

THE SOUTHERN PRESBYTERIAN REVIEW.

VOL. XI.—No. 1.

APRIL, MDCCCLVIII.

ARTICLE I.

RELATION OF BAPTIZED CHILDREN TO THE CHURCH.

The most important point, perhaps, in the controversy of infant baptism, as it now stands, is the determination of the precise relation sustained to the church by baptized children; and, as consequent upon this, of the benefits accruing to them from their baptism and the church relation into which it brings them. For let the anti-pædo Baptists say what they will and think what they will, the main argument by which, for the most part, they uphold their cause, consists only in making light of and ridiculing the baptism ("rantism," as they are pleased to call it,) of infants as a thing absurd in itself, and that can serve no good or useful purpose. Only let us, therefore, clearly show the true import of infant baptism, and its place in the economy of salvation, together with the many and precious benefits through it conferred upon the subjects of it, and we will have effectually turned aside the edge of the weapon that has always proved most serviceable to our opponents in this cause.

Another, and a much more important end, however, than

tracted much attention from divines and commentators of all classes. It is intimately connected with our general subject, and has been made exceedingly prominent by the opposers of the doctrine which we are endeavoring to advocate. We confess, too, that we are pleased with an opportunity of submitting our views for the consideration of fathers and brethren in the ministry, who are more skilful than ourselves, in the interpretation of God's Holy Word. Every ray of new light will be most thankfully received, no matter from what quarter it comes—no matter whether it tends to confirm, or to invalidate the views which we have been led to adopt. In one article more, we hope to finish this protracted discussion.

THE TRINITY OF THE GODHEAD, THE DOCTRINE OF THE SCRIPTURES.

Presumption that the Scriptures will teach it.

In former essays on the subject of the Trinity, it has been shewn that any a priori or abstract determination of the nature and mode of subsistence in the Godhead is beyond the powers and the province of reason; that reason unaided and untaught (directly or indirectly), by revelation, cannot even arrive at the knowledge of an infinite, eternal and spiritual God, much less at any conclusion as to the nature of God;* and that even educated reason, aided by all the light and stimulus of traditionary or written revelation, and even at the present time, with all the experience of ages, and all the advancement of learning and science, and the diffused knowledge of the Scriptures, cannot settle down upon the doctrine of a personal God, or of the absolute personal unity of God, or of there

* See Butler's Analogy, Part 1, Ch. VI. and Pt. 2, Ch. VII.

being only one God. It has been shewn that, on the contrary, the doctrine of a personal absolute unity of the Godhead never has been the creed of philosophy or the dogma of any religion, and that many reasons would render it impossible for reason to obviate objections to such a scheme, and to give it a certain authentication.*

It has been further shewn that the general impression, that the Scriptures very fully and explicitly teach the personal unity of the Godhead, that is of the Divine nature, is without any foundation in fact. The Scriptures every where, and in every possible way, teach, or rather assume as an indubitable fact, that God is one in opposition to all polytheistic idolatries, and that the Nature—the Godhead—the Essence of the Deity cannot possibly be divided. But the Scriptures nowhere teach that this Godhead is personally, absolutely, or metaphysically one person, or that in the unity of one Godhead there are not three persons or subsistences, one and the same in nature and essence, and yet so distinct in personal attributes as to be capable of personal and distinct offices. On the contrary we have shewn that the didactic statements of Scripture on the unity of God, beyond the general declaration that he is “ONE God,” are *very few*, and are so worded as to imply necessarily a plurality of persons in the unity of nature in that one God.

While reason unassisted is incompetent to discover, or to prove to conviction and certainty any thing pertaining to the nature of the Godhead yet it was shewn that nevertheless the doctrine of a trinity of persons in the one Godhead—when once miraculously taught by Divine inspiration—has not been found unreasonable by the great majority of mankind. Traces of an original doctrine of the Trinity, handed down by tradition, have been found among ancient philosophers, and most religions of mankind, proving the original communication of this doctrine to mankind originally, and also its congeniality to the reason of the wisest philosophers.

* See Bayle's Dictionary, Art. Manichean, Paulicians, Zoroaster, Marcionite, &c.

The Trinity of the Godhead.

Or where above the glassy sea
 Stands everlastingly,
 Some drops in secret reach the cells
 Of subterranean wells,
 And bear to every clime of earth
 The traces of their birth.

Or that the four-fold streams below
 From ancient Eden flow,
 And as they gather stains abroad
 Diverging on their road,
 Yet still retain beneath all skies
 Something of Paradise.

Indeed, so far is this doctrine from being absurd and unreasonable, that our minds almost instinctively require in their conceptions of an infinitely happy and eternal God, some social character, and hence learned men have framed arguments designed to prove from the very conception of an infinite God a triunity of persons in his single Godhead, and in confirmation of such views multiplied analogies have been pointed out in nature as indicative of the Triunity of nature's God.*

The presumption which is thus raised in favor of the doctrine of the Triunity of God is greatly enhanced by the views entertained by the most ancient Jewish writers as derived by them from the Old Testament theology, and by the trinitarian creed of the Christian Church from the very beginning, through every age, in every country, and in all its divisions, sects and controversies, to the present time, with but partial or temporary exceptions. While differing on many points, and separated by the most impassable gulfs of space, time and sectarian opposition, nevertheless, the Eastern and Western, the Nestorian, the Armenian, the Syrian, the Waldensian, the Reformed as well as the Romish, Prelatical and Presbyterian, Baptist, Methodist, and all the other divisions of Evangelical Christendom, British,

* It is most true of that ever blessed Trinity *Satis amplum alter alteri theatrum sumus*. God had from eternity a society perfectly like himself, "the CHARACTER of his person, Heb. 1, 3, and one spirit proceeding from both, and there is nothing can add any thing to those and their happiness." Leighton on 1 Peter, who has frequent similar observations.

European or American—ALL agree in holding forth the doctrine of the Trinity as a fundamental doctrine of Scripture, and as the very foundation of the whole scheme of Christianity.

The result of these inquiries is two-fold. In the first place they teach us that reason is altogether incapable of either ascertaining or proving any thing regarding the nature and mode of existence of God, and that any such proof and conviction must be founded upon the express revelation of God himself. "What saith the Scriptures?" is the only legitimate inquiry, and the plain teaching of Scripture the only standard of opinion, and the only adequate ground for unwavering conviction. "No man" says the Divine oracle, "knoweth the Father save the Son, and he to whom the Son shall reveal him." But while this is true of "man," and of all finite minds, there is another person capable of this infinite knowledge; for, as the same oracle teaches, "the Spirit also searcheth the deep things of God." Without Him also no man can comprehend the full nature of the Son, since "no man calleth Jesus, Lord, but by the Holy Ghost."

Now, the Scriptures are the revelation made to man by Christ through the Holy Ghost, according to his promise made to his disciples, that the Holy Spirit should "teach them all things." "All Scripture was given by inspiration—holy men of old having spoken in them as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." And hence, it is manifest, that in order to know anything with infallible certainty of the nature of God, we must have recourse to that word which alone is profitable for doctrine, for instruction, for reproof; and which, alone, is able thoroughly to furnish the man of God for every good work.

The second important conclusion, from our preceding inquiries, is, that, in coming to the Scriptures to ascertain their teaching on the nature of God, we do so with an *a priori* presumption, leading us to expect in them the doctrine of a triunity in "the eternal Godhead." This is a very essential point in the argument. The whole strength of Unitarianism lies in the supposed unreasonableness of the doctrine of the Trinity, and its acknowledged incomprehensibility and superhuman character; and, in the presumption which is thereby created in many

minds against its being possibly the doctrine of the word of God. Any interpretation, it is said, is, therefore, to be given to the Scriptures, any critical conjectures are to be adopted, and any theories of inspiration and of the canonicity of the books of the Bible are to be received, which may be necessary to explain the Bible, in consistency with the rejection of the doctrine of the Trinity. This, it is said, cannot be the teaching of Scripture; and, therefore, Scripture must be so interpreted as not to teach it.*

This course is, therefore, pursued in every possible way by Unitarians and Rationalists. They cannot explain the unity of God, as taught by themselves, or make it any more comprehensible than the doctrine of the Triunity of God. Reason can comprehend just as much of the latter as of the former, and just as little of the former as of the latter, and nothing of either. Both are far above out of its sight, and the proof of either and the belief of either as an incomprehensible but incontrovertible fact, can only be founded on the revelation of God himself.

Now, it is generally admitted, even by Rationalists and Infidels, that the proofs of the doctrine of a Triunity in the Godhead—of which the Scriptures are full—if taken in their plain, literal and obvious meaning, cannot be eluded by any approved rules of language or criticism; and, therefore, as Waterland remarks, “the last resort of our opposers, commonly, is to some philosophical principle—some pretended reason, drawn from the supposed nature of the thing, rather than from the Scripture style, or from the force of Scripture expressions.”

Another, and yet more affecting consideration is, that Unitarians, in eluding the Scripture proofs of the divinity of God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, “have,” as Waterland says, “scarce left themselves any for the divinity even of God the Father; indeed, none but which, by the same artificial way of eluding, may be evaded and frustrated as well as the other. This is a consideration of great weight, which has been pressed upon them over and over, and has never yet received a satis-

* Such assertions we have previously quoted.

factory answer. So it remains as a standing evidence of the glaring force of our Scripture proofs, and will ever remain so."

Our object in previous discussions of the doctrine of the Trinity has been to remove even the appearance of such a presumption in favor of Unitarianism and to build up a strong and irrefragable presumption in favor of the doctrine of the Trinity. The Bible is undoubtedly susceptible of interpretations which shall convey very opposite doctrines on the subject of the Trinity. We have, therefore, constructed in our previous articles, a presumptive argument composed of many cumulating proofs, to shew that the doctrine of the Trinity may reasonably be looked for in the Scriptures, and that the interpretation which fairly and literally brings out this doctrine is, therefore, to be regarded as the true teaching of the word of God.

