

Now the force of this argument depends altogether on the nature of the thing seen. If it were something natural, something which might be expected to be seen by many, then if only a very few had seen it it would hold good, but if, on the other hand, it is admittedly something supernatural, then the argument has no weight.

In the second place it is urged that with the advance of education the belief in the supernatural is gradually but surely disappearing. Before seeking to refute this statement, it were well to see if it corresponds with facts. Thousands, probably millions of Roman Catholics to-day firmly believe in the healing virtues of such places as Lourdes, where cures of an inexplicable character are constantly said to occur; thousands of our fellow Protestants profess a belief in the efficacy of what is termed "faith cure"; while two millions of the inhabitants of this American continent—no small proportion—are spiritualists; bearing these facts in mind, I think it can hardly be said that the result of the advanced and widespread education of our own day, has been the whole or partial disappearance of a belief in the supernatural.

In the third place it is affirmed that everything in this universe is governed by natural laws which cannot be broken; that miracles are contrary to natural laws, and cannot therefore be believed; that if the universe was created by God, the natural laws which govern it were ordained by Him, and that were He to permit the performance of miracles it would be a contradiction of His own laws. If we regard the supernatural as an abrogation of natural laws, there might be some force in these contentions, but it is not necessary to do so. Were it possible for any one of us to view the gradual development of an azotic world, we should see in the creation of the different forms of life an apparent contradiction of what we considered natural laws; for instance, we should see trees and grass, and various forms of vegetable life, springing and growing upwards, in contradiction to the law of gravitation which teaches us that everything is attracted towards the earth. If an apple is dropped from a height it immediately gravitates toward the earth, but if I stretch out my hand and catch it as it falls, it does not follow that the law of gravitation is abrogated, it is merely that a higher power has interfered with its complete action, the natural law remains unchanged. If we apply this principle to the performance of miracles we see that their performance does not affect the natural law, but introduces a higher power producing different results. The