

SIR OLIVER LODGE'S CREED

In an article which appears in a recent issue of one of our popular magazines, Sir Oliver Lodge has given us his confession of faith. He tells us in what relation he conceives psychological research to stand to religion. The article is written in a reverent spirit and illustrates the fact, too often forgotten, that some of the men of the "New Revelation" were very much in earnest and that if they are in one sense destructive in their treatment of the Orthodox Christian faith, there is a point of view from which their work may very well be regarded as a constructive one. And it is this point of view which appeals to and will always appeal to those many distressed minds who are seeking for some kind of religious or philosophical anchorage. They are looking to the findings of science rather than to the teachings of the Church for that certainty reflecting the soul and its future destiny for which they are craving. When we examine these findings of science, however, we are at a loss to determine in what their supposed advantage over the teachings of the Church precisely consists.

Sir Oliver Lodge tells us, in the first place, that the existence of a spiritual world has been established by psychic research, and he vaguely hints that that world is not apprehended by organs inherited from the animals, by which he means, we presume, that science has shown man to possess a spiritual soul.

It is, of course, gratifying to know that science is constrained to make this admission, but what we would urge is that the fact admitted is one which a Catholic child is never doubted, which a Catholic child is taught early in life and authoritatively, on the grounds of both reason and revelation, and which, we are convinced, although outside the Church believes who have not played tricks with their God-given powers of reason. It certainly did not require the spirits and their mediums and fifty years of psychological research to bring this fact to the world's knowledge.

Our articles of Sir Oliver's creed are the scientific demonstration that we are not entirely cut off from this other world, but that we can communicate with it and receive help from it under given conditions; that we are fully responsible for our thoughts, words and deeds, and that this other world, so far from being a state of ease and safety, is a condition where there is plenty of room for punishment, for remorse and for bitter, agonizing regret.

We are further informed that the descent and dwelling among us of a "lofty Personality," able to accomplish many things, apparently miraculous, is likewise reasonable according to psychic experience and instructions. But there will, we are told, be no arbitrary sentence of only two kinds—bliss on the one hand, damnation on the other. There will be judgment of many grades according to the many mansions prepared for us.

We have thus, in this creed of a scientific spiritist, a striking illustration of the peculiar spiritual danger which lies hidden in this attractive cult and of the wisdom of the Church in never ceasing to warn us against it. It is a subtle and for many unwarlike souls imperceptible mingling of error with truth and a replacing of the authority of the Holy Spirit by the authority of created spirits, respecting whose nature and purpose we have every ground for entertaining the strongest possible fears.

And we may well believe that it is owing to these mysterious spirits and to their interference with the currents of human thought that men like Sir Oliver Lodge cannot discern the flaws and fallacies in their mode of reasoning. For, if the other world exists and communications of grave import to man can reach us from it, it is surely reasonable to assume that such communications would take a rational form, reach us in a manner that makes them universally acceptable and accessible to all, and that admits of no grave error or misapprehension. We cannot imagine such communications coming through agencies who, we know, are apt to cheat and deceive and to introduce all manner of evil and trouble into the life of man.

And it is a curious but characteristic illustration of the vagaries of this modern form of thought that, while its exponents find it unreasonable to believe in a teaching body inspired by the Holy Spirit of God and in communications with saintly persons whom we know to have existed in this world, they find it quite reasonable to accept as authoritative messages transmitted through entranced mediums from created agencies of the character described who profess to be departed human souls but whom we have no means whatever of identifying. It is difficult to see in what sense it can be true, as Sir Oliver Lodge claims, that spiritualistic science will in the end be found to be helpful to the cause of religion. It can never, surely, be helpful to the cause of revealed religion except in the sense that it confirms the many warnings of the Gospels to the effect that the enemy of man is ever bent upon a mission of error and deception, and that his main occupation is to sow the seeds of false teaching amid the wheat of divine truth. It is here where the subtle part of the entire spiritualistic system is to be found and where its attraction lies for the unwary mind. So much of what the

Church teaches is admitted and so much of what the Church also teaches, but what the fallen nature of men dislikes, is repudiated. While not ceasing to be a Christian, therefore, it is possible for a man to so modify the Christian creed that its very essentials are eliminated and the Gospel in reality becomes "another Gospel."

