

"We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, begotten of the Father, only begotten, that is to say, of the substance of the Father; God of God and Light of Light; very God of very God; begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made, both things in heaven and things on earth; who for us men and for our salvation, came down and was made flesh, made man, suffered and rose again the third day, went up into the heavens, and is to come again to judge the quick and the dead." But whatever value belongs to theology, its creeds must be accepted for what they are, and not for what they are not. They are attempts to express in the forms and after the method of scientific philosophy spiritual truths that have come to us in Divine revelations from heaven. This they are; and if they have succeeded, then there remains nothing more to be learned in the definitions of the truth of God. Not only is the revelation perfect, but the reason has perfect comprehension of that revelation so as to state it in terms acceptable to the reason. "But these gracious and sublime ideas," says Principal Fairbairn, "were the aim rather than the achievement of the theology; they were more what it aspired to than what it reached. But the theology was as little the ultimate science of the religion or of the history as Plato or Aristotle is the ultimate science of nature, and man and society."

Christian doctrine had become pretty well crystallized against the seventh century, and so it remained for half a millennium of years. The Church was one throughout the world, and what it taught all believed.

Scholasticism, however, in forming an acquaintance with the original sources of Christianity, began to discover a contrast between these sources and the faith of the Church, and by its labors it prepared the way for the renaissance, and the renaissance made the Reformation a necessity.

Until the times of the Reformation the two chief factors in determining doctrine were tradition and philosophy. But the only authority which the Church of the Reformation would accept is the canon of Holy Writ, as it is contained in the fifth article of our Church, "The Holy Scriptures contain all