

# ALL THE NEWS WORTH READING



## The *Christian Science Monitor* and the Professionalization of Journalism

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The contribution of the *Christian Science Monitor* to the 1937 Chicago Exhibition was a display celebrating its first three decades in print, featuring letters of appreciation from major figures in U.S. political and intellectual life and popular culture. These letters—some solicited specifically for the occasion and some collected from the paper’s archives—uniformly attested to the daily’s high standards of journalistic objectivity and attentiveness to world affairs. As University of California President Robert Sproul stated, “I have been struck by the discrimination with which it eliminates from the news of the day those items which cater to pathological emotionalism, and by the thoroughness with which it reports matters of serious and lasting import.” Reflecting on its merits relative to other news outlets, he added, “These comparisons have led me to wish that the spirit of intellectualism which guides the editorial policy of the Monitor might be more widely adopted in journalism.”<sup>1</sup> This reputation for fairness and a judicious avoidance of sensationalism followed the paper throughout its history, becoming a central feature of its brand. In 1970, a survey by *Seminar* magazine (a quarterly publication for newspapermen published by Copley Newspapers) ranked the *Christian Science Monitor* as the “fairest” newspaper in the United States with 32% believing it had a liberal bias and 41% a conservative one.<sup>2</sup> Second place went to *The Wall Street Journal*, which survey respondents overwhelmingly considered to have a conservative bias (72%). That same year, Walter Cronkite wrote to editor Erwin Canham, describing the paper as “representative of the finest in independent, courageous and unbiased American journalism.”<sup>3</sup>

That the *Monitor* achieved this kind of reputation—that as a paper owned by a long-embattled religious movement it somehow avoided the pitfalls of propagandizing or even the perception that it was engaged in such—was hardly inevitable when Mary Baker Eddy established it in 1908.

At that time, Eddy was the founder and leader of one of the fastest growing and most controversial religious sects in the nation. Christian Science was founded (or, as Eddy frequently claimed, “discovered”) in 1866 when after a lifetime of chronic illness and a brief period under the tutelage of mind curist Phineas Parkhurst Quimby, Mary Baker Eddy healed herself of a supposedly fatal injury through her capacity to realize the fundamentally perfect nature of the world as God created it and thus the impossibility of the existence sickness or suffering. Unlike faith healers who turned to God for miracles, Eddy believed and taught that the body was an illusion and that its symptoms were “errors” produced by “mortal mind.” For that reason, Christian Scientists eschewed medical treatment and became the targets of a medical profession that was attempting to legislate against irregular practitioners and prosecute individuals who practiced medicine without a license as part of an effort to modernize and strengthen the profession.

But in spite of the controversy which surrounded its parent organization, the eventual success of the newspaper that deliberately and proudly carried the religious group’s name was not an accident of history. Speaking as it did to contemporary trends in popular spirituality and the nascent field of psychology, Christian Science had—for some—a degree of intellectual respectability. And among the members of the Church of Christ, Scientist were many professional journalists who felt that in creating the *Monitor*, the Christian Science Publishing Society was not only doing something important for their religious cause but for their *profession*. The earliest extant letter regarding the newspaper’s inception was written by John L. Wright, a reporter for the *Boston Globe*, who wrote to Eddy on March 12, 1908 of the necessity of creating

A general newspaper owned by Christian Scientists and conducted by experienced newspaper men who are Christian Scientists; so presenting news more as Christian Scientists would like it presented than any newspaper now presents it. I have heard a number of Scientists express a desire for, or the expectation of such a paper as perhaps the next thing to result from the Christian Science movement.<sup>4</sup>

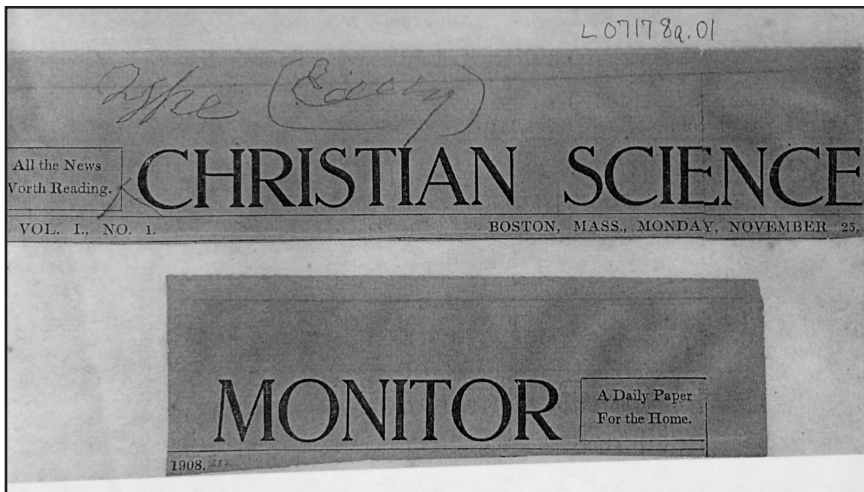
Embedded in his call for a Christian Science newspaper is a broader critique of journalism that was shared by many of Wright’s contemporaries. Referring to the perceived dominance of supposedly sensational news sources over more informational ones, he decries “the disappearance so largely of the more stable, sane patriotic newspaper, the usurpation of the newspa-

per field in great centres by commercial and political monopolists, and the commercialization of newspapers." The symptoms of this deplorable state of journalism were "the pictures and glaring and detailed descriptions of crime, death and other depressing representations that daily confront one at first glance at almost any newspaper." The antidote Wright prescribes is "a paper that takes less notice of crime, etc., and gives attention especially to the positive side of life, to the activities that work for the good of man and to the things really worth knowing."<sup>5</sup>

The period in which the *Monitor* was birthed into the world was a period of change and even turmoil in the journalistic profession, which had, over the course of the previous three decades, sought to redefine itself as a true profession based on rising educational standards and its commitment to the common ethos of fact-mindedness. This commitment, tinged with progressive idealism, was to depict reality as faithfully as possible for the edification of the reading public. What this pursuit of the real and the factual would look like depended on the journalistic outlet. The infamous "yellows" like Joseph Pulitzer's *World* or Hearst's *Journal* (though the former long lamented the public association of his paper with Hearst's extremism) sought to inform and entertain its readers through engaging and often sensational stories written for a primarily working class readership. Muckrakers in the tradition of Ida Tarbell, Lincoln Steffens, and Ray Stannard Baker were the journalistic vanguard of the Progressive movement, a largely middle class effort toward the radical refashioning of American society. In their narratives of exposure, revealing a corrupt core at the heart of American business and politics, they also frequently married novelistic storytelling techniques with the emerging methods of investigative journalism. Yet in the first decades of the twentieth century, the profession was beginning to turn toward more conservative values, rejecting the "story" model for the "information" model epitomized by the *New York Times* as the best possible method for dispensing salutary facts to the reading public. This more conservative turn involved not only a rejection of the perceived stylistic excesses of information journalism's more radical counterparts but a re-prioritization away from disclosing the darker, more corrupt side of human dealings.

Using materials gathered from the archives at the Mary Baker Eddy Library, this article demonstrates just how the Christian Science Publishing Society self-consciously and with a sense of spiritual purpose produced a paper that both embodied and helped shape the content and stylistic standards that would define respectable journalism—intellectualism, discretion, and an ethos of impartiality—in the subsequent decades. Christian Science's

emphasis on what William James called “healthy-mindedness” and distrust of sensory experience dovetailed beautifully with these nascent professional values, but the paper’s founders also had a material stake in branching away from the styles of writing that characterized new journalism in the last two decades of the nineteenth century. Thus, this article will also tell the story of how Christian Science ran afoul of both the *World* and *McClure’s* magazine, the premium outlet for progressive muckraking at the end of the nineteenth century. The damage caused to Christian Science by those conflicts made the creation of an alternative daily with a hard emphasis on bare fact and information and a rather conservative definition of what was worthy of being considered “news” a necessity for the movement, which found itself confronting unflattering and often elaborately embroidered narratives of its own history. An early motto for the *Monitor*, “All the News Worth Reading,” echoes the motto of the *Times*, “All the News that’s Fit to Print.”<sup>6</sup> It also signals the desire of the *Monitor* to best the enemies of Christian Science not by refuting their claims point by point but by embodying a style of journalism that certain voices in the profession and in the public viewed as inherently more wholesome. Both mottos denote comprehensiveness—“all the news”—and discretion, the determination to filter out for the reader all that is unnecessary or offensive.<sup>7</sup>



**Figure 1.** An early mock-up of the *Christian Science Monitor* masthead with handwritten edits by Mary Baker Eddy and the slogan “All the News Worth Reading.” Courtesy of the Mary Baker Eddy Collection. Reprinted with permission.

Background: Facts, Realism, and the Professionalization of Journalism

Along with medicine and law, journalism underwent a process of professionalization during the late nineteenth century, a process that granted its members authority and social status based on their special competency and adherence to a set of professional values.<sup>8</sup> As Lincoln Steffens' biographer notes, this was a period when the "old-style city reporter, colorful, tough, unschooled, socially marginal—'drunkards, deadbeats and bummers,' according to President Charles W. Eliot of Harvard—was giving way to a new school of professionals."<sup>9</sup> And like physicians and lawyers, they linked their credibility not only to their college degrees but to their commitment to the act of discovering and unveiling facts in the manner of a scientist, "more 'realistically' than anyone had done before."<sup>10</sup> That act of unveiling was linked to the new reporter's aesthetic and social agendas. No longer was newspaper or magazine work just a job. It was a professional calling imbued with a set of sacred values that elevated it above mere remunerative employment. Muckrakers, for example, "practiced the literature of exposure because they hoped it would bring about the moral regeneration of a corrupt, overly materialistic American society" and shared "a sweeping ideological vision of reform."<sup>11</sup> Many of them also looked to journalism as the jumping off point for their literary careers, and in the biographies of Ambrose Bierce, Bret Harte, William Dean Howells, Henry James, Theodore Dreiser, Frank Norris, and many others, professional journalism became embedded in development of literary realism.