We propose, therefore, to direct the attention of our readers in the present article, to a general outline of what the Scriptures teach, concerning the nature of God, without attempting any critical analysis of the passages adduced. This would be of course impossible. And in view of what we have said it is unnecessary, since our argument depends upon the general language and mode of representing the Deity, adopted by God in the Scriptures, understood in their plain and obvious sense, and not upon any refined explanations which it would require as much learning and ingenuity to understand, as to originate. The Bible being a revelation made by God to all men, for the benefit of all, and which all are required to understand, we must presume that the Holy Spirit moved holy men of God to use that language which will most clearly and unequivocally convey the meaning which he designed should be given.

I. The Scriptures teach the Unity of God—necessity of this truth to His Personality and Trinity.

I. And in entering upon this outline of the Scripture teaching on the nature of God, it is important to remark that, in the first place, the Scriptures every where represent God as one in his nature—essence—or Godhead. They every where declare

that God is one, besides whom there is none else. All other Gods—the idols of the human mind—are “nothing in the world.” In contrariety to the belief of all idolators, we are taught that the essence of God cannot be divided, separated or multiplied. Idolatry, or a multitude of Gods, whether the number be three or three millions—each partaking in a greater or less degree of the Divine nature, is not only unscriptural but is an impossibility, an absurdity and a contradiction in terms. God, by the very definition of his nature, is infinite, and therefore exclusive of all other Gods, since there cannot be more than one infinite, and no finite or created beings can be infinite.

The theory of Arius, of Socinus, of Milton (considered as the author of the Treatise of Christian doctrine ascribed to him)—and of Clarke and others, that Christ is God and yet the Son of God, in the sense of having been created by God and made a partaker of God’s infinite, eternal, and unchangeable Godhead, is at once, therefore, impossible, absurd, contradictory and blasphemous. The same theorists represent the Holy Ghost as also a created and yet Divine Being. They thus represent that there are three Gods—three Godheads, three Divine natures—and yet that two of them are created, and therefore finite beings of whose existence there was a commencement, and of whose existence there may, therefore, be an end, since He who created can destroy. This theory plainly overthrows the only Godhead known to Scripture—“the eternal Godhead.” Instead of one God it makes three. It is a tritheistic polytheism and Christianity heathenized.

It is all important, therefore, to maintain the Scriptural doctrine of the unity of God, against the tritheistic doctrine of Unitarianism, and the metaphysical theism of Sabellianism. Between these two points the pendulum of rationalizing Unitarianism must ever vibrate. These are the horns of its awful dilemma—three Gods which are no Gods, or three metaphysical nonentities. When it goes beyond these boundaries, the only result which is possible is the result which has been invariable—the utter denial of the Divine or Superhuman character of Christ, the annihilation of the Holy Ghost, or, more commonly, a blank scepticism, which rejecting the Bible as an inspired

revelation, seeks in it only the theologies of gifted or visionary men.

Let us then hold fast and firmly to the revealed doctrine that God is one, and that his Godhead is one, infinite, unchangeable, eternal and indivisible. This is the very foundation and fountain of the doctrine of the Trinity. There can be no triunity in the Godhead if there is not in it a unity. Unitarians allow themselves to remain so ignorant of what the doctrine of the Trinity really teaches, as to imagine that it denies the unity of God. Their writings therefore are full of proof from Scripture that there is only one God, and a Mr. Wilson has filled an octavo volume with a digested analysis of the Scripture proof of the unity of God. What that unity is, however, neither Mr. Wilson nor any other Unitarian attempts to tell us, and for the simple reason that they could not if they would. That the Scriptures ever speak of the Father as this God, and of the Son as this God, and of the Spirit as this God, they are careful in all their digests not to tell us; and all the multiplied proofs that these three persons are, each and severally, this God, and yet distinct as persons and in their personal offices and works,—all this they utterly ignore. Let us then all the more carefully accept and rejoice in all the proofs from the Scripture of the unity of God, since it is only on this absolute unity of the Divine Godhead we can rest the triunity of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, in that one “eternal Godhead;” and since it is only in this indubitable truth, as every where assumed and taken for granted in Scripture, we find a refuge from the gloomy polytheisms of Unitarian tritheisms—that is, from a trinity of Gods instead of a Triune God.

The doctrine of the absolute unity of the Divine nature, essence or Godhead, is also to be clearly understood and firmly believed, not only as a preservative against Unitarian rationalism or polytheism, but also against that pantheism into which such rationalism often runs. These are the Scylla and Charybdis which frown terribly on either side in all inquiries into the nature of the Deity. In truth the channel between them is very narrow. Discarding the chart of Divine revelation, and giving the sails to the wind, and the helm to the currents of vain philosophy, we are as likely to drive against the one as the

other, and in the strong current of Neology soon find ourselves whirling in madness and despair in the pantheistic whirlpool of atheistic unbelief.

Pantheism represents every thing as an emanation from, and a component part of the Divine essence, and thus instead of one "eternal Godhead," or of three Godheads, creates indefinite millions of Godheads—millions of whom are destitute of life, sense or reason—which is ineffably absurd.

This theory is contrary also to the unalterable conviction of every rational being to whom the Ego,—the I,—that is, he himself is a simple, separate, conscious, independent, free and responsible being.

And again as this theory only makes God the sum total of all the finite objects in the created universe, it can only lead to the supposition of an indefinitely great, but still a limited sum total of objective realities. But from the very necessity of our nature we are constrained to seek a cause for every effect. This Pantheistic God—this sum total of the visible and of the conceivable universe—must therefore have had an originating cause adequate to the production of all the spiritual, animate and inanimate objects, laws and systems of which it is composed. That is to say the God of pantheism—the sum total of all existences—is itself in effect, an effect, too limited by laws, and limited in its nature; and an effect therefore which requires for its existence and continuance the God of the Bible—"the eternal power and Godhead."

The unity of the Godhead is, therefore, a fundamental truth, and necessary to be intelligently and believingly held as the only preservative against the idolatry—the tritheistic idolatry of Unitarianism; and against the pantheistic transcendentalism of a philosophy, falsely so called, which, rejecting Scripture, rejects also the primary intuitive beliefs of the human mind.

II.—*Scripture teaches that the Unity of the Godhead admits a plurality of persons.*

II. But, we proceed to remark in the second place, that while it is true that Scripture, every where, assumes and asserts the absolute unity of the Divine nature; it also, every where,

assumes or implies that this unity admits of distinctions, and is not an absolute or personal unity.

The entire language of Scripture is based upon the assumption that there is, in the one eternal Godhead, a three-fold distinction; so that, without ceasing to be one, these three are, nevertheless, distinct.

What these distinctions are, Scripture does not attempt to teach, nor is it possible for man to comprehend. They are revealed only so far as they are necessary for our knowledge of duty, and our comfort, and joy in believing;—as facts rather than doctrines—facts which are to be received on the testimony and authority of God, and not as the conclusions or convictions of our own reason. What Scripture teaches and requires to be believed is not the mode of this divine existence, as one Godhead with a three-fold distinction, but the simple fact that such distinctions exist, and that they lie at the foundation of our faith and hope and joy; of our relations to God and of our obligations and duties towards him.

This is what Scripture teaches and requires as to the nature of God as one Godhead, and yet a triunity of distinct subsistences. And this is all that Scripture teaches and requires. And if it is said that the mind cannot believe God to be in Godhead one, and yet in distinct substances three, because we cannot understand how in one sense, and in one way, God is one, while in another sense and another way God is three, we reply that the difficulty lies not in the mind but in the will, in the pride of a self exalting and presumptuous reason. It is just as easy and as rational to believe that in the Divine unity there exist three-fold distinctions—*if God so instruct us*—as to believe otherwise. We know nothing, and can know nothing, on the subject. What God is—what the unity of God is—is infinitely beyond our comprehension. Unitarians, we repeat, cannot even define or determine any thing about their own alleged unity of God, and we determine nothing about our affirmed triunity of God. We believe that God is one, because Scripture every where affirms it; and we believe that in this one Godhead there is a triunity of distinctions for the same, and only for the same reason.

We do not say God *must* be three in one, that is, a Triunity, although we have been led by many presumptive reasons to expect God's own word will declare that He is so. We do not say that Scripture *must* teach this doctrine, or that otherwise it must either be rejected or emasculated of all Divine authority and power, and turned into a myth, or the mere vehicle of religious experience. This is what Unitarianism does. It does not ask "What does God say?" It dogmatically affirms what God *must* say, or else say nothing at all,—what they will believe or believe nothing,—what Scripture must write or be discarded as incredible, and impeached as a traitor.

We come to this inquiry as one of infinite moment. The doctrine is not one of speculation—a theory, or an abstract creed. It belongs to those practical matters on which our condition compels us to make up our minds one way or the other. It is the basis of those relations between the persons of the Godhead and between those persons and the sinful race of men, on which the whole scheme of redemption, the doctrines of grace, the hopes of salvation, the joys of pardon, the comforts of piety, the assurance of heaven, and all the activities and duties of the Divine life are made to depend. And it is because the doctrine of the Trinity involves all the doctrines and duties of Evangelical Christianity, that Unitarianism rejects the doctrine and rejects whatever in the inspiration and authority of Scripture requires that doctrine to be believed.

The Scriptures then, we affirm, are written so as to represent God as one, and yet at the same time not absolutely, metaphysically, that is, personally, one. They speak every where of one God, and yet every where of distinctions in this one Godhead—of three who are each God.

Plural Titles of God, and other Plural Forms.

The proof offered for this position is not drawn from a few texts or phrases, but is found embodied in the general phraseology of Scripture.

