

SOUTHERN PRESBYTERIAN REVIEW.

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ARTICLE I.

REPORT OF A CONFERENCE BY PRESBYTERY, ON THE SUBJECT OF "THE ORGANIZATION, INSTRUCTION AND DISCIPLINE OF THE COLOURED PEOPLE."*

At the last meeting of Presbytery the subject of the evangelization of the coloured people was discussed in conference, under the several heads of organization, instruction and discipline. The present report is the result of a motion, by which a committee was appointed to embody the views presented, and the various intelligence furnished during that conference.

The question of the segregation of the blacks from the whites in public worship, was not at that time considered, simply because the policy of Presbytery in that matter had already been settled and openly adopted. It has been the almost universal practice of our ministers for many years, to convene the coloured people into separate congregations and dispense to them instruction suited to their exigencies: and at the meeting of this Presbytery at Barnwell, in April, 1847, a formal sanction was afforded to this practice by the extension of its approval and patronage to a scheme contemplating the establishment of a separate congregation of the blacks of the 2d Presbyterian Church in Charleston.

The reasons for the collection of the coloured people

* This article is an abstract of a conference had in the Presbytery of Charleston, on the methods to be pursued for the religious instruction of our coloured population. It embraces no authorized deliverance of that ecclesiastical body on this subject, but gives the individual views of the speakers, some of whom have large experience in the matters discussed.

ARTICLE IV.

ON THE TRINITY.

The objections of unreasonableness, contradiction, and the human origin of the word Trinity.

The object of our previous articles* has been to determine the true nature, office, capacity, limits and condition of human reason, especially in reference to God's unity and nature. Our views will be found admirably sustained in a discourse by Bishop Butler,—the immortal author of the *Analogy of Natural and Revealed Religion*,—upon the ignorance of man.

After illustrating the position that "the wisest and most knowing" cannot, any more than the most ignorant, comprehend the nature of any causes, or any essences of things, and much less the Being, attributes or ways of God, he shews that difficulties in speculation, and limitations to our knowledge, are as much a part of our present state of probation and discipline as difficulties in practice. He goes on to remark, that "to expect a distinct comprehensive view of the whole subject of religion, and especially of God, clear of difficulties and objections, is to forget our nature and condition, neither of which admit of such knowledge, with respect to any science whatever. And to inquire with this expectation, is not to inquire as a man, but as one of another order of creatures."

"Knowledge" adds this deep master of human thought, is not our proper happiness." Men of deep research and curious inquiry, should just be put in mind, not to mistake what they are doing. For it is evident that there is another mark set up for us to aim at;—another end appointed us to direct our lives to;—another end which the most knowing may fail of, and the most ignorant arrive at. The secret things belong unto the Lord our God; but those things which are revealed, belong unto

* On the Province of Reason, and its incapacity to determine the nature and mode of existence of God.

us, and to our children, forever, that we may do all the words of this law, which reflection of Moses, put in general terms, is, that the only knowledge, which is of any avail to us, is that which teaches us our duty, or assists us in the discharge of it."

All morals, however,—and all duty,—have reference to law, to a law giver, and to the sanctions by which his laws are enforced. "To know the true God" truly, and the way of salvation He has devised and declared—this "is eternal life." And as it has been most clearly shewn, that by all our searchings we can find out nothing certainly of God's nature or will, "in the deepest humility, let us prostrate our souls before the word of His testimony, that we may implicitly hear, believe, and obey, all that the Lord our God shall say unto us."

The Scriptures, we have affirmed, do not teach what some men would now call the only reasonable doctrine of God's nature, namely, that He is absolutely, personally, and metaphysically, ONE, so as to be incapable of being in any sense THREE, AND YET ONE. On the contrary, they teach, as we affirm, that as the nature of God must be infinitely different and distinct, from what our finite capacities can comprehend, or our human language and analogies express, that the Divine essence or nature is common to the Father, Son and Spirit, who are, nevertheless, relatively distinct, and distinguished from each other. These three are one Being, in such a sense that they are all included in the idea of God, so that it is impious to say there are three Gods. These three persons, however, are distinct, not only in *name*, but in incommunicable *properties*, so that it is equally impious to say that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost are not each, and equally, God. In reference to each other there are internal, as well as economical differences, founded upon their personal relations, offices and distinctions, but these differences consist only in personal properties, and not in their substance, or Godhead, which is one.

The sum of what is revealed in Scripture on this subject is, that God is one; that this one God, is Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; that the Father is the father of the Son; and the Son, the son of the Father; and the

Holy Ghost, the spirit of the Father and the Son; and that, in respect of this, their mutual relation, they are distinct from each other.

"Moreover," says Dr. Owen, "whatever is so revealed in the Scripture, is no less true and Divine, as to whatever necessarily followeth thereon, than it is, as unto that which is principally revealed and directly expressed. Hence it follows, that when the Scripture revealeth the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, to be one God, seeing it necessarily and unavoidably follows thereon that they are one in essence, wherein alone it is possible they can be one; and three in their distinct subsistences, wherein alone it is possible they can be three; this is no less of Divine Revelation, than the first principle from whence these things follow."*

This doctrine is pronounced so contrary to reason as not to be credible, "even if it were not once, nor twice, but very frequently and most expressly written in the Scripture."† But from what we have seen, it is most unreasonable for human reason to say what is credible in reference to God's nature, which is infinitely above and beyond its comprehension, and of whose mode of existence we can know and express as little as we can about how and why he began to exist at all.

Let it be granted, then, that the doctrine of the Trinity is, by its very nature, inconceivable by the human mind. Is it therefore to be rejected? Mr. Mill lays it down as logically true, that "it is absurd to reject a proposition as impossible on no other ground than its inconceivableness."

"I cannot but wonder that so much stress should be laid on the circumstance of inconceivableness, when there is ample experience to show that our capacity or incapaci-

* Owen's Works, vol. x: pp. 469, 471, 472.

† See Smalcus in Abaddie, p. 254. The writers whom Stillingfleet opposed in his work on the Trinity say: "We deny the Articles of the new Christianity, or the Athanasian religion, not because they are mysterious, or because we do not comprehend them; we deny them because we do comprehend them; we have a clear and distinct perception, that they are not mysterious, but contradictions, impossibilities, and pure nonsense.—We have our reason in vain, and all science and certainty would be destroyed, if we could not distinguish between mysteries and contradictions."—See Stillingfleet on the Trinity, page 7, &c.

ty of conceiving a thing has very little to do with the possibility of the thing in itself; but is, in truth, very much an affair of accident, and depends on the past history and habits of our own minds. * * * * When we have often seen and thought of two things together, and have never, in any one instance, either seen or thought of them separately, there is, by the primary law of association, an increasing difficulty, which may, in the end, become insuperable, if conceiving the two things apart. * * * There are remarkable instances of this in the history of science: instances in which the most instructed men rejected as impossible, because inconceivable, things which their posterity, by earlier practice and longer perseverance in the attempt, found it quite easy to conceive, and which everybody now knows to be true.”*

We must consider an inference, logically drawn from established and admitted premises, to be true, even though the thing thus proved true be inconceivable.—For, what is to be understood by the terms inconceivable and conceivable, impossible and possible? If all our knowledge is originally derived from experience, then are these notions derived from our experience. The one class means things at variance with our experience, and the other, things not at variance with our experience.—Clearly, unless we possess fundamental ideas, or can gain a knowledge of things in themselves, no logical process can give to the notion, *impossible*, any larger meaning than this. But if, at any time, the inability of men to conceive the negation of a given proposition simply proves that their experience, up to that time, has, without exception, confirmed such proposition; then, when they assert that its untruth is impossible, they really assert no more than when they assert that its negation is inconceivable. If, subsequently, it turn out that the proposition *is* untrue; and if it be therefore argued that men should not have held its untruth impossible because inconceivable, we reply, that to say this, is to condemn the use of the word impossible altogether. If the inconceivability of a thing be considered insufficient warrant for asserting its impossibility, it is implied that there

* *System of Logic*, pp. 265, 266.

can exist a sufficient warrant; but such warrant, whatever its kind, must be originally derived from experience; and if further experience may invalidate the warrant of inconceivableness, further experience may invalidate *any* warrant on which we assert impossibility. Therefore, we should call nothing impossible.

In this sense, therefore, the inconceivableness of any theory which is above and beyond our present possible experience, is no test of its truth. In respect to all things beyond the measure of our faculties and consequent range of experience, inconceivableness must ever remain, as Sir William Hamilton affirms, an inapplicable test.*

We might also ask, whose reason is thus offended?—Not that of Bishop Butler, or of Lord Bacon, or of the great mass of Christians,—(not to name classic and heathen minds, including Plato,)—from the beginning until now. These have all contended that this was a doctrine in itself considered, neither reasonable nor unreasonable, nor one on which reason can pronounce any judgment whatever. The subject of the proposition is beyond the comprehension of reason. And yet the only terms in which we can speak of God, are drawn from finite beings, finite relations, and finite modes of existence. And hence reason has no premises from which it can deduce a positive conclusion. The whole matter is infinitely above and beyond reason. It is not true, therefore, that this doctrine of the Trinity is contrary to reason, if we understand by this term the general reason of men, for we shall find that the doctrine, in some form, has entered into all the ancient religions of mankind.

