

be possessed of property in a foreign land, or contract a foreign alliance for any of his children, and was moreover liable to the infliction of a fine for any trespass he might commit. The office was maintained, however, till the last days of the republic, and from time to time was held by men who knew how to make it something more than such an empty simulacrum. (See Cecchetti, *Il Doge di Venezia*, 1864.)

In Genoa the institution of the doge dates from 1339, and at first he was elected without any restriction by popular suffrage, and held office for life; but after the reform effected by Andrea Doria in 1528, the term was reduced to two years, plebeians were declared ineligible, and the appointment was intrusted to the members of the great and the little councils, who were bound, however, to employ, in proof of impartiality, nearly as complex a machinery as that of the later Venetians.

DOG-FISH, a name applied to several species of the smaller sharks, and given in common with such names as hound and beagle, owing to the habit these fishes have of pursuing or hunting their prey in packs. The Small-spotted Dog-fish or Rough Hound (*Scyllium canicula*) and the Large-spotted or Nurse Hound (*Scyllium catulus*) are also known as ground-sharks. They keep near the sea bottom, feeding chiefly on the smaller fishes and Crustacea, and causing great annoyance to the fishermen by the readiness with which they take bait. They differ from the majority of sharks, and resemble the rays in being ovoviviparous. Their young are brought forth inclosed in semi-transparent horny cases, known on the British coasts as *mermaids' purses*, and these have tendril-like prolongations from each of the four corners, by means of which they are moored to sea-weed or some other fixed object near the shore, until the young dog-fish is ready to make its exit. The larger of these species attains a length of 4 to 5 feet, the smaller rarely more than 30 inches. The Picked Dog-fish (*Acanthias vulgaris*) is pre-eminently the dog-fish. It is the smallest and most abundant of the British sharks, and occurs in the temperate seas of both northern and southern hemispheres. It rarely attains a length of two feet, the female, as in most sharks, being larger than the male. The body is round and tapering, the snout projects, and the mouth is placed far under. There are two dorsal fins, each of which is armed on its anterior edge with a sharp and slightly curved spine, hence its name "picked." In order to strike with these spines the fish first bends itself into a bow, and by a quick motion causes them to spring asunder in opposite directions, seldom failing thus to strike the object aimed at. The dog-fish is exceedingly prolific, the female, according to Couch, producing young almost daily for 9 or 10 months in the year. These are not contained in egg-cases, as in the ground-sharks, but are produced alive. It is gregarious, and is abundant at all seasons everywhere on the British coasts. In 1858 an enormous scull of dog-fish, many square miles in extent, appeared in the north of Scotland, when, says Couch, "they were to be found floating in myriads on the surface of every harbour." They are the special enemies of the fisherman, injuring his nets, removing the hooks from his lines, and spoiling his fish for the market by biting pieces out of them as they hang on his lines. Still greater injury is caused to the fisheries in the wholesale destruction of small fishes by this predacious species. They are, however, eaten, both fresh and salted, by fishermen, especially on the west coast of England.

DOGMATIC (Ger. *Dogmatik*) is the name usually given by modern writers, especially on the Continent, to that branch of theological study which treats of the doctrines of Christianity. As there are considerable varieties in the conception and treatment of dogmatic by different

theologians, churches, and schools, it will be best to give an historical account of the origin and usage of the term.

The Greek word *δόγμα*, from which it is derived, has two meanings, one of which is found in the LXX. and New Testament, while the other is given to it by some of the ancient philosophical writers. According to the former sense, it denotes a decree or ordinance, *i.e.*, a precept as to conduct or observance, proceeding from human or divine authority (Luke ii. 1, Acts xvi. 4, Eph. ii. 15). This is the only meaning in which the word is used in Scripture; but by Plato, Cicero, Seneca, and others it is employed to denote the doctrines of the philosophers, *i.e.*, principles or theories formulated or accepted in the different schools. In this latter sense the word was used by the early Christian writers, as describing indifferently heathen, Christian, or heretical doctrines, as the case might be; although sometimes, when the word was applied to the Christian verities, it may have acquired, from the other use of it, a certain tinge of the idea of authority belonging to the doctrines of the faith. As early as Cyril of Jerusalem (*Catech.* iv. 2) the distinction was made between the doctrinal and the moral elements of Christianity; and the term *δόγμα* was appropriated to the former, the latter being called *ἠθικὸν μέγος*.