Of this fact we have already given what we consider irresistible evidence in the constant employment in Scripture as a title

for God, of a plural name. We allude to the term Elohim. This is the title employed to designate God absolute; the God whom no man hath seen at any time; the Creator of the universe; Him who infolds in his being all the attributes and all the persons of the Godhead. This is the title of the one God in contrast with all polytheistic ideas.

Wherever in our English Bibles the word God is found, there in the original the term Elohim is used.

Now this term Elohim is a plural noun. It has a singular *Eloah*, which was known to the sacred penmen, and employed by them about seventy times, and also translated by the word, God. Now, the use of the plural form Elohim, instead of the singular form Eloah, in the great majority of cases, and the use of the singular often enough to prove that it was familiar and well recognized by the inspired penmen, indicates clearly some important purpose, and has been generally considered both by the ancient Jewish and Christian Church as referring to the mysterious plurality of the Divine nature—that is of God in his absolute, unknown and unrelated character. *

This term appears every where as the subject or nominative of verbs in the singular, as if necessarily to indicate the existence of distinct personalities infolded in it.

The term Jehovah is a name of relation, growing out of the Divine promise of a Divine Saviour, and of salvation through Him. It is, therefore, singular; is only used in a singular form; is unquestionably attributed to Christ; and well represents the person, character and work of Him who was to come; who assumed this name to himself and proclaimed it as his memorial name. *

These terms, Elohim and Jehovah, are also conjoined—the one in the singular and the other in the plural—and God is thus very frequently and emphatically called “Jehovah Elohim,” or, “Elohim Jehovah;” that is, God, in the person of Jehovah,—he who was to come,—the Messiah—the Sent—he who was and is, and is to come.

This form of representing God as plural by the word Elohim

* See *Yahveh Christ*, 1857; a work very much underrated by some.

is repeated no less than eight times in the earliest chapters in the Bible, which is very remarkable in so concise a history written by God's dictation for the instruction, primarily, of his people soon after their deliverance from idolatrous Egypt, and with a special view of instructing them in the true knowledge of the only living and true God, and of preserving them from all idolatrous and polytheistic errors.

The predominant use of the word *Elohim* Gods and of the combined terms *Jehovah Elohim*, that is the Lord thy Gods; their use in the Decalogue itself; and their employment no less than one hundred times in the law alone, is perfectly inexplicable except upon the supposition that there is in the unity of the Divine nature a plurality of Divine persons. This Bible in which these titles of God occur is, we assume God's word, and the oldest of all cosmogonies, of all theologies, and indeed of all books; God "the Holy Ghost, who moved holy men of old to speak its words" had the selection of the language, the words, and the forms and of speech. His use of them *originated and established* forms of speech which had no previous existence, and which were best adapted to express the nature of the Divine existence, and to teach whether God is ONLY ONE—a unicity incapable of any plurality, (a meaning indicated by the Hebrew word יְהִיד *yahid*;) or whether God is ONE ONLY, that is one in opposition to polytheistic Gods while admitting in the unity of the Godhead a plurality of persons (a meaning which is conveyed by the Hebrew term אֶחָד *ehad* that is *one*—a word which represents any thing numerically one, though a compound of more than one.) The selection by God therefore of the term *Elohim* instead of *Eloah*; his introduction of the new memorial name *Jehovah* when he became related to his people as their promised incarnate Saviour, and present visible king and deliverer; the frequent combination of these two names in one, that is, the plural with the singular, the absolute with the relative, and the essential with the personal; the plural form of speaking of his own creative and other consultations and acts; other plural descriptions of his nature to which we will refer; and the use of the term *ehad*, and not of the term *yahid* in defining his unity; these we think are the most conclusive of

all possible proofs that God has employed language so as most emphatically to teach us that while he is one in his essence, he is plural in his persons.

For it must be borne in mind, and duly considered, that this is not of another person respecting God, but that it is the language of God respecting himself, and it is language which God employed even when most peremptorily inculcating the doctrine of his unity, and that too under the most fearful sanctions. "Ye cannot," says Joshua, "serve the Lord for he is the holy Gods." (Ch. 24 : 19.) "Remember thy **CREATORS** in the days of thy youth." (Eccles. 12 : 1.) "Hear, oh Israel, the Jehovah thy Gods is one Jehovah"—*ehad*, that is, one, and not *yahid*, only one, (Deut. 6 : 4.) "For thy **MAKERS ARE** thy husbands, the Lord of Hosts is his name." (Is. 54 : 5.) We read also in Prov. 9 : 10, of "the holy ones," and in Eccles. 5 : 8, of the "high ones." "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the **HOLIES** is understanding." Prov. 9 : 10. "If I be **MASTERS** where is my fear." Mal. 1 : 6. "What nation is so great, whose Elohim **ARE** near to it." Deut. 4 : 7. "And it came to pass when **THE GODS** caused me to wander from my father's house." Gen. 20 : 13. "Because there appeared with him **THE GODS**." Gen. 35 : 7. "Even like Israel whom **THE GODS WENT** to redeem." 2 Sam. 7 : 23. Thus also in Levit. 9 : 4, God says: "Turn ye not unto idols, nor make to yourselves molten gods. I am the Lord (Jehovah) your Gods, (Elohim.)" This compound of the singular and the plural title is also used as the reason for the commands with which it is associated, several times within the compass of two chapters, and very frequently throughout the books of the Law. "Thou shalt fear thy Elohim for I am Jehovah, thy Elohim." Lev. 25 : 17. "I am Jehovah your Elohim that brought you forth out of the land of Egypt to give you the land of Canaan and to be your Elohim." Lev. 26 : 38. Such is the manner in which God is described throughout the Old Testament. Thus in Solomon's dedication of the temple, (1st Kings 8 : 59, 60.) "And let these my words wherewith I have made supplication before Jehovah be nigh unto Jehovah our Elohim, * *

* * * * that all the people of the earth may know that Jehovah is Elohim, and that there is none else."

Now, these and similar expressions are not mistakes. They are not accidental or unintentional. They are God's words, written by God's penmen, at God's dictation, in God's own chosen language, and without any necessity in the poverty or weakness of that language.* And they were spoken to God's own people, whom he had commanded on peril of death to have no other Gods than Jehovah Elohim, the one God.

But we would further remark that the plural title of God, that is, *Elohim*—is generally joined with singular verbs, pronouns and adjectives, as in the very first sentence of the Bible—*Elohim, the Gods—bara, created*. And this also is the ordinary construction throughout the whole of the Hebrew Bible. Now this plural title, according to one derivation to which it may be traced, signifies the Almighty or the Almighty powers. There is here, therefore, in the very title of the Creator, and in the very first sentence of Revelation, the unfolding of the plural personality and Divine unity of God—of that great and solemn name which with its infolded attributes stands in an opening revelation, at the head of the universe—a name of power, of distance and of mystery.

*God ascribes creation to three persons. "Let us make man."—
Gen. 1: 26.*

But, that this is no forced or fanciful inference, (whatever derivation of *Elohim* is adopted), will be made evident from the fact that in speaking of creation which is assuredly the very highest proof of absolute Divinity, the Scriptures do not ascribe it exclusively to God the Father, nor to God the Son, nor to God the Holy Ghost, but to each of these. The Father is therefore, declared to have been the Creator in Eph. 3: 9. The Son is expressly declared to have been the Creator in many

* In the sphere of religious ideas the Hebrew language showed an expansive capacity of expression.—*Dr. Davidson in his edition of Horne's introduction, Vol. 2, p. 9.*

passages, as in Heb. 8: 10; Col. 1: 16. The Holy Spirit is also introduced as the Creator, in the very second verse of this opening chapter of Revelation in connection with, or as one of the Elohim, and elsewhere in the Bible. Gen. 1: 2. Ps. 33: 6; and 104: 30. Job 26: 13; and 38: 4. This then is to be regarded as the Scriptural explanation of the term Elohim, and its marvellous and otherwise inexplicable construction.

Observe, also, that God, that is Elohim, *created*, (where we have reference to the invisible God, the Father); God *said* (where we have as distinct reference to the Son, who alone has ever been heard or seen by men); and the Spirit of God *moved* (where we have the Holy Ghost); and thus does Isaiah speak of "God, the Lord, he that created the heavens, and *THEY* that stretched them out," (Is. 42: 5); and Paul says "of him" (the Father) and "through him" (the Son) and "to him" (the Holy Spirit) "are all things." (Rom. 11: 36.) "By his wisdom," says the ancient Jewish Targum, "God created." "The Lord," says Solomon, "by wisdom hath founded the earth, by UNDERSTANDING hath he established the heavens." Prov. 3: 1.

But let us dwell further on God's own very carefully worded account of the creation, and particularly of the creation of man. "And God said let us make man in our image, after our likeness." This plural form of statement, is required by the original Hebrew, about the correctness of which there is no question.

Now, you will observe that the plurality here is in accordance with the plurality implied in the title of God, absolutely and impersonally considered, which is employed throughout this chapter—with the manifestation of one person in this plurality, speaking and executing the Divine will, "The Word of the Lord by whom the heavens were made," (Ps. 133: 6; and John 1: 3);—and with the declaration that "the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters."

Observe further, that the plural nature of Elohim here is conveyed in the form of mutual consultation and address; by the use of plural personal pronouns indicating real presence and individual separate action and yet mutual power, authority, and glorious personality.

Observe further, that we have here a complicated design, evinced by the use of language in varied forms, so as to convey, by different methods, the same meaning of a plurality of Divine persons in the Elohim or absolute and impersonal Godhead.

Observe still further, that this is God's own statement of his own nature, and of his own otherwise inscrutable councils, among different persons, and recorded in his own selected words, which "holy men spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." This idea, which is *fundamental* to any argument from the language of Scripture, and which really originates and authenticates the idioms of Scripture, we repeat again and again, because it has been so much overlooked.