Steffens, in fact, linked these literary, social, and scientific callings without seeing any inherent contradictions among them: "What reporters know and don't report is news, not from the newspapers' point of view, but from the sociologists' and the novelists'." And in their endeavors to portray life as it was lived as accurately as possible, journalists and literary men and women helped produce what Thomas Connery calls "a paradigm of actuality":

One that is defined by a focus on the actual and real, on people, events, and details that are verifiable and based on observation and experience. It includes common things and common people, but also can deal with daily concerns, experiences, and relationships, both cultural and personal, of the emerging middle and commercial class. This paradigm stands in contrast to the more romantic one—previously overwhelmingly dominant—that focused on the ideal, one whose depictions were ideational and weakly representational and at the same time mostly unrecognizable in the rapidly changing American social and demographic landscape.<sup>12</sup>

Karen Roggenkamp terms it “the cult of the real thing . . . a common appreciation of ‘the real’ over ‘the imaginary’” that “nourished both new journalism and American literary realism.”<sup>13</sup>

Realism was *not* the same thing as journalistic objectivity, a value that gained importance much later on. Realism contained nowhere in its formulations the distrust of individual subjectivity espoused by later advocates of objectivity in journalism.<sup>14</sup> The commitment to the actual and the real was influenced by the growth of the empirical sciences and the desire to appropriate their ethos of scientific detachment, but as a journalistic and literary movement, it represented an attempt to transform observations about reality into stories that people would be interested in reading, stories that might also influence social change. As Schudson indicates, “in their desire to tell stories, reporters were less interested in facts than in creating personally distinctive and popular styles of writing.”<sup>15</sup> For many writers of both fiction and journalism, this meant that though their writing might be rooted in facts and “reality,” it should also carry the dramatic and moral weight of romance. As Frank Norris—journalist, novelist, and proponent of naturalism—said in “A Plea for Romantic Fiction,” romance is that form of storytelling which searches for the truth that lies beyond mere surfaces:

[Romance] would be off upstairs with you, prying, peeking, peering into the closets of the bedrooms, into the nursery, into the sitting-room; yes, and into that little iron box screwed to the lower shelf of the closet in the library; and into those compartments and pigeonholes of the *secrétaire* in the study. She would find a heartache (maybe) between the pillows of the mistress’s bed, and a memory carefully secreted in the master’s deedbox. She would come upon a great hope amid the books and papers of the study table of the young man’s room, and—perhaps—who knows—an affair, or, great heavens, an intrigue, in the scented ribbons and gloves and hairpins of the young lady’s bureau. And she would pick here a little and there a little, making up a bad of hopes and fears, and a packages of joys and sorrows—great ones, mind you—and then come down to the front door, and stepping out into the street, hand you the bags and package, and say to you—“That is Life!”<sup>16</sup>

It was with that same voyeuristic pleasure and zeal for uncovering the true nature of lived experience that S.S. McClure sought out, in the words of Steffens, “facts, startling facts.” Likewise, Ray Stannard Baker described the editor’s obsession with “the excitement and interest and sensation of uncovering a world of unrecognized evils—shocking people.”<sup>17</sup> Pulitzer, through-

out his life as a publisher, harangued his editors and writers on the need for accuracy, which “is the first and most urgent, the most constant demand I have made upon them.”<sup>18</sup> The need for accuracy, however, was always in tension with the newspaper’s desire to shock, provoke, and entertain: “For Pulitzer a news story was always a *story*. He pushed his writers to think like Dickens, who wove fiction from the sad tales of urban Victorian London, to create compelling entertainment from the drama of the modern city. To the upper classes, it was sensationalism. To the lower and working classes, it was their life. When they looked at the *World*, they found stories about their world.”<sup>19</sup>

With his or her power to both shock and inform, the young, newly professionalized reporter saw him or herself as engaged in an endeavor that would better the community, the nation, and the world. According to Michael McGerr, “Twentieth-century American reform depended on a confrontation with the facts: cold statistics of child labor or corporate oligopoly; Jacob Riis’s hard-edged photographs of urban poverty; muckraking revelations from Samuel Hopkins Adams and David Graham; realist fictions by Hamlin Garland and Upton Sinclair.”<sup>20</sup> The *fin de siècle* reporter was animated by a new mandate not to act as the mouthpiece for a political party but to provide information to the public for the purpose of contributing to a better democracy. For some, this enterprise was non-ideological, while for others, it was informed by a commitment to progressive values in exposing and thereby combating the influence of monopolies, trusts, and special interests wherever they operated, to “not only use the state to regulate the economy” but to do “nothing less than to transform other Americans, to remake the nation’s feuding, polyglot population in their own middle-class image.”<sup>21</sup>

It was entirely predictable, then, that Christian Science should have captured the interest of journalists of this era. Stories about the rising sect had all the drama of life and death, the epic struggle between science and religion. Mary Baker Eddy and many of her most famous acolytes—like Josephine Woodbury and Augusta Stetson—were larger than life personalities, ripe for investigation by reporters who were interested in uncovering the scandal and corruption that unfolded behind the staid facades of the Mother Church in Boston or its sister churches in New York and Chicago. And as a rather wealthy religious organization, Christian Science also provoked the muckraker’s suspicion of monopolies and the accumulation of private wealth. And they were not the only church to come under criticism. After its series on Christian Science, *McClure’s* would go on to a series on the Latter Day Saints. Meanwhile, in 1908, Charles Edward Russell muckraked New

York's Trinity Church in the pages of *Everybody's*. Upton Sinclair included Christian Science in his book, *The Profits of Religion*, voicing the widely espoused critique that Christian Science was an unusually money-driven religion: "It is a strict religion—strictly cash. The heads of the cult do not issue cheap editions of 'Science and Health, With Key to Scriptures,' to relieve the suffering of the proletariat." Sinclair likewise condemned the Christian Scientists for their lack of charitable activity and said of its system of church governance, "the Roman Catholic hierarchy is a Bolshevik democracy in comparison."<sup>22</sup>

## Making the News: The New York *World* and the Next Friends Suit

In 1907, Mary Baker Eddy found herself the special target of Pulitzer's *World*, which began running a series of articles claiming that the octogenarian leader was either dead or dying and that an imposter was occupying her home. Eddy's health had been the subject of local rumor in Concord, New Hampshire. Because the restoration and maintenance of health were at the center of Eddy's theology, the opportunity seemed ripe for some of her critics to prove that she was ailing. Individuals both in and outside of the Christian Science movement advanced the theory that Mrs. Eddy's assets and authority within her church had been usurped by male members of the church Board, who were either propping up her rapidly deteriorating body or maintaining the falsehood that she was still alive in order to promote the myth that they were acting on her orders. In addition to exposing possible corruption within the Church hierarchy, this narrative—in which an old woman was being preyed upon by a cabal of powerful men whose sacred duty was to protect her—had a certain kind of tabloid appeal.

In 1906, the *World's* financial manager, Bradford Merrill, assigned two reporters to investigate the rumors, possibly at the command of Pulitzer himself. According to Stephen Gottschalk, this was motivated at least in part by a desire not to be bested by *McClure's*, which had begun advertising its series on Eddy for the upcoming year.<sup>23</sup> Gillian Gill likewise suggests that William Randolph Hearst's support of Christian Science was a motivating factor.<sup>24</sup> Though Joseph Pulitzer was at this point blind and suffering from neurological problems, he continued to direct the affairs of the paper from his luxury, sound-proofed yacht, and it is plausible that in revealing falsehoods at the heart of Christian Science, the venerable titan saw the oppor-



tunity to get the better of two of his rivals *and* discredit a nuisance religious cult with one sweep of the scythe.

In mid-October, reporters Slaughter and Lithchild arrived at Pleasant View, Eddy's Concord home, citing reports of Eddy's decrepitude and/or death and demanding access to her person. The subsequent interview was brief, but John Kent, a former neighbor brought along for the purpose of verifying her identity, confirmed that the woman the reporters had seen was, in fact, Mrs. Eddy. As Gill asserts, "The *World* reporters even remarked to the staff upon their departure that Mrs. Eddy was a remarkably well preserved woman."<sup>25</sup> But though these initial reports suggest that the rumors had been proven incorrect, the investigation continued. Indeed, the reporters stayed in Concord, at one point following Eddy on her daily carriage ride and jumping onto its sides, demanding that she show her face. The story that appeared in the *World* on October 24 did debunk the rumor that Eddy was dead, but in the place of that particular canard, it substituted another: "MRS. MARY BAKER G. EDDY DYING: FOOTMAN AND 'DUMMY' CONTROL HER." Mary Baker Eddy, the story alleged, was dying of cancer, and a body double was impersonating her on the streets of Concord. The Mrs. Eddy that they had seen during their interview, they said, was "more dead than alive. She was a skeleton, her hollow cheeks thick with red paint, and the fleshless, hairless bones above the eyes penciled a jet black." The article continues by describing her as dissociative and unaware of her surroundings, enfeebled and unable to remain standing: "To every eye it is clear that this unfortunate old woman had been doped and galvanized for the ordeal of identification. But it was equally clear that the utmost stimulation could not keep the tortured woman upon her feet much longer."<sup>26</sup>

The articles alleging Eddy's mental incompetence and physical disability were a prelude to a much bigger event, an event that was wholly orchestrated by the *New York World* based on the "facts" gathered by its reporters and later made a feature story for months of subsequent coverage. In early 1907, the *World* recruited former New Hampshire senator William Chandler to file suit against Eddy's lieutenants on behalf of Eddy herself and her "next friends"—her son and nephew. But while the editorial side of the paper was elated by the news that the lawsuit produced, the legal exposure that it generated proved to be too much for Ralph Pulitzer and the paper's legal counsel.<sup>27</sup> With the rock rolling downhill and rapidly picking up speed, the *World* cut Chandler a \$5000 check and subsequently withdrew its support of the lawsuit.<sup>28</sup> Chandler continued to pursue it anyway, enlisting the help of Boston lawyer Frederick Peabody—who still held a grudge against

Eddy for a lawsuit that he filed and lost on behalf of one of her former followers, Josephine Woodbury—and taking responsibility for the remaining legal costs. And as Chandler played the hero, “[t]he *World*, in effect, had it both ways. By severing its connection with the suit, it absolved itself of all the risks. But it also had its story in a high drama to be played out in a Concord courtroom—and as events proved, in a crucial examination of Eddy’s mental competence in her own home.”<sup>29</sup>

“EDDY’S SON IN A GREAT FIGHT TO SAVE HER FORTUNE,” read the headline in the *World* on March 2, 1907. The article described the case as “one of the most important in legal history” and proceeded with the by then established narrative of a heroic son and his champion lawyer coming to the defense of the enfeebled old woman. Asserting that the lawsuit was not an assault on Christian Science, the article claimed that “Mrs. Eddy herself appears as the real petitioner,” maintaining the pretense that the entire media circus had been marshaled on her behalf. Eliding the newspaper’s own role in the affair, it stated that

The foundations of this action were laid months ago in the public disclosures of gross deception at Pleasant View, where a human dummy was employed in the impersonation of Mrs. Eddy. . . . At this juncture public-spirited citizens decided that legal proceedings of the most dignified character were vitally necessary to establish the truth. In no other way could proper protection be afforded the feeble Mrs. Eddy. In no other way, it was urged, could the power surrounding her be destroyed.<sup>30</sup>

Describing George Glover’s account of a recent visit to his mother, the paper depicted her as paranoid and fearful for her life. “MRS. EDDY HINTED OF A PLOT TO MURDER HER,” said one lurid headline.<sup>31</sup>

As the case proceeded in court, a battle for public opinion was being fought in print. In order to counter the *World*’s picture of herself as pathetic and out of her wits, Eddy adopted a new media strategy, holding interviews with Arthur Brisbane of the *Evening Journal*, Edwin J. Park of the *Boston Globe*, and William E. Curtis of the *Chicago Record-Herald*. According to Gill, “After their visits to Pleasant View all three gentlemen pronounced themselves charmed and delighted by Mrs. Eddy, amazed at the acuity of her mind and her physical dynamism, and horrified that she was being sued in court and publically described as a lunatic.”<sup>32</sup> To these reporters, the founder of Christian Science shook her head sadly and described the suit as an unprincipled pursuit of her fortune, motivated by pure greed, adding “if I were a man, they would not treat me so.”<sup>33</sup>