Neither is this objection true, if we are to judge of what is reasonable by the reason of Christians, since this doctrine has from the beginning been almost universally believed by every branch of the Christian Church. Neither is it true, that this doctrine is contrary to the reason of modern Christians since the Reformed Churches, with entire unanimity, introduced this doctrine into their creeds, and thousands of the most acute and able

* See Art. on the Universal Postulate, in Westminster Rev., Oct. 1858, p. 276.

minds have found the doctrine in no way, *contrary* to reason, but a doctrine of which reason can know and judge nothing beyond the testimony brought before it in the revelation of God. In other words, this subject can only be known and determined by positive revelation.*

On all subjects on which it alone can give evidence, the testimony of God is the highest reason, and outweighs all possible objection and cavil, since these are all based upon the absurdity that finite can comprehend that which is infinite and infinitely incomprehensible and beyond our capacity to understand. Because in a finite nature such as ours, the same spirit cannot be three and yet one, therefore, it is argued God's nature, which is infinitely above, beyond, and different from, and cannot be one, and yet in sound sense three. Such reasoning is absurd, foolish, and contradictory. This

* In truth, says Mr. Faber, nothing can be more childishly unphilosophical and illogical, than the too common anti-trinitarian practice, of starting abstract objections to the bare nature of the doctrine itself, and of pretending to decide, by the wholly inapplicable argument *a priori*, the pure historical question of *fact*, *whether the doctrine of the Trinity is or is not a doctrine of Christianity?* This is the fatal paralogism which runs for instance, through Dr. Channing's Discourse on *The Superior tendency of Unitarianism to form an elevated religious character.*

He reasons abstractedly, against the truth of the doctrine of the Trinity, from his own distorted arbitrary statement of its alleged moral and intellectual tendency: and from a rapid view of this caricatured portrait, he determines, through the dangerous *argumentum a priori*, and in language which I have absolutely shuddered to read; that such a doctrine *cannot* form a part of sincere Christianity.

Now, even to omit the gross sophism of arguing from a gratuitous statement of *his own* which would offensively exhibit Trinitarianism as alike *absurd* and *immoral*; what can be a greater paralogism, than the *PRINCIPLE* upon which the whole of Dr. Channing's discourse is constructed!

1. The question is a simple historical question of *FACT*; the question, namely: *Whether the doctrine of the Trinity, with the dependent doctrine of Christ's essential deity, was taught by the Apostles, and is propounded in Scripture.*

2. Yet this palpably *mere* question of *FACT*, which, like all other *similar* questions, can only be determined by *evidence*, Dr. Channing actually professes to determine by the application of *abstract a priori reasoning.*

3. Thus, in *former* days, did misplaced ingenuity determine in the negative the question of *fact*; whether the Copernican system be true, and whether men exist in the supposed paradoxical condition of antipodes: and thus, in the *present* day, does a more eloquent, than logical, American Divine, similarly determine in the negative, the question of *fact*; Whether the doctrine of the Trinity, with the dependent doctrine of Christ's true Godhead, was taught by the Apostles and is propounded in Scripture.—*On the Apost. of Trinitarianism*, vol. 1, pp. 289, 290.

doctrine is, indeed, like many others, above reason, but not contrary to it, since upon it reason can determine nothing.

Such is plainly the teaching of Scripture. "The Scripture* tells us indeed, that the 'spirit of a man which is in him knows the things of a man.' A man's spirit, by natural reason may judge of natural things. 'But the things of God knoweth no man, but the spirit of God.'—1 Cor. ii: 11. So that what we know of these things, we must receive upon the revelation of the Spirit of God merely, if the Apostle may be believed. And it is *given* unto men to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God. To some, and not to others; and unless it be so given them, they cannot know them. In particular, none can know the Father, unless the Son reveal him. Nor will, or doth, or can, flesh and blood reveal, or understand Jesus Christ to be the Son of the living God, unless the Father reveal him, and instruct us in the truth of it.—Matt. 16, 18. The way to come to the acknowledgement of these things, is that described by the Apostle.—Eph. iii: 14-19. 'For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in Heaven and earth is named, that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints,' &c. As also, (Col. ii: 2, 3,) 'That ye might come unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ; in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. It is by faith and prayer, and through the revelation of God, that we may come to the acknowledgment of these things; and not by the carnal reasonings of men of corrupt minds.'"

Shall foolish, weak, short-sighted man
Beyond the angels go,
The great Almighty God explain,
Or to perfection know?

* Owen's Works, vol. 10, pp. 509, 510.

His attributes divinely soar
Above the creature's sight,
And prostrate seraphim adore
The glorious Infinite.

Jehovah's everlasting days!
They cannot numbered be;
Incomprehensible the space
Of thine immensity!

Thy wisdom's depths by reason's line
In vain we strive to sound,
Or stretch our labouring thought t'assign
Omnipotence a bound.

The brightness of thy glory leaves
Description far below;
Nor man's, nor angel's heart conceives
How deep thy mercies flow.

But it is further said, that the doctrine of the Trinity is, in itself, *contradictory*, and therefore, to be rejected, since to say that three are one and one is three is absurd. This however, is just what is not said. The word trinity from two Latin words, signifies a unity that is three-fold in its unity—a three that are one in their trinity, that is, a TRI-UNITY. It defines not three disunited persons united in one *name*, or in community of *counsel*, but the union of three persons in one essence, so as to be really and truly one, and yet, in a manner incomprehensible, to us, truly and really three. Mr. Locke says, “in my whole essay there is not anything like an objection against the Trinity.”* There is manifestly no contradiction in the term trinity, because it does not affirm that three are one and that one is three, but that in the infinite and incomprehensible Jehovah there is a unity so inconceivably different and distinct from the union of finite human natures,—of which alone we know anything,—as to admit of three persons, hypostases or modes of subsistence, in the one ever-blessed Godhead. The very term trinity therefore, which means a TRI-UNITY, obviates the objection made against the doctrine, that it is contradictory, since it does not imply that God is one in the same sense in which he is three, or three in the same sense in which he is one, but three in a sense

See on the alleged Unitarianism of Locke, &c., Note A, at end of the article.

different from, and reconcilable with, that in which he is one, and one in a sense different from, and reconcilable with that in which he is three. *WHAT* that sense is, or *HOW* God is what he is thus said to be, the doctrine does not affirm, nor does any man dare to explain. And that it implies any contradiction in the essential nature of the Divine being, no man can dare to affirm without presumption and impiety, since this would imply an actual knowledge of what that nature in its essence and mode of existence is.

When the late Daniel Webster, (whose capacity to determine what is and is not contradictory to reason no one will call in question,) was told by a friend coming out of church, that he did not know how any reasonable man could believe in the Trinity, therefore, that three is one and one three, "Ah, sir," replied Mr. Webster, "we do not understand the arithmetic of Heaven." This great mind was moved also to record his name at the foot of a dying declaration that while he could not in the flesh see God or understand the arithmetic of Heaven, he nevertheless, understood the fact attested of himself by God, and that he believed therefore, on "God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost," and now we would hope his faith is turned into knowledge, and he unites in ascribing glory and honour unto God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

Mr. Boswell once said to Dr. Johnson, "Would not the same objection lie against the Trinity as against transubstantiation?" "Yes," said he, "if you take three and one in the same sense. If you do so, to be sure you cannot believe it. But the three persons *in* the Godhead are three in one sense and one in another; [three in person or hypostases and one in nature, one in the unity of the spirit,] we cannot tell how, and that is the mystery."*

The apparent verbal contradictions in the language employed to express the personal distinctiveness, and the Divine unity of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, arise from the inapplicableness of words denoting human thoughts, to that which transcends all human thought. There is nothing in man's perceptions, con-

* Johnson's tour to the Hebrides, by Boswell, p. 90.

sciousness, or formal logical definitions, to supply him with intelligible terms that can ever be more than an approximation towards the exact and full truth of the unity of God. For this reason, theology cannot become a strictly logical science; language is too imperfect, too low a vehicle, to become the exponent of its higher truths.*

This, in reality, is the foundation on which philosophical objections to the doctrine of the Trinity, are founded. Thus Dr. Dewey asserts the impossibility of conceiving of the persons of the Trinity as any other than three distinct beings. And why? "When," says he, "we speak of unity in a being, we mean that he is self-conscious." He thus frames to himself a definition of what constitutes a being which suits his own purpose, omitting what is most essential to our idea of being, namely, that *substance* or essence, and those properties by which it is known and distinguished by us, and then bases his objection to a Scriptural fact upon his own defective theory.†

While, however, it is impossible, as has been said, to give any positive exposition of what is implied in the doctrine of a trinity of the Divine nature, the human mind is capable of showing that the doctrine is not inconsistent with our present experience and knowledge, however immeasurably it may be above them.

But not only is this doctrine not unreasonable, absurd or contradictory, it might be argued that it is most reasonable.