Now, what are we to understand by these combined declarations? They occur, be it further remembered, not only in words inspired by God, but also in that language which God chose as the medium of revelation, and which, as some think, he *originated* as a sacred language for the very purpose of conveying his word and will, and whose idioms, therefore, are either by his special selection or sanction. God employed them, not because they existed or were in common use, but they exist and are established in their use, because God has employed and thereby has authorized, perpetuated and stereotyped them. They never existed, so far as is known, before his using them. They are not found in any other primitive language, nor in any other modern language. They are not the ordinary idioms even of the Hebrew language, which knows nothing of a plural of majesty, as it is called, and in which this plural form of personal address is never used by the people in addressing God, or in addressing their princes, or kings, or each other. On the contrary they always addressed God in the singular as "thou God," and they always addressed their princes and rulers in the same form. And to this method of address there is no exception. God alone, in speaking of himself and in revealing himself, speaks of himself by a plural name, and in plural personal pronouns.

That, in doing so, God could refer to angels as his counsel, or to any creatures, is blasphemous; is contradicted by the accounts given of the persons actually referred to, both in the

context and in other parts of Scripture; and by the declaration, that no creature (as is, indeed, self-evident,) either did, or possibly could, be present in the beginning, while uncreated to assist in creating ALL created things, themselves included.*

These subterfuges of modern Jews to escape the force of these expressions are, therefore, mere "refuges of lies." They are, in themselves, houses of clay, built upon the sand. They are, also, useless. They explain nothing. They leave the whole difficulty unrelieved. The declarations of God, concerning himself, in language chosen by himself, in preference to other forms which he might have used, are still plain and palpably before us, and incapable of being explained away.

Unitarians, finding these subterfuges of their Jewish friends untenable, have taken refuge in the no less preposterous supposition that this is only a dramatic form of speaking. For, says Dr. Smith, "Would it not have been equally dramatic had the inspired authors written, *I will make, I will go down, I will confound?* That which these speeches possess, 'more than the dramatic form,' is *the whole* of the subject to be considered. A more gross instance of the *non causa pro causa* it would be difficult to find. Neither do we suppose that the Deity actually made use of vocal speech in the exercise of his creative energy, or on the other occasions referred to. But this is foreign to the question, which is plainly and only, why is the *plural* title, and pronoun, and other forms of speech used, when the singular was required by the subject, and would have been not only equally 'dramatic,' but more terse and vigorous and striking."

A further observation on the last remarkable passage ("let us make man, &c.,") will greatly strengthen the conclusion arrived at, and that is, that it is not singular, but is one of several similar ones. It is not, therefore, accidental, but designed; not a possible mistake, but a very pointed and emphatic didactic statement. Thus when our first parents sinned the Jehovah Elohim said: "Behold the man is become as one of us." Gen. 3: 22. Here the plural is very striking, being put in a numerical form—as ONE of us. Again, in Gen. 11:

* See the passage in Isaiah, quoted before, and Oxlee, vol. 1, p. 96-108.

7—God, in speaking of himself, says: “Let us go down and there confound their language.” This is and must be the language of the Trinity; and then it is added: “So Jehovah—that is Christ, the Son—scattered them abroad from thence.” And once more when the prophet Isaiah saw in vision the glory of the Lord, and heard the Seraphims cry Holy! holy! holy! is Jehovah of Hosts,” he adds: “Also I heard the voice of Jehovah”—the Word speaking in name of the Trinity, “saying whom shall I send and who will go for us.” Is. 6: 3 and 8.

Let it also be further observed that this most emphatic form of speaking of himself is employed by God without any necessity of language, and not generally, but on those occasions merely when it would have been most important to affirm his absolute personal unity, or to indicate his certain triunity. Had God said “I will make man in *my* image after *my* likeness,” the expression would have been good Hebrew, and would have avoided all implication of plurality, and all possible misrepresentation supposing such plurality not to exist. And had God thus worded this important statement of the creation of man in the first person singular, instead of the plural; had he employed for his name *Eloah* singular and not *Elohim* plural; and had he avoided all reference to the SPIRIT of God, he would have worded it as Unitarians and modern Jews would word it. But instead of doing this God has worded it just as Trinitarians would naturally express it.

Another observation confirmatory of our view of the *intended*, as well as *actual* significancy of this passage, is the employment by God as designative of His own nature of several titles, having a plural form, and all of which might either have been omitted or put in a singular form. Such are the titles of *Adonai, my Lords*; *Sebaoth, hosts*; and *Shaddai, Almighty*. God thus multiplies the evidences of a mysterious plurality in his Divine nature by employing these plural titles, besides using the designation *Elohim*, more than three thousand times in the Old Testament, while its singular form *Eloah* is also occasionally employed to prove that it exists, and yet *only fifty seven* times, to prove that it is purposely rejected as the *general* design-

nation of the Deity; and to make this designed purpose in the preference given to the plural form of Elohim more manifest, it must be mentioned that it is not only construed, as it most commonly is with singular verbs and adjectives, but is also sometimes connected with plural verbs and adjectives, and is therefore so employed as to designate either God in his absolute impersonality, or God in his personal manifestation as Jehovah. Thus, when it is said, Gen. 20: 13, "And it came to pass when the Gods (Elohim) caused me to wander," it is, literally rendered, "Elohim (Gods) *they caused* me to wander." Again in Gen. 35: 7, it is said, literally: "Because there appeared unto him the Gods. And so also in Deut. 4: 7, "For what nation is so great who hath Gods who are so nigh." So, again, Josh. 24: 19, literally rendered, is, "Ye cannot serve Jehovah for he *is Gods* who are *holy ones*."

"In our image"—Man, a triune emblem or image of God.

But there is still more in the statement of God, concerning his creation of man, which renders it pregnant with instruction on the nature of God. "Let us, says God in this important passage, (which is a revelation by the Holy Ghost of the secret counsel of the Divine Godhead, from before the foundation of the world, and 'the beginning' of all things,) let us make man **IN OUR IMAGE** after our likeness. So God created man **IN HIS OWN IMAGE**, in the image of God created he them." **ELOHIM**—not angels—created man, and man was created, not in the image or likeness of angels, but of **ELOHIM**. **ELOHIM** said, (not to the earth, as some Rabbis would absurdly suggest, for it was not a speaking *a surdo ad surdum*,) but to the plurality of his own infinitely perfect nature, let us make man **IN OUR IMAGE**," and not in the image or likeness of any thing created.

This **IMAGE** is most commonly represented as consisting in a trinity of spiritual endowments—knowledge, righteousness and true holiness, and, therefore, as the likeness of God in his moral nature, and not in his essential nature; and as that likeness which, by the fall, man has lost, and to which, by redemption, man is restored.

Now, this is true, but it is only part of the truth here taught. Man was created after the image of God's moral nature, and this likeness man has lost; so that now, morally, man is born "in the likeness of sinful flesh;" that is, of Adam fallen, corrupted and condemned—"IN HIS OWN LIKENESS after HIS IMAGE." Gen. 5: 3. But man was also created so as to be an image, likeness and living emblem of God in his mysterious and incomprehensible three-fold nature; and is, therefore, a being who consists of one nature, uniting, in its composition, three distinct and separate subsistences; each of which is mysterious and incomprehensible; and all of which, in their nature, union, mode of operation and influence, are equally incomprehensible and past finding out. The body is a separate organism—existing, acting and governed by its own chemical laws. Animal life is distinct from physical organization, and separate and separable from it, and like it unknown, except in its results. And the spiritual life is an unknown, unsearchable and mysterious subsistence, entirely separate, distinct and different from both. Each of these is necessary to constitute the compound nature of man; and yet, no one of them makes a man. Neither would all three, separately and uncompounded, constitute a man. Man is a being composed of these three separate subsistences united into one. Man is a triunity—a trinity.

This representation may seem puerile and unphilosophical, and even absurd to some. But our present question is not with its philosophical character, but with its Scriptural authority. We do not originate a supposition for the sake of adding strength to a doctrinal theory—we only employ one Scriptural statement to illustrate another to which it necessarily refers, and of which it would seem to be an intended explanation, and while the statement is in itself simple, and in its facts obvious and undeniable, yet it is in its important bearing on the fundamental doctrine of God's nature we now employ it.

God declares that man was made in his image and likeness, even as men are now said to be born in the likeness and image of Adam; and both must refer to nature, as well as to character, and attributes; and as Scripture most explicitly, and on several occasions, defines the nature of man as a triunity of body, soul

or life, and spirit,* we are led to conclude that there is an analogy in the threefold nature of God—an analogy of course not perfect, but still real. Man, therefore, was so made as to represent in the mysterious and incomprehensible triunity of his nature, the infinitely more incomprehensible triunity of the Divine nature. The body is human, the life is human, and the soul is human, and yet these are not three human beings, but one human being,† and so man was created in the image or likeness of Elohim, of whom it is true that the Father is God, the Son is God, the Spirit is God, and yet these are not three Gods, but one God.

We do not attempt to draw out any points in this analogy, though some are striking. We confine ourselves to the fact that according to Scripture, there is in man a triunity of mysterious, incomprehensible personalities or separate active agencies, united in one nature, and that God intended, and did actually make man so as to be an image or likeness of his own incomprehensible nature.

Now, that the reference was made to what is still characteristic of man, and therefore to his present nature and not to his original, spiritual and perfect nature exclusively, is also clearly affirmed in Scripture. The reason given for requiring the penalty of death to be inflicted on whosoever sheddeth man's blood is, "for in the image of God made he man." Gen. 9: 6. Man, therefore, is still "the image or likeness of God." The Apostle James in speaking of the tongue, (3: 9,) says, "therewith bless we God, even the Father, and therewith curse we men who are made after the similitude of God." The Apostle Paul also gives it as a reason why men ought not to cover the head, "forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God." And in the

* Thess. 5: 28. Heb. 4: 12. Rom. 12: 1, and several passages in the Old Testament.

† "Every man in his physical nature is an individual single agent."

