
Correspondence.

MR. WALLACE'S DEFINITION OF A MIRACLE.

To the Editor of the "Spiritual Magazine."

SIR,—Mr. Wallace's definition of a miracle is certainly a great improvement upon Hume's, but I doubt whether it is all-sufficient. What does Mr. W. mean by the words "implying the existence of?" There are many acts or events which imply the existence of superhuman intelligences, which are not considered miracles; viz. death and dreams.

Is not Mr. Wallace's view rather an explanation than a definition of a miracle, and when a miracle is explained does it not cease to be miraculous? To the philosophic spiritualist are there such things as miracles at all? I am inclined to think that the word miracle is not philosophic, that it is simply invented and used to express a popular idea. May we not then give a definition of a miracle by combining the best parts of Hume's doctrine with Mr. Wallace's criticism on it? Thus:—A MIRACLE is a transgression of a known and established law of nature, by a particular volition of the Deity or by the interposition of some superhuman intelligent agent.

A criticism on the meaning of a word is not necessarily a definition. I shall be glad to receive further enlightenment on this point.

Blackheath, 13th March, 1872.

NEWTON CROSLAND.