

Sir. Oliver Lodge Speaks to Big Crowd in Toronto On Death

SUMS HIS THEORIES ON THE EVIDENCE FOR SURVIVAL— TELLS OF HIS EXPERIENCE WITH "MEDIUMS"

TORONTO, Ont. March 18—A packed Massey Hall hung on the declarations of Sir Oliver Lodge, noted interpreter of scientific phenomena, on Saturday night. With many, undoubtedly, curiosity was the impelling motive, but there could be no shadow of doubt that behind the almost reverent hush of hundreds there was a heartache. For these his special message was:

"Let me beg of the bereaved people here to believe that their sons and brothers and husbands are in no way, in no sort of way, extinct or hurt. Bullets and shells are not among the awful things that assault and hurt the soul. They themselves, their memories, characters, affections, persist. They are more aware of us than we are of them. They long for us to think affectionately of them, although not to mourn them unduly; to cultivate the science of communication if so it may be, whether through mediums or otherwise, and look forward to reunion."

His great researches, he said, had evolved no new religion for human-

ity. "Just Christianity," he declared. "That is what I have come back to, the simple gospel of nineteen hundred years ago; that is what I see as the outcome." With deliberate words and apparent great concern, he cautioned his hearers to beware of fraud and deception, "by despicable people, of whom I hope there are none, or very few." Once, in humorous vein, he declared that suicide would no more extinguish a human being than would emigration. Seriously, at the end of his address, he said: "Above all, don't try life in another world before your time. You have got to do your jobs here and make yourselves worthy of life hereafter."

In opening, Sir Oliver remarked that this was his first lecture in Canada since 1884, in which year he appeared before the British Association in Montreal. "Let me make it quite clear," he said, "that I understand that many of you have come merely to hear politely what I have to say as the result of my long study on this subject. . . . willing to listen and to believe, that at any rate I do not preach this subject lightly or without great consideration."

To Comfort Bereaved

He asked for acceptance of "the substantial truth," of what he said,

rather than the "precise accuracy of everything I say of the main facts." He added: "My theories, in so far as I have time to tell you any of them, are tentative, working hypotheses, and may be modified. Some of them may be rejected."

He explained his appearance on the lecture platform as due to the "fearfully heavy bereavement in our country and in this great Dominion." He felt "that these facts known to me ought to be not merely stated in a cold-blooded scientific manner, as heretofore, but applied to the comfort and help of bereaved people so far as they are willing and able to make use of them."

"Is death the end or is it a mere episode in life?" Sir Oliver asked. "The latter has been the conclusion of poets and seers from time immemorial but it is not universally recognized. There has been too much superstition mixed up with our idea of death too much attention to creeps and the grave and the notion that it is important what happens to the body too much association of the individual with the body which has been left behind, too little with the animating member that goes on." Socrates, he said, grasped the truth, as instantiated in his reproach to his friends,

before drinking the hemlock, that it didn't matter what they did with his body after death, because he should not be there.

Birth a Miracle

"Death, the leaving of the matter behind, seems to me so simple and easy a thing to conceive as compared with birth, the incarnation and incorporation of life with matter. How does that life and mind become associated with matter for a time until the material body wears out? That is the thing to which we are accustomed that we take it for granted, it is in reality a kind of miracle."

"The question is: Can consciousness exist apart from the material body? Appearances are against it, but we ought to learn not to be guided by appearances. Appearance and reality to what we directly see and feel and hear by the senses and say that is all that exists we are stultifying ourselves and reducing ourselves to the mental calibre of the animal."

"I also feel sure our conception of the universe is very inadequate. No matter how we have conceived it, I am certain we cannot, even in our imaginations, come up to the reality of things. The more we study it, the higher we go and the more or its mentality grasps, the more we discern our inability to comprehend. Our senses were not made for philosophy, but for the preservation of existence. If we use them for other purposes, no wonder we make mistakes. The wonder is that we have got on as far as we have."

Dead Not Disembodied

He spoke of man's knowledge of astronomy and asked: "Do you suppose we see everything? I am convinced that if our eyes were opened in the full sense of comprehension we should be overwhelmed by the blaze and the glory of existence. Fortunately for our minds nature itself has screened that from us, and we see only enough to enable us to concentrate on our daily tasks and do the work before us, and attend to our own affairs, and become individuals and develop our character and personality, which we shall take with us when we leave the sphere of matter behind."

