

render any answer to prayer impossible? I answer they are not. For at their best and utmost, these terms are but the expression of human hypotheses, true so far as we know, and so far as they go, but certainly not going far enough to make answers to prayer impossible or unscientific.

However, it may be better perhaps—seeing that not a few people are sometimes suspicious about what they call “pulpit science”—that I should give them the words of some other authorities. I will, therefore, quote some words recently published—and so open to everybody to read—from one of our ablest and most esteemed professors of physics, a man than whom there is perhaps scarcely a greater physical expert living. What does Professor Sir Oliver Lodge say concerning these things? The question asked is, “Does not science make answers to prayer impossible?” Here is what Sir Oliver Lodge says: “As to what is scientifically impossible or possible, anything not self-contradictory or inconsistent with other truth is possible. Speaking from our present scientific ignorance, and in spite of anything said by Professor Tyndal, this statement must be accepted as literally true for all we know to the contrary.”

Science, we see, has thus nothing to do with the impossible, except the impossible be also self-contradictory. But there is certainly nothing self-contradictory involved in the actuality of answers to petition in prayer. Let us, however, continue the same able exponent's opinion. Listen to this: “Religious people seem to be losing some of their faith in prayer; they think it scientific not to pray in the sense of simple petition. They may be right; it may be the highest attitude never to ask for

anything specific, only for acquiescence. If saints feel it so, they are doubtless right; but so far as ordinary science has anything to say to the contrary, a more childlike attitude might turn out truer, more in accordance with the total scheme.”—“If we have an instinct for worship, for prayer, for communion with saints or with Deity, let us trust that instinct—but let us not assume that our present conscious intelligence is already so well informed that its knowledge exhausts, or determines, or bounds, the region of the true and the possible.”

That may suffice now, in regard to what is possible. But, again, some one may say that, after all, does not an answer to petition involve a breach of natural law, are we not asking God to contradict Himself by violating His own law? No, we are not. In no Christian petition whatever do we ask for that which necessarily contradicts any law of nature, known to us or unknown. In Professor Lodge's words, “Prayer for a fancied good that might really be an injury, would be foolish; prayer for breach of law would be not foolish only but profane; but who are we to dogmatize too positively concerning law?” Prayer, we have been told, is a mighty engine of achievement, but we have ceased to believe it. Why should we be so incredulous? Even in medicine, for instance, it is not really absurd to suggest that drugs and no prayer may be almost as foolish as prayer and no drugs.” Now, this is not a “pulpit” statement, observe, but that of a learned professor of science.

Again, here is another essay written not from the pulpit standpoint at all, but from that of a scientific essay. What did Professor Romanes say in his early days, before he took in hand to write his