"There appear to be," says Dr. Pye Smith, "very reasonable grounds for supposing that this doctrine, or some other resembling it, would be a necessary deduction from the fact of the ABSOLUTE PERFECTION of the Divine nature. The notion of Supreme and Infinite Perfection cannot but include EVERY POSSIBLE excellency, or,

* Augustine strongly felt, as he has majestically expressed, the ineffableness of this great mystery cum ergo quaeritur quid tria, vel quid tres, conferimus nos ad inveniendum aliquod speciale vel generale nomen quo complectamur haec tria, neque occurrit animo, quia excedit, supereminetia divinitatis usitati eloquii facultatem. Verius enim cogitatur Deus quam dicitur, et verius est quam cogitatur.—*Stowell on the Work of the Spirit.*

† See the *New Englander* for 1848, pp. 678-5.

in other words, every attribute of being which is not of the nature of defect. It must be premised that creation had a beginning. At whatever point that beginning may have been, whatever multiples of ages, imagination or hypothesis can fix upon to carry that point backwards, the point will stand somewhere. *Before* that position, therefore a *duration without beginning* must have elapsed. Through that period, infinite on one part, it is incontrovertible that nothing can have existed except the Glorious Deity. But, if the unity of the Divine nature be such a property as excludes every kind of plurality, the properties of *active life*, *tendency to diffusion*, and reciprocity of intellectual and moral enjoyment, (which are perfections of being,) must have been through that duration, in the state of *absolute quiescence*. It seems to follow that *from eternity* down to a certain point in duration, some perfections were wanting in the Deity. The Divine Mind stood in an immense solitariness. The infinitely active life, which is a necessary property of the Supreme Spirit, was from eternity inactive. No species of communication existed. There was no development of intellectual and moral good, though in a subject in which that good has been necessarily, infinitely, and from eternity inherent. I feel the awful ground on which I have advanced, in putting these suppositions; and I would humbly beseech the Divine Majesty to pity and pardon me, if I am guilty of any presumption. I am, also, fully attentive to the attribute of ALL-SUFFICIENCY as a necessary property of the Blessed and Adorable Nature. But when I have given every consideration of which I am capable to this most profound of subjects, I cannot but perceive it as a strong, and even invincible deduction of reason, that the denial of such a plurality in the Infinite Essence as shall admit of a development from eternity of the ever active life and a communion from eternity in infinite good, is a denial to the Supreme Nature of something which is *essential* to absolute and Infinite Perfection.

I add, therefore, that, whatever improper use may have been made of the terms by impious familiarity, and whatever ridicule may have been cast upon them by profane opposition, the venerable confessions of antiquity

appear to me to be entirely accordant with careful reasoning and with Scriptural authority;—that *the one Lord Jesus Christ is the only Begotten of the Father, before all ages; and that the Holy Spirit proceeded from the Father, equal to the Father and the Son in eternity, majesty, glory, and all perfection.*”*

“Own, then, man
The image of his Maker—grant that God
Possesses all perfections he has given,
And in the Deity there needs must be
Some glorious attributes, that correspond
With those peculiar faculties in us,
Call’d social ones; I speak not of the bonds
Of finite passion,—but the inherent power
To make a promise, a command express,
And witness bear.

That God this power possesses
We need not wander far for evidence.
Let nature be our witness. He who form’d
The eye must see; and He whose mandate call’d
Creation forth, most surely can command;
Or all the beauties that our eyes behold,
When turning fondly on the earth’s fair face,—
Or piercing far into immensity,
To gaze delighted on its spangling orbs,—
Nay, we ourselves, had no existence known.
But if on naught except created things
Those great perfections can be exercised,
They cannot be eternal or immense;
And as, before creation’s natal hour,
They never could be exercised at all,
Not only are those attributes themselves
Contingent, but the Godhead must possess
Peculiar powers which once he did not hold;
And the firm grasp of mutability
Thus seems to enclose the Uncreated One,
The great, Unchang’d, Immutable, Supreme.
But, turn we to the converse side and own
That, like the rest of His inherences,
These too are infinite—we then are led
(To find them an unbounded exercise)
To some unlimited created thing,
Another independent Deity,
Or a distinctness of hypostases
In the great Essence Incarnate;—(the first
And second of which three hypotheses

* See his Testimony to the Messiah, vol. 3, pp. 420, 421. See also, *Howe’s Works*, vol. 4, pp. 320, 321, where, in his calm inquiry on the subject of the Trinity, he has these observations.—See Note B., at the end of this article.

We have before exploded:) and behold
 The Trinity in Unity again
 Stand forth in glory to the enquiring eye.
 Nor does the Deity's perfection yield
 An evidence less sure. For this seems plain,—
 (And here with deepest reverence I speak,)
 If God exists in Unity alone,
 According to the wandering sceptic's dreams,
 He cannot in perfection know himself;
 He cannot fully exercise his power,
 His wisdom, goodness, purity, or love,
 According to their nature; nor can hold
 Those social faculties he gave mankind.
 Nor is perfection of existence found
 In him, for that, undoubtedly, must rest
 (Since nought beside can grasp its every mode,)
 In union and distinctness. Wherefore, then,
 Sons of a blind philosophy, maintain
 This perilous position! Wherefore shackle
 God's active, energetic attributes
 In all their operations, till as well
 We might suppose a paralyz'd old man,
 Whose limbs had long forgot their native use,
 Complete in power, or deem an idiot sane,
 As think perfection can in *him* inhere—
 When Trinity in Unity displays
 Perfection's beauty; reconciles in full
 Whate'er appeared to jar, and Nature's voice
 With that of Revelation sweetly joins
 In one harmonious song of lasting praise."
 "But to return * * * * * If in operation
 Of moral excellence alone are found
 (Where hope is banish'd by fruition full,)
 The fruits of happiness; and Deity
 Be to himself a fountain—spring of bliss,
 Ineffable, eternal, underiv'd;
 Where then does fond enquiry lead the mind?
 Oh! talk not of presumption! tell me not
 It is but limiting the Deity
 To say that bliss, as it inheres in him,
 Must flow from sources consonant with ours,
 While Revelation's voice attests the truth
 Which Reason here would urge. "Thou loved'st me,"
 Hear the Redeemer's sacred lips exclaim,
 "Before the world's foundations." Here he points
 To God's eternal source of happiness,
 And shews it was not mere inactive rest.
 And well may Reason, with a voice like His
 Corroborating its conclusions, say,
 "As happiness is only to be found
 (Where hope's bright visions can no entrance gain,)
 In exercise of moral excellence—
 And no plurality of Gods can be—
 Then either God exists in modes distinct,
 Or was, before an object yet was form'd

On whom to exercise his attributes,
 Eternally devoid of perfect bliss."
 "As then the happiness of God must be
 Complete, above all height, beneath all depth,
 Immense, eternal, and immutable,
 He needs must have some object, infinite,
 Co-equal, co-eternal, with Himself,
 United, yet distinct, on whom to pour
 The o'erflowing fulness of his attributes;
 Which leads us to the same eternal truth
 We now so long have been contending for."

A very short and able letter on this subject, will be found also, in the posthumous works of the celebrated John Wallis, D. D., Savilian Professor of Geometry, in Oxford, and Chaplain to King Charles II., who undertakes to show from mathematical as well as other sciences, that there is no inconsistency or impossibility that what in our regard is three may in another regard be one," and that though these illustrations "even from finite beings, do not adequately agree with this of the sacred Trinity, yet there is enough in them to show that there is no such inconsistency as is pretended, in believing that the three persons may truly be so distinguished as that one be not the other, and yet all but one God."*

"It is true," he added,† "that not any, nor all of these instances, nor any of those given by other learned men, do adequately express the distinction and unity of the *Persons* in the *sacred Trinity*; for neither hath God distinctly declared it unto us, nor are we able fully to comprehend it, nor is it necessary for us to know. Shall we, therefore, say, things *cannot be*, when God says they *are*, only because we know not *how*? If God say, "The Word was God," and "the Word was made Flesh," shall we say, Not so, only because we cannot tell *how*? It is safer to say, It is; WHEN GOD SAYS IT IS, though we know not how it is: especially when there are so many instances in nature, to show it not to be impossible or inconsistent with reason. The thing is sufficiently revealed to those who are willing to be taught and receive the truth in the love of it."

Others however, have dared to go even further than

* *Sermons and Memoirs*, London, 1791. † *Ib.*

the *removal* of any objections to the possibility or reasonableness of the doctrine of the Trinity, and have conceived that by a chain of abstract *a priori* reasoning similar to Dr. Clarke's celebrated demonstration of the being and attributes of God, they can even demonstrate its truth and necessity. Such is the work of the Rev. Jas. Kidd, Professor of Oriental Languages in the University of Aberdeen, entitled "An Essay on the Doctrine of the Trinity, attempting to prove it by Reason and Demonstration founded upon duration and space, and upon some of the Divine perfections, some of the powers of the human soul, the language of Scripture and tradition among all nations."

Of the success of Mr. Kidd's argument, several eminent men have expressed favourable opinions, and it was listened to in lectures by Mr. Belsham and Mr. Broadbent with frankness and great candour, though both Unitarians. The argument, however, is too severely metaphysical ever to be popular, and while such discourses may *strengthen* conviction, they never can *originate* our belief in a doctrine which nothing but Revelation can authoritatively teach and command.*

The learned and judicious Stillingfleet has written a very able work in vindication of the Trinity, especially

* See also, for some ingenious reasoning, "The Great Physician," by John Gardner, M. D., of London. London, 1843. The arguments of Professor Kidd have been presented to some extent, in a poetical form, in a Poem of very considerable ability and poetic spirit,—an elaborate philosophical poem, indeed, "The Deity," a Poem, in Twelve Books, by Thos. Ragg, with an introduction by Isaac Taylor. 2d Edition, London, 1834:

"Thy nature now, Almighty One, I sing!
And as thou dost exist would thee portray.
In confutation of deistic dreams,
Shewing by Reason's light thou art TRI-UNE.
Come then, celestial Spirit Increase!
Shed thine own self upon me, as ere while
Thou, like a flood of love, cam'st rushing down
And fill'dst the chosen ones in Palestine,
And thou, my harp, resume thy sweetest tones;
That Poesy may spread o'er Reason's page
A loveliness it otherwise could not gain,
Pleasing the fancy as it feeds the mind,
While TRINITY IN UNITY, display'd
Without the aid of Scripture plainly shews
The God of Scripture is the Living God."

against the objections of its unreasonableness,* from which we make a quotation.