Eddy also submitted to medical examinations by Dr. Edward French of the Massachusetts Hospital for the Insane and Dr. Alan Lane Hamilton of the Royal Society of Edinburgh. Both declared that she was of sound mind. Hamilton's interview was conducted with a reporter from the *New York Times*, who described the alienist's findings in an article appearing on August 25, 1907. According to Gill, Hamilton read in advance all of the affidavits supplied for the case as well as a broad sample of Eddy's personal correspondence in order to establish whether or not they supported the prosecution and the *World's* narrative of Eddy's steady mental decline from the 1870s onward. The *Times* coverage of Dr. Hamilton's investigation was remarkable in the way it drew distinctions between the narrative propagated by the *World*, and its own dispassionate account. "There really is no mystery about Mrs. Mary Baker G. Eddy," it begins. "Her case is a perfectly simple one, and the sensational stories which have been disseminated about her have no foundation in fact—although they can be very easily traced to a spirit of religious persecution that has at last quite overreached itself." The article first and foremost emphasized Dr. Hamilton's disinterestedness: "Dr. Allan McLane Hamilton, the expert alienist who has devoted the last month to an exhaustive investigation of the mental condition of the founder of Christian Science . . . expresses himself as having no sympathy with the religious teachings of the latter, at the same time that he is emphatic in his belief as to her sanity." In his quoted remarks, Hamilton extolled the sanity of Mrs. Eddy, declaring that he viewed her "without regard to the peculiar religious system with which she is identified . . . and viewing her in this way, simply as a woman, I have come to the conclusion that she is absolutely normal and possessed of a remarkably clear intellect."<sup>34</sup>

Hamilton's testimony was instrumental to the conclusion of the court case, which ended in a decisive victory for the defense. The prosecution "failed lamentably to persuade Judge Aldrich that Christian Science was not a religion but an insane belief and thus not protected by the constitution and the law. Only a handful of the depositions and letters and witnesses which Chandler and his colleagues had so carefully collected, and of which they expected so much, were allowed as evidence, to the chagrin of the assembled press corps."<sup>35</sup> But just because the case was won did not mean that the furor surrounding it wasn't terribly damaging to Mary Baker Eddy and her organization. As Gottschalk argues, "It was potentially more damaging to Eddy than any of the many crises that had marked her work in Christian Science. If the suit was an example of religious persecution, it was persecution in the distinctly twentieth-century form of a media event—indeed, a media-

*orchestrated* event.”<sup>36</sup> The case was one the biggest stories of the summer of 1907, and much of the coverage was problematic for Eddy’s public image: “Between March and August 1907, the *Boston Herald* published over ninety articles unfavorable to Eddy, over half of them on the front page.”<sup>37</sup> But what was most dangerous was the fact that the newspaper coverage had managed to reduce the question of the credibility of Christian Science to a question of Mary Baker Eddy’s *personal* credibility, a problem that boded ill for the future growth of Christian Science after its founder’s death. If Christian Science would continue to grow, then Mary Baker Eddy needed a legacy in print that extended beyond her personality and even beyond her own writing. And it needed to be a legacy that was accessible and agreeable to the right sorts of people.

### Narrating the News: Literary Journalism and *The Life of Mary Baker G. Eddy*

Concurrent with the Next Friends Suit, *McClure’s* magazine published a serial biography that probed all of the most controversial aspects of Eddy’s theology and leadership and laid the details of her life from her birth to her most recent actions out in a style that exemplified the tension in new journalism between reporting based on the judicious discovery and unveiling of fact and the imperative to tell a good story while unveiling grave social ills. It was hardly the only attempt to expose the inner workings of Eddy’s organization in the press, and it certainly was not the only biographical treatment of Eddy herself. Indeed, *McClure’s* published its series contemporaneously with Sibyl Wilbur’s far more sympathetic portrayal of Eddy in *Human Life*. But for a variety of reasons, it was the *McClure’s* version that played the most significant role in shaping public opinion about Christian Science. And it was the *McClure’s* version—released as a book in 1908—that served as the baseline for almost all subsequent attempts to write Eddy’s biography by persons unaffiliated with the Church. The major reasons why this is likely so are encapsulated in the editorial announcement used to advertise the series:

One of the most important, certainly the most interesting contributions to *McClure’s* in 1907 will be the first life of Mrs. Mary Baker Glover Eddy, head of the Christian Science Church. She is the richest woman in the United States, who got her money by her own efforts; the most powerful American woman by all odds, easily the

most famous; yet no one has ever before written the true story of her life. She is eighty-five years old, has been three times married; at fifty-five she was unknown and a dependent, and yet she has worked up a fortune which no one has been able quite to estimate, but which must be more than \$3,000,000. She is the most absolute church head in the world, not even excepting the Pope.

The whole story of her life is a romance. McClure's Magazine is going to tell the story for the first time. Never was a series of articles in any magazine more carefully prepared than this. Georgine Milmine, the author, has worked on it steadily for more than two years, gathering data, and five of the members of the McClure staff have helped to confirm and fill out her results.

It will be a great historical series, as great, perhaps, as the history of the Standard Oil, and to most people more interesting. It is not an attack on Christian Science, as most magazine articles have been. It is the history of a remarkable woman and a remarkable movement.<sup>38</sup>

In its framing of the project, the editors traded on the magazine's established reputation as a purveyor of provocative long-form journalism, referring explicitly to its series on the life of Rockefeller, which remains to this date the magazine's most famous achievement. It also appeals to the values of impartiality, asserting that it is "not an attack" and describing the efforts that went into the collection and verification of information. Yet in that same paragraph, Eddy's life is described as a "romance," as, essentially, a literary construct. And it is, in fact, the biography's literary pedigree that would ensure its continued impact on public opinion and future historiography.

*McClure's* was founded in 1894 by Samuel McClure and became, by the end of the century, the foremost purveyor of the *respectable* sort of muckraking. As Harold Wilson notes, when Roosevelt coined that term of opprobrium, he "was careful to inform the leading muckrakers at *McClure's* that they were excluded from the odium of the phrase."<sup>39</sup> Indeed, the magazine was pathbreaking in its reconfiguration of the relationship between the editor and his writers, Sam McClure being foremost among a "new generation of business-minded, entrepreneurial editors whose own biographies were patterned by the Horatio Alger novels" who "proceeded to reinvent the American magazine and redefine its editor-publisher."<sup>40</sup> The staff that McClure drew to himself was modeled on that of the *London Times*, and the picture Wilson paints of the editorial offices is one that evokes the adventure and romance of magazine journalism at its height: "Well-educated, literate young men were slowly added to the staff, men who would often confer with

McClure on one of his hasty proprietary tours of the editorial offices, then race away on one of the zesty editor's assignments." *McClure's* published literature and original reporting, and in the latter effort, its leader sought to maximize "the magazine's principal advantage over the daily newspaper: the ability to analyze events and reconstruct them in perspective."<sup>41</sup> The most lauded pieces of long-form journalism that the magazine published combined judicious fact-finding with gripping narrative and nuanced analysis, which usually reflected the editorial room's anti-monopolistic politics.

The most famous of these was the 1904 series *The History of Standard Oil*, written by Ida Tarbell. Combining a biographical portrait of Rockefeller with a ruthless investigation into the trust he famously founded, Tarbell's work shaped public opinion, influenced policy, and became a seminal text in the history of investigative journalism. Yet the magazine was not immune to the impulse to polemicize, and as much as McClure and his writers "revered sociology and science," as Justin Kaplan notes, "their stance and rhetoric were moralistic, evangelical, millennial, and echoed the pulpit as much as the laboratory, the lecture hall and the soapbox."<sup>42</sup> *McClure's* was valued for its reliability, but its writers were charged with a kind of righteous zeal and a commitment to particular aesthetic goals in their storytelling: "What opportunities were there, in the age of McKinley and Roosevelt any more than in the age of Ulysses Grant, for the creative interplay of art, intellect and reality? The *McClure's* group of 1903 saw the answer in a concept of literature as truth-telling, as a way of applying science to experience. In their work a vagrant strain of grass-roots dissent and suspicion of authority fused with a definition of naturalism as a life force in literature and advocacy as a life force in journalism."<sup>43</sup>

The success of the Rockefeller series and the example of Ida Tarbell inspired a young journalist named Georgine Milmine to begin writing a similar biographical series on Mary Baker Eddy.<sup>44</sup> Milmine was a native Canadian and a former staff writer for the *Syracuse Herald*, a position she relinquished when she married Benjamin Welles and moved with him when he became a writer for the *Auburn Citizen*. Archivists at the Mary Baker Eddy Library have discovered references to her newspaper and magazine writing after that point, but the Eddy series for *McClure's* is, at present, her only extant work. It was Tarbell who acquired the manuscript and notes that Milmine spent a year producing just prior to Tarbell's departure from the magazine's staff. Because Milmine was relatively inexperienced and the subject she had chosen potentially inflammatory, the manuscript spent more than a year in limbo before it was assigned in 1906 to a group of editors—

led first by Burton Bledstein and then later by Willa Cather—for thorough fact-checking and revision.

The world of Boston was, at the time, rather small. And the leaders of the First Church of Christ, Scientist were almost immediately aware that the project was being considered. Letters archived in the Mary Baker Eddy Library reveal that members of the Church Board and Eddy's household staff, namely Alfred Farlow, Frank Sprague, and Harold Wilson (not the historian cited above), negotiated extensively with editor Edgar Sisson, who was in turn regularly consulting John Sanborn Phillips, junior partner at *McClure's*. On July 15, 1905, Sprague wrote to Farlow to confirm that the articles were being written "by a woman (the name was not divulged) who is interested in studying matters of public concern, and who, in this vein, conceived the idea of 'writing up' the subject of Christian Science, as it seemed to her to offer a good field for the exercise of her genius."<sup>45</sup> The letters reveal just how sensitive the Eddy project was, not only for the Church but for the magazine itself. The editorial staff and partners were evidently polarized on whether to publish the series at all and, if so, how the subject matter ought to be treated. McClure was wildly enthusiastic about the project, while Phillips, it seems, was ambivalent. In July 1906, Wilson told Farlow that McClure was being restrained from publishing the kind of attack on Mrs. Eddy that he desired by other "more conservative" individuals surrounding him. As Wilson (Eddy's secretary) states:

To me it is patent that Mr. McClure is personally disposed to approach the subject of Christian Science as an antagonist and for the purpose of doing what he would call "showing it up." This, notwithstanding that Mr. Sisson, a close acquaintance and former business associate, has undertaken personally to rid Mr. McClure of the popular misconceptions of Christian Science, and still whatever prejudice would influence him, by a frank, and I am sure, convincing statement of the benign influence Christian Science has exerted in his own experience and of its wonderful results apparent to Mr. Sisson on all sides.<sup>46</sup>

