

World," for instance—have been written from the old standpoint, but with direct reference to the tenets of Ritschlianism.

In taking up the work of Ritschl we enter the realm of Systematic Theology. There are those who cry out against all dogma, and would fain look upon Christianity as life only, but Ritschl was not of these. He tilts against the whole dogma of the church in the past; but ousts the old only to bring in a new. Though much of his labor was lavished upon thorough-going historical research—witness his epoch-making, "Rise of the old Catholic Church," and his massive "History of Pietism," yet, as Kattenbusch declares, "he was entirely a Systematic Theologian, even when he appeared as an Historian." The express function of Theology as he defines it is "to present each element of Christian truth in its inseparable connection with the unity of the whole."

But we cannot take up his doctrine in the order which is familiar to us. Dr. Orr says that much of the difficulty felt by the student in grasping the trend of the system arises from the fact that it does not follow the order of the categories Theology, Anthropology, Christology, etc. We may not in fairness to him follow this order, for these categories belong to the system which he repudiates as scholastic and metaphysical; nor in justice to ourselves, for it is as important to understand his method as his treatment. The genius of his theology lies more in his method, in his standpoint and his theories of knowledge and religion, than in the consequent treatment of special doctrines. We shall therefore follow the order of his thought.

For Ritschl, the standpoint of Theology is the Kingdom of God. The theologian takes his stand within the circle of the existing community as one who shares its experience. Here is an existing phenomenon, an exalted and enduring one, the Christian Church. It possesses a distinct and characteristic life. To comprehend that life and set forth the truth which manifests itself in it is the province of the theologian. From that standpoint he is to build up his system. He is to consider whatever manifests itself in the religious life of the commun-