It is quite reasonable, we are told, to believe that a lofty Personality descended and dwelt among us, but it is not reasonable to believe all the things which that Personality has told and taught us. It is, for instance, not reasonable to believe that there are only two sentences for man after death—bliss on the one hand, damnation on the other. But it is not this lofty Personality that has told us of these two states of being after death—in an infinite variety of forms, and in language so clear and emphatic that only mental or moral perverseness can rob that language of its self-evident and legitimate meaning? "The most uncompromising revelation of this awful truth," says a modern writer, "which no rationalizing sophistry can effectively obscure, issued from the lips of the Incarnate Word Himself." "Hell," writes the rationalist Leslie Stephen, "must be an integral part of the ideal world so long as the radical convictions of Christianity retain their genuineness. Simply to suppress it is to substitute a vapid optimism which will never satisfy men nourished upon the Christian version of the unmistakable facts of the universe. Eternal damnation is as much a necessity of the imagination as a logical deduction from the fundamental principles of the creed."

It is thus that accurate thinkers, who are often not even themselves committed to the Catholic creed, reason. Reject, if you will, they would say, the belief in a lofty Personality, discredit the existence of any kind of otherworldly existence, but do not accept that belief and then accommodate its teachings to your own preference and predilections. Yet it is this wholly illogical and untenable mode of thought that men like Sir Oliver Lodge commend to us, and from which they promise themselves so much respecting the future of religion. We can but again warn, and warn emphatically against it. It is a miserable and worthless substitute for the true superstructure for which the human heart craves and without which life is imperfect and incomplete. It is a form of error and self-deception which invariably terminates in entire rejection of historical Christianity and in separation from that sacramental union with Christ which is the one true connecting link between the world that is and that which is to come.—Catholic Union and Times.

PEACE TO MEN OF GOOD-WILL

Christmas finds the world far from peace. There has, indeed, been a cessation of hostilities on most of the battlefields and already nature has hidden many of the ugly wounds. But the guns have not yet been turned into plough-shares, and the consummation, for the attainment of which millions of men underwent indescribable suffering, is still merely a hope, and, as some think, a fond and foolish hope. Hunger and disease, the inevitable aftermath of the years of privation, destruction and industrial and agricultural disorganization, are waging relentless and inexorable war on weakened and exhausted human nature; capital and labor have put an end to their patched up truce and instead of sinking individual interests in the common and universal interest, are massing their strength for purely selfish purposes, unmindful of the cries of children and widows; Bolshevism, partially restrained, is smoldering and raging in bonds, and is biding its time to let loose destruction of the present order; politicians are wrangling over the spoils of war; national and international aspirations are thrusting aside the idealism of heroic dreams; control of the world is gravitating to a small group of powerful men; and the peace, of which we boasted so much, is a poor and pitiful thing.

Those who take a pessimistic view believe that the world has been permanently cheated of its brief hope and that it will settle down into a chronic state of discontentment, greed and strife. Others maintain that the present state of things is merely a reaction, not surprising but inevitable, from the mood of exaltation which lifted mankind from selfish egoism to the high plane of dedication to universal service, that this reaction will prove temporary and passing, and that after its relapse we will pick almost to death, will recover its long lost health. The latter view should seem to be the truer.

Certainly there is still good-will in the world. It is idle even to question the fact. No one can forget the heights to which humanity, with all its superficial pettiness, rose during the awful years, unparalleled in their toll of human pain; with that record of sublime self-sacrifice written so large on our bleeding memories, it is impossible to doubt the altruism that lies in the depths of the human heart. And as if to dispel the clouds that hang so low and so menacing over the world, Christmas comes with its promise of peace to men of good-will. The test of peace, even so-called peace, is harder than the test of strife. It locks the enthusiasm, and the fellowship, and the unity that are the

bonds of war. But the habits of service will persist and triumph. It cannot be otherwise so long as we have good will. For the present, perhaps, we must be content with the promise of peace, keeping our eyes on patience, remembering that even Christmas has its advent, its period of preparation, resolute meanwhile to do our part to hasten its coming, by practising and preaching, not the gospel of hate and greed, but the Gospel of peace and usefulness as taught by the Christ, who, being God, for our sakes became a little child.—A mercia.