In his earlier letter, Sprague expressed concern that the sources interviewed for the project were primarily hostile to Mrs. Eddy and that the portrayal would be unfair, but he said that he was assured that "it was the disposition of McClure's to give both parties to a controversy an equal opportunity; that its columns had been tendered to Mr. Rockefeller for a rejoinder to Miss Tarbell's articles on 'Standard Oil', but that he had declined. Mr. Lord

expressed the opinion that McClure's would be willing to publish a presentation of the Scientists' side of the case."<sup>47</sup>

In 1906, the core of the editorial staff split. Phillips, Tarbell, Sisson, Baker, and Lincoln Steffens left to create *The American Magazine*, citing disputes over the financial management of the magazine and McClure's increasingly authoritarian (and borderline unhinged) style of leadership.<sup>48</sup> At that point, there was no one left to oppose McClure in pursuing the Eddy story. That McClure was allowed such a free hand is important. The writers whose careers he helped make could often layer the factual with the dramatic in the pursuit of compelling narratives of exposure. As Cecilia Tichi notes, "The picturesque and the dramatic, Ida Tarbell knew, were prime components of her expose of Standard Oil, not flourishes but integers."<sup>49</sup> McClure's attitudes tended in a more extreme direction, a fault that is reflected in the correspondence surrounding the Eddy project. What appeared in the magazine was one of the most lyrical but also scathing accounts of Eddy's life ever to appear in print. The literary influence of such editors as Hendrick and Cather turned Milmine's dry prose into a narrative with driving momentum, thematic complexity, and a rich cast of characters. That it was also supposedly based on interviews with dozens if not hundreds of witnesses to Eddy's life lent it a level of credibility that it does not completely deserve. Even today, this biography—which many literary scholars credit to Willa Cather despite shaky evidential grounds for doing so—remains an essential citation for any researcher who doesn't know any better.<sup>50</sup>

The narrative of Eddy's life that resulted from these collective efforts is without question an engrossing read. The prose is lapidary, and the story has a strong sense of forward momentum in the way it lines up the events of the leader's life to produce a coherent portrait of a woman destined for notoriety. But Milmine certainly came to the project with a thesis that is woven throughout the text: that Mary Baker Eddy had deliberately *stolen* her healing method from her mentor Phineas Parkhurst Quimby and that *Science and Health* was plagiarized from his unpublished writings. This theory has been fairly well debunked in recent decades, and even in the early 1900s, the evidence for it was shaky.<sup>51</sup> Quimby's "writings," for instance, exist not as autographs but only as "copies" taken down by his various amanuenses, including the future founder of Christian Science, and for which there are no originals. And the claims for plagiarism were being made by the leaders of the rival mental healing movement that eventually became New Thought. In other words, the primary preoccupation of the text was not to disprove the essentials of Eddy's theology or healing method but to prove that she merely



did not originate them. Milmine's initial manuscript treatments exerted a great deal of effort to provide psychological reasons for Eddy's duplicity, depicting it as a complex process of self-deception that led Eddy to gradually become convinced that she was the author of ideas she had acquired from someone else:

Surrounded as she was by these admiring students, who hung upon her words and looked to her for the ultimate wisdom, Mrs. Glover gradually became less acutely conscious of Quimby's relation to the healing system she taught. She herself was being magnified and exalted daily by her loyal disciples in whose extravagant devotion she saw repeated the attitude of many of Quimby's patients—herself among them—to their healer. Instead of pointing always backward and reiterating, "I learned this from Dr. Quimby," etc., she began to acquiesce in the belief of her students, who regarded her as the source of what she taught. Her infatuated students, indeed, desired to see no further than their teacher, and doubtless would not have looked beyond her had she pointed. Consequently she said less and less about Quimby as time went on, and by 1875, when her first book, *Science and Health*, was issued, she had crowded him altogether out of his "science."<sup>52</sup>

But this endeavor to present an accurate and psychologically complex portrait of Eddy was complicated by the fact-finding techniques practiced not only by Milmine but by other members of the *McClure's* staff. According to Lyman Powell, who later undertook his own biography of Eddy and who consulted personally with Milmine, Cather, and other writers from the magazine, Milmine's research method was essentially to establish herself in one of the small towns that Eddy had lived in and to talk with whoever was willing: "Her method of work, as she described it to me, was to stay long enough in a place to get naturally reticent New England people to talk freely to her, and then with her trained newspaper mind she put what she learned from them often into the form of affidavits, to which in most cases those she met readily subscribed."<sup>53</sup> Powell, however, casts suspicion on the reliability of the accounts this method produced. One of the towns Milmine visited was Eddy's childhood home of Tilton, Massachusetts. Mary Baker Eddy was in her eighties at the time this research was performed, and most of the people who had any first-hand knowledge of her were deceased or had only been children at the time that the future founder of Christian Science had walked among them. Hannah Sanborn Philbrook, who had attended the same school as Mary Baker but self-admittedly did not know her very well,

was one of Milmine's most prolific correspondents on the subject of Eddy's past, and as Gillian Gill suggests, she had very little to say that wasn't self-serving: "We can all imagine how we would feel as worthy octogenarians to find that in researching our youth reporters were quoting only the girls who hated us most at school!"<sup>54</sup> As Powell indicates, "Three years ago Mr. Perkins of Tilton confirmed this affidavit story, and told me in some detail how, as Notary Public, he went around with Georgine Milmine and took the affidavits of many people in his part of the country, though his estimate of their value—knowing many of the people—was not as high as Georgine Milmine's."<sup>55</sup> Indeed, Cather herself critiqued the use of such sources in a letter describing her work on the project to Edwin Anderson, saying that "much of the first chapter" of the biography (in other words, the part she did not work on), "frankly deals with legend—with what envious people and jealous relatives remember of Mrs. Eddy's early youth. It was given for what it was worth, but I always consider such sources dubious."<sup>56</sup> The same problems of memory and bias plague the chapters on Eddy's life during the 1870s and 80s. Frank Sprague was not merely being paranoid when he wrote feverishly to Alfred Farlow that "[v]arious opponents of Mrs. Eddy have used the opportunity to give her such statistics and information as would aid in making an effective presentation; and she has had ample opportunity to collect whatever material could be gathered from all hostile sources."<sup>57</sup> Milmine's research notes reveal that many of the affidavits on Mrs. Eddy's life during this period were provided by none other than Frederick Peabody himself, *still* holding a grudge from his defeated lawsuit of 1899 and making a living as a kind of anti-Eddy pundit.<sup>58</sup>

The intervention of the *McClure's* editors evidently did little to fix this problem. As Tichi notes, while muckrakers saw fact as the "antidote to rumor and to sensationalist yellow journalism," they could often be "vulnerable to charges of amateurism. These writers were not expert in the subject areas of their work. Against opponents' charges of flawed data, exaggeration, and falsification, they armed themselves with factual claims. Our own 20<sup>th</sup> century skepticism of facts as manipulable and 'massageable' by beavies of PR flacks and 'spin doctors' had not yet entered the public consciousness."<sup>59</sup> That the professional editors at *McClure's* would rely so heavily on a well-known polemicist like Frederick Peabody—whom even Mark Twain, Eddy's most famous critic, found unsavory—is evidence of the preconceived notions that tainted the fact-finding process. If anything, these editors made the problems with Milmine's initial research *worse*, which calls into question the way in which *McClure* presented the work of his writers. In a letter

to John Dittmore, a member of the Christian Science Board of Directors, McClure insisted that “we are publishing no attack on Mrs. Eddy. We are giving a very clear, documentary history of Christian Science, such a history as no one could possibly object to unless he objects to the simple truth.”<sup>60</sup> As Amy Ahearn asserts, McClure expressed a belief that “‘plain facts’ were most persuasive to readers,” discouraging “his reporters from engaging in ‘literary’ styles.”<sup>61</sup> But any comparison of the early drafts of the article series to the finished product quite simply fails to bear this out. Milmine’s rather flat, unadorned prose was, if anything, embellished by later editors. For example, the treatment of Eddy’s childhood outbursts and frequent illnesses contains a great deal of unsympathetic editorializing that is not present in earlier drafts. The revisions characterize the young Mary Baker’s delicate constitution as evidence that the future founder of Christian Science ruled tyrannically over her own family through irrational and inexcusable behavior even as a very small child.

Both versions use the fact that Mary’s outbursts tended to be worst on Sundays to support these wildly divergent interpretations of her behavior. The draft describes the situation thus:

An incident showing her excessive sensibility is related by a member of the Baker family. On Sundays, Mark Baker was strict as to the proper observance of the day in his own house. There was the usual church going, and after that, silence and decorum at home. It was on these blue-law Sundays that Mary’s nerves received their severest tests. The youngest of the large household, it was hard for her to sit in enforced quiet all day, and remain<ing> indoors from morning until night, with the small rooms over-crowded with five other children, all <active, but> obliged to keep equally silent.

Sundays thus became the regular day for Mary’s attacks of hysteria, and after these she would lie <as> rigid as a corpse while a doctor was sent for, and hastened to rescue her from the cataleptic state. When at last she had two of these attacks on one Sunday, the older children took up the subject with the head of the house and pleaded for more liberty on the seventh day. After he had granted this and they could run about the farm on Sunday, Mary’s hysteria grew less violent.<sup>62</sup>

This version suggests that the Baker children all chafed under their father’s Puritanical regime, that Mary’s fits provided a pretext for quite reasonable requests on the part of the entire family for more freedom. The book version, however, depicts the youngest child’s behavior as entirely unsympathetic, a source of alienation between herself and other family members:

The family rules were relaxed where she was concerned, and the chief problem in the Baker house was how to pacify Mary and avoid her nervous “fits.” Even Mark Baker, heretofore invincible, was obliged to give way before the dominance of his infant daughter. His time-honoured observance of the Sabbath, which was a fixed institution at the Baker farm, was abandoned because Mary could not, after a long morning in church, sit still all day in the house with folded hands, listening to the reading of the Bible. Sundays became a day of torture not only to the hysterical child, but to all the family, for she invariably had one of her bad attacks, and the day ended in excitement and anxiety. These evidences of an abnormal condition of the nerves are important to any study of Mrs. Eddy and her career.<sup>63</sup>

And even under the stewardship of these professional editors, the biography contained numerous misstatements of fact that were immediately identified as such by outside observers. Indeed, Burton Hendrick’s introductory installment was published with a photo of a woman who looked sort of like Mary Baker Eddy but was actually an entirely different person, who had died in California two years prior.