But it was not till long afterwards that the adjective, "dogmatic," was used to distinguish a particular branch of theological study; for in early times the need of subdivision in the scientific study of Christian truth was not felt, and the name theology was sufficient to describe all works dealing with that subject in any way. The progress of thought and inquiry in the history of the Church has, however, made it possible and necessary to treat the truths of Christianity in various different ways, from distinct points of view; and hence different kinds and departments of theology have come to be distinguished. In the 17th century the divines who wrote systems of theology gave different titles to their works, indicating the special manner of their treatment; *e.g.*, Mastricht, *Theologia Theoretico-Practica*; F. Turretin, *Theol. Elenctica*; Marckius, *Compendium Theol. Didactico-Elencticum*; Quenstedt, *Theol. Didactico-Polemica*; Baier, *Theol. Positiva*.

The title *Theologia Dogmatica* was first adopted by John Francis Buddæus, a Lutheran divine, in 1724. This terminology was followed by J. H. Michaelis, Seiler, and others, and from it the word *Dogmatik* as a substantive came into common use in Germany. In England and America, in so far as any specific designation of the general term theology or divinity has been thought necessary, the title "systematic" has been until recently more current than "dogmatic." As, however, the division and mutual relations of the various theological studies have been very thoroughly discussed in recent times, especially by German theologians, and as the name "dogmatic" has been used by them to denote one principal department of these, there is good reason for its adoption by English writers. Some prefer the form "dogmatics," after the analogy of "mathematics," "physics," &c.; but this seems awkward and needless.

But there is among the best authorities on the subject a considerable difference as to the proper nature and place in the theological sciences of dogmatic. There are two distinct conceptions of its nature, each supported by eminent names, according to one of which it is an historical, and according to the other a philosophical study. The difference may be said to turn on what substantive is to be understood along with the adjective *dogmatica*. If, according to what was undoubtedly the older usage, we supply *theologia*, then the name "dogmatic theology" would denote the study of God and divine things in a doctrinal manner, or so as to exhibit its results in a series of doctrines. The epithet dogmatic would indicate, not the subject of the

study, but the manner of it; and thus it would fall under the general head of philosophical or systematic theology. This was the older view, and is held in modern times by Julius Müller¹ and Hagenbach.² If, however, it be held, as is held by many moderns, that *scientia* is the substantive understood with *dogmatica*, then the term means the science of doctrines, and has for its object not the Christian realities themselves, but the doctrines that have been formed about them; and as such it must be an historical science. This is the view adopted by Schleiermacher,³ Rothe,⁴ Martensen, Oosterzee, and others; though the particular form and development of the general idea differs according to the different views of these writers as to the nature and formation of doctrines. There can be no doubt that an historical and critical study of the doctrines that have been held in the Christian Church or its several branches is a legitimate, and in its own place, not unimportant pursuit, and whether such study should be called dogmatic is a mere question of nomenclature and usage. But it can be as little doubted that this study does not occupy that central place in the theological sciences that has usually been assigned to dogmatic, and is not fitted to supersede that direct study of Christian truth that has long borne the name of theology by way of eminence. Hence some of those who make dogmatic a merely historical science hold that there is required besides that a science of speculative theology, dealing directly in a philosophical way with the objects of Christian faith; while Al. Schweizer thinks that dogmatic, as a science of dogmas, should be discarded as essentially un-Protestant, and that in its stead should be placed what he calls *Glaubenslehre*. It is clear that we must have some name to express the former conception of dogmatic, and there is no other name so convenient or so generally used as this. On the other hand, all are not agreed on the necessity and importance of a separate science of dogmatic in the historical conception of it; and it is not easy to draw a line of distinction between it and symbolical theology, or the study of the creeds and confessions of the different churches. It seems therefore convenient to regard dogmatic as a branch, not of historical, but of systematic or philosophical theology. In this view it is the study which endeavours to understand the facts and truths of Christianity in their true nature, causes, and mutual relations. This study presupposes the reality of Christianity, as the divinely-revealed and perfect religion, and on that basis proceeds to investigate what is contained in it with a view to its scientific comprehension. It is thus distinct from, and posterior in the order of nature to, apologetic, which is another branch of philosophical theology, and has for its function the scientific exhibition of the grounds of religion in general and of Christianity in particular. Apologetic has accomplished its task, when it has established and vindicated against attacks that Christianity is truly divine, and the final form of revealed religion. Dogmatic accepts this conclusion as its starting-point, and proceeds to inquire what are the facts that constitute Christianity, how they are to be accounted for, and what is their mutual relation. In this process it must needs generalize and determine the conceptions suggested by the facts by means of definitions, and combine these in the form of definite propositions, which are what are called doctrines, and which are again arranged and framed into a system of doctrine. Doctrines, as usually understood, have reference simply to truths to be believed; and they correspond to the