Sir Oliver raised the question of whether human beings when they pass on shall become "wraiths and ghosts." "No," he said, "we shall not be disembodied. We shall still have an organism sufficient for our purposes, then and there, that will serve the needs of the spirit as this body serves it now. It will feel, speak and hear; and if anybody seems to be ghostly and indistinct and filmy it is we who are left behind in the body, not those who are gone on."

Studying Old Age

"Mind you, there are things yet to be found out about that," he declared, in speaking of the wearing out of the human body. "What does old age mean? It is being studied at the Rockefeller Institute. I know about it, you will know about it some day when they have gone a bit further, such a thing as natural death, whether there is any need to die if you don't let the body suffer accidents."

Again the speaker emphasized his point, that the body in the next world would be "all that we require and substantial, and satisfactory in every way." If it were asked how the dead were raised up, he would presume to suggest, subject to further consideration, that the ethereal body goes on and the material body dies. The temporary association of matter and life for 70 or 80 years undoubtedly served some good purpose, and was necessary to future existence. On earth, he said, we developed our own individuality and character, which would persist for better or for worse. "You have got to take yourselves with you," the speaker declared.

"The evidence that people survive after death," he went on, "is the getting into touch with them, getting messages from them, talking to them." The process called death Sir Oliver described as a "natural process, a definite episode in life," at which people should not look with awe and alarm.

To get in touch with the dead from whom evidence was available it was necessary to utilize the services of a "medium"—a person with receptive faculties, which, Sir Oliver said, were more difficult than to find more difficult than the safety of the dead. He mentioned his earliest experiences, and added, "After taking all precautions to avoid any kind of material communication, I came to the conclusion that mind could act upon mind apart from matter. Apart from ether—I don't know."

Sir Oliver was introduced to the audience by Prof. J. C. McLennan of the University of Toronto.

A curious case is reported from Devonshire. A widow, named Hewitt, aged 75, who lived alone at Uffculme, was found dead lying face down on her bed, having apparently fallen and been suffocated. She had spoken to no one except her doctor and her landlady since the death of her husband.

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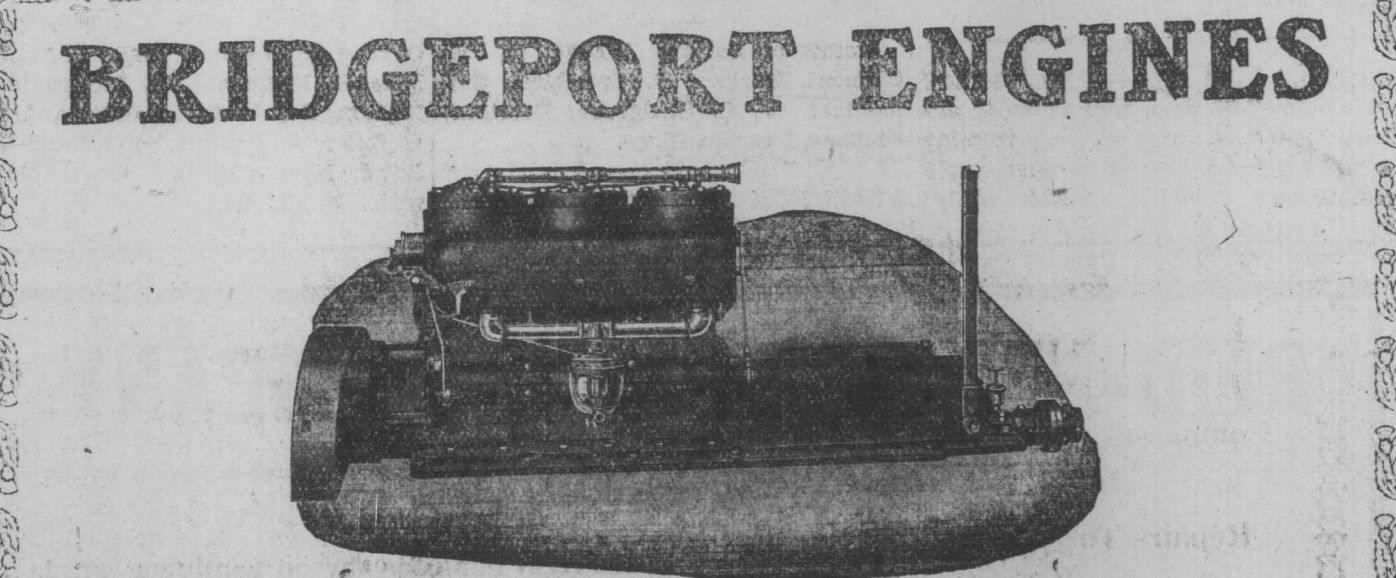
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