

**FOG BELLS: A
SEQUEL TO
NAZARETH**

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Fog Bells: A Sequel to Nazareth by Caroline Wells Healey Dall

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CAROLINE WELLS HEALEY DALL

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"FOG BELLS"

A SEQUEL TO NAZARETH

"And Jesus answering said,
"Get thee behind me, Satan, for it is written
"Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God,
"and Him only shalt thou serve'"

Luke 10: 3-9

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FOG BELLS.

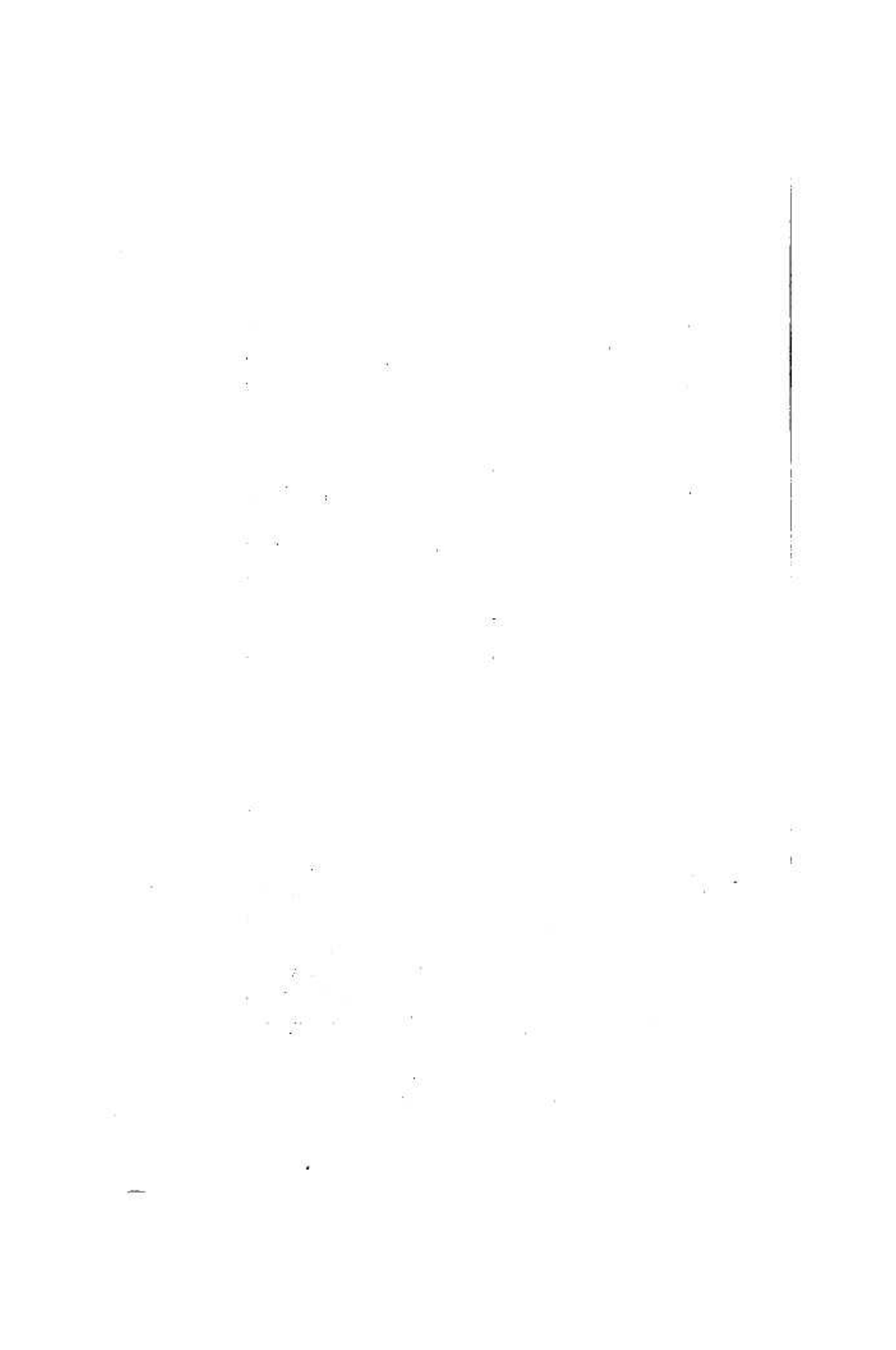
I.

"To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because *there* is no light in them."—*Isaiah viii: 20.*

The question whether a miracle is possible is one thing. The question whether it is profitable or can fitly be made the evidence of spiritual truth is another. For the discussion of both a very high order of gifts is demanded. The man who undertakes it should have not only great logical and metaphysical ability, but great logical and metaphysical culture. Not only close argument but generous catholic sympathy is needed; not only perceptive and reflective faculty, but a spiritual imaginative faculty. For this cause, nothing is so absurd as a popular attempt to decide whether a miracle is possible *per se*. All men are entitled to their own convictions on the subject — very few men are entitled to any authoritative statement of them. The determination to press this discussion is one of the causes of the impatient, irreverent, half resentful rejection of the Lordship and Leadership of Christ, which is one of the most remarkable developments of modern Christianity, a rejection which, while

it means to deny only that which has been unduly claimed, namely, the absolute authority of God the Father, incarnated as it were in Jesus, *seems* to deny the divine help and spiritual leadership which is in him, as it is in all inspired teachers, but which culminates in him, and, so far as the spirit of modern Christians may be thought to be prophetic, is likely forever there to culminate.

The position of Christ is no longer matter of opinion, it is a matter of history. But we presume, however indignant many men may be at the presumption of the Lordship of Christ, there will no man be found who will not admit that he is still our ultimate human authority in all things pertaining to himself and his work. Why is it then that men do not ask what *Christ himself* declared about the miracles he was said to have wrought, and what importance *he* attached to such faith in them as the people about him might feel? For is it not evident that if a miracle has any weight, it will have weight with the man who sees it, and not with the man who hears of it—weight at first-hand, not at second-hand? To accumulate the evidence of Christ himself is what we now propose to ourselves. The last four years have so exhibited the power of a mythical spirit in a cold-blooded Western people, that it is to be hoped the world is somewhat prepared for its influence upon a



fervid Oriental race, an influence which, properly felt and understood, will add to and not detract from the value of the gospel story.

The first miracle recorded by the Evangelists is one which must be classed with the resurrection, for the conception and the resurrection, if they are considered as miracles at all, were not wrought *by* Christ in any sense, but were wrought upon him. Now if Christ were the Son of God in any unusual fashion, by a direct act of personal power — if, in one word, he had no natural parent but Mary — a position so remarkable among men must have been accorded for some special reason, and because it was impossible that his work in the world should be done without it. The fact must therefore be necessary to be believed by all succeeding generations. Before they could believe it, it was needful to impress it upon his contemporaries; but, so far as we know, Jesus himself never heard of it, his brethren were not aware of it, and when the people wondered at him, they said, "Is not *this* the carpenter's son, and are not his brethren here with us?" When he stayed behind to talk with the elders in the temple, Mary said, "Behold I and thy *father* have sought thee sorrowing!" But if the star had stood over Bethlehem, if the Magi and the shepherds had acknowledged the miraculous birth, if a flight into Egypt had been miraculously commanded to the