laws of nature discovered and formulated by science. The leading theological doctrines are thus attempts to explain in a scientific way certain religious phenomena that belong to Christianity. In dealing simply with facts as distinct from laws, with what is as distinct from what ought to be, dogmatic is distinguished from ethical or moral theology, which is another branch of the same general division of theological studies. For Christianity is more than a revelation of truths; it is also a body of practical precepts; and the meaning, principles, and application of these afford a wide and important field of inquiry. There have indeed been some weighty and earnest protests raised against the separation of ethics from dogmatic;⁵ and there is a certain advantage in the two subjects being treated together, as they usually were by the older theologians, under the heads of *fides* and *observantia*, or the like. Christian doctrine and Christian duty can never be separated in reality without the loss of the life of both, and this should be kept in mind in their discussion. But each of these subjects has grown to such an extent that convenience almost necessitates the plan that has become usual in academic teaching and books, of giving them a separate treatment, and restricting the province of dogmatic to the truths of Christianity that are objects of belief, as distinct from its precepts as matters of duty. Polemic and irenic are branches of theology that have also a very close connection with dogmatic,—the former having for its object the exclusion from the system of Christian doctrine of ideas and opinions that are essentially alien to its principles, and the latter the harmonizing or bringing into a relation of mutual toleration views of doctrine which differ in some particulars, and yet are neither of them essentially un-Christian or anti-Christian. These may be regarded as appendices to dogmatic, being the application of its principles to the varieties of belief that exist among Christians.

There are two other studies, of recent origin, whose relation to dogmatic should be defined, as they have sometimes been thought capable of superseding it—biblical theology and the science of religion. The former of these is a development of Scripture exegesis, and seeks, in dealing with the sacred writings, not merely to understand their direct meaning, but to enter into the conceptions of their several writers on the whole subject of religious truth,—to find out from their writings the theology of Paul, or Peter, or John, just as the historian of doctrine endeavours to exhibit the theology of Athanasius, Augustine, or Luther. Then, taking a wider view, it groups all the inspired writers of a period together, and seeks to present the theology of the New Testament, or of the Old, just as one may do with the Nicene or the Reformation theology. This is a most interesting and useful study, and much valuable work has been done by it; but it is clearly an historical study, and as such belongs to a different department from dogmatic, if that is placed in philosophical theology. It furnishes important materials for dogmatic, and gives us the power of using Scripture in a more historical way than would be possible without it; but as it cannot be assumed that any one inspired man, or any one age of the history of revelation, saw the entire system of divine truth as it is in itself, even the most perfect results of biblical theology will only be materials for dogmatic, not dogmatic itself.

The science of religion, again, investigates the various forms of religion among mankind, and by the comparative study of these seeks to discover their origin and mutual relations. It is probably too soon yet to judge what the results of this young and promising study may be, but they should certainly not be despised by the Christian theologian. They may have an important bearing on apologetic, and

¹ Art. "Dogmatik" in Herzog's *Real Encyclopädie für Protestantische Theologie u. Kirche*.

² *Encyclopädie u. Methodologie der Theologischen Wissenschaften*.

³ *Kurse Darstellung des theologischen Studiums*.

⁴ *Zur Dogmatik*.

⁵ By Schleiermacher, Nitzsch, and Beck.

through that may possibly affect the form, and even in some points the substance, of dogmatic. But the science of religion is itself entirely distinct from dogmatic; for it takes as its subject all religious beliefs, and treats them simply as psychological phenomena, without considering, in the first instance, whether any, or which of them, have objective reality, whereas dogmatic is a science of faith, and proceeds upon the assumption of the truth of Christianity and the Christian view of the universe.

