

her mouth wisely and legitimately,<sup>1</sup> and mercy is hers." Hosea vii. 7: "They all were heated as an oven, their hearts were as when a fire burneth." Micah vi. 1: "Hear ye now the word of the Lord what the Lord saith." Exodus xxviii. 20: "Covered round about with gold and bound together with gold." Haggai ii. 13: "Defiled or impure in soul." In all these cases a reference to the Hebrew will shew the reason of the double rendering, and serve possibly as a guide to the correct translation of the word or clause.

WILLIAM J. DEANE.

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### BRIEF NOTICES.

MIRACLES: AN ARGUMENT AND A CHALLENGE. *By Samuel Cox, D.D.* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench & Co.) It has not been my habit to have my own books reviewed in this Magazine by some friendly hand, but myself to give a brief uncoloured description of their contents and aim. I should have thought my motive for taking that course would have been apparent to every one, had I not been charged, by a hasty critic, with want of modesty in "reviewing" my own works, which is precisely what I have carefully avoided. For I could hardly ask a friend to review me in my own Magazine without making it very hard for him to pronounce any censure which I deserved; and I could hardly be expected to ask an enemy to cut me up; nor, indeed, did I know where to find one. Happily, however, I need not expose myself to any reflection of that kind this time. For my little book on *Miracles* had not been out a month before two considerable reviews of it appeared, the one favourable, and the other unfavourable. That I may not wound the delicate susceptibilities of any critic

<sup>1</sup> νομοθέσιως, a most uncommon word. In the former paragraph it is ἐννόμως. The last of portion this chapter is full of these double renderings: e.g. πολλὰι θυγατέρες ἐκτέσαντο πλοῦτον, πολλὰι ἐποίησαν δύναμιν· οὐ δὲ ὑπέρκεισαι καὶ ὑπερῆρας πάσας.

who *reflects* on what he has not read, instead of describing the contents and aim of the little book before me, I will simply give a very brief abstract of these two reviews, and leave my readers to form their own opinion, after they have heard both sides.

*The Spectator* (July 12th) opens its review thus: "This admirable little book is a republication of three articles in *The Expositor* for 1882 and 1883, in which the relation of miracle to the Bible is carefully studied and described, and in which probably the best *rationale* of miracles known to us, as studied by the light of modern science and philosophy, is given. Dr. Cox's view is a view of miracles which we have often enforced in these columns." Then follows a very able summary of the main argument of the book, illustrated by deftly chosen quotations, in which the reviewer points out, what I had failed to notice, that the view of miracles which I endeavour to uphold is sanctioned and confirmed by the Scriptures both of the Old Testament and the New,—thus adding greatly to its value and force; and compliments me on "the admirable force and lucidity" with which the argument, so far as it goes, is conducted. And the article closes with the sentences: "It seems to us that it would not be easy to explain better the true nature of miracles, nor the relation between miracles and the answer to prayer. In conclusion, we cannot too highly recommend this terse and lucid little book to the notice of our readers."

On the other hand, the writer in *The Christian World* (July 10th), after a brief exordium on the duty of Christian controversialists to conduct their differences without "the slightest abatement of respect," or "the slightest infraction of courtesy," declares that, after careful and deliberate examination, he can accept neither my statement of the problem nor my solution of it. Not that my statement is "absolutely incorrect." It is "indefinite and ineffective rather than demonstrably wrong." Then follows a summary in which my argument is so curiously vulgarized that I had much ado to recognize it; and the writer concludes with the verdict, "He has taken up the whole matter by the wrong handle," and points out how I ought to have taken it up.

And here I might leave the reader to decide to which of those two critical authorities he will give the greater weight, were it not that the writer in *The Christian World* raises a clear question

of fact which is easily determined, and on which I should have thought no man who has studied theology would have had a moment's doubt. With that superior air into which we are all too apt to slip—and the more apt the less our warrant for it—when we assume the chair of the critic, he says: “*Mr. Cox, if he reflects for five minutes, will perceive that no such achievements as he calls miracles (i.e. modifications of the natural order by the incoming force of the Will whether human or Divine) have ever been regarded by man as miraculous,*” or, as he puts it in another sentence, “*have ever been given out by God or looked upon by man as miraculous!*” Have they not? Then how does my critic get over the facts embodied in the following passage from a very thoughtful and suggestive book recently published—*The Gospel of Divine Humanity* (p. 137): “Our word, ‘miracle’ had not even among the Romans, from whom it is derived, the sense of something supernatural. The Seven Wonders of the World were called *miracula*, although works of art. In the Old Testament, the word in some places translated *miracle* in the Authorized Version is applied to the sun, moon, and stars, ‘Let them be for *signs*.’ In no case are the wonderful works of our Lord or of his disciples spoken of as violations or even suspensions of law, any further than the operations of a higher law may be said to interfere with the lower; as when a stone, being held in the hand, does not fall to the ground is no suspension of the law of gravitation. The writers of the Sacred Records cannot be held responsible for mistaken constructions put upon their simple narration of facts. The adherence to an erroneous conception of miracle, as violation or suspension of law, has needlessly perplexed the minds of many sincere souls.”

This sentence too, from the same gifted pen, will bear and reward reflection. “To Him who could work not merely on nature, but on that substance, spirit and life, which underlies and makes nature, changing water into wine and stilling a storm were works as surely according to unvarying law as the natural growth of the vine and the calming of every tempest.”

So also will the following paragraph:—

“To the Lord of nature, all natural forces are in perfect subjection. Jesus never laid claim to the working of miracles in the popular sense. His works are *signs*, powers or forces: signs that the Perfect Man had appeared to exercise his rightful sovereignty.

Through the opening of all degrees of life in Himself, He saw and worked on what, to us, is the unseen reality of nature. We, having merely the bodily and mental senses in activity, can work on substance only through phenomenal appearances. We want the *pou sto*—the fulcrum on which to rest the lever of the will. We see and work on things temporal, mere images or shadows of the eternal. We know in part, because we see only in part; but when that which is perfect is come, the partial is absorbed in completeness.”

There is a broad good sense and a manly force of practical application in *Dr. Marcus Dod's* treatment of THE PARABLES OF OUR LORD (Edinburgh: Macniven and Wallace), which render this little book very welcome. It includes only the parables recorded in the Gospel of St. Matthew.

EDITOR.

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