"SALVATION BY LEGISLATION"

American Protestants are raising millions of dollars to "evangelize" Europe, and are mapping out "zones of fluence" in which to proselytize the people of Belgium, France, Italy and other countries. They are leaving behind them here about fifty millions of perfectly good pagans in order to buy souls with soup and blankets. Such few perverts as they make cost thousands of dollars per head, and were aptly termed by the Irish "soupers." The work furnishes lucrative employment for preachers and their families who usually carry on an anti-Catholic campaign. Isn't there a passage in the gospel of St. Matthew where our Lord says: "Woe to you Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites; because you go round about the sea and the land to make one proselyte; and when he is made, you make him the child of hell twofold more than yourselves?" Moreover, we do not think that Europe will appreciate the effort to bring Methodist and Baptist religiosity and civilization to the benighted natives of an effete civilization. Money does not mean civilization, and the Methodist and Baptist missionaries' coin will not transform European culture. New York Life appropriately suggests that the Methodists spend their millions on civilizing themselves. Mr. E. S. Martin says in that paper: "Methodists are excellent raw material of civilization, there is no doubt; they are shock troops of religion, and religion is the basis of civilization; but the material needs a lot of patient labor before the rest of the world will contemplate it without anxiety. For the world fears that the Methodists' true aim is to make it Methodist, and it does not want to be that. It will take to the woods first. It may easily like Methodists, for many of them are good, and lots of them are useful. But it will never like a Methodist civilization, and it never ought to."

"Methodism is too puritan, too much given to salvation by legislation, too narrow in its notion of what is wrong, too inventive of new sins, and too harsh about providing legal penalties to punish them. So long as Methodists provide, and submit to a discipline for themselves, there is no quarrel with them, but when grown strong, they seek to impose their discipline on other and unwilling people, they loom up at once as a formidable and tyrannous force, of which account must be taken."—Truth.

THE ANGLICAN MASQUERADES

The following startling statement appears in an issue of the London Daily Mail, which reached us recently: "London will see a remarkable procession of clerics next Thursday morning. Twelve hundred clergymen, with a score of bishops will march in their robes to high mass at St. Alban's Church, Holborn, when the first Anglo-Catholic Congress opens. There will be no laymen in the procession. Banners, crucifixes and candles will be carried by the priests, and the bishops in copes and mitres will each be attended by two deacons of honor, wearing dalmatics. The priests will robe in St. Alban's school and will be marshalled in Baldwin's gardens. Apart from a few officials, the congregation also will be composed entirely of clergymen. The Bishop of Salisbury will preach the sermon and, after high mass, there will be a series of services at eight other churches."

We rub our eyes in amazement at this announcement and ask ourselves whether the world is coming to an end. Is not this an effacing of all their accepted laws and principles? "Priests" and Bishops robbing for "high mass" in the Protestant church by law established, which ladies that this same mass is a "blasphemous fable and a dangerous deceit!" One can but stand in utter perplexity before this feat of mental gymnastics and ask oneself: What is the nature of the mentality that makes this kind of thing possible? By what sort of intellectual trickery and self-delusion do these men manage to deceive themselves and to get over the manifest moral difficulty? We venture to assert that such a trifling with fundamental distinctions and principles would, in any other sphere of life, be denounced as flagrant dishonesty. No honorable man of business would tolerate it for a moment.

It was the Mass, be it remembered, upon which the Reformation turned, for the celebration of which hundreds, if not thousands, of England's noblest men died a cruel death and which was utterly and explicitly repudiated under the Elizabethan settlement. Not more than twenty-

five years ago an Anglican clergyman would have been deprived of his living if he had claimed to be a priest who had the power to say Mass. And now we see Anglican Bishops themselves assisting at what they claim to be a valid sacrifice and one of their number preaching the sermon on the occasion!

And we wonder what the reasoning powers of that portion of the Anglican laity are like who approve of these masquerades and identify themselves with these manifest self-deceptions. Would such self-deceptions be possible to any but the English type of mind which is world-famous for its inconsistencies and its lack of all power of logical reasoning?

We confess that we prefer the honest and even bellicose Protestant, whose mode of thought has a certain kind of logic to support it and who is at least loyal to his Protestant principle—who knows that the very *raison d'être* of the Protestant church is protest against Rome and mere especially against the Catholic doctrine of the Mass. We have no sympathy with these Protestant clergyman masquerading in priestly garb and deluding themselves and deceiving and misguiding their followers.

But there is a sense in which we welcome these religious masquerades and this introduction into the Protestant church of Catholic terms and practices. They show on the one hand how rapidly the Anglican clerical mind is departing from the principles of the Reformation and, on the other, how favorably disposed the Anglican laity mind is to regard Christianity from the Catholic point of view. The way is thus being prepared for the study and acceptance of true Catholic teaching and, as Leo XIII. never tired of emphasizing, a conscientious study of Catholic doctrine in the light of history is all sufficient to lead to its acceptance by all minds that are really in search of truth and that are of good will.—Catholic Union and Times.