"It is strange boldness in men," says Bishop Stillingfleet, "to talk of contradictions in things above their reach. Hath God not revealed to us that he created all things; and is it not reasonable for us to believe this, unless we are able to comprehend the manner of doing it? Hath not God plainly revealed that there shall be a resurrection from the dead? And must we think it unreasonable to believe it, till we are able to comprehend all the changes of the particles of matter from the creation to the general resurrection? If nothing is to be believed but what may be comprehended, the very being of God must be rejected, and all his unsearchable perfections. If we believe the attributes of God to be infinite how can we comprehend them? We are strangely puzzled in plain ordinary finite things; but it is madness to pretend to comprehend what is infinite; and yet, if the perfections of God be not infinite, they cannot belong to him.

"Let those who presume to say that there is a contradiction in the Trinity, try their imaginations about God's eternity, not merely how he should be from himself, but how God should co-exist with all the differences of times, and yet there be no succession in his own being; and they will, perhaps, concur with me in thinking that there is no greater difficulty in the conception of the Trinity than there is of eternity. For three to be one is a contradiction in numbers; but whether an infinite nature can communicate itself to three different substances, without such a division as is among created beings, must not be determined by bare numbers, but by the absolute perfections of the Divine nature: which must be owned to be above our comprehension."

The justly celebrated and admired John Howe has, among his works, a short treatise on this subject, entitled "*A calm Discourse of the Trinity in the Godhead*," in which there is a very lucid and satisfactory exposition of the perfect consistency of this doctrine with the conceptions of the human mind, and of the impossibility of

* London, 1697.

finding in it anything either absurd or contradictory* to our reason, and to the constitution of our compound nature, or to our present knowledge of what is possible, though beyond our comprehension.

Another work has not long since been published on the doctrine of Triads,† of which it has been said, "This is decidedly the most original work which has appeared for some time." The design of the author is to illustrate the doctrine of a Divine Trinity, by tracing a triplicity of character, not only in Scripture, but in every part of the natural and moral world. The mass of evidence which he has gathered together is truly astonishing, and exhibits, not only vast labour, pursued with untiring patience, but likewise a familiar acquaintance with the languages and literature, both of ancient and modern times. His great aim, throughout the whole of his remarkable work, has been the discovery and advancement of truth, of which he feels himself the influence and value. All is subservient to this; and therefore while he displays great ingenuity and much keenness of perception, he never suffers himself to be influenced by mere fancy. He demonstrates the existence of a triform impression on the human mind, as exemplified in the singular frequency of the tertian form of expression in speaking and writing, and in our ideas of superstition, law, majesty and dominion; he shows the same impression as prevailing in the physical world, in the theology of the heathen, and throughout the Scripture, as well in its facts as in its mode of expression.

From what has been advanced, it will be seen that the doctrine of the Trinity is, not only not contradictory to reason and to the invisible things of God, which are clearly seen in all his works and ways, but that it is in consonance with the eternal power and Godhead as manifested in our own wonderful constitution,‡ and as displayed in all his works and ways.

* The reader will do well to consult this Treatise, particularly § ii.-xii., pp. 307-11.

† In the Albion, which contained large extracts from it, many others have supposed that traces of this doctrine are imprinted on all the works of God.—Baxter's Works, vol. 2, pp. 14, 15, Fol. Ed. Cheyne's Phil. Prima. of Revealed Religion, pp. 99, 113. Owen's Works, vol. 10.

‡ See Howe, as above.

But it is further objected that the very term Trinity, is of human origin, and is not Scriptural, and that, therefore, the doctrine itself, is unwarranted by the Word of God. But this objection comes with a very ill grace indeed, from those who claim so much for the office and power of reason. For all that is proper and competent to reason, and essential to the progress and improvement of knowledge we earnestly contend, since it is both our *right* and *duty* to know all that we have the means of knowing, as well as to be willing to be ignorant where knowledge is withheld. Now, the analogy between Natural and Revealed Religion, which is found to exist in so many essential particulars, is equally striking, as it regards the form in which truth is placed before the human mind in each of these departments of knowledge. Revelation, like nature, presents a vast collection of particular facts, not arranged scientifically, but apparently without any order, symmetry, or system. As in nature every fact or object is single, and found, as it would seem to the ignorant and uninformed, in apparent isolation or disunion; so have the inspired writers delivered their sublimest doctrines in popular language in an incidental isolated form, or in connection with some history or precept, and "have abstained,—as much as it was possible to abstain,—from a philosophical or metaphysical phraseology." In nature, and in Revelation also, it is found that the earliest formations were the most simple, and adapted to a lower condition in the one case of animal, and in the other of mental and spiritual development, until both were at length, brought to that finished state which was best adapted to the whole of man's earthly history and necessities. This being the case, reason has the same office and duty to discharge in reference, both to nature and revelation. *First*, the facts or truths as they actually and certainly exist must be discovered, and then they must be arranged, classified, and systematized, in order that from them may be deduced general truths and comprehensive systems of knowledge. Otherwise, the human mind would know nothing of the natural world but particular facts, and as it regards revelation, instead of being, as the Apostle says, "perfect," that is, able to comprehend the more

recondite and spiritual mysteries of the Christian faith, we should still be but "babes in Christ," acquainted only with the first, or elementary principles of religion, and never able to arrive at the full measure of the stature of perfect men in Christ Jesus."

In both nature and revelation, therefore, the facts or truths being known with sufficient certainty, "the processes of comparison, deduction, analysis, and combination, by which alone, we can form comprehensive systems of knowledge, cannot be carried on with convenience and perspicuity, without the use of general terms."*

The propriety, therefore, of using such general terms to express our knowledge of the particular facts or truths of Scripture, which we have classified and arranged, "rests upon the same foundation as the use of general terms in all scientific investigations, namely, that they are abbreviations of language, and serve as instruments of thought." "The proper consideration is, whether the objects and facts for which they are used as a compendious notation, are not asserted and implied in the Scriptures."†

If, therefore, we find not the *word* TRINITY in Scripture, yet, if we do find in Scripture what amounts to a clear proof of the TRUTH that word expresses;—if it is proved by Scripture that God is in essence, that is, nature or Godhead, only ONE, and that he will not give his glory to another,—and if the Son as begotten, and the Spirit as proceeding,—are, nevertheless, both declared to be really and truly God,—then it follows by the inevitable necessity of intuitive reason, that these three persons are severally God, and yet that God is one,—that is, that GOD IS A TRINITY. The facts being found in Scripture, the human reason must stultify itself, refuse to follow out its own intuitive and necessary conclusion from the premises;—and contrary to its right, office, and duty, in reference to all other truth, and especially as we have seen in reference to revealed truth, refuse to employ a general term for its own convenience, as an instrument of thought, and as a medium of instruction.‡

* Smith, iii, p. 421. † Ib.

‡ See Owen's Works, vol. 10, pp. 471, 472, 503, 504, and 511.

And who are they who would dethrone and silence reason, in this her legitimate and proper office? The very persons who would insist upon our adopting the term *Unity*, which is not Scriptural, and not only the *term* unity, but this *term* with a metaphysical explanation of the meaning, requiring us to believe that the infinite Jehovah, the ever existing and uncreated source of all being, is such an one as his own finite creatures, and that he, therefore, is, and can be only an absolute and personal unity; and all this, as we maintain and believe, in plain and palpable contrariety to the facts found in revelation? How many other terms also, such as omniscience, omnipotence, omnipresence, do they and we employ in presenting in what is believed a convenient and general form, the individual, isolated, and unsystematised statements of Scripture, in reference to God and man, time and eternity, doctrine and duty.

It would, therefore, be just and proper to deny the doctrine of the divine ubiquity or omnipresence, and many other truths, because the terms by which they are described are not found in Scripture, as to deny that of the Trinity because the *term* Trinity, is not found in Scripture. If this doctrine is not directly, positively, and in explicit definition declared in Scripture, this is equally true of other fundamental articles of religion, admitted by Jew and Christian, such as the being of God, the existence of angels, the resurrection of the dead, and future retribution, which, though evidently derived from the inspired penmen, and now invariably received among the professors of Judaism, do not, in the volumes of holy writ, appear in the form of plain propositions, as, that God is, that angels exist, that the dead shall be raised again, and, that men shall be rewarded according to their actions; but being frequently intimated and assumed, posterity is satisfied, that, with the ancient Hebrews, they formed a very essential and prominent part of their theological system.*

We have no zeal for the *term* Trinity any more than for the terms person, unity of God, omnipresence, &c.,

* See Oxlee's *Christian Doctrines, Explained on Jewish Dunc.* vol i, pp. 33, 34, on the objection to the term God-man, or theanthropos. See Burgess' *Tracts*, pp. lxiv.-lxvi.

if any other can as well, or better, express the ideas of which these are the conventional signs. We contend, not for *terms*, but for the doctrines expressed by the terms, and which are, in each case, no more than conclusions drawn by the irresistible power of human reason from the premises found in Scripture. But the opposition, it would seem, is not to this necessary, not to say, legitimate employment of human reason, in generalizing for its own use the particular facts contained in Scripture. The whole outcry is against any party doing this but they who reject as impossible and contradictory the doctrine of the Trinity, and therefore, oppose the term by which it is propounded. The facts from which this doctrine is deduced may be indisputably found in Scripture, and the term does nothing more than state in one word, what these facts do in many words. We, however, must not employ the word, however simply expressive of the facts. But *they* are at perfect liberty to employ the term unity, which is not found in Scripture, and to attach to it a meaning contrary to that of tri-unity, and which is not warranted but opposed by Scripture, which even as speaking of God's unity employs language which necessarily implies a plurality in the one Divine nature or Godhead. And just so it is, that they condemn also, all controversy on our part, FOR the truth, and all criticism that would maintain and support it, while they are to be permitted to controvert AGAINST the truth, and to force constructions upon the Bible which will make it mean anything they wish it to, only that which they or their pride of reason think it ought to mean.*

The discoveries of revelation remained in the church in statements very near to their original simplicity, and free from any metaphysical distinctions until,† “by the perpetual cavils of gainsayers, and the difficulties which they have raised, later teachers, in the assertion of the same doctrines, have been reduced to the unpleasing necessity of availing themselves of the greater precision of a less familiar language.”

