

**INSPIRATION
CONSIDERED
AS A TREND**

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Inspiration Considered as a Trend by D. W. Faunce

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BY
D. W. FAUNCE, D. D.
Author of "Hours with a Sceptic"



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1896

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Dedicated
TO
REV. W. H. P. FAUNCE, D. D.
MY SON IN THE FLESH
IN THE SPIRIT
AND IN THE MINISTRY OF THE GOSPEL.

PREFATORY NOTE

IN his former volume entitled, "Prayer as a Theory and a Fact," the "Fletcher Prize Essay," the author of this book attempted to show that prayer involves two persons, God and man. The various lines of proof for the Divine existence were briefly named. They all show direction rather than attainment. It was said, "These various ways of seizing upon the idea of God are by no means exclusive of each other. They are methods suited to unlike minds. But there are minds so constituted that an unmistakable *trend* is more convincing than the sight of the ultimate goal. Enclosed in a circular box that men call a compass, is a delicate needle which, however you disturb it, trembles back to its pole. And it does this because all over the earth run unseen magnetic currents converging toward an unseen magnetic center far away in the north. Men sail on every ocean of the world and measure their land on every continent of the globe by that trend of the magnetic currents toward the pole. But no mortal foot ever touched that pole, no mortal eye ever saw it. It is the world over only a trend. And not only the earth beneath, but the wide heavens above us, are mapped off in lines of gigantic boundary by the steady trend toward a pole no man ever saw or touched.

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The trend toward God in all forms of human thought is just as distinct."

This volume aims to carry out and newly apply the thought of trend as there expressed. The form of argument used there for the Divine existence is used here for the Divine inspiration. It is insisted that trend, the strongest proof in the one case, is the strongest proof in the other. What if the method God intended us to use in proving his own being and his own revelation is one? So too, it may be that the trend in the various theories of inspiration proposed by devout students of the Bible and that shown by the Bible itself, deserve notice. No new theory is here proposed; but the theories devoutly held and the facts declared and involved in the Scriptures and confirmed in the Christian experience, are passed in brief review—to find in them all an unmistakable trend.

So broad a subject as this of inspiration will present itself to men under various aspects. It can be studied in manifold relations. It may be considered as an inbreathing with reference to its source, or as an impulse with reference to its power. It may be considered as a process with reference to its method, or as a product with reference to its results as found in a book. Only one of the many ways of considering the subject is here undertaken—that of *trend*. Hence the title, "Inspiration Considered as a Trend."

It is to be remembered that "trend," like all our mental and moral terms, was primarily used in a physical sense. It is now used to signify the

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tendency that makes for an end and also for the potency that gains it. The "magnetic trend" in physics is a term employed not only to describe a tendency, but to define a force attaining constantly a definite end. Used in political, in literary, in historical, and in moral statement, it declares not only developmental direction, but achieved potency covering alike process and result.

Nor let any man think that the idea of trend reduces inspiration to its lowest terms. Trends do indeed differ in intensity. But the accumulation of facts which show the potency of this trend, raises the certainty and the character of this method of proof above that of any one theory or of all theories, and so lifts it into the highest possible position.

If the satisfaction gained by a fresh study of this view of inspiration shall equal, in the mind of any reader, that enjoyed by the writer of these pages in their preparation, he will be abundantly rewarded.

D. W. F.

PAWTUCKET, R. I.