*The Life of Mary Baker G. Eddy and the History of Christian Science* was a noteworthy, though tremendously flawed, attempt at what *McClure’s* alum Mark Sullivan would later call “a biography in somewhat the new manner, then the very new manner indeed.”<sup>64</sup> Though it based its account on the supposedly scientific methods of journalists of the era, it remains essentially a work of literature, produced in a popular literary style for the entertainment—as well as enlightenment—of its readers. And that it is still in print more than a hundred years after its original publication is attributable not to its credibility as an authoritative biography but to the involvement of Willa Cather, the famous novelist, whose name appears alongside Milmine’s on the cover of the 1993 Nebraska edition edited by David Stouck despite the fact that Cather was the leader of a large collaborative effort to refine Milmine’s original work and not, as that edition claims, the principal author. Its status as an object of some curiosity for scholars of American literature has not only kept it in print but ensured that it continues to be viewed by some as a credible account of Mary Baker Eddy’s life.<sup>65</sup>

Some contemporary observers certainly regarded this intermingling of literariness and factual reporting to be suspect. In a letter to the editor following the publication of the first two installments, Louis Block wrote of his interest “in studying such religious and psychological phenomena as this

Christian Science” and declared that “nothing would be more pleasing to me than to have an accurate record of the facts on which to base a conclusion.” However, the photo debacle as well as counterclaims issued from the Eddy camp raised doubts for him about the biography’s accuracy. “It is true the author writes in a very clear and lucid and entertaining style, but what good is all this if she is not writing the truth.”<sup>66</sup>

## All the News Worth Reading: Clean Journalism and the Growth of the *Monitor*

Following the one-two punch of the Next Friends Suit and the *McClure’s* series in 1907 and 1908, Mary Baker Eddy instructed the Christian Science Publishing Society to create a daily newspaper. Paul Deland, who was involved from the beginning, described the enterprise as motivated by “the realization of the need for a newspaper that would spread confidence instead of fear, the desire and provision to have it ably edited and the establishment of a helpful, hopeful guide for all time.”<sup>67</sup> The first issue appeared the day before Thanksgiving in 1908, just nine weeks after Eddy gave the order. Like Deland, many of the original staff members described their conviction that the newspaper would serve not only as a boon to Christian Science but to the public and to the journalistic profession. Contrary to expectation, the editors saw more advantage for the movement in downplaying the daily’s religious character rather than merely using it as a tool for deflecting hostile press. Indeed, they seem to have had the long game in mind, exercising perhaps a kind of soft influence that might eventually place the name “Christian Science” in the mainstream of American intellectual life rather than on the fringes. The paper published “one brief metaphysical article daily,” but otherwise the only evidence of its religious character was “the rigid exclusion of matters repugnant to the religious convictions of its readers, whatever their church or creed.”<sup>68</sup>

How exactly the editors attempted to avoid offending *anybody and everybody’s* religious sensibilities (an impossible feat to be sure) is unclear. But the paper tended to reflect the philosophical and theological orientation of Christian Scientists through its “rigid exclusion” of anything that gave credence to “mortal mind.” The way those running the paper tended to interpret that mission was by eschewing the “bizarre, the grotesque, the freakish” and the sensational.<sup>69</sup> In other words, the founding mandate of the *Monitor* was to avoid precisely what the *World* and the muckrakers

were often accused of dwelling upon. It sought to avoid controversy for controversy's sake, to celebrate human progress rather than expose human corruption, to "inform" rather than to advocate. It was a church-owned newspaper that showed no real desire to preach, unless it was its own "doctrine of clean journalism." And that is fitting, perhaps, given that sermons had at this point been banned from Christian Science services in place of readings from the Bible and *Science and Health*, presented to the congregation without mediation or interpretation. If muckraking, as some scholars have argued, was a fundamentally evangelical enterprise, the *Monitor* was underwritten by a religion without hellfire or brimstone, without original sin requiring atonement.<sup>70</sup>

Because of the paper's commitment to unmediated "facts" or "truth" and its lack of an explicit political or commercial agenda, the *Monitor* editors successfully adopted the rhetoric of objectivity and impartiality, asserting that the paper was "burdened by no financial and commercial ties" and therefore "is free to give an accurate report of a meeting, an impartial account of an event and to present all sides of the case." And in articulating this objective stance, editors like Deland reflected the Christian Science belief in the discoverability and efficacy of Truth, which Eddy taught had the power to drive out the Error of human suffering. As Deland stated, "*Monitor* editors work upon the idea that the most original story is the one that comes nearest to 'the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth'" and trained their reporters to "make *Monitor* stories absolutely accurate in the light of fundamental truth."

It is also clear that the editors of the *Monitor* saw themselves as participating in something entirely new and heroic in the field of journalism. Two weeks before the publication of the first issue, Alexander Dodds informed his compatriots that "they were to turn traditional newspaper practice upside down."<sup>71</sup> Deland, who was present at that meeting, qualified that "it wasn't long before we found that we were not turning things upside down. We were turning things right side up. It was the other newspapers that were upside down."<sup>72</sup> Erwin Canham, who served the paper for forty-nine years, half of them as its editor, states in his book-length history of the paper,

In its early years, the *Monitor* preached the doctrine of "clean journalism" almost as much as it practiced it. Part of its articulate missionary work was to sell itself to an increasing readership. Part of it was to remind other newspapers of their duties, by word as well as by deed. As time went on, the word became less necessary than the deed. The *Monitor's* position became better known, its editors and

staff members took a more active role in newspaper organizations dedicated to the betterment of newspapers.<sup>73</sup>

“Clean journalism” became the by-word for the *Monitor* throughout its earliest phase. “Clean” meant presenting salutary, non-sensational facts in a pure and unembroidered form in contrast to the unseemly scandal-mongering of the yellows. Deland says that they vigorously sought out “new sources, standards and treatments of news” and describes how “the reporters of the old school are redirected and young reporters trained on radically different lines from those long established.”<sup>74</sup>

In defining themselves against the “old school,” they were certainly not alone. They weren’t even all that original. The *Monitor* was decidedly within the tradition of Horace Greeley, Charles Dana, and the *Times*. By 1908, a conservative backlash against “story journalism” was well underway, setting its sights not only on the suspect practices of the “yellows” (which had become infamous at the very end of the previous decade) but the revolutionary impulses of the muckrakers. This was a movement within the profession away from the populist crusading of Pulitzer and the storytelling of McClure toward what sociologists of the profession call the “information” model of journalism. And in some cases, those calling for a return to sanity were the remorseful (or self-protective) former exponents of new journalism’s excesses. This turn was marked by Theodore Roosevelt’s speech, “The Man with the Muckrake,” in which he referenced (and made a hash of) Bunyan’s *Pilgrim’s Progress* in order to condemn “the man who in this life consistently refuses to see aught that is lofty, and fixes his eyes with solemn intentness only on that which is vile and debasing.” To look upon the filth, he admits, is sometimes necessary—“there are times and places where this service is the most needed of all the services performed”—but the man who sees nothing else, “who never thinks or speaks or writes save of his feats with the muckrake, speedily becomes, not a help to society, not an incitement to good, but one of the most potent forces of evil.”<sup>75</sup> And when the disenchanted writers of *McClure’s* left to establish their own magazine, what they had in mind was “a magazine of joyous reading” that would emphasize the positive, upward progress of humanity in “a happy, struggling, fighting world, in which, we believe, good people are coming out on top.” In Steffens’s words, “Every man in this whole country who is for better things is with us.”<sup>76</sup> Christian Science with its optimistic take on human nature, its rejection of hell and original sin, had found its moment and its audience.

This shift in editorial practice was accompanied and aided by journalism’s continuing path toward professionalization, toward the codification

and entrenchment of various institutions and standards that would come to separate the “real journalists” from the amateurs and pretenders. New schools of journalism introduced “an educational curriculum that imposed desirable professional standards on young reporters and upheld a rigid line between literature (or ‘invention’) and journalism (or ‘fact’).” It was Pulitzer himself who, in 1904 supplied the initial endowment for the Columbia School of Journalism, which opened in 1913. When told that such a school would create class distinctions within the profession, “Pulitzer answered that this was exactly what it should do—establish a distinction between the fit and the unfit.”<sup>77</sup> Determined to see journalism become “one of the great and intellectual professions,” he “proposed that journalists receive training on a par with that given to lawyers and doctors.”<sup>78</sup>

David Mindich characterizes the confrontation between these two models of journalism as a “moral war” in which the participants saw themselves as fighting not only for business models but for the very health of society.<sup>79</sup> Critics of the excesses of the yellows, “were outraged by new journalism’s tendency to fictionalize and invent, practices they considered morally and epistemologically dangerous. Newspapers functioned as a form of public record. If the facticity of these public documents was only a veil, how could one finally determine what was real?”<sup>80</sup> Class interests and a certain hierarchy of tastes at least partially informed this debate. Noting that story journalism tended to be preferred by the working classes and information journalism the middle and upper classes, Schudson demands that we consider, “[i]n the critical decades from 1883 to the first years of this century, when at the same moment yellow journalism was at its height and the New York Times established itself as the most reliable and respected newspaper in the country, why did wealthier people in New York read the *Times* and less wealthy people read the *World*?”<sup>81</sup> Indeed, he locates the moment of professional crisis in the moment when “the educated middle class no longer recognized in ‘public opinion’ what it took to be its own voice, the voice of reason.”<sup>82</sup> As Roggenkamp notes, “Some critics, often the same ones who criticized the democratic gestures of realism in literature, openly assailed the equalizing tendencies of new journalism, fearing that it would ‘drive out the ideas and serious discussion’ seemingly inherent in more elite papers and fiction, and fretting that ‘these new papers’ provided a vulgar immigrant audience with ‘frightening political power.’”<sup>83</sup> Indeed, at the height of the circulation war between the *World* and the *Journal* at the turn of the century, the Young Men’s Christian Association Library in Brooklyn boycotted both papers, declaring that it “brought into our rooms a very undesirable class of readers.”<sup>84</sup>



Through “clean journalism,” *The Christian Science Monitor* adapted itself to this informational model wholly and self-consciously, regularly voicing its repudiation of anything that might be deemed sensationalistic. As a general rule, this meant that the paper tended to emphasize any news that might be construed as positive or pointing to mankind’s trajectory toward enlightenment, peace, and prosperity. Reporting on a series of interviews with foreign diplomats, one headline in the January 4, 1910 edition declares “WORLD-WIDE PEACE DESIRED BY NATIONS,” an article that carries a bitter sense of irony just a few scant years before the First World War.<sup>85</sup> When it was necessary to cover a war or a disaster, the early *Monitor* tended to stick to a bare outline of the facts, refusing to dwell on the details of violence or the material suffering of human beings. Where possible, reporters would emphasize whatever was being done to provide humanitarian aid, demonstrating the ways in which the good in humanity could be revealed in times of trouble. As Willis Abbot informed the members of the professional journalistic fraternity Sigma Delta Chi,

Writers for *The Christian Science Monitor* are instructed to avoid reporting crimes, disasters, epidemics, deaths, or trifling gossip. There are qualifications to each clause in these instructions. A crime or a death by which the course of history might be affected would be reported—the assassination of a ruler, for example, or the death of a man whose passing would end some notable service to mankind. The disaster such as the Japanese earthquake would be reported in the expectation that *Monitor* readers would eagerly avail themselves of the opportunity to extend charitable aid—as indeed in that particular instance they did with notable liberality. But in neither case would anything more than a dispassionate statement of the facts be published.<sup>86</sup>

During my research, as a kind of experiment, I simply entered the term “war” into the search field for the *Monitor*’s ProQuest archive for the years 1914–18. These are some of the headlines that appeared in the top fifty results:

