

of Plato, the practice of Aristotle, and the general propensities of the human mind: I mean the opinion that all science may be obtained by the use of reasoning alone;—that by analyzing and combining the notions which common language brings before us, we may learn all that we can know. Thus Logic came to include the whole of Science; and accordingly this Abelard expressly maintained.⁵ I have already explained, in some measure, the fallacy of this belief, which consists, as has been well said,⁶ “in mistaking the universality of the theory of language for the generalization of facts.” But on all accounts this opinion is readily accepted; and it led at once to the conclusion, that the Theological Philosophy which we have described, is complete as well as true.

Thus a Universal Science was established, with the authority of a Religious Creed. Its universality rested on erroneous views of the relation of words and truths; its pretensions as a science were admitted by the servile temper of men’s intellects; and its religious authority was assigned it, by making all truth part of religion. And as Religion claimed assent within her own jurisdiction under the most solemn and imperative sanctions, Philosophy shared in her imperial power, and dissent from their doctrines was no longer blameless or allowable. Error became wicked, dissent became heresy; to reject the received human doctrines, was nearly the same as to doubt the Divine declarations. The *Scholastic Philosophy* claimed the assent of all believers.

The external form, the details, and the text of this philosophy, were taken, in a great measure, from Aristotle; though, in the spirit, the general notions, and the style of interpretation, Plato and the Platonists had no inconsiderable share. Various causes contributed to the elevation of Aristotle to this distinction. His Logic had early been adopted as an instrument of theological disputation; and his spirit of systematization, of subtle distinction, and of analysis of words, as well as his disposition to argumentation, afforded the most natural and grateful employment to the commentating propensities. Those principles which we before noted as the leading points of his physical philosophy, were selected and adopted; and these, presented in a most technical form, and applied in a systematic manner, constitute a large portion of the philosophy of which we now speak, so far as it pretends to deal with physics.

2. *Scholastic Dogmas*.—But before the complete ascendancy of Aristotle was thus established, when something of an intellectual waking

⁵ Deg. iv. 407.

⁶ Enc. Met. 807.