"Thus the body is a system or constitution."

Man's conscious nature is three-fold—sensational, intellectual and moral. *The Mystery of Evil and God.* Page 18.

So Coleridge, Hengstenberg and Olshausen.

genealogy of Luke, ch. 3: 38; after tracing it up to Seth, he says of him that he "was the son of Adam, who was the son of God." Adam was the son or image of God, in the construction of his nature, and not merely in his character, just as every other son bears in his nature and constitution the image or likeness of his father. The same image, in some essential form in which Adam was made in the likeness and as a representation of God, is, therefore characteristic of every human being.

This image, can not be limited to man's soul and to its spiritual attributes, otherwise angels as well as men would be represented as participating in it, which, however, they are never said to do. Their nature on the contrary is distinguished from that of man, and Christ is therefore said to have passed by the nature of angels, and to have taken that of men. This image and likeness must, therefore, be found in what is peculiarly human and not angelic, that is, it must be found in his whole compound nature, and not in his spiritual merely.

Neither is this "image" what is characteristic of men collectively, or generically, but of men, individually and personally, that is, every man, as the preceding quotations prove; and therefore, it must be found in those constitutional elements which are common to every man, that is in his compound triune nature.

Again this image of God is that which Christ, in assuming human nature, took upon himself, "the fashion of a man," the likeness of men. In Christ this image or likeness was again perfect and complete in body, soul and spirit, that "he might become the first-born among many brethren" in the family of redeemed men. Now, it is to this perfected and immaculate "image of his Son" all true believers are "to be conformed," being "changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord," so that as we have borne (in consequence of the fall) the corrupted image of the earthly Adam, we may also by redemption "bear the image of the heavenly." And this image to which we shall by Divine grace be restored is not merely spiritual, nor merely living and active, but also in addition to these, corporeal, for "Christ shall change

our vile body so that it may be likened unto his glorious body.”*

(*To be continued.*)

ARTICLE IV.

THE BURDEN OF EGYPT.

The connection between science and revelation, or any point in that connection, is, we claim, a legitimate theme for free discussion. True science and genuine revelation can never differ, at least can never conflict. It is the more grateful, accordingly, to seize upon points where they have seemed to be at issue and may be reconciled; as well as to indicate avenues through which their truths may visibly approach each other. The number of such points is rapidly increasing; and

* Another analogy has been beautifully pointed out between the union and love of man, Adam and Eve, and of that ineffable union and communion, and love between the persons of the ever blessed Trinity, “Of all relations, marriage is the most *intimate*: for in it two become one. Adam was *one* in no high or happy sense as he stood lonely amid the beauties and bounties of Paradise, and found no “help meet for him” among the creatures around. But a deep sleep fell upon him; and during that sleep he became two, that so he might become one again, by a better and more perfect oneness; a oneness more like the oneness of God, in whose image he was made. That Divine image was less perfect in him while he was alone. For “God is love;” and Adam had none whom he could love as an equal, till Eve was at his side. But then, he had one to love who was himself, and yet not himself; “bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh;” taken out of himself—of one nature and substance with himself; yet a distinct *person*. And so, in man, as he stood *complete, male and female*, there was a faint type of that love which is eternally interchanged among the Three Persons of the one Godhead. And so, by being severed and united again, man became more like his Maker. So perfect was the oneness of Eve with Adam, that Adam, in loving his wife, loved himself: not his own *person*, but another *person* who was yet himself. And that was the highest perfection of human love, and the nearest approach that it could make to the love that is eternally in God.”

THE SOUTHERN PRESBYTERIAN REVIEW.

VOL. XI.—No. II.

JULY, MDCCCLVIII.

ARTICLE I.

ALEXANDER VON HUMBOLDT.

Life of Alexander Von Humboldt, translated from the German of Professor Klencke. By JULIETTE BAUER. London, 1852.
Works of Alexander Von Humboldt. 1800-1858.

Among the counsellors near the person of Frederic the Great of Prussia, in the latter part of his reign, was the Baron Von Humboldt, an officer of high rank, possessing much of the confidence of his great master. The baroness was of the family of Colomb, which had fled from Burgundy upon the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, to take refuge in Protestant Prussia. The fruits of this union of the Prussian and Huguenot families were two sons, William and Alexander, (born in the years 1767 and 1769,) whose names will long reflect lustre on that noble race which, for conscience sake, left the sunny plains and vine-clad hills of their beloved France to seek new homes in foreign lands. Of Alexander Von Humboldt, his labors, his travels, and his researches, we propose to give a short sketch. Fontenelle, in his celebrated eulogy of Newton, makes little reference to his youth, but passes it by with the sentence: "It

ARTICLE II.

THE TRINITY OF THE GODHEAD, THE DOCTRINE
OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

(CONTINUED.)

Design and strength of these plural forms—Ancient interpretations of Gen. 1: 26—Pagan, Jewish, and by the primitive Fathers.

From all that we have advanced, and from the fact that the image and likeness in which man was created was essential to his whole nature, and to what constitutes his peculiar nature as man, (that is the mysterious compound of body, soul and spirit which renders that nature a living tri-unity,) we must conclude that man was intended to be a living emblem, analogy, or image of the tri-unity of the ineffable Elohim by whom he was created, and who has recorded the purpose and the plan of his formation in the words under consideration. "And Elohim (that God who is, at the same time, *'the Gods,'*) said let us make man in our image, after our likeness. So Elohim created man in his own image, in the image of Elohim created he him." In this Elohim Creator we find three distinct subsistences, each spoken of as Creator, and yet only one God. And, in man, we find a body which is complete and distinct in itself, a living soul which is distinct and separate from that body, and a spirit which is distinct and separate from both, and yet, in man, these three subsistences, in order to constitute man, must be combined in one inseparable and undivided, triune, compound nature. And as in this Elohim God the Father is invisible, and the Holy Ghost is invisible, and the Son alone has been visible and perceptible by the senses of man, so also in this tri-unity of man, the soul is invisible, and the life is invisible, and only the body is cognizable by the senses.

We have dwelt long on this declaration of God because it is

so prominent and emphatic; because it is so evidently designed to awaken deep consideration; because it is the earliest annunciation in human language of man's creation, of the nature of the Creator, and of man his creature; because it is itself the original form of expression imparted by God the Holy Ghost to holy men of God, who spake as they were moved by him, and is not, therefore, a mere idiomatic, or dramatic, or unmeaning form of human speech; because it is associated with other similar and as emphatic statements, and with the whole phraseology of the Old Testament respecting the God of Israel in distinction from the invisible Elohim and the invisible Holy Spirit; and because it has attracted the deep and solemn consideration of both the ancient Jewish and Christian churches.

Any one of the considerations we have advanced might, in itself, appear trivial, or at least insufficient to sustain our conclusion. But they all go together. They all arise from the plain, unambiguous words of the passage, and they are all scriptural, and according to the analogy or proportion of faith. And even should any one, or several of them, be regarded as doubtful, any one of them will prove that God, by his own mouth, has led us to believe that His name and nature are inconsistent with an absolute, personal unity, and that they are consistent with a personal plurality.

The glosses of modern Jewish Rabbis have, as we have elsewhere shown, been refuted by earlier and abler Rabbis than they, and by their most ancient and most sacred books. The perplexity felt by the Jews of the middle ages appears by their inventing this childish story: "Rabbi Samuel Bar Nachman said that Moses when, in writing the law, he was come to the place where he was, by Divine dictation, to write, *Let us make man*, paused, and replied to God: *Lord of the world, why dost thou afford an occasion for error, with respect to thy most simple unity?* But that the Lord answered: *Moses, write thou so; and he that desires to err, let him err.*"* Indeed the interpretation we have given seems to have been preserved in the very earliest traditionary cosmogonies of the heathen world, as

* See Smith's Testimony, Vol. I., p. 527, and the authorities quoted.

we have also shown. Orpheus almost paraphrases the words when he says, "all things were made by one Godhead of three names." Philo, in the first century, considered these expressions of God as "manifesting a plurality—the expression, one of us being put," he says, "to signify not one, but many."* Philo may well be put against all modern Jewish interpreters, and Orpheus may well stop the mouth of all modern Unitarian expositors, since these pagan traditionary records of a Trinity as distinct, and not more disfigured, than their records of primitive sacrifice, of the temptation, fall and seduction of man by a serpent, of the deluge, &c.,—prove either that the doctrine of the Trinity was the original revelation of God concerning his own nature, or that it is the necessary conclusion of the human mind reasoning upon the nature of God.

As a further confutation of all such modern Jewish or Unitarian interpretations of these declarations of God concerning his plurality, we would, before passing, refer to the invariable exposition given of them by the primitive fathers.

We begin with the epistle of St. Barnabas, who says, "And the Lord took upon him to suffer for our souls, though He was Lord of the whole earth, to whom God said before the foundation of the world, Let us make man after our image and likeness."

Hermas, in his Pastor, says, "The Son of God is more ancient than all the creatures, for that he was present with his Father in council about producing the creatures."

