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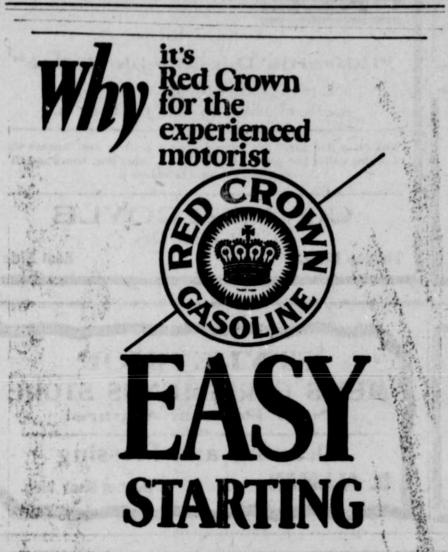
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### DODGE REPORT IN CHRISTIAN SCIENCE LITIGATION FILED

Judge, Sitting as Master, Approves and Confirms Position of J. V. Dittemore.

Boston, Mass.—After over four years of litigation in the Christian Science Church, ex-Federal Judge Dodge of Boston, sitting as Master under appointment of the Supreme Judicial Court of Massachusetts, has filed his final report on the evidence. The plaintiff, John V. Dittemore, the senior Director of the Church, whose service intedates the decease of Mrs. Mary Baker Eddy, and who his associates sought to remove from office, seems to have been completely justified in his contentions that undesirable and unwholesome conditions have existed in the administration of the church government.

Judge Dodge finds from the evidence, which includes testimony by the malority Directors themselves, that Mr. Dittemore's dismissal was for the purpose of doing away with opposition to the wishes of the majority and also because Mr. Dittemore had sought to establish a standard of propriety and conduct higher than desired by his associates. It is also found that a principal reason for the hostility to Mr. Dittemore was because of his rebuke to his associates on numerous occasions when offensive language was used and offensive jests made at meetings of the governing body of the church. Judge Dodge holds that Mr. Dittemore is still legally a Director and that the effort to remove him and appoint a successor more sympathetic with the policy of the board is legally

In regard to the illegality of Mr. Dittemore's dismissal, Judge Dodge says that no Director could fairly be supposed to have accepted his posttion upon the understanding that he was subject to instant, arbitrary dismissal whenever a majority of his associates might find it expedient. The Master finds that the vote attempting to dismiss Mr. Dittemore "was only the formal adoption of a conclusion previously agreed on outside the meeting" and that it was for his associates, then accusing him and at the same time proposing to also act as his judges, to afford him "such opportunity to be heard in his own defense upon the charges made as would satisfy the requirements of natural justice." He also finds that the complaints against Mr. Dittemore were not founded upon first hand knowledge and "were inadequate ground for any but a purely arbitrary dismissal." The Judge also finds that there was never any question as to Mr. Dittemore's sincerity in maintaining his position and that nothing said or done by him in maintaining his opinions could have constituted adequate ground for dismissing him, "unless the majority's power to dismiss could lawfully have been used by it for the sole purpose of stifling any opposition in the Board to their wishes.

The Master declares that Directors Dickey, Neal, Merritt and Rathvon were animated by personal hostility toward Mr. Dittemore and that they had long planned among themselves to get rid of him. One of the occasions when bad feeling was engendered was when Dittemore refused to join Dickey, Neal, and Merritt in attending a play in New York which Dittemore considered objectionable and which had as the leading player a person of notorious reputation. On this occasion Director Merritt testified that he urged Dittemore to accompany them and said: "Come on with us. You are not so much better than the rest of us."

Judge Dodge also finds from the evidence that "There were occasions in 1917, 1918 and 1919 upen which, at meetings of the Directors, the plaintiff (Dittemore) expressed disapproval of utterances by Dickey of a kind tolerable only when men only, and men not disposed to be scrupulous in such matters, are the hearers—thereby arousing resentment on Dickey's part, and sometimes on the part of Merritt and Rathvon." The testimony regarding eight or nine s-ch instances was taken by Judge Dodge in private. In regard to all of these occurences Judge Dodge finds from the testimony of Mr. Dittemore and others, including the cross-examination of the defendant, Directors Dickey, Neal, Merritt and Rathvon themselves, that Mr. Dittemore's account of them was substantially true and that his "repeated insistence upon a standard of propriety in language or conduct stricter than that accepted by his associates materially augmented their hostility and dislike."

Judge Dodge concludes that Dittemore's co-Directors were "incapable, on March 17, 1919, of impartial judicial consideration of accusations against him, especially of accusations framed by themselves, had they ever undertaken any such consideration."

At the present time Christian Scientists throughout the world are deeply interested in the facts brought out by the Dodge report which Mr. Dittemore and others are distributing in large quantities among the membership.

quantities among the membership.

The progressive element in the Church seems to be gaining much strength. It urges a more consistent and practical interpretation of the teachings of Mrs. Eddy by those in authority and a more liberal administration of the church government. Next to a change in the official personnel in Boston, under a definite rule of rotation in office, the greatest need of the Church seems to be for the encouragement of greater local church self-government and democracy according to the spirit as well as the letter of the Church Manual, and a minimizing rather than an encouragement of the greater centralization of authority in the self-perpetuating Board of Directors and their appointees in Boston.

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