The possibility and the need of such a science as dogmatic rest upon the specific nature of Christianity as the perfect form of a divinely given religion. Religion in general is a relation between man and God, and it may be either natural or supernatural. In the former case, it is the relation of man to the divine Being as manifested in the world, and as long as men have no other knowledge of God than this, their religion is apt to degenerate into unworthy ideas and practices; and thus natural religion, in the present state of mankind, tends to become false religion, as is seen in the various forms of heathenism. But the fundamental assumption of Christianity is, that God has, in addition to the manifestation of Himself that nature affords, also come forth in history by a divine work, leading men from the errors of false religion to the true knowledge and pure service of Himself. This work of grace has always dealt with men in a way suitable to their nature as intelligent beings, and hence has included a discovery of truth that they could not have found out for themselves, which is the idea of revelation. But while supernatural religion must include revelation as an essential part of it, this is not the whole, nor even the most vital and important element in it. The divine religion is essentially the establishment of a right relation between man and God, a fellowship between earth and heaven; and it only includes the communication of new truths, because that fellowship must be an intelligent one, brought about in an intelligent way. This work has also been a gradual one, and has had its several successive stages. Scripture represents the call of Abraham, the exodus of Israel from Egypt and covenant of Sinai, the establishment of the kingship and temple worship in Israel, and the messages of the prophets, as so many stages in the history and progress of religion; and the coming of Christ and the foundation of the Christian church is the final stage of its development. Now, like all the earlier stages, Christianity, while it implies the communication of new truth, is essentially a fact or work of history—the establishment of the perfect fellowship of man with God, which is that mediated by Jesus Christ, and the reconciliation effected by His death. It is this conception of Christianity that makes possible a scientific exhibition of it in the form of a system of doctrines as distinct from the simple interpretation of its records. If, according to a notion that early entered and long pervaded the church, Christianity is merely a new law, a revelation of hitherto unknown truths to be believed, precepts to be obeyed, and promises to be hoped for, then the theologian has nothing to do but to expound the revelation, ascertaining the meaning of its several statements, and classifying them according to their subjects or character. Any attempt to gain a scientific knowledge of the realities with which these statements have to do must proceed on general philosophical principles, and not on a specifically Christian foundation. Now this conception of Christianity was the prevailing one up to the time of the Reformation; and consequently the pre-Reformation theology, and much of later theology too, consists either of the mere exposition of certain *dicta* of authority, biblical or ecclesiastical, or of purely logical ratiocination, applying to these the principles of the philosophy current at the time. Only when the Reformers brought out the principle that Christianity is not

a new law, but a work of God's grace, reconciling men to himself in Christ, and that as such it must come before theology, was the construction of a system of Christian doctrine on right principles possible. On the basis of the direct experience of reconciliation to God through Jesus Christ, it is possible to raise and investigate the question—What is the nature, the cause, the various parts and relations, of this great work, this new relation into which I as a believer am brought to God? Now this is just the question that dogmatic seeks to answer; for it is, as before said, a scientific treatment of Christianity as the perfect form of supernatural religion. On this view the existence of dogmatic is not due to a primary, but to a secondary necessity of Christian life. The primary necessity for the Christian is a fellowship with God, including a sense of His favour, of His guidance in practical life, and protection against all hostile influence. To this religious fellowship it is not necessary that a complete system of divine truth be known or believed; according to the Pauline and Protestant doctrine of salvation by grace through faith, it is secured at once by the direct exercise of trust in Christ; and there must be this before there can be any right understanding of the truths contained and implied in Christianity. But there is a secondary need and impulse that forms a motive to dogmatic,—the desire of knowing as much as possible of the way in which we have been brought into that relation to God which is designated a state of grace or salvation. Christ and His apostles fully recognize the importance of knowledge, understanding, wisdom; while they teach that the only true knowledge of divine things must be preceded by direct experience of them, through faith in Christ. They speak wisdom among them that are perfect, though it is a heavenly wisdom, that needs spiritual enlightenment to know; and they exhort their converts to strive to be perfect or mature Christians, not children but men in understanding,—to add to their faith knowledge, and to grow in it. It is this craving for understanding of their new relation to God, which forms, though not the first, yet an important secondary necessity of healthy religious life, that affords the motive for the construction of theology in general, and of dogmatic in particular. Some amount of such knowledge seems to be indispensable to qualify one for teaching others; and so, if the church or Christian community is to exercise the function of teaching, there must be, beyond the faith that is the primary and essential quality of true Christians, the higher stage of Christian progress that is attained by those who add to their faith knowledge. Theology is thus not essential to the bare existence of the church; yet it is the natural and necessary form and means of her development in one department of her functions, the intellectual; just as in the department of practical morality a system of ecclesiastical discipline is an indispensable development, and in that of social devotion, ordinances of worship. Every living and thriving branch of the church of Christ must, in proportion to its health and vigour, cultivate scientific theology, as well as earnest conscientious discipline and warm spiritual devotion.

