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## MARVELS OF PROVIDENCE.

A celebrated skeptical philosopher of the last century – the historian Hume – thought to demolish the credibility of the Christian Revelation by the concise argument: "It is contrary to experience that a miracle should be true, but not contrary to experience that testimony should be false." Contrary to experience that phenomena should exist which we cannot trace to causes preceptible to the human sense, or conceivable by human thought! It would be much nearer the truth to say that within the husbandman's experience there is no phenomena which can be rationally traced to anything but the instant energy of creative power.

Did this philosopher ever contemplate the landscape at the close of the year, when seeds, and grains, and fruits have ripened, and stalks have withered, and leaves have fallen, and winter has forced her icy curb even into the roaring jaws of Niagara, and sheeted half a continent in her glittering shroud, and all this teeming vegetation and organized life are locked in cold and marble obstruction; and, after week upon week, and month upon month, have swept, with chilly rain, and howling storm, over the earth, and riveted their crystal bolts upon the door of nature's sepulchre – when the sun at length begins to wheel in higher circles through the sky, and softer winds to breathe over the melting snows – did he ever behold the long-hidden earth at length appear, and soon the timid grass peep forth; and anon the autumnal wheat begin to paint the field, and velvet leaflets to burst from purple buds, throughout the reviving forest, and then the mellow soil to open its fruitful bosom to every grain and seed dropped from the planter's hand; buried, but to spring up again, clothed with a new, mysterious being; and then, as more fervid suns inflame the air, and softer showers distil from the clouds, and gentler dews string their pearls on twig and tendril, [R918 : page 8] did he ever watch the ripening grain and fruit, pendent from stalk, and vine, and tree; the meadow, the field, the pasture, the grove,

each after its kind, arrayed in myriad-tinted garments, instinct with circulating life; seven millions of counted leaves on a single tree, each of which is a system whose exquisite complication puts to shame the shrewdest cunning of the human hand; every planted seed and grain which has been loaned to the earth, compounding its pious usury thirty, sixty, a hundred fold, all harmoniously adapted to the sustenance of living nature, the bread of a hungry world; here a tilled cornfield whose yellow blades are nodding with the food of man; there, an unplanted wilderness – the great Father's farm – where he "who hears the raven's cry" has cultivated, with his own hand, his merciful crop of berries, and nuts, and acorns, and seeds, for the humbler families of animated nature, the solemn elephant, the browsing deer, the wild pigeon whose fluttering caravan darkens the sky; the merry squirrel who bounds from branch to branch, in the joy of his little life – has he seen all this? Does he see it every year and month and day? Does he live, and move, and breathe, and think, in this atmosphere of wonder – himself the greatest wonder of all, whose smallest fibre and faintest pulsation is as much a mystery as the blazing glory of Orion's belt? If he has, and if he does, then let him go, in the name of heaven, and say that it is contrary to experience that the august Power which turns the clods of the earth into the daily bread of a thousand million souls, could feed five thousand in the wilderness. – *Edward Everett*.