“As to their (the Arians,) complaints, says Athana-

* See Paul's Refutation of Arianism, pp. 19 and 41.

† Horsley's Tracts, p. 358.

sus,* the great champion of orthodoxy in the fourth century, and who suffered the loss of all things for his bold fidelity to the truth, "It was they who began with their impious expressions, $\epsilon\omicron\ \sigma\upsilon\kappa\ \omicron\nu\tau\omega\nu$ and $\epsilon\omicron\ \eta\nu\ \pi\omicron\tau\omicron\varsigma\ \omicron\tau\epsilon\ \sigma\upsilon\kappa\ \eta\nu$,† which are not Scripture; and now they make it a charge, that they are detected by means of non-scriptural terms, which have been reverently adopted." The last remark, says Mr. Newman, is important; for until the time of Arius, even those traditional statements of the Catholic doctrine, which were more explicit than Scripture, had not taken the shape of formulæ. It was the Arian defined propositions of the $\epsilon\chi$, $\sigma\upsilon\kappa\ \omicron\nu\tau\omega\nu$, *made out of nothing*, and the like, which called for their imposition.‡

The term Trinity is found in the Greek language $\tau\rho\iota\alpha\varsigma$, in the Latin *trinitas*, and as it is admitted in Oriental languages.§ And if this word is not found in the Hebrew language we have seen, and shall further see, that in stating the doctrine of the Unity of God, the Hebrew writers on many occasions, and from the very opening of the Bible, use plural and triple forms of language which, necessarily, imply in their very statement, a trinity or trinity.

The assertion of Dr. Beard and others, that the term trinity was not used by the early Christians, is contrary to existing proof. The word *trias*, in Greek, or *Trinity*, in Latin, was, originally employed, not to signify the number three absolutely and simply, but the thing thus described as being in one aspect of it, a trinity, and in

* Athan. Ep. ad Afros, 5, 6.

† "That which was made of things not existing," and "that which once was not."

‡ See Newman's History of the Arians of the 4th Century, p. 252, London, 1838. It would appear from Aulus Gellius, that *trias* in Greek, as *ternio* in Latin, signified the number three; and if we speak of the cube or square, or any other power of three, we should not say *trion*, but *tes triados*. The word is also, frequently used by Philo Judæus, in his work on the creation, where he speculates upon the number of days in a manner very similar to that followed by Theophilus. The passage in A. Gellius might lead us to think, that Pythagoras had made use of the term *trias*, and his peculiar theory concerning numbers led him to pay particular regard to the number three. The word, also, occurs in one of those spurious oracles, which have been ascribed to Zoroaster and the Persian Magi.—(Burton, p. 35.)

§ Dr. Beard's Artistic and Hist. Ill. of the Trinity, pp. 59-61.

another aspect, a unity. This distinction was found in the very form of Christian baptism, in the doxology and benediction, and in several triple forms of Scriptural expression, and in the whole teaching of the Old and New Testaments, respecting the supreme deity of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and at the same time, concerning the unity of the Divine nature. The belief in these three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, as one God, was made a primary article in the earliest creeds, embodied in what is called the Apostles' creed, and in all the creeds of the Eastern Churches. The true doctrine of the primitive Church may also be learned from published apologies for the Christian faith, viz: those of Justin Martyr, Athenagoras and Tertullian, which have been handed down to our time in a perfect state. The doctrine held by the primitive Church may be learned also, from other writings of the second century, viz: the genuine production of Justin Martyr, Irenæus, Theophilus of Antioch, Tatian, Clemens Alexandrinus, and Tertullian; also from the fragments of Dionysius, Bishop of Corinth, of Melito, Bishop of Sardis, and of Hegesippus, in Eusebius; from the epistle of Polycarp of Smyrna, to the Phillipians; from the supposed epistle of Barnabas; from the writings ascribed to Ignatius, and also from Pliny's letter to Trajan, and from the Philotrapis of Lucian.*

The result of long and laboured controversy, and of the most elaborate and critical examination of these writings cannot, we think, leave any impartial reader in doubt, as to the belief of the *doctrine* of the Trinity by the primitive Christians. The *term* trinity, however, was not at first employed because, as has been said, controversy had not required its introduction.

Justin Martyr, who was born according to different computations from the year A. D. 89 to A. D. 103, and was beheaded at Rome, A. D. 165, in a Confession of Faith, found among his works,—a work whose genuineness is doubted, indeed, by many, but admitted by all to be of his age or near it,† uses the term trinity, (τριάς) very clearly.

* φιλοτραπισ.

† See an article in the Biblical Repertory for January, 1858.

Theophilus, A. D. 180, undoubtedly employs the term trinity (τριας,) in the following passage:* "In like manner also, the three days, which preceded the luminaries, are types of the Trinity, of God and his Word, and his Wisdom." It is not necessary to attempt to explain this typical allusion; and the reader is, perhaps aware, that the term wisdom was applied by the fathers to the second and third persons of the Trinity, though more frequently to the second.

It is plain, that in the present instance the term wisdom is applied to the Holy Ghost, as Bishop Bull has shown it to have been by Irenæus, Origen, and others.

This much, at least, is evident, that Theophilus must have considered some resemblance, if not equality, to have existed between the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, or he would not have included them in the same type: and who would venture in any sense, to speak of a trinity of beings, if one of the three was God, and the other two were created.

The next writer, who uses the word in the ecclesiastical sense, is Clement of Alexandria, who flourished a few years later than Theophilus. Like many of the fathers, he supposed Plato to have had a Trinity in view, when he wrote that obscure passage in his second letter to Dionysius. Upon which Clement observes, "I understand this in no other way, than as containing mention of the blessed Trinity: for the third thing is the Holy Ghost, and the Son is the Second." Hippolytus, in a fragment of one of his works, speaks of "the knowledge of the blessed Trinity;" and in another, after reciting the form of words used at baptism, he adds, "For by this Trinity the Father is glorified." Origen also, very frequently made use of the term.

Methodius, in his Symposium, made use of the word τριας, *trinity*, and though we may condemn him for seeing an illusion to the Trinity in the sacrifice offered by Abraham, (Gen. xv: 9,) it is plain from the passage, that the word was in general use in his day. But there is another passage in the same work, which shows still more clearly, that, not only the name, but the doctrine

* Ad Autolyceum, lib. 2, c. 15, in Dr. Burton's Testim. to the Trinity, p. 34.

of the Trinity was well understood in those days. Having compared the stars, which are mentioned in Rev. ii: 4, to the heretics, he adds in the same allegorical strain which was then too common, "Hence they are called a third part of the stars, as being in error concerning one of the numbers of the Trinity; at one time, concerning that of the Father, as Sabellius, who said that the Omnipotent himself suffered; at another time, concerning that of the Son, as Artemas, and they who say that he existed in appearance only; and at another time concerning that of the Spirit, as the Ebionites, who contend that the prophets spoke of their own impulse."*

Tertullian, A. D. 200, frequently uses the term *trinity*, and also, the term *person*, in their modern theological sense. This he did, both before and after adopting the opinions of Montanus, which, however, did not affect this doctrine.† Cyprian, and Novatian also, employs the term *trinity*; and Origen very frequently.‡

Lucian, a heathen writer, who was a contemporary of Athenagoras, has a remarkable passage in his dialogue called *Philopatris*.

The speakers in this dialogue are Critias and Triephton, the former an heathen, the latter a Christian, and when Critias has offered to swear by different heathen deities, each of which, is objected to by Triephton, he asks, "By whom then shall I swear? to which Triephton makes the following reply, the first words of which are a quotation from Homer:

"By the great God, immortal, in the Heavens;"

The Son of the Father, the Spirit proceeding from the Father, one out of three and three out of one, [*unum*, one substance; not *unus*, one person:]

"Consider these thy Jove, be this thy God."

Critias then ridicules this arithmetical oath, and says, "I cannot tell what you mean by saying that one is three, and three are one."

There can be no doubt, that when this dialogue was

* Dr. Burton's *Anti Nicene Testim. to the Trinity*, p. 351.

† See numerous passages with the original, given by Dr. Burton, pp. 60-84, 82, 88.

‡ See Do.

written, it was commonly known to the heathen, that the Christians believed the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, though in one sense three, in another sense to be one: and if the dialogue was written by Lucian, who lived in the latter part of the second century, it would be one of the strongest testimonies remaining to the doctrine of the Trinity. This was acknowledged by Socinus, who says in one of his works, "that he had never read anything which gave greater proof of a worship of the Trinity being then received among Christians, than the passage which is brought from the dialogue entitled *Philopatris*, and which is reckoned among the works of Lucian.*

The two following fragments are preserved by Basil. In the first of them it is necessary to remember that the term *υποστασις* hypostasis, was sometimes used for the nature or essence of the Deity; sometimes for a person, *i. e.* for the substantial individuality of the three persons in the Godhead. The Sabellians declined saying in the latter sense of the term, that there were three hypostases; and wished to argue, that such an expression implied three distinct unconnected Beings. Dionysius observes, "Though they may say, that the hypostases, by being three, are divided, still they are three, though it may not suit these persons to say so; or else let them altogether deny the Divine Trinity." We may infer from this remark, that the word Trinity was in common use before the Sabellian controversy began; and Dionysius assumes it as an undisputed point, that in some sense or other there was a Trinity in the Godhead. The Sabellians probably denied, that the word *τριας* implied three *υποστασεις* or distinctly existing persons; but the history of Dionysius and his writings, leaves no doubt as to the body of believers maintaining this opinion.†

In the liturgy ascribed to St. James and used in the Church of Antioch, it is distinctly affirmed *τριας εις Θεος*

* Bishop Bull believed it to be genuine, and Fabricius was inclined to do the same. Some have ascribed it to a writer older than the time of Lucian; others to one of the same age; and others to much later periods. I need only refer the reader to discussions of the subject by Dodwell, Blondell, Lardner, &c.