This motive prompts equally to all the branches of the theological study—exegetical, historical, practical, as well as systematic or philosophical: but that which is designated dogmatic, as falling under the last head, may well be esteemed the highest of them all, and that which is most to be desired, if only it can be attained. As, however, some have doubted whether such a science is possible, we must not take this for granted, but indicate the grounds on which we believe it is. Now, if a scientific knowledge of any subject is impossible, this must be either because we do not possess materials enough to give us a thorough

knowledge of it, or because we have no means of reducing these materials to their true and natural order. If there are sufficient materials of knowledge about Christianity, and a method by which these may be reduced to a system, the conditions of a scientific dogmatic may be said to exist.

The sources of dogmatic have been variously enumerated by different branches of the church and schools of thought, and the determination of the genuine ones involves the most important issues as to the whole character of the system. We may begin with the lowest and most universally accepted, and then proceed to those in regard to which there is more difference of opinion, and which determine the peculiarities of the dogmatic of different sects or churches. First, then, we may place the testimony of nature to God, which is admitted by nearly all theists to be real and valuable, so far as it goes, and which is clearly recognized in Scripture.¹ The Socinians in the 16th and 17th centuries denied the possibility of any knowledge of God without revelation; but this position, which was zealously controverted by the orthodox, has been given up by those who are the nearest modern representatives of the Socinians, and may be said to be held now only by those who would deny all knowledge of God whatever. This natural knowledge of God has sometimes been separated from properly Christian dogmatic, and relegated for separate treatment under the title of natural theology; but since most of the truths reached by it are also expressly taught in Scripture, it seems impossible to exclude from their consideration in the Christian system the prior light that nature throws on them. Hence the most orthodox divines admit that reason has as one of its functions in theology that of establishing or confirming some of its doctrines, which are therefore distinguished by many, especially of the Lutherans, as *articuli mixti*, being supported by reason and revelation together, from the *articuli puri*, which are known by revelation alone. This source of theological knowledge includes the manifestations of the being and character of God, and the nature and destiny of man in the phenomena of the external world, and also in the intellect, conscience, and religious affections of man. The importance of it arises from the fact that this natural knowledge of God alone connects the doctrines of revelation with the actual realities of consciousness and experience, and gives to the whole of theology a basis in ascertainable and verifiable fact. Unless we know, on grounds as legitimate as those of any secular science, that God is, and that He is true and good, we cannot rationally receive any revelation from Him, and our whole dogmatic would be a mere castle in the air.

But most Christians, while recognizing the reality and importance of the manifestation of God in nature, consider that this alone is inadequate, in the present condition of mankind, to bring us into that relation to Him which is the true and perfect religion; and all but those who deny the supernatural entirely believe that God has made a special revelation of himself in Christ. The person of Jesus of Nazareth is for all such the centre of God's saving discovery of himself and of His will to sinners of mankind; in His life and death we have an image of the character of God, and in His teaching, statements of religious truth that are of primary authority. On this account it may be truly said that the person and teaching of Christ is the fountain-head of revealed theology.² It would be quite possible to maintain that this is the only source of theological knowledge beyond the teaching of nature; but nearly all who entertain such views of Christ also believe that we have in the writings of His disciples an authoritative record of

¹ Ps. xix. 1-6; Rom. i. 19-21; Acts xiv. 15-17, xvii. 24-29.

² Oesterzee, *Christian Dogmatics*, sec. viii.

His words and deeds, and a divinely taught explanation of their meaning. Hence the Scriptures, at least of the New Testament, are recognized as themselves a direct source of dogmatic material. Some have limited this recognition of an inspired book to the New Testament, as Schleiermacher; but this position virtually rests on the idea that Christ himself is really the only supernatural source of religious truth, and that the New Testament Scriptures are not a real communication from God, but only an authentic human record of the revelation He has made of Himself in Christ. When the notion of a truly divine and authoritative Scripture is really admitted, it is impossible, in view of the use made of the Old Testament in the New, to deny the authority of these earlier Scriptures. The coming of Christ was not a sudden isolated appearance, unprepared for and alone, like a lightning-flash in a dark night; it was rather like the rising of the sun after a long and gradually lightening twilight. The way was prepared for Him by a series of historical revelations recorded in the sacred books of the Jewish people, which have from the days of the apostles onwards been regarded as divine by the Christian church. It is this continuous line of revelation, from the beginning onwards, that gives Christianity its universality in point of time, as the perfect form of the true religion that has always in some shape or other existed in the world. On this view, the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, as testifying of Christ, are the more immediate source of dogmatic materials; and this is the fundamental Protestant position.

