Term: Fallibilism

Quote: To return to our friends the Conservatives; these ladies and gentlemen will tell me this doctrine of fallibilism can never be admitted because the consequences from it would undermine Religion. I can only say I am very sorry. The doctrine is true; – without claiming absolute certainty for it, it is substantially unassailable. And if its consequences are antagonistic to religion, so much the worse for religion. At the same time, I do not believe they are so antagonistic. The dogmas of a church may be infallible – infallible in the sense in which it is infallibly true that it is wrong to murder and steal – practically and substantially infallible. But what use a church could make of a mathematical infallibility, I fail to see.


References: CP 1.151

Date of Quote: 1893 [c.]

URL: http://www.commens.org/dictionary/entry/quote-fallibilism-continuity-and-evolution-r-2