† Burton, p. 124.

the Trinty is one God, and it speaks also, of "the holy, adorable, and co-essential Trinity." The term Trinity was employed in the Synod of Alexandria, A. D. 317, and from that time came into common and familiar use, and is described, by Zacharias, Bishop of Mitylene, as "the uncreated, eternal, and consubstantial Trinity, the first and blessed nature and fountain of all things, itself the true ens" or source of all being. In the council of Ephesus it is described as "the Trinity consubstantial above all substance, invisible, incomprehensible, inseparable, immutable, simple and undivided, and uncompounded, without dimension, eternal, uncorporeal, without quality, without quantity, whose is honor and glory, and Deity infinitely good."*

I will only farther remark, in connection with this objection, in the words of Calvin,† "If they call every word exotic, which cannot be found in the Scriptures in so many syllables, they impose on us a law which is very unreasonable, and which condemns all interpretation, but what is composed of detached texts of Scripture connected together."

The fathers often accuse themselves and blame the enemies of the truth for making it necessary to use terms liable to perversion. Thus‡ "Hilary accuses the heretics of a great crime, in constraining him, by their wickedness, to expose to the danger of human language those things which ought to be confined within the religion of the mind; plainly avowing, that this is to do things unlawful, to express things inexpressible, to assume things not conceded. A little after, he largely excuses himself for his boldness in bringing forward new terms; for when he has used the names Father, Son, and Spirit; he immediately adds, that whatever is sought farther, is beyond the signification of language, beyond the reach of our senses, beyond the conception of our understanding. And in another place, he pronounces, that happy were the Bishops of Gaul, who had neither composed, nor received, nor even known, any other confession but that ancient and very simple one, which had been received in all the churches from the days of the

* See Suiceri Thesaurus sat nomine τριας.

† Institutes, Book i, ch. 13, § 3, &c. ‡ Calvin's Institutes, p. 99.

Apostles. Very simple is the excuse of Augustine, that this word, trinity, was extorted by necessity, on account of the poverty of human language on so great a subject, not for the sake of expressing what God is, but to avoid passing it over in total silence, that the Father, Son, and Spirit are three."

"If, then, the words have not been rashly invented, we should beware lest we be convicted of fastidious temerity in rejecting them. I could wish them indeed, to be buried in oblivion, provided this faith were universally received, that the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, are the one God; and that, nevertheless, the Son is not the Father, nor the Spirit the Son, but that they are distinguished from each other by some peculiar property. "I am not so rigidly precise as to be fond of contending for mere words." "Let us also learn, however, to beware, since we have to oppose the Arians on one side, and the Sabellians on the other, lest while they take offence at both these parties being deprived of all opportunity of evasion, they cause some suspicion that they are themselves the disciples either of Arius, or of Sabellius. Arius confesses "that Christ is God," but maintains also, "that he was created and had a beginning." He acknowledges that Christ is "one with the Father," but secretly whispers in the ears of his disciples, that he is "united to him," like the rest of the faithful, though by a singular privilege." Say that he is consubstantial, you tear off the mask from the hypocrite, and yet you add nothing to the Scriptures. Sabellius asserts, "that the names Father, Son, and Spirit, are expressive of no distinction in the Godhead." Say that they are three, and he will exclaim, that you are talking of "three Gods." Say "that in the one essence of God there is a trinity of Persons," and you will, at once, express what the Scriptures declare, and will restrain such frivolous loquacity." Calvin adds, "But I have found, by long and frequent experience, that those who pertinaciously contend about words, cherish some latent poison."

Let us, then, recognise the necessity and importance of the term, trinity. Names are things. And so long therefore, as the doctrine taught by this word is assailed and denied, we have no alternative. Nor could the

facts, proved, as we shall show, from Scripture, be probably expressed in a simpler form than in saying, that the God who is one and who is yet God as Father, as Son, and as Holy Ghost, is a TRINITY.

"Ineffable, all-powerful God, all free,
 Thou only liv'st, and each thing lives by thee;
 No joy, no, nor perfection to thee came
 By the contriving of this world's great fame:
 Ere sun, moon, stars, began their restless race,
 Ere painted was with light Heaven's pure face,
 Ere air had clouds, ere clouds wept down their show'ra,
 Ere sea embraced earth, ere earth bare flow'ra,
 Thou happy liv'dst, world nought to thee supply'd,
 All in thyself, thyself thou satisfy'd;
 Of good no splendor shadow doth appear,
 No age-worn track, which shin'd in thee most clear
 Perfection's sum, prime cause of every cause,
 Midst, end, beginning where all good doth pause.
 Hence of thy substance, differing in nought,
 Thou in eternity thy Son forth brought;
 The only birth of thy unchanging mind,
 Thine image, pattern-like that ever shin'd;
 Light out of light, begotten not by will,
 But nature, all and that same essence still
 Which thou thyself, for thou dost nought possess
 Which he hath not, in aught nor is he less
 Than he his great begetter; of this light,
 Eternal, double kindled was thy spright
 Eternally, who is with thee, the same
 All-holy gift, Ambassador, knot, Flame:
 Most sacred Triad, O most holy One!
 Unprocreate Father, ever procreate Son,
 Ghost breath'd from both, you were, are still, shall be,
 (Most blessed) Three in One, and One in Three,
 Incomprehensible by reachless height,
 And unperceived by excessive light.
 So in our souls three and yet one are still,
 The understanding, memory and will;
 So (though unlike) the planet of the days,
 So soon as he was made, begat his rays,
 Which are his offspring, and from both was hurl'd
 The rosy light which consoles the world,
 And none prevent another: so the spring,
 The well head, and the stream which they forth bring
 Are but one self same essence, nor in aught
 Do differ, save in order; and our thought
 No chime of time discerns in them to fall
 But three distinctly 'bide one essence all.
 But these express not thee: who can declare
 Thy being? men and angels dazzled are.
 Who would this Eden force with wit or sense,
 A cherubim shall find to bar him thence.

O! King, whose greatness none can comprehend,
 Whose boundless goodness doth to all extend;
 Light of all beauty, Ocean without ground,
 That standing, flowest; giving doot abound;
 Rich Palace, and In-dweller, ever blest,
 Never not working, ever yet in rest;
 What wit cannot conceive, words say of thee,
 Here, where we, but as in a mirror see,
 Shadows of shadows, atoms of thy might,
 Still only-eyed when staring on thy light;
 Grant, that, released from this earthly jail,
 And freed from clouds, which here our knowledge veil
 In Heaven's high temples where thy praises ring,
 In sweeter notes I may hear angels sing.

[*Drummond of Hawthornden. Hymn to the Fairest Faire.*

NOTE A.

The alleged Unitarianism of Locke, Newton, Milton, Clarke, Watts, and Grotius.

Although Unitarians claim pre-eminent honour because they base their opinions on reason alone, yet none are more anxious than they to sustain and patronize them by the authority of great names.

Mr. Locke's Essay was believed by some to lead inferentially to the rejection of the doctrine of the Trinity; and therefore, say Unitarians, Mr. Locke was a Unitarian. But in his elaborate and extended letters to Bishop Stillingfleet, Mr. Locke repudiates the charge, and proves that, as no such consequence was intended by him to be deduced from his Philosophy, so, in fact, no such consequence does, or can fairly be considered to follow from it. In his vindication of himself, Mr. Locke occupies nearly as much room as his entire essay, and as he was a bold and open expounder of his views, we may conclude that he had not adopted sentiments contrary to the orthodox doctrine of the Trinity. That he held such views, he solemnly denied, in *words*, and by his subscription to the Articles of the Church of England and communion at her altars. He acknowledged the doctrine of Christ's satisfaction for sins, and in his last moments he thanked God "for the love shewn to man in justifying him by faith in Jesus Christ, and in particular for having called him to the knowledge of that Divine Saviour."*

* See the statement of his literary friend, who lived with him until death, in *Works*, vol. ix: p. 173, 8vo ed. See also numerous passages in proof of his anti-Socinian views in *Hales on the Trinity*, vol. i: p. 275, 276, and in *Bishop Burges's Tracts on the Divinity of Christ*, p. 211, &c.

Giving a reason why Christ was not a mortal man, Locke uses this language: "Being the Son of God, he was immortal, like God, his Father." Now, to be immortal, with respect only to the future, is to be immortal like the angels, or the human soul; but to be immortal like God, his Father, is "to have neither beginning of days nor end of life," as St. Paul says of the Son of God, that is to be eternal and uncreated. To be immortal, then, like God, his Father, is to be immortal through his divine Sonship, that is, because he is of the same nature with his Father, or by consubstantiality of nature.

