

light received we know not how. Another school regard inspiration as the result, not of the natural, but of the gracious agency of God, illuminating the spiritual consciousness of the writers, so that out of the fulness of their own understanding and feeling they wrote the product of their own religious lives and beliefs. The writers of the New Testament differ from ordinary Christian authors only in this, that they stood nearer to Christ personally. While recognizing the difference between Wegschneider and Baur, between Parker and Maurice, between Schleiermacher and Neander, yet that difference is to be found rather in the devoutness of the spirit with which such men as Neander and Maurice approach the Scriptures than in the fundamental theory of inspiration. The inspiration which they all contend for is purely a subjective one ; the one assign inspiration to the natural and the other to the gracious agency of God ; but both deny the presentation of supernatural truth from without ; both reduce the Scriptures to the level of the religious authorship of ordinary men ; both reject the idea of a supernatural revelation or of infallible truth, and thus reduce all theological enquiry to the same level with philosophical speculation. On such a theory dogmatic truth is an impossibility. There is no authoritative or infallible system of religious teaching. The logical conclusion of this theory is that consciousness is the ultimate and absolute revelation of God in man, and that we could for ourselves have attained all that is revealed in the Scriptures, though, but for the Scriptures, we might have been slower in attaining it.

It is contended that there is a religious sentiment or instinct in man, and that this is the only essential and eternal reality in religion. The existence of a religious sentiment in man, is undeniable. But for this religious sentiment there could be no conception of God—and consequently no belief in a revelation from God. When however we come to ask what this religious sentiment amounts to, we find that it has in itself no power to deliver us from endless contradictions and monstrous errors, atheistic, polytheistic and pantheistic. A subjective emotion with no objective reality to answer to it must be unsubstantial and unreal, and can never be the religion of rational beings. We grant that emotions are often so subtle that we