Tertullian says, "If you still take offence at the number of the Trinity, as if it was not connected in simple unity, I ask how does one individual Being speak in the plural number? *Let us make man, &c.*, when he ought to have said, *I will make man, &c.*, as being one and singular. So also in what follows: *Behold Adam is become as one of us*, (Gen. 3: 22.) He deceives us, or is amusing himself by speaking in the plural, when he is one, and alone and singular. Or was he speaking to the angels, as the Jews explain it, because they also do not acknowledge the Son? Or because he was himself Father, Son

* Ed. Mangey Tom. 1: p. 430–431. See also Oxlee 1: p. 93–103.

and Spirit, did he therefore make himself plural, and speak plurally to himself? The fact is, that He used the plural expressions, *Let us make*, and *our*, and *to us*, because the Son, a second person, His Word, was united to him, and the Spirit, a third person, in the Word. For with whom did He make man, and to whom did He make him like? It was with his Son, who was to put on the human nature, and with the Spirit, who was to sanctify man, that He conversed as with ministers and witnesses, by the unity of the Trinity. Again the following words distinguish between the persons: "*And God made man, in the image of God made he him.*"

"Well, therefore," says Origen, in his reply to Celsus, "do we censure the Jews for not deeming him to be God, who is by the prophets so often testified of, as being THE GREAT POWER AND GOD, according to the God and the Father of all things. For we assert, that in the Mosaic Cosmogony, the Father addressed to him the command: Let there be light, and let there be a firmament, and whatsoever other things God commanded to be made. He, moreover, said to him: Let us make man after our image and our likeness; and the Word, having received these commands, did all the things which the Father enjoined him."*

Such passages might be multiplied from these writers, and from Irenæus and Clemens. This interpretation may be regarded as universal and established among the primitive writers.

Whitby owns that "all the fathers, from the Apostles' times, were of opinion that God the Father, in the creation, spake to his Son and Spirit, or at least to the Son, in a way of consultation about making man."

Mr. Faber gives the views of all the apostolic fathers and of the Council at Antioch, in corroboration of the Trinitarian exposition of this passage.†

* Orig. cont., Cels. lib. I., p. 54.

† See Faber on the Trinity, vol. I., p. 311; also p. 42-48; also a Catena Patrum in Suiceri Thesaurus Tom. II., p. 1299, &c.; also Burton Testim. to Trinity, p. 46, 75, 119.

The Visible and the Invisible God and Holy Spirit of the Old and New Testament.

Another line of general proof that in the Old Testament God is revealed as One, and yet as more than One,—and proof too which, like the preceding, is based not upon any particular passage, but upon the general language and teaching of the Scriptures,—is the unequivocal recognition of a visible and an invisible God; a God seen and a God unseen; a God capable of appearing in human form, of speaking with human voice, of talking face to face with human beings, of regulating human affairs, of leading human armies, of wrestling and eating with human beings, of dwelling locally in human temples made with hands, and of becoming the king and covenant God of a chosen nation,—and yet, at the same time, of being a God infinitely removed from all such manifestations, whom no man hath seen at any time, or can see and live. This visible God of Israel, the Jehovah of the Old Testament, is also identified with the Lord of the New. He walked with Adam and Eve in the garden; called, condemned and sentenced them; communicated visibly and audibly with Cain; appeared to Abraham as he sat in his tent door, and reasoned with him and made known to him his plans; “went up from” Abraham and Jacob; descended and revealed himself to Moses; spake to Moses, mouth to mouth and face to face; “knew him face to face;” spake unto Joshua; called the child Samuel; and was, in the conclusion of the Old Testament, foretold as “the Lord or Jehovah whom ye seek,” and who “should suddenly come to his temple” as Christ the Lord did come at the time and in the manner so specifically determined.

This same Jehovah is also represented as manifesting himself at sundry times in dreams, visions and appearances;—to Moses in the wilderness, and to Moses and the elders of Israel, when it is declared “they saw the God of Israel;”—in “the glory of Jehovah,” the bright cloud that rested on the mercy seat; in the “glory of the Lord” which filled the tabernacle and the temple at Jerusalem, and which spoke to Elijah; and which in the new economy was manifested to the three disciples on the

mount of transfiguration, and to Saul on his way to Damascus. All these things receive their explanation in the declaration: "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him."

The God of Israel also manifested himself in emblematical visions. This he did to Jacob, to Isaiah, to Daniel, to Ezekiel, and, under the new economy, to the Apostle John—between whose visions, and those of the prophets, there is an almost perfect and wondrous similarity; thus identifying "the Word made flesh and tabernacling among men," with the God of Israel, the Jehovah, the personal God, he who was, and is, and is to come,—the "God who was to be, and who was, manifest in the flesh."

The expressions "the Spirit of God," "Spirit of the Lord," "Holy Spirit," "My Spirit," are also of frequent occurrence in the Law and the Prophets, and especially in all that relates to the future glories of Zion, and of Israel. This Spirit is said to be "upon those" to whom He is imparted; to be poured out; to be taken from Moses, upon whom it was, and "put upon" the elders; "when the Spirit rested upon them, (it is said,) they prophesied and did not cease." By this Spirit men "were filled with the Spirit of Wisdom." "The Spirit of Jehovah will come upon thee, and thou shalt prophesy." "The Spirit of the Lord clothed Gideon," "departed from Saul," and is in every way spoken of as God, and yet not as an attribute, or will, or power of God, but as a distinct, personal agent.

Objection from Deut. 6: 4.

But it may be said that, in Deut. 6: 4, God once for all made this matter plain by teaching his people his real nature and his absolute, personal and indistinguishable unity. "Hear O Israel, Jehovah, our Elohim, Jehovah one" is the literal rendering of the passage. But, as has been fully shewn, this passage is itself so framed as to confirm all our conclusions from the general language and teaching of the Old Testament. The Jews in their prayer-book and creed have been obliged to pervert and absolutely to contradict this passage in order to make God a *yahiduth*, as they term it, that is, an absolute

and undistinguishable, personal unity. God, however, does not call himself a *yahiduth*, but an *ahiduth*, that is, a compound unity. He says, the God of Israel is ONE אֶחָד (*ehad*), not *only one* יְהִיד (yahid). He does not use the term *yahid* which he employs, when he speaks of bitterness and mourning for “an *only son*,” (Zech. 12: 10); and of Isaac as Abraham’s “*only son*.” Throughout the whole Bible the term *yahid*, *only one*, is never used with reference to God. The term which God does use is *ehad*, which means one in more than one; as in Ezek. 38: 19, where it is said of the stick of Joseph and the sticks of the other tribes of Israel, when “put with him, even with the stick of Judah,” that God will “make them *one stick*, and they shall be one in mine hand,” that is, a compound unity. The sticks when combined become *ehad*, and not *yahid*. And so “Jehovah, our Elohim,” is ONE (*ehad*), not *yahid*, and is, therefore, an *ahiduth*, and not as the Jews falsely teach, a *yahiduth*.

Besides God here employs a three-fold designation to indicate the nature of his unity. Jehovah, which is singular, Elohim, which is plural, and Jehovah again. “Jehovah, Elohim, Jehovah, these three (it is said) are one.” And in the Zochar—the most ancient and sacred book of the Jews—this mystery of this passage is distinctly stated, and the heresy of modern Jews, therefore, condemned. And, as if to make the meaning of this passage unquestionable, God in his law required that this triplicity of names in the one God of Israel should be employed as we have seen in their constant benediction, and declares himself to be “Jehovah, your Elohim, which brought you out of the land of Egypt, to be your Elohim; I am Jehovah, your Elohim.” Num. 6: 24–26, and 15: 41. Examine also the remarkable manner in which God expresses his jealousy, and yet uses these combined titles in this very connection. See Deut. 6: 13–15, and ch. 7: v. 6.

Strength of these arguments in view of God’s hatred of idolatry, and the tendency to it. The Golden Calf.

Such, then, is God’s own declaration and definition of his unity. The thoughts, the words, the arrangement, the form of

expression are his own, given by inspiration, and spoken by holy men of God as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. They are, therefore, significant. They mean what they express; all that they express, and nothing short of what they express. They were given, too, by a God who is jealous of his glory and of the rightful and exclusive worship of his creatures. And they were given to his chosen people redeemed by his power, whom he had set apart and consecrated to his especial honor as the representatives and witnesses of his truth. These forms of expression were also employed in a language full of grace and propriety, and affluent in Divine titles of singular formation. And they were employed, also, in view of a constant tendency on the part of the Jewish people to relapse into idolatry.

This proclivity to idolatry, manifested through such a length of time, is very inexplicable, on the supposition that the Hebrew Scriptures contained nothing but what explicitly taught the absolute personal unity of God. But it is easy to conceive how the constant use of plural titles and other forms of plural representation might give colorable pretext for polytheistic views. Of this we have a very remarkable illustration in the account given of the golden calf. "Up," said the murmuring people, who knew not what had become of Moses in the Mount, "up, make us Gods which shall go before us." Have we not here the intrepertation given by the earliest Jewish people, including Aaron himself, and all intelligent men among them, of the plural representation of the God of Israel given in the term Elohim, and in the other forms of expression we have referred to? There was, we presume, no intention to deny, or apostatize from their Elohim. But, contrary to his second commandment, they desired to have some visible representation, or emblem of Him, through the medium of which they might worship Him. All the people said of the golden calf, (Exod. 3: 2, 4, 5): "These be the Gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt." And when Aaron saw it he built an altar before it and made proclamation and said: "Tomorrow is a feast unto THE LORD." This image, therefore, was made to represent God, and to represent him as plural and not singular, and is apparently an unequivocal proof, that the

teaching of God concerning himself conveyed to the minds of the earliest Israelites the same expression of a mysterious plurality in the One Elohim that it does to our minds. And the fact that, in view of this understanding, these forms of instruction were introduced and permanently established, is also, we think, a demonstration that, in fact, God is a tri-unity; that it is only as such he can become known and related to men, and become their Redeemer and Sanctifier; and that therefore this mystery of godliness must be distinctly promulgated, however it might be perverted by the corrupt and idolatrous spirit of depraved men, seduced by the evil influence of the great apostate.

Now as these forms of speech were adopted by God, and oftentimes in connection with the most earnest protests, prohibitions and denunciations of polytheism; and when we can easily conceive that on the basis of Unitarianism their use would have been most dangerous; and when we know that they did prove, in fact, plausible pretexts for idolatry, we must conclude that they were used with a fixed and All-wise design to intimate a plurality in the nature of the one God. The constant tendency of the Israelites to confound the plurality of persons in the one God with several Gods, and therefore to relapse into idolatry, is conclusive proof that the Old Testament, so far from teaching the absolute personal unity of God, required all the explicit revelation afforded by the actual manifestation of the Son of God as the revealer of God, and by the dispensation of the Holy Ghost, to restrict, preserve and authenticate the Unity in the Tri-unity of God.*

The Three-fold Benediction.

