

THE  
CHRISTIAN INSTRUCTOR.

DECEMBER, 1860.

“THAT THE SOUL BE WITHOUT KNOWLEDGE, IT IS NOT GOOD.”—Prov xix. 1.

PLENARY INSPIRATION OF THE SCRIPTURES AND MODERN THEORIES OF PARTIAL INSPIRATION.

In the present article we design to review some recent theories of partial inspiration which are exercising a most vicious influence upon the Theology of the present day. These views have been maintained by men whom we are loath to class with the enemies of Christianity, nay, very imperfect views have been held by men whom we regard as in the main evangelical, and who have done some service to the cause of godliness. This is the great failing even of the Evangelical party of Germany. Even such men as Tholuck and Neander and others who have done good service to the cause of truth in the fatherland are here strangely astray, and their progress is proportionally hampered, while we have lately had theories of inspiration promulgated, which, while we are loath to class their authors with the enemies of revelation, are really infidel in their tendency.

Among those who hold the doctrine of Plenary Inspiration, there are been differences of statement on the subject. Calamy and Maldane contend for a theory of verbal dictation which would make the sacred writers mere amanuenses of the Holy Ghost (*Calami spiritus*). Gausson in his delightful little work on this subject seems to contend for the same view, but he has since disowned it and even pronounced it as mischievous. But the great body of Protestant theologians, Dick, Henderson, Chalmers, Tivestin and Smith, maintain that while we cannot regard the sacred writers as mere scribes, that such an influence was exerted over their minds, as infallibly direct them what to say, and what to omit, so that we should see the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, so far as is necessary to the main object of the Bible; and that while we cannot say that the very words were dictated to them, yet such an influence extended to the words selected as would prevent the use of any that would convey untruth or sanction error. Notwithstanding the minor differences between these two classes they are united in the main. They both hold the grand principle of plenary inspiration.