FORMER FRENCH LEADER CALLS FOR A DEFINITE PEACE  
MANY INTERNED GERMAN SOLDIERS IN HOLLAND  
FREED  
LONDON LORD MAYOR TO AID IN RELIEF WORK  
HOLLAND PAPER POINTS AT RIGHTS AS NEUTRAL POWER  
SWEDISH NEUTRALITY SAID TO STRENGTHEN AS THE EU-

ROPEAN WAR PROGRESSES  
 ANTI-WAR COUNCIL OF NETHERLANDS WORKS FOR  
 PEACE  
 GOETHE LITERARY TREASURES ARE SAID TO BE SAFE  
 BRITAIN IS NOT DISTURBED OVER WOOD SITUATION  
 WESTERN BOND MARKET IS KEEPING UP IMPROVEMENT  
 FREE TRADE CRY IN ITALY ONE OF EFFECTS OF WAR

There were no headlines in the top fifty results describing acts of aggression or casualties of the conflict. Prior to US entry into the war, the *Monitor* appeared particularly zealous to avoid taking sides, reporting extensively on the neutrality of certain states and on whatever glimmers of hope might be garnered from the deepening conflict. This is also true of its coverage of disasters. In the aftermath of the devastating 1909 earthquake in Italy, the *Monitor* offered a rehearsal of the facts along with the following qualification: “It is quite unnecessary to dwell on the appalling details of the disaster. True charity is born of the desire to fulfill one’s duty toward one’s neighbors, and not emotional heart-burnings. John Ruskin, speaking of charity, once said that he gave because he realized that it was his duty to give. This should always be so; they should give because they realize it is their duty and privilege to give, and not because Pelion has been piled on Ossa in the shape of sensational details.”<sup>87</sup> Withholding whatever might be shocking here has both moral and aesthetic dimensions. Fellow-feeling for the suffering of another person and the good deeds that might inspire, it suggests, ought to come from a rational contemplation of one’s “duty” rather than the pure pathos provoked by the horrifying nature of that suffering.

The invocation of Ruskin distinguishes the *Monitor*’s style as not only a reportorial or a moral choice but an aesthetic one. And indeed, it was this commitment to the rational and a certain kind of spiritual and intellectual elevation that informed what Abbot went on to describe as the positive aspects of the paper’s editorial policy: “*Monitor* correspondents are instructed to report fully all advances made in education methods, notable discoveries in science, great public benefactions, incidents of social or political progress, conferences of religious, educational, reformatory, or economic associations, and indeed every event, material, intellectual, or spiritual, which has its bearing upon the ascent of man.”<sup>88</sup> The *Monitor* favored an aesthetic of elevation, of sublimity that lapped over into their coverage of literature. One brief item in the “Home Forum” section praises a story by Richard Harding Davis—one of new journalism’s more famous practitioners—called “A Charmed Life,” which appeared in the November 1910 issue of *Scrib-*

*ner's*. The story centers on a young couple separated by the man's military conscription during the Cuban War. Though all odds are against them, the man manages to survive the conflict uninjured. He encounters more danger on the trip back across the gulf, but each time, he is saved by some seemingly miraculous force. When the couple is reunited, the woman tells him that she had sensed he was in peril and prayed to God to protect him. That this story should have appealed to Christian Science readers is not at all surprising, but the terms the Home Forum uses to praise the story indicate the ways in which the aesthetics of optimism (we might even call it sentimentality) were linked to a loose concept of realism, of truth-telling: "The incidents are all delightfully natural in their working out." The article also praises Davis, "a contemporary writer of light literature of often a rather bravado type" for writing "this pretty idyll to stand for the power of love and prayer to protect the absent friend."<sup>89</sup>

Visual aesthetics, down to precise font specifications, were important for projecting the paper's credibility and distinguishing it from those that were corrupted. According to Abbott, "the news pages of many papers have deteriorated in proportion as the advertising pages have been improved. Glaring black type which in the best papers has disappeared from the advertising pages, now appears in headlines on the first page and too much of the news published is as offensive in character as were the detailed symptoms of loathsome diseases which formerly were given space in those columns, which were sold for a price."<sup>90</sup> Deland states, "Use of very heavy type, solid back effects and dark backgrounds is not permitted, neither is freakish typography. Position is sold only on the picture page. The pyramid form of make-up is employed, except for the financial and hotel-travel pages, on which the make-up is from the top of the page downward." Furthermore, "In preparing copy for *The Christian Science Monitor* writers are required to write concisely and to the point but not to be handicapped by the modern fallacy of inadequate brevity that merely records an occurrence. The tendency is to revert in a measure to the journalism of Greeley, Dana and Bennett, to give the interpretation necessary in presenting stories of important developments and actions."<sup>91</sup> Praise for the paper tended to highlight these very qualities. The editors of the *Granite State Free Press* praised the paper's discretion in content, layout aesthetics, and advertising all at once: "We see that it is neat, newsy, clean, in good large, legible print, wholesome in tone and that only about one-sixteenth of it, or a little more, is given to advertising; of course, no patent medicine ads."<sup>92</sup>

*Monitor* editors and reporters saw themselves involved in an enterprise with the potential for global impact. It is no accident that of the accolades

the paper has garnered over its century-long history, the most notable have been for international reporting. In 1950, *Monitor* correspondent Edmund Stevens won the Pulitzer for his 43-part series “This is Russia Uncensored,” based on a three-year stint in Moscow at the height of the Soviet era. John R. Hughes won in 1967 for his reporting on Indonesia’s Transition to the New Order and David Rohde in 1996 for his work on the Srebrenica Genocide. According to the paper’s announcement about this award, Rohde was “the first Western journalist to visit the sites of suspected mass graves . . . uncovering grim and convincing evidence that Bosnian Serb forces had executed Muslim prisoners in Europe’s worst massacre since the Holocaust.”<sup>93</sup> Rohde’s pictures of the mass burial sites—which he discovered after interviewing refugees holding camps and obtaining location data from Western intelligence sources—got him arrested by Bosnian Serb soldiers. He was held for ten days under threat of imprisonment or death and eventually released under pressure from US officials, journalists, and NGOs.<sup>94</sup>

The very nature of this reporting indicates that at least in the present day, *Monitor* reporters don’t exactly shy away from violence or from documenting human suffering on a grand scale. And despite its desire to appear neutral, commitment to reporting the major news of the world has been consistent almost since its inception, though different editors disagreed about how exactly such news should be covered. In describing the newspaper’s policy of avoiding sensationalism, Deland insisted that “it [the *Monitor*] does not ignore conditions and always hastens to lend a helping hand. Instead of trying to make its readers squirm by making suffering, damage and death the motive as do so many newspapers in their frantic sensationalism, the *Monitor* endeavors to bring out the thoughts of relief as the dominant idea.”<sup>95</sup> Similarly, Canham asserted that

It does not leave out news just because it is unpleasant, nor seek to throw a rosy glow over a world that is far from rosy. To describe the *Monitor* as a “clean” newspaper is correct but incomplete. It also strives to expose whatever needs to be uncovered in order to be removed or remedied. It seeks to put the news in a sound perspective, giving greatest emphasis to what is important and reducing the merely sensational to its place in an accurate system of values. It seeks also to amuse and entertain, but in wholesome and socially desirable terms.<sup>96</sup>

Indeed, it was under Canham that the foreign affairs side of the paper flourished.<sup>97</sup> He characterized the *Monitor*’s approach to internationalism

as “strictly of the sort expressed by Mrs. Eddy in her phrase ‘to bless all mankind.’”<sup>98</sup>

One of the ways in which the paper saw itself dispensing this blessing was by connecting the rather small flock of Christian Scientists to a broader cosmopolitan community. According to Canham, “It is dedicated to the enlightenment of all whom it can reach. Its audience is global.”<sup>99</sup> Indeed, the Publishing Society saw it as the duty of a Christian Scientist to subscribe to and read the *Monitor* not only in order to support the Church financially but in order to become a more enlightened global citizen:

As we observe our Leader’s request that we subscribe for and read the *Monitor*, our mental horizon is broadened, for thereby we break the hampering bonds of local, selfish views and interests, and we become citizens of the world in the true sense. Consistent and intelligent reading of the *Monitor* lifts us out of the narrow valley of local considerations to a higher and better point of view where we gain a more universal and sympathetic survey of the problems confronting mankind. Of course, the recognition by Christian Scientists of these problems calls forth the right metaphysical work which is needed to neutralize and nothingize the erroneous beliefs and practices which tend to debase and enslave men. Thus the reading of the *Monitor* helps to awaken us to the unlimited possibilities for unselfish service to others and for spiritual growth and enlarged understanding with ourselves.<sup>100</sup>

But beyond that, they believed that through strong reporting, the *Monitor* could promote real change in the world. The 1925 reminiscence of Mr. Algernon Hervey Bathurst, which is preserved in the Mary Baker Eddy Library, describes his effort to use the paper as a tool of diplomacy. “In 1916,” he writes, “when the relations between U.S.A. and Great Britain seemed to be very strained over the question of the right to search at sea, I recall realizing that if any paper was in a position to do some healing and constructive work in connection with this matter it would be the C.S. *Monitor*. What to do, and where to begin seemed to me to present a problem to which I saw no solution.” Bathurst believed that his efforts played a role in turning the tide of American public opinion and in the entry of the United States into the war. He describes the unprecedented sight of the Stars and Stripes and the Union Jack flying side by side over Parliament, and attributes to Lord Balfour (perhaps wishfully) a belief in “the ‘metaphysical’ importance of the occurrence, pointing out that not only had the United States come to the assistance of Great Britain and the allies, but that for the time being

the American troops were brigaded with the British owing to the fact that the U.S.A. generals had not had the time to familiarize themselves with the situation, and the methods of warfare then in operation. It was for me a wonderful and inspiring occasion—one I can never forget.”<sup>101</sup>

Without a doubt, the *Monitor's* unique viewpoint resulted in some idiosyncrasies. The paper did not print obituaries, for example, and tended to shy away from medical news, reporting only on “medical news that effects the general community, such as legislative actions or sanitary and hygienic decisions” and rarely—if ever—on medical research or discoveries.<sup>102</sup> Mary Baker Eddy rarely gave instructions on how the paper was supposed to be run or what it was supposed to print. But when she did, she tended to focus on tellingly minute issues. She insisted, for example, that reports on the weather emphasize their status as “predictions” rather than certainties. According to Canham, this was so that

They need not bind or impair man, responsive to God's law. Here once more, in addition to a position of religious principle, was another highly practical point. What the Weather Bureau announces is, after all, strictly a prediction, and how often does it turn out to be wrong. It is the height of journalistic accuracy to make this point, though with sufficient subtlety to not offend the hard-working meteorologists of the Weather Bureau.<sup>103</sup>

And in January of 1909, Mary Baker Eddy wrote to then editor Archibald McClellan not to report too extensively on automobile accidents. Curiously, she did not express any concern that doing so would give credence to “mortal mind” but rather so as “not to make those have interest in the automobiles our enemies.”<sup>104</sup>

