognized and often spoke of the need, at this period of the demonstration of Christian Science, for properly conducted institutions where those seeking relief through Christian Science might find such care and attention as would assist in their recovery. In about the year 1905 Mrs. Eddy consulted with Mrs. Mary Beecher Longyear of Brookline, Massachusetts, in regard to the founding by Mrs. Longyear of an institution which Mrs. Eddy proposed should be called a "sanatorium," and which should include provisions for such instruction in practical methods of caring for those under treatment as is consistent with the teachings of Christian Science.

In a letter to Mrs. Longyear under date of Jan. 15, 1905, Mrs. Eddy wrote:—

"God is moving on the face of the waters of your thoughts and His creations will appear.

"I propose that the institution you found be called Sanatorium . . . that it be a resort for invalids without homes or relatives available in time of need; where they can go and recruit.

"Our cause demands a wider circle of means for the ends of philanthropy and charity, and better qualifications for practical purposes. This latter lack in students of Christian Science is a great hindrance to our cause and it must be met and mastered. The students need to be qualified so that under the fire of mortal mind they can stand, and 'having done all, to stand' (St. Paul)."

During the ensuing year Mrs. Longyear kept in communication with our Leader in regard to her desires, and plans for the founding of an institution gradually took definite form. However, on Jan. 21, 1906, Mrs. Eddy wrote to Mrs. Longyear as follows:—

"Since reading your letters, pondering the subject of an institute or sanatorium, and studying our Manual, I see it is not best for you to take the initiative in the matter. It properly belongs to The Christian Science Board of Directors to do that, for thereby we shall avoid much confusion in the future. So please drop the matter."

During the next three and a half years Mrs. Eddy frequently spoke of the needs of our cause in this direction, and on July 27, 1909, she sent the following letter to this Board:—

"Box G, Brookline, Mass., July 27, 1909.

"The Christian Science Board of Directors,

"Beloved Brethren:—

"Please vote on the adoption of the following by-law, and if adopted publish it in our periodicals and in the Church Manual.

Mary Baker Eddy.

"BY-LAW

"The Mother Church shall establish and maintain a Christian Science resort for the so-called sick."

The proposed by-law was at once adopted and plans for the establishment of the "resort" were considered. After further correspondence with Mrs. Eddy, however, she advised this Board through her secretary, on Aug. 11, 1909, that "if The Mother Church is not ready to establish and maintain a Christian Science resort for the sick, she [Mrs. Eddy] is willing to let this matter rest for the present and suggests that you vote on the repeal of the by-law providing for the same."

The by-law was at once repealed. Although temporarily delayed, this Board has not lost sight of its obligation to found this work for which the demand has so definitely and rapidly increased, but has only awaited the time which seemed right for carrying out the project.

A short time ago Mrs. Longyear offered to make a gift of a valuable tract of over twenty acres of land, beautifully situated in the suburb of Brookline, as a site for the first Christian Science home or sanatorium to be established and conducted by The Mother Church. Our appreciation of this generous offer was immediately expressed, and Mrs. Longyear was notified that the gift would be accepted. The project will be developed as rapidly as possible. Plans for buildings will be started at once, and it is hoped that the actual work of construction will commence not later than the early spring. Such announcements as are necessary will be made from time to time through our periodicals.

THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE BOARD OF DIRECTORS.

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