The Church of Rome goes further, and maintains, not only that the Divine Spirit has inspired the writers of Scripture to convey to us an authoritative record of God's revelation in Christ, but also that the Spirit so dwells in the church as to enable her to develop that revelation, supplementing it by tradition, authenticating it by her authority, and interpreting it by decision on controverted points. Hence, for the Romanist, tradition, decrees of councils and of popes, opinions of fathers and doctors of the church, are equally with Scripture authoritative sources of doctrine. In this, however, Protestants hold that they err as much in the way of excess, as Rationalists, who deny the authority of the Bible, err in the way of defect. Those Protestants, however, who have taken the most profound and spiritual view of the subject, have been ready to allow that there is provision made in Christianity for what Romanists seek to attain by the authority of the church. They admit that something more is needed than unaided human reason for the right interpretation and application of the word of God; but they find this, not in an infallible church, but in the work of the Divine Spirit, enlightening the mind of believers in and with the word (*testimonium Spiritus Sancti*). The recognition of this, which was very fully and strongly made by the Reformers, not only gives to Protestant theology a firmer position as against the claims of Rome than it can have without it, but also enables us to give their due place to the elements of truth, exaggerated and distorted, in the Romish doctrines of the authority of the church, fathers, and councils. If we have the witness of the Spirit, giving us an assurance of the truth and insight into the meaning of Scripture, we must admit that our fellow Christians have the same guidance also, and that believers have had it in all ages. Hence we may reasonably allow great weight to the opinions of men who have given evidence of being guided by the Spirit, and more especially to those doctrines that have been received as scriptural by the great body of the spiritually enlightened in different ages. Thus the teaching of fathers and theologians, and the consent of the Christian church, are important helps and guides to the Protestant theologian; only he does not, like the Roman Catholic, attach absolute

authority to any of them; and he esteems them, not simply because of their antiquity or their official position, but in proportion to the evidence they have given of being really guided by the Divine Spirit, who is the Spirit of holiness, love, peace, and godliness.

This inward spiritual enlightenment of the believer corresponds very nearly to what has been called Christian consciousness, to which a prominent place has been assigned among the sources of theology by many modern divines. The currency of the phrase is due mainly to Schleiermacher; and the form of it proceeds from his fundamental principle, that religion consists properly in feeling, by which we have an immediate consciousness of the divine—a "God-consciousness." Whatever justification this view may have had, as a needed protest against the previously dominant intellectual view, that made religion virtually an affair of the understanding only, it is now generally admitted that Schleiermacher went to an extreme on the other side, and that no complete account of religion can be given that does not include the exercise of thought and will, as well as of feeling. In so far, therefore, as the phrase Christian consciousness represents in its form the one-sided conception of Schleiermacher, it is insufficient; and that which really corresponds to it is the Christian life, with its full complement of beliefs, emotions, and volitions. This, being the work of the Divine Spirit in the soul, may and must be recognized, on the principles already indicated, as the expression of the witness of the Spirit, by which the authority and meaning of the revelation in Scripture are established. In this sense, therefore, Christian consciousness, or the knowledge that a Christian has of his own religious experience and of what is implied in it, is a legitimate means of obtaining doctrinal conclusions. But if the authority of Scripture is to be recognized as the objective and normative representation of what true Christianity is, Christian consciousness can only be a mediate and subordinate source of theology, a channel rather than the fountain-head.¹ By giving it this position we are also saved from the one-sided subjectivity and variable individualism that must result from its being made a primary and independent source of knowledge. The history of the church, especially as it presents to us the expression of Christian faith and devotion in different ages and countries, gives us an insight into the religious life of the church as a whole, and so exhibits the Christian consciousness on a large scale as it were; but if we do not believe in an absolutely infallible guidance of the church, we cannot regard this either as a primary or authoritative source of doctrine, but must always test it by the standard presented in Scripture.

From these various sources, (1) God's manifestation of himself in nature, (2) His revelation in Jesus Christ authoritatively recorded in Scripture, and (3) His enlightenment of the believing soul by the Spirit in Christian life, when used, as they should be, in combination and in their proper order and subordination, we have a large supply of materials for the construction of a dogmatic system.