Before we pass on to notice another evidence of plural distinctions in the Divine nature, we will more particularly advert to the triple form of benediction enjoined in the Old Testament. See Num. 6: 24, 25, 26, 27. "The exact triplicity of this Divinely prescribed formula," says Dr. Smith, "and the correspondence, in the significance of the very terms with the

* See Bishop Hinds' *Three Temples*.

apostolic benediction, (2 Cor. 12 : 14,) may be considered as an allusion to a Trinity of subsistences in the Divine Being. The first member of the Mosaic formula expresses the benevolent and efficient 'love of God,' the Father of mercies and Fountain of all good. The second well comports with the redeeming and reconciling 'grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.' And the last is appropriate to the purity, consolation and joy which are received from the 'communion of the Holy Spirit.' It is also worthy of being observed, that this is called PUTTING THE NAME of God upon his people; a phrase remarkably conformable to that of the initiatory institution of the Christian religion, 'baptizing into the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit;' also, to what is found in Isaiah 6: 5, where we have a three-fold form of adoration, "Holy! holy! holy! Jehovah of Hosts!" followed by the same remarkable use of the plural pronoun, "whom shall I (the Father) send, and who will go for us (the Triune Elohim)."

That some great mystery was contained in this form of triple benediction has been, as Rabbi Menachem testifies, the belief of the Jews. He refers to the three variations of the accents. There is also a tradition that, in pronouncing this benediction, the high priest lifted up his hands so that his three fingers were made to represent a Trinity of some kind. And it is known that Petrus Alphonsi, an eminent Jewish convert of the 12th century, wrote a treatise in which he applies this passage to prove that there are three persons to whom the incommunicable name of Jehovah is applied. Does not this proof, therefore, seem to amount to a demonstration when we find a similar form of benediction in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, enjoined in the New Testament?

Summary and design of these proofs.

Let the true bearing of these numerous and various forms of speech, indicative of some plural distinctions in the Godhead, be borne in mind. We do not bring them forward as direct, plain and positive proofs of the Trinity of the Godhead. That is not our present object. We produce them rather as disproofs of the assertion that the Scriptures inculcate the doc-

trine of an absolute personal unity of God. We refer to them as in accordance with the presumption that the Scriptures will be found so worded as to imply, rather than didactically teach, the doctrine of a Trinity; that its language will be framed on the supposition, that the doctrine is taken for granted as a necessary truth, and assumed—like that of the immortality of the soul and God's existence—rather than proved. And we adduce them as positive proofs that the Scriptures do teach us that in the unity of God there is a plurality of some kind.

These proofs have been drawn thus far from the very earliest books, and from the most fundamental forms of expression found in the Bible; from its most didactic and legislative records; and from the very portions of Scripture in which denunciations against idolatry are the most fearful. And then, too, the forms of expression referred to were not necessary. They were used purposely while others of a different purport were rejected. God says *Elohim Gods* created, when he might have said, *Eloah God* created. And God says in the very table of the law: "Hear, O Israel, Jehovah thy Elohim is one (not *only* one nor absolutely one) Jehovah." And God says *Elohim* (plural), *bara, created*, (in the singular), when he might have used a plural form or a singular form in both. Such expressions occur not once nor twice, but often; and in subsequent references to the creation, the same plurality is attributed to the Creator, even while idolatry was denounced and punished: "Thy makers are thy husband—the Lord, that is, Jehovah of Hosts is his name;" and, "Remember thy creators." Is. 54: 5; and Eccles. 12: 1.

Proofs from later books of Scripture.

Proceeding, however, to the later books of Hebrew Scripture, we find these distinctions in the Deity more apparent. We can only specify a few cases. Thus, in Isaiah 63: 9–10, it is written: "In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them. . . . But they rebelled and vexed his Holy Spirit," &c. There is in this passage distinct mention of God the Father, of the angel of his presence, who is elsewhere identified with Christ the Son of God, and of the Holy Spirit.

In like manner, in Isaiah 48: 16, it is said—"Draw near to me, hearken ye to this: from the beginning I have not spoken in concealment; from the time of its being I was there, and now the Lord (Adonai) Jehovah hath sent me and His Spirit." The mutual illustration of this passage, and many in the New Testament, cannot but occur to the recollection of the serious reader. In prophecy the Messiah declares, "THE LORD JEHOVAH hath sent ME and HIS SPIRIT;" and, when actually sojourning with men, he says: "I came forth from the Father, and I have come into the world;—THE COMFORTER whom I will send to you from the Father, THE SPIRIT of truth, who proceedeth from the Father, He shall testify concerning me." Here the plural Jehovah—He who is one and yet plural, is said to send Him who is "the first and the last," the Creator; and also to send "His Spirit," three distinct persons being plainly introduced.

Another very striking and very incontrovertible declaration of a plurality of distinctions in the Divine nature, is found in Proverbs 30: 4—"Who hath ascended up into heaven or descended? Who hath gathered the wind in his fists? Who hath bound the waters in a garment? Who hath established all the ends of the earth? What is his name, and what is his son's name, if thou canst tell?"

The meaning of this passage will be apparent by remembering that the angel who appeared to Manoah, and his wife said his name was "Secret"—not a secret—but "Wonderful" as the term might be translated, which is the very name given among others to Christ by Isaiah (9: 6), when he declared that his name (that is the Messiah's, as every Jewish and all other commentators must admit) shall be so called. "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace!"

Again, in Isaiah 61: 1, we read, "*The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me*; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the

opening of the prison to them that are bound." Here the speaker is evidently the promised Messiah, who was to be sent for the redemption and salvation of his people; but then mark, in the eighth verse he speaks of himself as God, by saying, "For I the Lord love judgment, I hate robbery for burnt offering; and I will direct their work in truth, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them." Now, it is this Lord who said, in the first verse, "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me." Here, then, is the *Spirit*, and the *Lord God*, and the *Lord* on whom the Spirit is.

These passages might be multiplied, but it is needless, as they must occur to the mind of every student of the Word of God, who will also remember how often the Angel of the Lord is spoken of as the Lord himself, and the Spirit of the Lord not as a mere power or emanation of the Deity, but as a Divine Person. Thus, for instance, when it is said, in Job 33: 4, "The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life." Or when we read, in Isaiah 40: 13, "Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or being his counsellor hath taught Him?"

Concluding summary of proof for distinctions in God from the Old Testament; and the alternative.

Presuming,—and we have seen that we are led by many considerations to presume,—that the Deity is a tri-unity of persons, and not a personal unity, we find that the Old Testament is written in accordance with such a presumption. It does not formally state the doctrine of the Trinity. It does not present it in a categorical proposition. It seems to assume and take it for granted, and to use language which pre-supposes it and is adapted to it. And if it is objected that a doctrine so fundamental would, if true, be very clearly and unequivocally defined, in a revelation given by God, we reply that this objection would apply as forcibly to the doctrine of the Divine existence, and, supposing it to be the true doctrine, to the absolute, personal unity of God. The objection, therefore, refutes itself, since it requires that if God is in his nature a per-

sonal unity incapable of any distinction of persons, he would in his revelation of himself so fully state and define this unity as to leave no possible ground for ambiguity or doubt. But this, we have seen, he has not done. The very contrary, we have seen, has been done. Even in proclaiming the unity of his Godhead in opposition to all polytheistic notions; and even while commanding that no other Gods shall be worshipped; and even while denouncing his indignation against such, as a jealous God; he nevertheless uses language which implies, if it does not affirm, a plurality,—a Trinity,—in that ineffable unity. This form of language is, we have seen, inwrought into the very texture, the weft and woof of revelation. It originates idioms peculiar to the sacred language—not only not found in any other, but of which others are incapable; and adopts forms of personal address for which no parallel is found in any contemporaneous or early writings. God is spoken of as one, and yet under three distinct names or persons; as singular and yet plural; as invisible and yet visible; as spiritual and yet human; as infinitely distant, unapproachable and incomprehensible, and yet as present with, speaking, acting and ruling among the children of men; as unspeakably removed from any thoughts or feelings of humanity, and yet as susceptible of all the feelings and affections of the human heart. We have thus, throughout the Old Testament, a Jehovah invisible and a Jehovah visible, who, under the character of the Angel, the Angel of the Covenant, the Angel of Jehovah's presence, the Messenger, the Messiah, &c., is the living, reigning and ruling Jehovah of God's people—the God of Israel.

Now, suppose God to be a Tri-unity, in whose invisible, incomprehensible and unapproachable Godhead, of which the Father is the representative, there are three distinct subsistences called Father, Son and Spirit, all equally God, and yet distinctive in personal offices;—and is not the Old Testament written so as to imply this truth of the Trinity, to assume it, and to speak in accordance with it? Our presumption is, therefore, met. It is in these early records, and in even a clearer and fuller oral communication of this doctrine which may have early been

given and always co-existed, we find the origin and the only satisfactory origin of the various traditionary forms of the doctrine of a Trinity throughout the pagan world:

Where didst thou glean that strange mysterious tale,
Thou solemn bard, or seer, or sage divine,
Or priest of Heathen wisdom? In what vale
Of shadowy death, or subterranean mine,
Chaldee or Ind,—or in Egyptian shrine
'Neath some dark pyramid,—or on the shore
Of dim Oblivion left in its decline,
Some fragment old of Babylonian lore;—
Where didst thou gain that myth of days that went before?

Much changed, much fraught with error, which thus fell
Like some stray scatter'd fragments on the strand;—
Methinks if we could all the meaning tell,
It bears the mark of some unearthly hand,
On which with awe we gaze, yet cannot understand.