Sir Isaac Newton, in a letter to James Pearce, says, "Your letter a little surprised me, to find myself supposed to be a Socinian or Unitarian. I never was, nor am now, under the least temptation of such doctrines." "I hope you will do me the favour to be one of the examiners of my papers: till which time, you will do kindly to stop so false a report."*

In his work against the genuineness of the passage in 1 John, Sir Isaac remarks,†—"It is no article of Faith, no point of discipline, nothing but a criticism concerning a text of Scripture, that I am going to write about." But he says, clearly enough, that he was not a Socinian. For, speaking of the passage in Cyprian's works, in which he asserts the doctrine of the Trinity in Unity, he says, "The Socinians here deal too injuriously with Cyprian, while they would have this place corrupted,—these places being, in my opinion, genuine." The two passages of Cyprian are the following: "Si templum Dei factus est, quare ejus Dei? Si Creatoris; non potuit, quia in eum non credidit: Si Christi: nec ejus fieri potuit templum, qui negat Dominum Christum: Si Spiritus Sancti; quum tres unum sint, quomodo placatus ei esse potuit, qui aut Patris aut Filii inimicus est? Dicit Dominus Ego et Pater unum sumus: et iterum de Patre et Filio et Spiritu Sancto scriptum est: Et Hi Tres Unum Sunt." No one can doubt Cyprian's belief of the doctrine of the Trinity. And when we connect Newton's censure of the Socinians, with his conviction of the genuineness of these Trinitarian passages of Cyprian,—with the absence of all objection to the doctrine of the Trinity in his letter to Le Clerc,—and his adherence to the Church of England,—what can be reasonably inferred, but that he was not only a decided Anti-Socinian, but a believer of the established doctrines of the Church? There is one passage in his Letter to LeClerc, which strongly marks the mind of a believer in the Trinity. "In the Eastern nations, and for a long time in the Western, *The Faith* subsisted without this verse, (1 John v: 7,) and it is rather dangerous to Religion to make it now lean on a bruised reed." *The Faith*, he says, once subsisted without this verse; that is the faith, of which this verse now makes, or is supposed to make, a part or evidence; namely, Faith in the Holy Trinity. This Faith, he says, was prior to, and independent of, the verse. Faith, then, in the Holy Trinity, is called by *The Faith*, or the primitive Christian Faith. Again, he says, "It is rather a danger to Religion to make it lean on a bruised reed." By religion (the Christian Religion,) here also must be meant Faith in the Holy Trinity; for the general truth of Christianity cannot be said to lean on this verse; nor any other doctrine, but the doctrine of the Holy Trinity. The language, therefore, of this passage, evidently comes from one, who considered the Christian religion, the Faith, and Faith in the Holy Trinity, as synonymous terms.

Dr. Clarke is another authority claimed by Unitarians. But, while inclined to modify the doctrine of the Trinity, Dr. Clarke believed that "with this first and supreme cause, or Father of all things, there has existed from the beginning, a second divine Person, which is the Word or Son."

"With the Father and the Son there has existed, from the beginning, a third Divine Person, which is the Spirit of the Father and the Son."

By existing from the beginning, Dr. Clarke does not mean, as the Unitarians do, from the beginning of the Gospel dispensation, but speaking of the Son existing "before all worlds," and "without any limitation of time," that is, from eternity; and so of the Holy Spirit.

* This letter is quoted by Mr. Belsham in his *Calm Inquiry*, p. 474.

† See Burges's *Tracts*, pp. 197-222.

"After the accomplishing of man's redemption, by his sufferings and death on the Cross, for the sins of the world, our Lord (says Dr. Clarke,) is described in Scripture as invested with distinct worship in his own person, and receiving prayers (adoration, in the 3d edition,) and thanksgiving from his Church." As proofs of such worship, Dr. Clarke refers to a variety of texts, which mention his disciples worshipping him, honouring him as well as the Father, baptizing in his name, angels worshipping him, every knee bowing at his name, calling upon his name, invoking him in prayer, and praying for grace, peace, blessing, direction, assistance and comfort from him.

The Chevalier De Ramsay, who was witness to the last sentiments of Dr. Clarke, assures us that he very much repented having published his work on the Trinity.—[See Whitaker's *Origin of Arianism*, pp. 456-470.] And in a paper presented to the Upper House, he formally and solemnly declared his opinion to be, "that the Son of God was eternally begotten, by the eternally incomprehensible power and will of the Father; and that the Holy Spirit was likewise eternally derived from the Father, by and through the Son, according to the eternal, incomprehensible power and will of the Father."

Another eminent man, claimed as an Unitarian, is Grotius. Grotius has, however, given indisputable proof of his anti-Socinianism. This we might establish by showing that he admits the words of Thomas, "My Lord, and my God," to be an acknowledgment of Christ's Divinity; that he follows the usual interpretation of John i: 1-14, making Christ the incarnate Word, and the Creator of the World, &c.

In the year 1617, he published his *Defensio Fidei Catholicæ de Satisfactione Christi adversus Faustum Socinum*. The friendly correspondence which he afterwards carried on with Crellius, excited some doubts of his orthodoxy. To repel these doubts, he prefixed to an edition of his tract *De Satisfactione Christi*, in 1638, (one and twenty years after its first publication,) a Letter to G. J. Vossius, in which he confirms his former sentiments on the subject of Atonement, by an appeal to his Annotations on the Bible, and to his tract *De Jure Belli et Pacis*; and asserts his belief in the Trinity. In his treatise *De Veritate Religionis Christianæ* L. V., he vindicates Christians from the charge of worshipping three Gods against the Jews on their own principles, and from their own writings; to which treatise he refers in his Letter to Vossius: *Triados probationem in eo libro directe aggressus non sum, memor ejus quod a viro magno socero tuo audiverem, peccasse Resæum, &c.* Illud addam, si quis meam de summa Trinitate sententiam scire cupiat, reperiturum, quod satis sit in Poematis nuper editis. Amplior explicatio in notis reservanda est. Poetry is the natural language of religion, Sacer interpretsque Deorum.

Another name most unwarrantably claimed as in his last days favouring Unitarianism, is Dr. Watts. For this bold and daring sacrilege and profanation of a good man's name, there is, as I have shewn elsewhere, no manner of proof.*

The great Milton is another authority on which Unitarianism delights to rest with confidence. Milton, during his life, held communion as far as he did commune, only with those who believed in the doctrine of the Trinity. He has published the boldest prayer to the Triune God in the English language. He was universally regarded as a Trinitarian during life, and since his death, until the year 1823, when the posthumous work

* In two Articles published in the different Periodicals. See also *Milner's Life of Watts*.

on Christian doctrine attributed to him, was discovered. Of the authenticity of this work, very serious doubts may be entertained, both on the ground of its internal style, which is in perfect contrast to Milton's prose works, and of deficient external evidence. The very fact that Milton, who was a martyr to his free and bold expression of opinion, and a leading controversialist, should not have published this treatise, but have left it to the chances of destruction, is, in itself, strong proof against its authenticity.

But granting that this work is Milton's production, it may have been, for all we can tell, the work of his yet unsettled and wayward youth, whose sentiments he lived afterwards to correct.

But it is, after all, only in one point, and to a certain extent, that this treatise apposes the views of Trinitarian Evangelical Christians. On the subjects of man's fall, depravity, guilt and ruin,—of the covenants, both of works and grace,—of original sin, and its imputation to all mankind,—of regeneration, repentance, justification, sanctification, adoption, perseverance, election, predestination, assurance, atonement, and the prophetic, sacerdotal and kingly offices of Christ,—in short, on all that enters into, defines, and constitutes the system of evangelical, orthodox Christianity, this treatise is evangelical, and *in direct antagonism* to the system of Unitarianism, from which it is as far removed as Heaven from earth.

Against Socinian views of the inspiration and authority of Scripture, and of the nature of Christ and the Holy Spirit, this treatise wages *open* and *avowed* conflict.

Equally opposed is the teaching of this work on the subject of the Trinity, to the views of any body of Unitarians now existing.

The author does not believe in a Tri-unity of three persons in one God-head, but in three distinct and separate beings, each of whom is God, and possessed of all divine attributes, prerogatives, powers and worship. The Son, however, was created or generated by the Father, and is inferior to Him, and the Spirit, who was also created, is inferior to both.

The Son received from the Father both "the name and nature of Deity," (vol. i., p. 126, Boston ed.)—"coequality with the Father," (p. 193.) In becoming man, therefore, the Son "emptied himself of that form of God in which he had previously existed,"—(p. 193.) The Father "imparts his glory to the Son,"—(p. 192.) The Son possesses self-existence, (p. 177,) omnipresence, (p. 178,) omniscience, (p. 179,) omnipotence, (p. 180,) though not absolutely, or independently, of the Father.

"When the Son is said to be the first born of every creature, and the beginning of the creation of God," nothing can be more evident than that God, of his own will, created, or generated, or produced, the Son, before all things, endued with the Divine nature, as in the fulness of time he miraculously begat him in his human nature of the Virgin Mary. The generation of the Divine nature is described by no one with more sublimity and copiousness than by the Apostle to the Hebrews, (i., 2, 3,) whom he appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, &c. It must be understood from this, that God imparted to the Son as much as he pleased of the Divine nature,—nay, of the Divine substance itself.

This point also appears certain, notwithstanding the arguments of some of the moderns to the contrary, that the Son existed in the beginning, under the name of the *logos*, or word, and was the first of the whole creation, by whom afterwards all other things were made, both in Heaven and earth. John i., 1-3, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word

was with God, and the Word was God," &c. : xvii., 5, "And now, O Father, glorify me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was."—Col. i., 15, 18. Pages 112, 106.

