

stated it," the philosopher might have said, "amounts simply to this:—Creation by direct act is a miracle; whereas all that exists is *propagated* and *maintained* by natural law. Natural laws—to vary the illustration—were in full operation at the period when the Author of the Christian religion was, it is said, engaged in working his miracles. When, according to our opponents, he walked upon the surface of the sea, Peter, through the operation of the natural law of gravitation, was sinking into it; when he withered, by a word, the barren fig-tree, there were other trees on the Mount thriving in conformity with the vegetative laws, under the influence of sun and shower; when he raised the dead Lazarus, there were corpses in the neighboring tombs passing, through the natural putrefactive fermentation, into a state of utter decomposition. In fine, at the time when he was engaged, as Reid and Campbell believe, in working miracles in violation of law, the laws of which these were a violation actually existed, and were every where actively operative; or, to employ your own words, when the New Testament miracles were, it is alleged, in the act of being wrought, 'all the common operations of the physical world were going on in their usual simplicity, obeying that order which we still see governing them.' Such is the portion of your statement already made; what next?" "It is surely very unlikely," replies the auxiliary, "that in such a complex mass of phenomena there should have been two totally distinct modes of the exercise of the Divine power,—the mode by miracle and the mode by law." "Unlikely!" rejoins the philosopher; "on what grounds?" "O, just *unlikely*," says the auxiliary;—"unlikely that God should be at once operating on matter through the agency of natural laws, of which *man knows much*, and through the agency of miracu