RARE AND VALUABLE EDITION OF BIBLE

Among the many rare and valuable volumes in the possession of the renowned Abbey Library at St. Benedict's College, Atchison, Kansas, is an early German translation of the Bible from the press of Hans Schoensperger, Augsburg, Germany, edited and published in the year 1487.

The volume, which is 8 1/2 by 10 inches, bound in pigskin covered boards, and secured with hammered ornamental clasps and knobs, is a wonderful specimen of the early printer's art. It is a masterpiece of bookmaking of nearly five hundred years ago.

But the real value of this priceless German translation of the Bible lies in the fact that the date of its issue is a clear refutation of the many fallacious statements so often advanced that Luther should be accorded the honor of being the first to open the secrets of the Bible to the German people in the language of the people. The date of Luther's birth in 1483, four years prior to the issue of this German edition of the Bible, will hardly justify placing the honors of the first German translation of the Bible to his credit.—The Pilot.

OBITUARY

MRS. PATRICK BURKE

After an illness of several months, Mrs. Amelia McGillis Burke, widow of Mr. Patrick Burke, and mother of Rev. Father J. J. Burke, parish priest at Fitzroy Harbor, and formerly of St. Patrick's Church, Ottawa, died Saturday, December 11, at the home of her son, Fitzroy Harbor. She was the daughter of the late Dr. D. J. McGillis of Pakenham, and was in her seventy-first year. For many years she had resided in Ottawa and her death will cause deep regret among a wide circle of friends by whom she was held in high esteem. Her husband predeceased her about fourteen years. Surviving her are one son, Rev. Father J. J. Burke, Fitzroy Harbor, one daughter, Mrs. Lake Villeneuve, 38 Melrose avenue, and one sister, Mrs. J. Harvey, Pakenham.

DIED

SMITH—At Cleveland, Ohio, on Thursday, December 16, 1920, James Smith, Mgr. Incoquois Mfg. Co., aged forty seven years. May his soul rest in peace.

MARION—At the General Hospital, Pembroke, on December 16, 1920, Rev. H. S. Marion, retired priest of Douglas, Ont., aged seventy years. The late Father Marion was a lifelong reader of the CATHOLIC RECORD. He leaves two sisters, Mrs. Alex. Devlin of Ottawa and Mrs. Christopher O'Kelly of Winnipeg. R. I. P.

Have nothing more to do with your mistakes, short comings. No matter how bitter they have been, blot them out, forget them and resolve never again to harbor them.—O. S. Marden.

Religion is the link between the creature and the Creator. God is your First Beginning; therefore He must be your Last End. All things return to their source. The streams have all come from the sea, and they all hasten back to it at last. Keep your life ever turned toward your Last End.—Archbishop Kenne.

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WANTED for Carleton county, qualified teacher for S. S. No. 7, Huntley, salary \$850 per annum. Duties to commence Jan. 3, 1921. Apply M. L. Kennedy, Sec. Cochrane, R. R. 1, Ont. 2102-2

WANTED a qualified teacher for P. S. S. No. 4 Brougham. Duties to commence Jan. 3rd, 1921. Apply stating qualification, experience and salary wanted to Thos. H. Moore, Caledonia, Ont., care of B. D. Graph Co. 2202-3

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TEACHER wanted for Separate School, No. 2, Grattan; close to church; small attendance. Duties to begin Jan. 3rd. Apply stating salary, etc., to W. J. Oshagan, R. R. 5, Colborne, Ont. 2202-2

WANTED school teacher for Kenora Separate school; 2nd class certificate, male or female; wages \$750 per annum. Address C. McKinnon, Sec. Treas., Kenora, Ont. 2202-1

WANTED qualified teacher, (Normal preferred) for Separate School Section No. 6, North Burgess. Apply stating qualifications and salary expected to M. E. Mooney, R. R. 1, Portland, Ont. 2202-3

WANTED second class professional teacher for C. S. S. No. 1, Cornwall, one holding a certificate in agriculture preferred. Duties to commence Jan. 4. Apply stating salary and qualifications to Angus H. Chisholm, Sec. Treas., R. R. No. 1, Northfield station, Ont. 2202-4

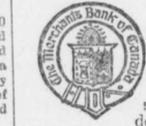
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