

**THE METAPHYSICAL  
MIRACLES OF THE  
NEW TESTAMENT**

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The metaphysical miracles of the New Testament by Thomas Frederick Smith

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**THOMAS FREDERICK SMITH**

**THE METAPHYSICAL  
MIRACLES OF THE  
NEW TESTAMENT**



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Among the Authors and Celebrities referred to or quoted in this volume, are the following:—

Houdin,—Herodotus,—Wm. Howitt,—Ritual Commission,—Kitto,—Burgon,—Rev. John Lamb, Hulsean Lecturer,—Pfenninger,—Right Hon. Robt. Lowe,—Mr. Lyne (Father Ignatius),—Baden Powell,—Melvill,—Disraeli,—Archbp. Trench,—Josephus,—Lightfoot,—Shelley,—Author of "Ecce homo,"—J. H. Newman,—Renan,—Strauss,—Paulus,—Schenkel,—Dr. Johnson,—Professor Huxley.

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ERRATUM.

At page 7, for *optician*, read *oculist*.

METAPHYSICAL  
MIRACLES.



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The  
*Metaphysical Miracles*  
of the New Testament,

COLLECTED AND CONSIDERED MAINLY WITH REFERENCE TO  
THE DOCTRINE OF HUME THAT NO AMOUNT OF  
TESTIMONY CAN BE CREDITED AGAINST  
THE FIXITY OF NATURE'S LAWS,

BY

THOMAS FREDERICK SMITH, B.D.,

RECTOR OF HORSINGTON, LINCOLNSHIRE, AND FORMERLY FELLOW OF  
MAGDALEN COLLEGE, OXFORD.

"It is very easy to talk about the shallow impostures, and the silly, ignorant sophisms of Voltaire, Rousseau, Condorcet, D'Alembert, and Volney, and to say that Hume is not worth answering; *the affectation of contempt will not do.*"—SYDNEY SMITH.

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1871.



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RATHBONE PLACE, W.

## PRELIMINARY STATEMENT.

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THE possibility of mistaking a trick for a miracle must be obvious to every one who has witnessed the marvellous deceptions accomplished by conjurers and jugglers. In Houdin's celebrated memoirs a spirited description is given of the manner in which his marvellous feats in sleight of hand did more to overawe the wild Arabs of Algeria than all the military resources of his country. He was, in fact, employed professionally by the French Government as a miracle-worker, to impose on a people whose inborn love of liberty had hitherto baffled every other mode of assault.

If, then, legerdemain may pass itself off as miraculous it must always be apprehended that there may be a considerable resemblance between a false and a true miracle; and this possible resemblance may perhaps afford the true solution of our Lord's repeated charge, "See thou tell no man." The possessors of genuine attainments, gifts, or powers are acutely sensitive of being weighed in the same scales with pretenders, quacks, or mountebanks, and "see thou tell no man" admits of

being paraphrased, "Save me from the sneers of this generation, let futurity reveal the truth."

This possibility of being imposed upon is the fulcrum upon which Hume, and most impugnors of miracles have placed their levers; take away this fulcrum and they could no more upset the faith in miracles than Archimedes could move the earth.

The exhibitor of wonders, or thaumaturgist, may employ mechanical deception, as when he works with sleight of hand upon previously prepared apparatus; or he may use spiritual deception assigning results to wrong causes, and making believe that a sick person has been cured by Divine power when really nature in the ordinary course has produced the cure under the influence, perhaps, of some strong emotion of the mind; and thirdly there is the deception of which the Jews were so suspicious, and which belongs specially to their history, that viz: whereby Satan himself might palm off upon them works of his own for works of God. We have seen how fatally this suspicion operated against their conversion and salvation—suspicions of other kinds may not work perhaps so fatally in the present day, but they account for the readiness with which the shallow arguments against miracles, (meaning by the word