

This may be taken as a warning or in any way the corruptionists choose.

A WORD WITH PROF. HUXLEY.

In the *North American Review* the following excellent remarks appear concerning the sense of perception, which every live and awakened person enjoys to some extent. They are from the pen of Lyman Abbott, the talented and learned editor of the *Christian Union*:

Over against Mr. Huxley's agnostic principle, that the soul can obtain certainty only by evidence which logically justifies that certainty, I desire to put the contrary, and, if the reader pleases, the gnostic principle, that there are propositions which men ought to believe without logically satisfying themselves. This, undoubtedly, the gnostics believe, and this gnostic belief I frankly confess to be my personal profound conviction. The agnostic believes that all certainty enters the human mind through the logical faculty, and that it is immoral to assume certainty for any truth not certified by evidence which logically justifies that certainty. Gnostics, on the contrary, avow that there are other doors than the logical faculty by which certainty enters the human mind; that there are absolute convictions which are certified by evidence which the logical faculty is incompetent to certify. It believes with Pascal "that the heart has reasons of its own which the reason knows nothing of." It believes that the soul is furnished with a sixth sense, a super-sensible faculty, sometimes called faith, sometimes called imagination, sometimes called insight, which gives direct and immediate cognizance of invisible and spiritual truths that neither the senses nor the logical faculty can perceive. It is this sixth sense in the artist which sees the divine something which the mere mechanic or even the mere critic can not see; which in the friend discerns beneath the features of the pure and noble woman a beauty which the sculptor's art can not imitate and the sun can not copy. The gnostic sees a golden beauty in a field of daisies, while the agnostic farmer sees only a weed that impairs the hay crop. The gnostic hears in the strains of the organ or the orchestra a spiritual voice speaking—the voice of Beethoven, Schumann, or Wagner—while the agnostic, closing all doors of the soul to truth except the door of logic, hears only so many violins, 'cellos, flutes, and brass instruments, or at best, certain extraordinary chords and combinations to be scientifically studied and critically analyzed. The gnostic does not—at least he ought not to—imitate the dogmatism of the agnostic by declaring that it is immoral to deny that we can be certain of the objective truth of propositions without logical evidence to certify them. He pities rather than condemns the man

who is deficient in the faculty of spiritual vision. He looks upon him as one who, having eyes, sees not, and, having ears, hears not. But he declares with great and growing positiveness of conviction that this philosophy, which denies to man all faculty of discernment except the logical faculty, and all certainty of truth except that which logic ratifies, is narrow and unscientific; and if not in itself immoral, and if held, as it certainly is, by some men of pure and lofty ethical natures, yet would, if it were generally adopted, dissolve the very foundations of the moral life. For there is no evidence which logically justifies the moral certainties on which modern society is built. If Professor Huxley were to attempt by a logical process to convince a South Sea Islander that cannibalism is wrong, he would certainly be eaten up as soon as he had completed his demonstration. His only hope would be to develop a moral faculty which would, without the aid of logic or there-enforcement of evidence, perceive the moral hatefulness of the practice. When a convict is sent up to the Elmira Reformatory, Mr. Brockway, the distinguished superintendent, does not begin with a course of philosophy to render more acute the logical faculty of the agnostic before him, who is not certain that it is wrong to steal because he has had no evidence which justifies that certainty. He gives the man a bath and puts him in the workshops, and under moral discipline. He sets to work to develop in the convict a moral habit out of which will grow in time a clear moral perception. The man who relies on evidence to justify the certainty that robbery and murder are immoral is a very unsafe neighbor. In fact, it is doubtful whether there is any evidence which will suffice in a purely logical mind to produce that certainty. Why shall I not lie? Because it will injure my neighbor? But there is not always evidence which will justify the certainty that it will injure my neighbor. Is it, then, uncertain whether it is wrong to lie in such cases? No! Not according to Mr. Huxley, whose condemnation of lying in the interest of good morals I heartily agree with. But, even supposing lying always did injure my neighbor, why should I not lie if it will benefit myself? What evidence is there which will justify the certainty either that lying will always be an injury to me, or that there is any obligation on my part to abstain from it when it will be a benefit to me? The evidence is in the soul itself; in its own moral perception of the beauty of truth and the hatefulness of lying. If any man has not a soul which perceives this beauty and its deformity, the remedy is not new evidence addressed to the logical faculty, but a new soul; or, if this be thought too theological a phrase, then such a course of instruction as will develop the now rudimentary faculty of conscience. These spiritual certainties are no more dependent on the logical faculty than is the certainty of those material phenomena which are objects of physical sight. And

they are no more logically demonstrable to men who are color-blind. We take only a languid interest in the critical discussion as to the authorship of the four gospels. We find in them a portrait of a character which transcends human limitations and that is enough. We listen with absolute incredulity to the conclusions of the positivist that there is no freedom of the will. We find our faith neither strengthened by philosophical arguments in support of immortality, nor weakened by philosophical arguments against it. We realize in ourselves a nature superior to disease, decay, mortality; we do not think we shall be immortal, we know that we now are so. We do not accept God because He is logically presented to us as the most convenient hypothesis to account for the creation. We are sorry for the agnostic who does not see with our eyes. But we decline to accept the limitations which are of his own fashioning, or to deny that we know what we know, because he has closed in his own soul the windows which we have left open, and shut out from himself the vision which lies open and patent and visible and certain before us.

JUMPING AT CONCLUSIONS.

THE suit about to be brought against Salt Lake City by a resident of Utah County, who claims that the boring for water by this corporation has tapped the source of some springs on his land and thus deprived him of water, ought not to take long to decide. It ought to be clear to everybody that a man has the right to obtain water, if he can, by sinking for it on his own land, no matter whether his neighbor has or has not availed himself of a similar right.

It does not follow, because a spring ceases to flow about the same time that another is made to run, that the first has been tapped by the second. Coincidences are often viewed in the light of cause and effect when there is no actual relation of one to the other.

The folks in the neighborhood of the main sewer claim that digging the trench has drained their wells. This *may* be true. And again it may be a mistake, for at the same time that the wells in the vicinity of the sewer trench "gave out," a large number of wells in the eastern and southeastern part of the city "ran dry," and they are quite remote from the sewer.

"Flowing wells" that once produced a large supply have also failed. It is thought that in some instances the boring of other wells in the neighborhood has caused the loss.

But it is quite possible that this is an error, for the volume of water has