

taken place. The reverend gentleman then referred to the miracles attributed to Moses, Elijah, Elisha, and Christ, and continued: If miracles were impossible, all these fundamental positions of their religious belief must be abandoned. He would ask them to examine the reasonings of David Hume, on which little progress has been made by those who had succeeded him. Hume's main position was that a miracle is incapable of proof. The existence of certain general laws is established by universal experience. If it is asserted that they are set aside, there must be stronger proof than that which establishes the existence of these laws, which is impossible. But is a miracle, in a strict sense, a violation of natural laws? The speaker contended that it was not. Natural laws were simply the usual method of God's working. As a matter of fact, the majority of our Saviour's miracles were restorations of natural laws, and not violations of them, as Hume insinuated. To be blind, lame, leprous, dead, was not natural; it was not a normal state of things. To give sight to the blind, speech to the dumb, life to the dead, and so forth, was a restoration of natural laws—a bringing things back to their normal state. Hume's point was, that miracles were contrary to experience. This, however, was not true. The most that could be said was that they were contrary to the experience of the majority of men; that the majority had no experience of miracles—which was a very different thing from saying that they were contrary to universal experience. Suppose that the majority of men had no knowledge of the existence of the individuals comprising that congregation, would it follow that they were not existing? Or if a criminal on his trial in Montreal were to allege that thousands in the city were not aware of his guilt, would that establish his innocence? Universal experience, properly speaking, is the experience of those in a position to be cognisant of the event in question, and such experience is available in respect to every one of the Christian miracles. Again, Hume contended that we know that the laws of nature are firm and unalterable, while human testimony may be false. He is perfectly willing to accept human testimony when applied to natural laws, but he discards it when applied to miracles. Hume's reasoning, however, is abandoned by modern sceptics as being fatal to all human testimony and knowledge. The Rev. Baden Powell, one of the leading writers of this school, abandons the position, and, seeming to accept the miracles recorded in the Bible as possessing a certain evidential value, endeavours to explain them by natural laws. The lecturer would meet him, however, on the ground that natural laws and scientific explanations were insufficient to account for the miraculous works of Jesus. They were miracles which could not be explained but on the supposition of Divine interference. To show the manner in which science itself contributes to the establishment of the reality of miracles, the reverend gentleman quoted from Hugh Miller's *"Footprints of the Creator."* He continued,—they could not allow Powell and those who agreed with him to assume, as they did, that Christ availed himself of His superior knowledge to perform works which, deemed miraculous at the time, are now seen to be referable to natural causes. A second supposition put forward by Baden Powell was that the narratives of miracles bear more or less of a parabolic and mythic character. This was practically the ground taken by Strauss, Renan, and other continental critics. In opposition to this it was to be affirmed that the narratives, so far from being parabolic, bear every appearance of historical truth upon their very surface, and that no amount of ingenuity can discover anything but historical reality and precision beneath the surface. Let them examine, for example, the account