

ness, and in comparison with this vindication attempted external vindication of those claims seems to me superfluous. Without it, external vindication will never compel the assent of a single disciple.

If the question is raised, whence did Christ get His revelation? Was it not only an amplification of previous insight on the part of the prophets and sages? I think one may safely say that He never got it from the contemplation of external nature. He saw the sparrow fall and yet believed in the goodness of God. As to His predecessors, the most orthodox person believes that He had forerunners; but, let any one apply the simple experimental test—take the writings of any other sage—and see whether they will produce the same results as Christ's sayings have done on millions of souls.

Miracles are, let it be freely confessed, a great stumbling block in the present day. We must remember that however much Christ was the revelation of the Divine, He exhibited that revelation in human form, and not in the human form of a twentieth-century man of culture, but in that of a Jewish peasant of two thousand years ago. By parentage He inherited a language and a stock of common ideas, which had much of mere temporary value. It is impossible to separate between inherited ideas and inherited language—the latter by its very structure is a repository of ideas which are absorbed unconsciously in learning the language. We must make the necessary allowance for this, just as it was necessary to translate His words from Aramaic into Greek and from Greek into English. Further, though doubtless in the Man of Sorrows the Divine Ideal glowed with such brilliance as to press into insignificance all that was temporary, yet we have only received those rays refracted through the turbid minds of His first followers who, by their own confession, did not fully understand their Master. In the age in which they lived, wonderful and magical deeds were supposed to occur quite frequently; and the wonderfulness of Christ's works did not arrest their attention so much as their gracious and loving character. It is quite possible that had we been witnesses of these deeds we should not have termed them miraculous, but have seen in them instances of the wonderful effect of mind on mind in curing nervous diseases—but, of course, this is only a hypothesis.

To this hypothesis one great exception must be made, namely,