

A noted skeptic recently based an argument on the psychological impossibility of Christian faith to a mind like his. "How could he resist the logical conclusions which forced themselves upon his reason?" But he overlooked the fact that for twenty years he had warped his judgment by a public and bitter crusade against Christian revelation.

As skeptical sentiments are everywhere promoted by sympathy and interest and all adverse moral tendencies, so, on the other hand, "with the heart man believeth unto righteousness." Christ constantly taught that clear apprehension of spiritual truth went hand in hand with love and obedience to divine precept. According to the whole teaching of the Scriptures, faith toward God is the outgoing not of one, but of all the higher powers of our being. And when a defender of Christianity stoops to popular discussion with some athlete of infidelity, on his narrow ground, he throws away all the noblest part of his armor and enters the arena of mere intellectual gymnastics, and often of low sarcasm and blasphemous sneers.

It is a lesson which this age especially needs to learn, that mere scientific training does not qualify a man to sit in judgment on religious truth. How constantly is it assumed that because a man has become a master, for example, in biology, he is also an authority on religious subjects, or any other subject on which he may venture an opinion! The late Charles Darwin was candid enough to admit that the exclusive use of scientific methods had well nigh destroyed his appreciation of poetry and general literature; and on the other hand Mr. Herbert Spencer retorted against the criticisms of Matthew Arnold and others, that their habitual attention to literature had unfitted them to comprehend his scientific generalizations. Much more, then, may the religious sense, or what Cardinal Newman calls the "faith faculty," become impaired or even atrophied by mental habits which are hostile to the truth.

If it be urged that this claim for the faith element is a begging of the question, the answer is that no human creed of whatever sort is wholly without it. The social and political opinions of men are largely due to moral and sympathetic influences. In childhood, sympathy and example are the chief media of all sentiments and the bases of character.

From this point of view how clear is the duty of the Church to urge the truth of God upon the consciences of men, and especially to prepossess the minds of the young. It is idle to talk of unbiased judgment in a world where a thousand influences are in full play upon every human heart from infancy to age! Candor there may be, but no colorless mind exists or is possible. We say, then, prepossess the children and the youth. Feed them as lambs of the fold; guard them from poisonous literature as from poisonous food. Ground them in