

It is argued that the systematizing of truth, whether for instruction or defence, as well as its technical forms, are necessarily human and therefore cannot be authoritative. The possibility of error in the process of systematizing, or in the form of statement, we grant at once, but whatever is proved to be a misconception or misstatement of the Divinely revealed truth ceases to be dogma, that is authoritative, and we are bound at once to give it up. More than this, we are not to shrink from making the examination, and if necessary making it again and again, but the truths which God has revealed are to be received as authoritative.

The questions between those who arrogantly assume to be the advanced thinkers of the nineteenth century, and those who hold fast the faith once delivered to the saints, are not such as affect merely the accuracy or inaccuracy of the systems or formulas of truth, but such as affect the existence or certainty of the truths themselves, questions affecting not the form but the substance. The disciples of this modern school do not contend for one system of truth as against another, but they deny the authority of all systems, of all positive religious beliefs. Their theory carried fully out amounts to this, that it does not matter what a man believes, there is no certain belief—no one form of religious belief is more true than another, therefore the nearest approach to truth is to reject all dogma—to sweep away all authoritative religious teaching.

It would, however, be unjust to place all the opponents of dogma in the same category, and an attempt to classify them is important to a full and candid discussion of the question.

1st. There are those who repudiate the truths of God's word from an intense aversion to the doctrines of grace—skeptics, who would retain the name of Christians, while they reject the inspired authority of the Bible. They profess to accept the pure and lofty morality of the Bible, so far as it commends itself to their consciousness, but they contemptuously reject the facts and doctrines of Christianity.

(a) Under this class we find a large number of men who, through the lighter literature of our day, aspire to be the leaders of public opinion—men of letters, who are for the most part ignorant alike of theology and philosophy, and who yet