What then is the method to be followed in order to deduce general principles and laws of mutual relation from the mass of facts and truths thus presented to us bearing upon God's character and dealings with men? This is the next question that arises in regard to dogmatic theology. Now, plainly, if this study is to have a scientific character at all, it must be pursued in the same methods that are proper in other sciences of a similar kind. Theology, no doubt, differs in some important respects from all other sciences; but the difference lies in its matter rather than

¹ This view of the nature and function of Christian consciousness is that taken by Martensen, *Dogm.*, sec. 29; J. T. Beck, *Einleitung in das System der Christlichen Lehre*; Oosterzee, *Dogm.*, sect. 10.

in the form of its elaboration. Its materials are not merely the phenomena of nature, but the great redemptive and saving works of God made known by revelation. In this respect it differs from all merely natural sciences. But if it is to have any analogy to them at all, it must apply to these facts of revelation the same processes by which the facts of nature are made to yield natural sciences. Now, there are just two essentially distinct methods by which general laws and principles can be ascertained,—the analytic or inductive, and the synthetic or deductive. Neither of these, indeed, can be absolutely separated from the other. Induction in physical science, for example, calls in the aid of deduction, when hypotheses are formed to explain certain phenomena; and then it is tested by tracing them downwards to what would be their results whether they are true or not: and, on the other hand, geometric demonstration seeks the aid of analysis as a guide to the solution of its problems. And not only in subordinate points, but as wholes, the two methods supplement each other. There can be no concrete science that does not begin with induction; and there is no complete science unless it ends in deduction. All knowledge of facts must be *a posteriori*, and from these we ascend to general principles and laws; but the aim of all such procedure must be to reach such a complete and satisfactory explanation of all the phenomena, that the process might be reversed and the facts deduced from the most general principles. It is only in a few sciences, *e.g.*, mechanics, that such a degree of perfection has been attained as to enable them to enter on the deductive process. Now it is a question debated by some of the ablest divines, whether theology can adopt this method. It is not denied by any that the inductive method, or that of empirical reflection, as it is called in Germany, is competent; but some maintain that, while this is so, that of speculation is also legitimate and possible, and that it must be followed, if we are to have a theology in the highest and most proper sense of the term. Those who take this position are for the most part of the Hegelian school; and we have a favourable specimen of the way in which it may be maintained in a truly believing spirit in Rothe.² But the considerations adduced by Julius Müller³ against the possibility of such a method, if we are to avoid a pantheistic view of the universe, seem conclusive. The real and thorough-going recognition of personality and free will, both in God and man, makes it impossible to arrive at the phenomena of Christianity by any process of *a priori* demonstration; and more particularly, neither the fact of sin on the one hand, as the act of the free will of man, nor of grace on the other, as the work of God's free will, can be exhibited in their essential character in such a method. No science that has to do with the events of a real history in which rational and moral agents are recognized as acting with true liberty can be constructed by a *priori* deduction of logical consequences from abstract necessary first principles. The dogmatic theologian therefore, who maintains the freedom alike of the human and of the divine will, is shut up to the *a posteriori* method of induction. Even though the existence and attributes of God could be satisfactorily demonstrated by reasoning from necessary truths and laws of thought, as Anselm, Descartes, Clarke, and others thought possible, yet when we come to inquire what God has done, and on what principles He acts, we must, if the world's history is not a mere nature-process, learn from experience and testimony the facts, and ascend inductively from them to the principles or laws that direct them. The inductive method, therefore, is the one proper for Protestant evangelical dogmatic. This is recognized by writers so different in many respects as Dr

² *Theologische Ethik*, sec. 2.

³ *Die Christliche Lehre von der Sünde*,—Eiuleitung.

Chalmers,¹ Julius Müller,² Hodge,³ and it has been practically followed by most evangelical divines. They have indeed sometimes disguised the real nature of their method by the arrangement of topics adopted, for the almost universal practice has been to begin the systematic exhibition of Christian doctrine with the loftiest and most recondite part of the subject, which would come first in a really deductive treatment, and to descend from them to those that are more immediately verified by experience. This has tended to produce the impression that these systems are properly chains of logical demonstration, especially as doctrines once held to be established are often appealed to as forming part of the proof of other doctrines. In many cases, however, this appearance is deceptive; and the system, though wearing a deductive garb, is not really of that nature. Each of the doctrines is established on its own proper basis of Scripture testimony and Christian experience; and the order of progress, from above downward, does not show the order in which the doctrines have been ascertained, either by the church in general or by the individual theologian, but only the order in which it is thought best that they should be exhibited and taught.

