

Preface to the Revised Edition

There is virtuous indignation. Or again if one writes, "God responds," they demand "by a voice?" or "was it by planchette?" or how the trick was done. My friend Mr. William Archer becomes almost facetious in his "God and Mr. Wells" because God who can come into men's hearts as a still small voice does not come in with a few recipes of practical value. Many people have evidently never realized that all discussion except the discussion of matters of fact is poetical incurably. Yet all terms used in human speech are either the names of definite facts in the common experience of men or they are metaphors, witticisms or a deliberate distortion or extension of such terms to express vaguely apprehended realities that are otherwise elusive. "Molecule" and "ether" are just as real and just as unreal as the personality of God. Anyone may jeer at the preposterous idea of a medium as rigid as steel in which we move freely; anyone can refuse to find any further significance than a faint squeak in a "still small voice." Yet in either case there is *something* there and the word or phrase we use is the most expressive we can find. But both Rationalist and Romanist are blind with the vanity of mental finality. The Rationalist knows exactly that that something is It and not Him, the Romanist knows the exact contrary in clear detail. He knows indeed whether God's beard grows. With neither type is any real understanding possible until the almost wilful metaphysical ignorance that sanctions this conceit of exactitude has been overcome.

Those few readers who know the earlier version may be