

macher's conception of religion as a matter of feeling, as the spiritual sensation of absolute dependence. Students of theology, such as Strauss and Zeller, who sat under Hegel as well as under Schleiermacher, did not acquire from the latter the genuine and deeper psychological interest, but were stirred by another original element in Schleiermacher's teaching. For, as I have had occasion to state already,<sup>1</sup> Schleiermacher was one of the first brilliant representatives of the critical school of biblical research, as he was also one of the first critical students of ancient philosophy. And, indeed, it was mainly in the direction of historical studies that Schleiermacher's influence made itself felt in philosophical circles: the two pioneers in the history of philosophy, Heinrich Ritter and Chr. A. Brandis, coming from his school.

Be this as it may, it is not doubtful that in the history of philosophic thought the first beginnings of a more adequate treatment of the religious problem are to be found in Schleiermacher's writings.

In these were combined three distinct conceptions which have since been worked out with greater clearness and from many sides. First, the conception of a divine or moral as distinct from the existing natural order; second, the conviction that this can only be reached and realised through the combined work of individual minds in human society; and third, that it is being historically accomplished in the Christian community or church with its Founder as its centre and as its realised ideal of perfect goodness.

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Three  
distinct  
conceptions.

In the further development of religious philosophy

<sup>1</sup> See *supra*, vol. iii. pp. 166, 168 n.