Besides these two distinct methods, the speculative or deductive, and the empiric or inductive, a third is recommended by Beck, and approved also by Oosterzee, called by the former the *real-genetic*. This proceeds on the assumption that the object of theological knowledge is faith, *i.e.*, according to Beck's use of the term, spiritual life in the soul apprehending as its object God in Christ. This faith or spiritual life has, he points out, a principle of development and growth; and theology grows by following the growth of faith in the soul. But the life of faith in us is not perfect; it is liable to hindrances and abnormal development; hence this by itself is not a safe guide for theology. There is, however, a perfect archetype (*Urbild*) of the true and normal development of faith in the soul, and that is to be found in revelation. The revelation of which we find the record in Scripture has the same course of development as the subjective life of faith in the soul; and the growth of revelation is the perfect pattern of what the growth of faith within us should be. In order, therefore, to be a representation of the faith or spiritual life of the Christian in its ideal condition, theology has to follow the development of revelation as presented to us in Scripture, and must first go back to its primary source, and trace from thence its growth and development. Hence the designation of the true dogmatic method as *real-genetic*. Now whether or not the results of theological inquiry will come out in this particular form depends on the truth or falsehood of a number of positions, and these can only be established by the examination of facts and evidence bearing on the case. This method, therefore, does not in principle differ from the inductive or empiric one; it is only a special form which that method will assume, if the views of Beck as to the relation of revelation to the life of faith in the soul are true and borne out by evidence. It does not, therefore, seem proper to regard this as a distinct kind of method, and we may legitimately claim those who follow it as disciples in general of the inductive school.

On the whole, there appears no reason why the principles of inductive philosophy, which have been so fruitful in their application to the sciences of external nature, should not be applied to materials, bearing on the relation of man and the world to their Author, that are furnished by the phenomena of nature, the dictates of conscience, the facts of revelation, and the experience of the Christian life. Surely, too, the endeavour to do this is neither a hopeless nor an impossible one. Those who have objected most

strongly to the application of logic to theology, such as Isaac Taylor⁴ and Bishop Hampden,⁵ will be found at bottom to object chiefly to the use of a merely verbal and deductive system of logic, and not to that inductive method which is the mighty instrument of the progress of modern science. But it must be admitted that the processes of theologians have too often been, and too often still are, of that merely formal and logical kind that cannot really increase our store of knowledge. If dogmatic is to hold its ground as a true science at all, it must frankly and consistently adopt the inductive method; and it must take as the objects of its analysis, classification, and induction, not merely the statements of Scripture, but the religious realities which those statements, as well as our own experience, make known to us.

Further, if a scientific character is to be vindicated for dogmatic, it must also accept the position of a variable and progressive study. This does not imply that nothing is certain within its domain, or that there must be a constant flux and reflux of opinions about its contents. It is as much characteristic of science that it has certain well-established principles and results, which are not to be overthrown by any future inquiries, as that it is constantly advancing to further acquisitions and discoveries. Those who claim an absolutely fixed and unprogressive character for theology, though they may seem to do honour to its divine authority, really degrade it from the rank of a science; and if they retain any reverence for it at all, can only do so on the principles and in the spirit of Roman Catholicism. Thus Macaulay's brilliant statements to that effect,⁶ which are sometimes quoted by those who defend an immobile orthodox theology, imply as their basis either a contemptuous dismissal of theology altogether as a tissue of uncertainties, or a lurking belief that the one unchanging system is to be found in the faith of the Church of Rome. What has tended, and still tends very powerfully, to obscure the idea of progress in dogmatic theology is the want of a clear apprehension of the distinction between religion and theology, and the notion that the Bible is directly a revelation of theological dogmas, which need only to be correctly interpreted and arranged in logical order. If this were so, then we should be able at once to construct a complete system of theology, by simply applying the laws of grammar and logic to Scripture; and this could be done as correctly and well in the 2d century as in the 16th or 19th. There would be no room, or the very narrowest conceivable, for progress. In that case, then, if it were found that students dealing thus with Scripture came to widely different conclusions as to the system of doctrine to be drawn from it, we should be obliged to conclude that the revelation was not complete or unambiguous, and therefore that it must either be supplemented and checked by a living authority in the church to determine its true meaning, or that no certain knowledge in regard to doctrine can be attained. The former is the Roman Catholic, the latter the sceptical or anti-dogmatic alternative; but both alike proceed from the same premises, and indicate the impossibility of carrying them out without either giving up the practicability of dogmatic, or seeking it in an infallible church.

But this difficulty disappears when the Bible is regarded as a revelation, not solely or directly of doctrine, but of religion. On this view, it is the inspired record of the great historical events by means of which the religious fellowship of man with God has been established, and gradually elevated to its perfect form in Christianity, and

⁴ *Logic in Theology*.

⁵ "Scholastic Philosophy in Relation to Christian Theology," *Bampton Lectures* for 1832.

⁶ *Essay on Ranke's History of the Popes*.

¹ *Institutes of Theology*, bk. iii. ch. 10.

² *Ubi supra*.

³ *Syst. Theol.* Introd. ch. i.