Even Canham admits that these proscriptions frequently hampered the paper's ability to be effective. Of the first decade, he says that what began as a bold experiment in journalism gave way to “a varying and indeterminate set of taboos which had a considerable effect on *Monitor* style and did not begin to melt away until the mid-1920s. The nature and extent of these taboos should not be exaggerated.” He attempts to downplay the impact of the editorial desk's byzantine list of prohibitions as “largely stylistic” but admits that “they produced in the community and the world at large an impression, not altogether unjustified as far as style went, that the *Monitor* was “odd.”<sup>105</sup> Keith S. Collins, a former writer for the paper, paints a less rosy picture, suggesting that “clean journalism” effectively meant “sanitized news”:

[D]espite the similarity in appearance to other papers, the *Monitor* was clearly different in tone. All stories of suffering had happy endings but one, and that one—a report of the burning of the cruise ship *Sardinia*, when “many lives . . . were lost”—bore the headline “*Sardinia Beached Because of Fire*,” as if the ship had simply run aground with no further problems. The dominant theme came through clearly in the lead story on the Charles River dam: Don’t worry; despite what you may hear and see, mankind is making progress!<sup>106</sup>

In other cases, the *Monitor* failed to sufficiently cover stories on which the public needed to be informed. In the case of the lynching of three black men in Tennessee, the paper “merely sketched its outlines, trying to minimize the fear of it,” while the *Times* managed to provide context and a moral outlook that the *Monitor* might have also been uniquely equipped to provide had it not shied away from the task.<sup>107</sup>

Collins also suggests that in its pursuit of an anomalous concept of “accuracy,” the *Monitor* frequently became a mouthpiece for the powerful, even going so far as to let “public figures revise what they said for publication.” And unlike the crusaders who wrote for the yellows, the *Monitor* did not really attempt speak truth to power. Of the paper’s leadership under Willis Abbott in the 20s, he says, “There was no recognition of underlying errors in the world that did not, in fact, make war improbable and capital-labor disputes susceptible to easy moralizing. There was no attempt to probe festering evils and identify ways to eliminate them.”<sup>108</sup> In other words, through its kid-gloves handling of the “facts” and its judicious avoidance of obvious bias, the paper failed to illuminate systemic abuses of power or to present the perspectives of people who might have had a grievance. The *Monitor* remained a conservative paper, a defender—through omission if not through direct action—of the status quo.

To be fair, some comparable criticisms were also leveled against muckraking, which has frequently been accused of ideological incoherence and naiveté about facts.<sup>109</sup> And as Kaplan says of McClure’s, “The implicit achievement of muckraking, as Steffens later suggested, was actually to strengthen the system by alerting it to its own vulnerabilities. According to this view, muckraking was a fundamentally middle-class, loyalist strategy, despite dramatic appearances to the contrary; and its net effect was comparable to that of administering underdoses of antibiotics: warned and injured, the hostile organism becomes stronger than ever.”<sup>110</sup> And failure to effectively perform the “watchdog” role of the press is also problem that has

been identified with the model of information journalism that proceeded out of the early twentieth century. It continues to be a critique leveled against the mainstream press, often accused of serving as stenographers for government interests in Washington. According to Schudson, the news during the rise of the information model “appeared to become less the reporting of events in the world than the reprinting of those facts in the universe of facts which appealed to special interests who could afford to hire public relations counsel.”<sup>111</sup> It was the earnest desire of the papers that would become the new elite to present themselves as the reasonable, respectable alternative to the gossip and gore of the yellows, which were “deviant, unmanly, and uncivilized.”<sup>112</sup> And as such, “[t]he professions developed a proprietary attitude toward ‘reason’ and a paternalistic attitude toward the public.”<sup>113</sup> The rapid social changes that defined the turn of the century—industrialization, urbanization, and the expansion of the franchise—placed urban professionals in contact with “new categories of persons,” who had “often been conceived of as passionate beings, incapable of sustained rationality.”<sup>114</sup>

As Mindich argues, newspapermen of this era came to associate the concept of “objectivity” with civilization, something which they presumably had while the teeming masses did not: “Charles Dana, for example, wanted his reporters to know Greek and Latin, to read Shakespeare, the Bible, and other ‘great’ literary works. For Dana, the paradigm for news gathering represented another Western tradition, the tradition of an industrialized and stratified society, one that gains its wealth from the service of others.”<sup>115</sup> Tellingly, the *Times* advertised itself not only as “all the news that’s fit to print” but claimed it would “not soil the breakfast cloth,” depicting their ideal reader as the type of person who ate at a table draped by white linen. According to Roggenkamp, “Not incidentally, the information “fit to print” was most often suitable for business interests and conservative politics.”<sup>116</sup> And “fit to print” did quite often mean excluding news that ought to have been of interest to the public. Despite the ethos of authenticity, Mindich argues, “the truth about lynching or even a reasonable facsimile of the truth, was not conveyed by the mainstream media.”<sup>117</sup>

In the *Monitor* files, there is an undated<sup>118</sup> proof containing a “Word of Appreciation” from a reader who states that he read “the Herald, World and Times” and saw “about 20 columns of murders, wife beaters and drunken and depraved boys killing their fathers and mothers and how three thieves strangled Mrs. Vanderbilt and stole her pearl necklace, and how citizens of Texas burned 10 negroes.” Then he describes being handed a copy of the *Monitor* and finding “all the pure news of the world without a single blood-



curdling crime.”<sup>119</sup> While “Eli Perkins” appears representative of the type of reader who became exhausted with the tawdry voyeurism of the other papers, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the response of much of the respectable and enlightened segment of society to the problems of their communities was to simply avoid reading about them. Thus, a turn toward internationalism could also mean looking away from corruption and human suffering closer to home.

## Conclusion

Because it is owned by a religious organization, it is tempting to treat *The Christian Science Monitor* much as its early founders treated it: as a special case. And in the sense of its unusual origins and ideological standpoint, it sort of is. But the *Monitor*'s version of “clean journalism,” which its editors saw as a force that would change the future of the profession and not just pander to the tastes of the public, needs to be understood in the broader context of the profession's twentieth century development. The *Monitor* was fringe, but it was also very mainstream, and having largely shed the taboos that Canham decried, it continues to be. In the days of hyper-partisan media, it is difficult to think of any news organization (including the *Times* and NPR, mistrusted by the right for its supposed liberal bias) that inspires less controversy. In 2005, on the occasion of its move to digital, the *Boston Globe* praised it for its “distinctive brand of nonhysterical journalism.”<sup>120</sup> This can, perhaps, be partly attributed to shrewd business sense, but it also indicates the degree to which the central ideas of Christian Science—optimism and DIY spirituality—remain at the core of American popular religion and popular culture.

As Anne Harrington and Barbara Ehrenreich have shown, belief in the power of optimism infuses American business culture, motivational literature, and recovery and addiction therapy.<sup>121</sup> But as distant as these populist theories may seem from a woman who died in Boston in 1910, every contemporary healer and self-help author, from Napoleon Hill to Deepak Chopra to Andrew Weil, “came out from under Mary Baker Eddy's petticoats.”<sup>122</sup> Mary Baker Eddy and other mental healing figures like P.P. Quimby and Warren Felt Evans are the direct intellectual ancestors of Norman Vincent Peale, author of *The Power of Positive Thinking* (1952), and Rhonda Byrne, author of *The Secret* (2006). Bill Wilson, one of the founders of Alcoholics Anonymous, was also influenced by the writings of Mary Baker

Eddy, attesting to the ways in which the central assumptions of Christian Science have penetrated mainstream therapeutic vocabularies that we quite simply take for granted. But the example of the *Christian Science Monitor* further demonstrates how these ideas are embedded in our most important cultural institutions, right down to the way that we obtain information.

### Notes

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1. Robert G. Sproul, Letter to Wilbur P. Robinson, 31 October 1939 (CSM Subject File. Mary Baker Eddy Library for the Betterment of Humanity, Boston, MA.)
2. "Monitor Judged 'Fairest' Survey Ranks U.S. Publications," *Christian Science Monitor*, (Boston, MA), 28 August 1970.
3. Walter Cronkite, Letter to Erwin Canham, 30 April 1970 (Subject File. Box 27. Mary Baker Eddy Library for the Betterment of Humanity, Boston, MA.)
4. John. L. Wright, Letter to Mary Baker Eddy, 12 March 1908 (Incoming Correspondence File. Mary Baker Eddy Library for the Betterment of Humanity, Boston, MA.)
5. Ibid.
6. The motto appears on an early mock-up of the *Monitor's* masthead but was not, evidently, kept. Archibald McClellan used in in a speech in Chicago on October 28, 1910: "We are trying to publish . . . all the news it is worth while reading." Erwin Canham, *Commitment to Freedom: The Story of The Christian Science Monitor* (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1958), 74
7. But in telling this particular story, I wish to emphasize that my usage of terms like "objectivity" or "impartiality" is meant to reflect the aspirations of particular journalists and editors, not as a value-judgment.
8. The rise of professionalism in nineteenth-century America is covered at length in Burton Bledstein, *The Culture of Professionalism: the Middle Class and the Development of Higher Education in America*, (New York: Norton, 1976) and Samuel Haber, *The Quest for Authority and Honor in the American Professions: 1750-1900*, (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1991).
9. Justin Kaplan, *Lincoln Steffens: Portrait of a Great American Journalist*, (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1974), NOOK edition, 63.
10. Michael Schudson, *Discovering the News: A Social History of American Newspapers* (New York: Basic Books, 1967), NOOK edition, 62.
11. Howard S. Good, "Epilogue: Muckraking and the Ethic of Caring," in *The Muckrakers: Evangelical Crusaders*, edited by Robert Miraldi (London: Praeger, 2000), 157-58.
12. Thomas Connery, *Journalism and Realism: Rendering American Life* (Chicago: Northwestern UP, 2011), 14-15.
13. Karen Roggenkamp, *Narrating the News: New Journalism and Literary Genre in Late Nineteenth-Century American Newspapers and Fiction* (Kent: Kent State UP, 2005), 21.
14. As Schudson argues, "It would be a mistake to read contemporary views of objectivity into the fact-mindedness of the 1890s. Objectivity is an ideology of the distrust of the self, something Richard Harding Davis and his colleagues did not feel. The Progressives' belief in facts was different from a modern conviction of objectivity." Schudson, *Discovering the News*, 62.