These extracts are made from the chapter on the Son of God, which is published by Unitarians as a tract. But there is another full chapter "of Christ as a Redeemer," [ch. xiv.,] which Unitarians have not published in connexion with the other, and thus give to their readers a very imperfect and false view of the doctrines of this work. In this chapter, Milton says [p. 383,] "Redemption is that act whereby Christ, being sent in the fulness of time, redeemed all believers at the price of his own blood, by his own voluntary act, conformably to the eternal counsel and grace of God, the Father."

Again, page 386: "Two points are to be considered in relation to Christ's character as Redeemer: his nature and office. His nature is twofold—Divine and human."

Again, page 388: "With regard to Christ's Divine nature, the reader is referred to what was proved in a former chapter concerning the Son of God; from whence it follows, that He, by whom all things were made, both in Heaven and earth, even the angels themselves,—He who in the beginning was the Word, and God with God, and although not supreme, yet the first born of every creature, must necessarily have existed previous to his incarnation, whatever subtleties may have been invented to evade this conclusion by those who contend for the merely human nature of Christ."

"This incarnation of Christ, whereby he, being God, took upon him the human nature, and was made flesh, without thereby ceasing to be numerically the same as before, is generally considered by theologians as next to the Trinity in Unity, the greatest mystery of our religion."

Again, pages 392-3: "There is, then, in Christ, a mutual hypostatic union of two natures, that is to say, of two essences, of two substances, and consequently of two persons; nor does this union prevent the respective properties of each from remaining individually distinct. That the fact is so, is sufficiently certain; the mode of union is unknown to us; and it is best to be ignorant of what God wills should remain unknown."

"How much better is it [p. 393,] for us to know merely that the Son of God, our Mediator, was made flesh, that he is called both God and man, and is such in reality; which is expressed in Greek by the single and appropriate term, Θεανθρωπος."

Page 397: "It sometimes happens, on the other hand, that what properly belongs to the compound nature of Christ, is attributed to one of his natures only, [1 Tim. 2, 5,] one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." Now he is not mediator, inasmuch as he is man, but inasmuch as he is Θεανθρωπος."

The mediatorial office of Christ is that whereby, at the special appointment of God the Father, he voluntarily performed, and continues to perform, on behalf of man, whatever is requisite for obtaining reconciliation with God and eternal salvation.—Page 400.

"Christ's sacerdotal office is that whereby he once offered himself to God the Father as a sacrifice for sinners, and has always made, and still continues to make intercession for us."

"The humiliation of Christ is that state in which, under his character of God-man he voluntarily submitted himself to the Divine justice, as well in life as in death, for the purpose of undergoing all things requisite to accomplish our redemption."—Page 410.

The satisfaction of Christ is the complete reparation made by him in his two-fold capacity of God and man, by the fulfilment of the law, and payment of the required price for all mankind.—Page 417.

The effect of Christ's satisfaction is sufficient to produce the reconciliation of God the Father with man.—Page 428.

It will be now, we think, abundantly evident that, however much the work differs from the orthodox faith on the subject of the Trinity, it differs on the same subject quite as much, and indeed far more, from the Unitarian theory, while on all other points it coincides with the evangelical system, and is diametrically opposite to that of Unitarian.

To the names mentioned as being claimed by Unitarians, as authorities in favour of their opinions, several others of less celebrity might be mentioned.* Enough has been said to prove, 1. That Unitarianism is ever ready to avail itself of the authority of great names, however slender, or even suicidal may be the evidence. 2. That, like Popery, it waits for death to prevent the opportunity of immediate and direct denial, in order to create and perpetuate rumours of an alleged change of opinions.

NOTE B.

How on the Social Nature of God.

"Upon the whole, let such a union be conceived in the being of God, with such a distinction, and one would think (though the complexions of men's minds do strangely and unaccountably differ,) the absolute perfection of the Deity, and especially, the perfect felicity thereof, should be much the more apprehensible with us. When we consider the most delicious society which would hence ensue, among the so entirely consensient Father, Son and Spirit, with whom there is so perfect rectitude, everlasting harmony, mutual complacency, unto highest delectation; according to our way of conceiving things, who are taught by our own nature, (which also, hath in it the Divine image,) to reckon no enjoyment pleasant, without the association of some other with us (herein; we for our parts, cannot but hereby have in our minds, a more gustful idea of a blessed state, than we can conceive in mere eternal solitude.

God speaks to us as men, and will not blame us for conceiving things so infinitely above us, according to the capacity of our natures; provided, we do not assume to ourselves to be a measure for our own conceptions of him; further than as he is himself pleased to warrant, and direct us herein. Some likeness we may (taught by himself,) apprehend between him and us, but with infinite (not inequality only, but) unlikeness. And for this case of delectation in society, we must suppose an immense difference between him an all-sufficient, self-sufficient Being, comprehending in himself the infinite fulness of whatsoever is most excellent and delectable and ourselves, who have in us, but a very minute portion of being, goodness, or felicity, and whom he hath made to stand much in need of one another, and most of all of him.

But, when looking into ourselves, we find there is in us a disposition, often upon no necessity, but sometimes, from some sort of benignity of temper, unto conversation with others; we have no reason, when other things concur, and do fairly induce, and lead our thoughts this way, to

* See Heber's Bampton Lectures, pp. 120, 121.

apprehend any incongruity in supposing he may have some distinct object of the same sort of propension in his own most perfect being too, and therewith such a propension itself also.

As to what concerns ourselves, the observation is not altogether unapposite, what Cicero treating of friendship, discourses of perpetual solitude, "that the affectation of it must signify the worst of ill-humor, and the most savage nature in the world. And supposing one of so sour and morose a humor as to shun and hate the conversation of men, he would not endure it, to be without some one or other to whom he might disgorge the virulency of that his malignant humor. Or that supposing such a thing could happen, that God should take a man quite out of the society of men, and place him in absolute solitude, supplied with the abundance of whatsoever nature could covet besides; who, saith he, is so made of iron, as to endure that kind of life?" And he introduces Architas Tarentinus, reported to speak to this purpose, "that if one could ascend into Heaven, behold the frame of the world, and the beauty of every star, his admiration would be unpleasant to him alone, which would be most delicious, if he had some one to whom to express his sense of the whole."

We are not, I say, strictly to measure God by ourselves in this; further than as he himself prompts and leads us. But, if we so form our conception of Divine bliss, as not to exclude from it somewhat, whereof that delight in society, which we find in ourselves may be an imperfect, faint resemblance; it seems not altogether disagreeable to what the Scriptures also teach us to conceive concerning him, when they bring in the eternal wisdom, saying, as one distinct from the prime Author and Parent of all things, then was I by him, as one brought up with him, and daily his delight.—Prov. viii: 80.

For the same import are many passages of the Fathers: "If," says Athenagoras, "on account of your surpassing intellect, you wish to learn what the Son means; in a few words I will tell you. He is the first offspring of the Father, but not as anything created, for God is from the beginning, and being an eternal mind, he himself had within himself the Word, being eternally comprehensive of the Word. The Holy Spirit likewise, acting efficaciously in those who prophecy, we assert to be an emanation from God, flowing from him and returning to him, as a ray of the sun. Who then, might not well think it strange, that we, who declare God the Father, and God the Son, and the Holy Spirit, showing both their power in unity and their distinction in order, should yet be called Atheists."

The argument of Athenagoras is this, God's personal Word is the Reason of God. But God is eternally rational, or eternally comprehensive of Reason. Therefore, the Word or Reason of God is eternal also.

The play upon the terms λογος and λογικος in their Greek acceptance cannot be preserved in an English version.

There is a parallel passage of Athanasius, which may serve to elucidate this of Athenagoras. Athan. Orat. ii. Cont. Arian. Oper. vol. i. p. 154. Commel 1600.

The αλογος of Athanasius is evidently the opposite to the λογικος of Athenagoras.

Tertullian has imitated in Latin, the same form of phraseology and the same peculiar line of argument.

Ante omnia enim Deus erat solus, ipse sibi et mundus et locus et omnia: solus autem, quia nihil extrinsecus praeter illum. Caeterum ne tunc quidem solus; habitat enim secum, quam habet in semetipso, Rationem suam scilicet. Rationalis [Athenagorae λογικος] enim Deus; et Ratio

in ipso prius: et ita ab ipso omnia. Quæ Ratio sensus ipsius est, hanc Græci *λογον* dicunt. Tertul. adv. Prax. § 3. Oper. p. 407.

The whole argument is founded upon the double sense of the term *λογος* which imports either Verbum or Ratio. On this double sense, Athenagoras and others of the old Fathers delighted to play. As the Father is eternally *λογικος* his *λογος* they argued must be eternal also.

Tres dirigens, Patrem et Filium et spiritum sanctum: tres autem non statu, sed gradu; nec substantia, sed forma: nec potestate sed specie: unius autem substantiæ et unius status.*

The same argument for, and view of, the Trinity, is embodied in one of the ancient hymns of the church, as found in the *Thesaurus Hymnologicus* Tom. i, p. 276.

In maiestatis solio,
Tres sedent in triclinio,
Nam non est consolatio
Perfecta solitario.

Aeternæ mentis oculo,
Quando pater inflectitur
In lucis suæ speculo,
Imago par exprimitur.

Imaginis consortium,
Nativus præter exitus,
Cونسorsque spirans gaudium
Ingenitus et genitus.

Hoc gaudium est spiritus
Quo patri natus jungitur,
Et unum bonum funditus
In his tribus concluditur.

In tribus est simplicitas,
Quos non distinguit qualitas,
Non obstat tribus unitas,
Quos ampliat immensitas.

Per solam vim originis,
Communio fit numinis,
Nativo ductu germinis,
Votivique spiraminis.

Ingenito et genito, etc.

* Faber's *Apost. of Trinit.* vol. ii, pp. 240.