

Presbyterian elders are priests to whom has been delegated the power of transmitting Orders, then I must protest that he asks for what it is impossible to give. "Proof" in such a matter there can be none. It would be interesting to know Mr. Malaher's idea of the proof which the Catholic Church can offer that her Bishops were given the power to transmit orders. At any rate, if with Lightfoot and Gwatkin we believe that Episcopacy is a very early development from Presbytery, then the question of the power to transmit Orders stands upon the same footing for the one as for the other. In such a matter we cannot well go behind the intention of the founders of Modern Presbyterianism. If the intention was, as we believe, to maintain the unbroken succession of Orders, though reverting to Presbyterian government, then those who desire Reunion will be satisfied.

But I cannot refrain from adding that the real intention of my original paper was to show, by reference to some of the representative Anglican divines, how very far from the true spirit of English Catholicism is the modern rigorist demand for proof in matters not susceptible of logical demonstration. I must therefore regard Mr. Malaher's comment as expressing a view which our great Anglican predecessors would have disowned, and which is necessarily fatal to hopes of Reunion.

W. ALDWORTH FERGUSON.



Reason and Belief.¹

BY SIR OLIVER LODGE, F.R.S.

THIS is a book to read, and at the same time a readable book, pleasantly written in a popular, lucid style, and enriched on almost every page with apt poetical quotations, of which, by the way, there is a complete index at the end.

The learned author has certainly an adventurous spirit. He makes incursions into many fields and invades many realms. He is interested in the subject of psychical research, has recently delivered himself on the phenomena of spiritualism, has compiled a Catechism, and in "Man and the Universe" has offered suggestions on such subjects as Christian Worship and the formation of a comprehensive National Church.

It is, of course, in the realm of science that he has won his laurels, and may claim to be an authority. In the realm of theology, however, he is more or less a mere layman, and while he may be listened to with respectful attention, it must yet be tempered with caution. This is quite fair. If a theologian ventured to write on scientific subjects, and if, moreover, he presumed to differ from recognized experts, he would be quickly pounced

¹ Methuen. Price 3s. 6d. net.

upon and severely handled. At the same time, since science and religion are not in themselves mutually antagonistic, the observations and pronouncements of the scientist command attention.

Divided into three parts, Sir Oliver in the first deals with the subject of Incarnation, in the second with the Old Testament in education, and in the third with the scope of science. The first part appears to be mainly the expansion of an address recently delivered in Birmingham; indeed, some portions are identical.

He affirms, in a chapter on "the adventure of existence," his belief in pre-existence, though the only proof he has to offer is "that children often appear to retain for a time some intuition, some shadowy recollection, as it were, of a former state of being," and that "even adults . . . are perplexed at times with a dim reminiscence as of previous experience." He is anxious that his theory should not be confounded with "the guesses of reincarnation and transmigration." "We may not," he says, "have been individuals before, but we are chips or fragments of a great mass of mind, of spirit, and of life—drops, as it were, taken out of a germinal reservoir of life, and incubated until incarnate in a material body. . . ." He thinks that at the time of birth personality begins, and he is convinced that it must continue. "Before that [birth] we cannot trace identity. Perhaps we had none. Either we had none or we have forgotten." He does not believe in annihilation, and declares his conviction that the death of the body conveys no assurance of the "soul's decease." Again he says: "All analogy is against the idea of disappearance being synonymous with destruction. Death is change . . . but it is not annihilation." From the subject of the permanence of personality he passes on to those of character and freedom. Under this heading he speaks of the Fall. He is an evolutionist, so we are hardly surprised to read: "Man tripped over the upward step"; but with much he says on this subject few will disagree.

Having considered human responsibility and freewill, he proceeds to speak of the Incarnation. It is the pronouncement and confession of faith in this chapter that is, above all else in the book, of profound interest. Only one or two quotations can be given. "We are all incarnations, all sons of God, in a sense; but at that epoch a Son of God, in a supremest sense, took pity on the race, laid aside His majesty, made Himself of no reputation, took upon Him the form of a Servant, a Minister, entered into our flesh, and lived on the planet as a Peasant, a Teacher, a Reformer, a Martyr. This is said to have literally happened: and, as a student of science, I am bound to say that, so far as we can understand such an assertion, there is nothing in it contrary to accepted knowledge. I am not testifying to it because it is a conventional belief, I am testifying because I have gradually become assured of the possibility of such an incarnation. The historic testimony in its favour is entirely credible." With the exception of this last sentence, I can discover nothing to show that the writer believes in an incarnation by miraculous birth. He does not mention the Virgin Mary, though, oddly enough, he refers to Joseph. On p. 75 we read: "At last He emerged from obscurity, and in His native place stood up in the church and announced that hereafter He was no longer a village carpenter, the mere Son of Joseph

. . . but a Prophet, a Messiah." We may, however, give Sir Oliver the benefit of the doubt, since he has gone so far as to say that the historical testimony is credible, and that testimony includes an account of the Virgin birth. We might have expected to find the scientist referring to parthenogenesis, an admitted fact, though usually confined to lower forms of life.

One other quotation on this point: "Christ did not spring into existence as the man Jesus of Nazareth. At birth He became incarnate. Then it was that He assumed His chosen title, 'Son of man.' Before that He is called the Companion, the Counsellor, the Word of God." For such words, coming as they do from one of the leading scientists of the day, we may well be thankful.

I pass over a delightful chapter on "progress and service" with one quotation: "Truly the peace of God passes all understanding. It is not a thing easily obtained; it is very different from mere rest; it is restfulness, but it is not rest. Nor can it ever be the folding of the hands in satisfaction with what has been accomplished. . . . The most ideal joy is found in service. It is the keynote of existence—service in the highest. This is what is meant by the 'joy of the Lord.'" The parable of the talents serves as an illustration of service for God beyond the confines of this present life. There is advancement from a trusteeship of ten pounds to a rulership over ten cities—an enlarged sphere, and not the rest of inactivity.

In the second part of the book Sir Oliver treats of the Old Testament in education. It is refreshing to read such words as these: "For teaching purposes the Bible itself is better than Commentaries, Creeds, and Catechisms." Nor does he desire an expurgated Bible. He would teach the whole Bible. Even unessential stories are part of a literature which should be known by educated persons. Of these Old Testament Scriptures we read: "They rise to a magnificence of utterance which no other nation can parallel."

In answer to those who would condemn the morality of the Old Testament, he observes that we can, of course, see much to blame in the actions of the chosen people. "Imagine," he continues, "posterity 3,000 years hence reading our history, our newspapers, our politics! What will they think of us? They will not place us very high; they may prefer, in some respects, the record of the early Hebrews."

In these pages there is much with which we find ourselves in agreement. The temper of the author is delightful. We find it impossible to be angry, even when we differ from him. Even when he assails the Christian Science citadel, though without mentioning that cult by name (p. 140), he does not even descend to sarcasm. Every line has been penned in a profoundly reverent spirit—there is not a flippant note anywhere. It is the work of an optimistic evolutionist who believes that the palmy days of the race are all in the future, and that the "long pathetic struggle of the human race . . . culminates in the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."

S. R. CAMBIE.