15. Schudson, *Discovering the News*, 63.
16. Frank Norris, "A Plea for Romantic Fiction," *The Norton Anthology of American Literature*. ed. Nina Baym & Jerome Klinkowitz. 8<sup>th</sup> ed. Vol. C (New York: W.W. Norton, 2007), 915.
17. Harold S. Wilson, *McClure's and the Muckrakers*, (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1970), 190.
18. Qtd. in James McGrath Morris, *Pulitzer: A Life in Politics, Print, and Power*, (New York: Harper Collins, 2010), NOOK edition, 234.
19. Morris, *Pulitzer*, 233.
20. Michael McGerr, *A Fierce Discontent: The Rise and Fall of the Progressive Movement in America*, (New York: Oxford UP, 2005), NOOK edition, 268.
21. McGerr, *A Fierce Discontent*, 7.
22. Upton Sinclair, *The Profits of Religion: An Essay in Economic Interpretation*, (Pasadena: Published by the Author, 1918), 259-60.
23. Stephen Gottschalk, *Rolling Away the Stone: Mary Baker Eddy's Challenge to Materialism* (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 2006), 14.
24. Gillian Gill, *Mary Baker Eddy* (Reading: Perseus, 1998), 471-2.
25. Gill, *Mary Baker Eddy*, 473.
26. Qtd. in Gill, *Mary Baker Eddy*, 474.
27. Gill, *Mary Baker Eddy*, 488.
28. Gottschalk, *Rolling Away the Stone*, 19.
29. Gottschalk, *Rolling Away the Stone*, 20.
30. "Mrs. Eddy's Son in a Great Fight to Save her Life," *Evening World* (New York, NY), 2 March 1907.
31. Ibid.
32. Gill, *Mary Baker Eddy*, 513.
33. Qtd. in Gill, *Mary Baker Eddy*, 513.
34. "Dr. Alan McLane Hamilton Tells About His Visit to Mrs. Eddy." *The New York Times* (New York, NY) 25 August 1907.
35. Gill, *Mary Baker Eddy*, 159
36. Gottschalk, *Rolling Away the Stone*, 13.
37. Gottschalk, *Rolling Away the Stone*, 24.
38. "The Life of Mrs. Eddy" (Magazine advertisement. Milmine Collection. The Mary Baker Eddy Library for the Betterment of Humanity, Boston).
39. Wilson, *McClure's*, v.
40. Cecilia Tichi, *Exposes and Excess: Muckraking in America 1900-2000*, (Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 2004), 86.
41. Wilson, 81.
42. Kaplan, *Lincoln Steffens*, 124-5.
43. Kaplan, *Lincoln Steffens*, 130.
44. Lyman Powell, Letter to Lucia Warren, 13 January 1933 (typescript, Milmine Collection, Mary Baker Eddy Library for the Betterment of Humanity, Boston).
45. Frank Sprague, Letter to Alfred Farlow, 15 July 1905 (typescript, *McClure's* File, Mary Baker Eddy Library for the Betterment of Humanity, Boston).
46. H.C. Wilson, Letter to Alfred Farlow, 18 July 1906 (typescript, *McClure's* File, Mary Baker Eddy Library for the Betterment of Humanity, Boston).
47. Sprague, Letter to Farlow.
48. Wilson, *McClure's*, 168-9.
49. Tichi, *Exposes and Excess*, 25.
50. For a thorough analysis of the documentary evidence on the authorship of the Eddy series, see L. Ashley Squires, "The Standard Oil Treatment: Willa Cather, *The Life of Mary*

Baker G. Eddy, and 20<sup>th</sup> Century Collaborative Authorship,” *Studies in the Novel* 45, no. 3 (2013): 328–48.

51. Even Twain, no great fan of Mrs. Eddy’s, found it suspect. See Mark Twain, *Christian Science* (New York: Oxford UP), 1996.

52. Willa Cather and Georgine Milmine, *The Life of Mary Baker G. Eddy and the History of Christian Science*. ed. David Stouck (Lincoln: U of Nebraska P, 1993), 161–2.

53. Powell, Letter to Warren.

54. Gill, *Mary Baker Eddy*, 38.

55. *Ibid.*

56. Willa Cather, Letter to Edwin Anderson, 24 November 1922, (Letter 0649 of *A Calendar of Letters of Willa Cather: An Expanded, Digital Edition*. Ed. Andrew Jewell and Janis P. Stout. *The Willa Cather Archive*. Ed. Andrew Jewell. U of Nebraska-Lincoln. 13 December 2008 <<http://cather.unl.edu>>. Path: Letters; Keyword; 0649).

57. Sprague, Letter to Farlow.

58. Gill and the finding aid for the Milmine file indicate that certain documents, including interview notes, are in Peabody’s hand, and a handwritten note by Milmine indicates that Peabody supplied the affidavits from Horace T. Wentworth, Mrs. Catherine Isabel Clapp, Mrs. Lucy Holmes, and Charles Wentworth, all critical informants for the section on Eddy’s early years as a teacher of Christian Science.

59. Tichi, *Exposes and Excess*, 88.

60. S.S. McClure, Letter to John V. Dittmore, 6 November 1908 (typescript, *McClure’s* File, Mary Baker Eddy Library for the Betterment of Humanity, Boston).

61. Amy Ahearn, “Engaging with the Political: Willa Cather, *McClure’s Magazine*, and the Production of National Rhetoric” (dissertation, U of Nebraska, 2008), 22.

62. Milmine, *The Life of Mary Baker G. Eddy*, 1905, (typescript, Milmine Collection, Mary Baker Eddy Library for the Betterment of Humanity, Boston), 6–7.

63. Cather and Milmine, *Life of Eddy*, 12–13.

64. Mark Sullivan, excerpt from *The Education of an American*, New York: Doubleday, 1938 (Photostat, Milmine Collection, Mary Baker Eddy Library for the Betterment of Humanity, Boston).

65. Michael Shelden, for example, invokes Cather to vindicate Mark Twain’s claims about Christian Science in his infamous essay series for *North American Review*, apparently unaware of the fact that both the McClure’s team and Twain were sharing precisely the same informants, including Frederick Peabody. See *Man in White: The Grand Adventure of his Final Years* (New York: Random House, 2010), 68–9.

66. Lewis Block, Letter to the Editor (unpublished), 11 February 1907 (typescript, Milmine Collection, Mary Baker Eddy Library for the Betterment of Humanity, Boston).

67. Paul Deland, “Helpfulness—Keynote of Christian Science Monitor,” reprint from *The Quill*, 1925 (clipping, CSM Subject File, Mary Baker Eddy Library for the Betterment of Humanity, Boston, MA).

68. Willis J. Abbott, “A Force for Clean Journalism,” reprint from *The Quill*, 1933 (clipping, CSM Subject File, Mary Baker Eddy Library for the Betterment of Humanity, Boston, MA).

69. Abbott, “Force for Clean Journalism.”

70. Robert Miraldi, *The Muckrakers: Evangelical Crusaders*, (London: Praeger, 2000).

71. Canham, *Commitment to Freedom*, 52.

72. Qtd. in Canham, *Commitment to Freedom*, 52.

73. Canham, *Commitment to Freedom*, xxii.

74. Deland, “Helpfulness.”

75. Qtd. in Kaplan, *Lincoln Steffens*, 162.

76. Qtd. in Kaplan, *Lincoln Steffens*, 168.

77. Roggenkamp, *Narrating the News*, 264.
78. Morris, *Pulitzer*, 411. Critics at the time frequently accused Pulitzer of merely attempting to polish his legacy and redeem himself from a career of indulging some of new journalism's worst impulses, but the image that the publisher's biographer presents is far more nuanced.
79. David Mindich, *Just the Facts: How "Objectivity" Came to Define American Journalism*, (New York: NYU Press), 129.
80. Roggenkamp, *Narrating the News*, 119.
81. Schudson, *Discovering the News*, 79.
82. Schudson, *Discovering the News*, 109.
83. Roggenkamp, *Narrating the News*, 120.
84. Morris, *Pulitzer*, 360.
85. "World-Wide Peace Desired by Nations, Say Big Diplomats," CSM (Boston, MA), 4 January 1910, p. 10.
86. Abbott, "Force for Clean Journalism."
87. "The Distress in Italy," CSM (Boston, MA), 1 January 1909, p. 1.
88. Abbott, "Force for Clean Journalism."
89. "New Note in Fiction," CSM (Boston, MA), 7 January 1910.
90. Abbott, "Force for Clean Journalism."
91. Deland, "Helpfulness."
92. Notice from the *Granite State Free Press* (clipping, CSM Subject File, Mary Baker Eddy Library for the Betterment of Humanity, Boston, MA).
93. Peter Grier, "Monitor Correspondent Wins Pulitzer," CSM (Boston, MA), 10 April 1966.
94. Rohde later became a correspondent for the *New York Times* and was kidnapped by the Taliban in 2008 while working on a book on Afghanistan. After seven months of imprisonment, Rohde and a colleague escaped. The *Times* collusion with other media organizations to scrub any mention of the kidnapping from the news has been the subject of controversy in the profession. He describes his experiences in Bosnia in *Endgame: The Betrayal and Fall of Srebrenica, Europe's Worst Massacre Since World War II* (New York: Penguin, 2012).
95. Deland, "Helpfulness."
96. Canham, *Commitment to Freedom*, xvi.
97. William Dicke, "Erwin Canham, Longtime Editor of the Christian Science Monitor, Dies," *New York Times* (New York, NY), 4 January 1982.
98. Canham, *Commitment to Freedom*, xviii.
99. Ibid.
100. "A Message from the Trustees of The Christian Science Publishing Society," 16 March 1936 (memorandum, CSM Subject File, Mary Baker Eddy Library for the Betterment of Humanity, Boston, MA).
101. Algernon Hervey Bathurst, Letter to Lucia C. Warren, 23 June 1925 (typescript, CSM Subject File, Mary Baker Eddy Library for the Betterment of Humanity, Boston, MA).
102. Canham, *Commitment to Freedom*, 124.
103. Canham, *Commitment to Freedom*, 96.
104. Mary Baker Eddy, Letter to Archibald McClellan, 22 January 1909 (Outgoing Correspondence File, Mary Baker Eddy Library for the Betterment of Humanity, Boston, MA).
105. Canham, *Commitment to Freedom*, 119.
106. Keith S. Collins, *The Christian Science Monitor: Its History, Mission, and People* (Nebbadoon, 2012), 28.
107. Collins, *The Christian Science Monitor*, 50.
108. Collins, *The Christian Science Monitor*, 91.
109. See Gregory Kolko, *The Triumph of Conservatism: A Reinterpretation of American History, 1900-1916* (New York: The Free Press, 1963), 160.

110. Kaplan, *Lincoln Steffens*, 129.
111. Schudson, *Discovering the News*, 117.
112. Mindich, *Just the Facts*, 142.
113. Schudson, *Discovering the News*, 111.
114. Ibid.
115. Mindich, *Just the Facts*, 131.
116. Roggenkamp, *Narrating the News*, 123.
117. Mindich, *Just the Facts*, 144.
118. The proof contains a brief response from Mrs. Eddy, so this was clearly from the paper's first couple of years.
119. Eli Perkins, "A Word of Appreciation" (undated proof, CSM Subject File, Mary Baker Eddy Library for the Betterment of Humanity, Boston, MA).
120. Alex Beam, "Appealing to a Higher Authority," *The Boston Globe* (Boston, MA), 9 June 2005.
121. Anne Harrington, *The Cure Within: A History of Mind-Body Medicine* (New York: Norton, 2008); Barbara Ehrenreich, *Bright-Sided: How Positive Thinking is Undermining America* (New York: Picador, 2010).
122. Caroline Fraser, *God's Perfect Child: Living and Dying in the Christian Science Church* (New York: Picador, 2000).