But, on the other hand, suppose Unitarianism in its form of Arianism, Tritheism, Sabellianism, Manotheism, Socinianism, or Rationalism, to be the true doctrine of God's nature, and then we find the Bible worded so as constantly to mislead; so as to originate universal traditionary heresies; so as to foster and promote polytheistic errors; and so as to lead the great body of the ancient Jews and of the Christian church in all ages, in all countries, and in all its opposite and opposing sects, to adopt as a fundamental doctrine of Scripture the doctrine of the Trinity! Against all this violence of presumption we are required to believe as Scriptural a dogma with which Scripture, fairly interpreted, is perfectly incompatible; to believe as reasonable a dogma which the reason of Plato and the reason of humanity in almost all ages has repudiated; and to receive as comprehensible and plain a theory which involves the infinite, the incomprehensible and unknown; a theory which makes man the measure of his Maker, and what we see and know the standard of what is invisible and past our finding out; and a theory which, in glaring contradiction to its own premises, makes the eternal fountain of sociality in all the creatures of his formation, Himself the only Being in the universe who, throughout an endless duration, is incapable of either exemplifying or of en-

joying in ineffable and Divine communion, the most essential happiness of his creatures! Unitarianism, in short, makes that a matter of knowledge which can only possibly be a matter of belief; founds upon experience what can be known only by testimony; and rests upon the experience of *Man* what can only possibly be known to the experience of *God*, and what can only possibly be communicated by God's revelation of himself. The nature of God as a Trinity, if so revealed as a fact by God, is just as reasonable to be believed, and is just as easy to be comprehended, as would be the fact, provided God revealed it that the nature of God is an impersonal unity; both being facts of whose certainty we can be made infallibly assured only by God's own word.

Proofs of distinctions in the one God from the New Testament.

Such are some of the evidences of a distinction in the unity of God as intimated in the Old Testament, in accordance with the gradual development of Divine truth. In the New Testament the passages from which this distinction is drawn are very numerous. We can only call attention to a few.

When Jesus Christ was praying among the people, after he had been baptized in the river Jordan, "the heavens were opened, and THE SPIRIT OF GOD descended in a bodily shape like a dove, lighting upon HIM (Christ); and a voice came from heaven, which said, THOU art MY beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Here we have three persons most clearly distinguished, viz: God the FATHER, who by a voice from heaven declared Christ to be his beloved Son, and publicly sealed his appointment to the mediatorial office; CHRIST, on whom the SPIRIT OF GOD descended, and who then entered upon that office; and the HOLY SPIRIT who descended visibly under the emblematic representation of a dove and lighted upon Christ, through Him to be communicated to all his true disciples. Here, therefore, the three persons in the Sacred Trinity evidently acted, according to the offices sustained by them in the great work of man's salvation.

But the appointed form of Christian baptism is yet more conclusive. When our Lord instituted that sacrament, he said

to his apostles, "Go ye, and teach (or make disciples of) all nations, baptizing them in the name of **THE FATHER** and of **THE SON** and of **THE HOLY GHOST**."

As we will reserve this all-important baptismal commission—the constitutional charter and Divine warrant of the Church, its ordinances and its doctrines—for a separate and full discussion, we will only at present offer two observations respecting it. Schleusner, in his *Lexicon* says, that the most remarkable passage in the New Testament in which "Holy Spirit" is expressive of a person, and which alone is sufficient to prove that the Holy Spirit is different from the Father and the Son, in the same manner as they differ from each other is, in Matt. 28: 19, where the Apostles are commanded to baptize in the name of the Holy Spirit, as well as of the Father and the Son." We are baptized into **ONE** name, and yet by their own united agency into the worship and service of **THREE** persons, who are, nevertheless, the one God of Christians. Bishop Burgess remarks: "The many passages which record the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost in the same sentence, are all analogous to the baptismal commission, in the proof which they afford of the distinct personality, and the Divinity, of the three Divine persons, Father, Son and Holy Ghost."

But to proceed. The Apostle teaches us in 1 Cor. 12: 4-6, "that there are diversities of gifts," that is of spiritual gifts, "but the same **SPIRIT**," by whose Divine and extraordinary influence these are imparted. "And there are diversities of administrations," or offices in the Church of Christ, "but the same **LORD**;" meaning the Lord Jesus Christ, who appointed them all. "And there are diversities of operations," or extraordinary working of miracles, "but it is the same God which worketh all in all;" meaning God the Father, the fountain of all goodness and power, and the immediate dispenser of every good and perfect gift. Here, then, we are taught that, in the one Divine essence or nature, there is Father, Lord and Spirit, so that we have here a Trinity in unity, and a unity in Trinity.

Again, in the form of apostolic benediction, (2 Cor. 13-14,)—"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all—

Amen,"—the separate, and yet united power of the three persons is most emphatically taught. There is here a plain reference to the one name or Nature, and to the three Persons by whom Christians are blessed with all spiritual blessings. To each is ascribed the same personal attributes and power, and yet to each is ascribed also a diversity of operation and communicated grace.

Again, we find in the first epistle of John 5: 7, it is said, "For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one." Although quoted once probably by Tertullian, and twice certainly by Cyprian, and although its subsequent omission and adulteration may be satisfactorily accounted for, as they are by Jerome, yet we will not dwell upon this passage. The similarity of this passage to other portions of Scripture is, however, very striking. Thus our Saviour says, John 8: 17-18, "The testimony of two men is true: I am ONE that bear witness of MYSELF; and the FATHER that sent me beareth witness of ME." 1 John 5: 6. "It is the SPIRIT that beareth witness." Our Saviour has also mentioned, upon another occasion, a plurality of witnesses in heaven—"We speak (says he) that we do know, and testify that we have SEEN, and ye receive not OUR witness!"

The Apostle Paul, in Eph. 4: 4-6, says that there is ONE SPIRIT—ONE LORD—and ONE GOD and FATHER of ALL, who is above or over all, and through all and in you all."

Our Lord Jesus Christ while on earth, in comforting his disciples, said, "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever: even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him; but ye know him, for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless, I will come to you. If a man love me he will keep my words, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." Now, in this passage, we have a distinct reference—as to Divine persons carrying out the scheme of the Gospel—to the Father, Christ, and the Spirit; and to each as acting separately, and yet unitedly, in the work of man's salvation.

The Apostle Peter speaks of the "elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus," and thus associates these three equally and essentially in the plan of salvation, ascribing election to the Father, sanctification to the Spirit, and redemption to the Son. A Trinity is thus represented as concurring and giving security and glory to the Christian. And yet, while these work equally in all believers, they are represented as working distinctively according to their respective persons and relative official offices. A similar distinction of the three persons in the Trinity, and of their separate and distinct offices in the work of human salvation, is made by the Apostle Paul in Eph. 1: v. 3-14.

And this distinction both of person and office, in the unity of the common work of human redemption, is very forcibly inculcated by our Divine Redeemer while upon earth, when he declared that Peter was led to confess that he was the Son of God, by the teaching of the Father through the influence of the Holy Ghost, without whom no man can call Jesus Lord. See Matt. 16: 16, and 1 Cor. 12: 3.

But it would be an endless task to present all the indications of the plural distinctions in the Deity which are found in the word of God. They pervade its whole language. They give character to its whole spirit and teaching, and enter into all its doctrinal and didactic, its practical and consolatory statements. Even Sabellius, therefore, the ancient Arians, and all the early Unitarians, admit that "the Father, Son and Spirit, indicate some distinction in God." Dr. Samuel Clarke, the author of "The Scripture Doctrine of the Trinity," and who is generally claimed by Unitarians as an advocate of their opinions, gives the following summary of the language of Scripture respecting the three persons of the Trinity. The three persons, says he, are styled, *once*—He which is, and which was, and which is to come—the seven spirits which are before the throne—and Jesus Christ, the faithful witness: *once*—the Father, the Son, and Holy Ghost: *once*—the Father, the Son, and the Spirit: *once*—the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: *twice*—the Father, Jesus, the Spirit: *twice*—the Father, Jesus, the Holy

Ghost: *once*—the Father, Christ, the Spirit: *once*—the Father, Jesus Christ, the Spirit: *once*—the Father, the Lord, the Spirit: *once*—God the Father, Jesus Christ, the Spirit: *once*—He that raised up Jesus from the dead, Jesus, the Spirit: *once*—the living God, Christ, the Spirit: *once*—the living God, Christ, the Eternal Spirit: *four* times—God, Jesus, the Spirit: *once*—God, the Son of God, the Holy Ghost: *five* times—God, Jesus, the Holy Ghost: *once*—God, Jesus Christ the Son of God, the Spirit of Holiness: *once*—God, Christ, the Holy Ghost: *five* times—God, Christ, the Spirit: *four* times—God, Jesus Christ, the Holy Ghost: *five* times—God, Jesus Christ, the Spirit: *four* times—God, the Lord, the Spirit: *twice*—God, his Son, the Spirit: *once*—God, the Lord, the Holy Ghost: *once*—God, Christ, the Eternal Spirit.*

Our second position therefore is, we think, undeniably established, namely: That while the Scriptures every where imply and take for granted that God is, in his essential nature, only One, they teach that he is nevertheless so One as to be capable of being distinguished and of acting in Three separate and independent "forms of God."

ARTICLE III.

DR. WAYLAND ON THE LIMITATIONS OF HUMAN RESPONSIBILITY.

The fact that he is a responsible being is the chief characteristic and distinction of man. A sense of responsibility, that is, of holding every power, and faculty, and influence, and office, and relation to his God and to his fellow men, under a solemn trust, to be here and hereafter accounted for—this is the loftiest attribute of man.

But it is equally plain that this is man's most fearful prerogative; constituting him at once a sovereign, and a subject; a

* See the Scripture Doctrine of the Trinity, pp. 383, 4.

THE SOUTHERN PRESBYTERIAN REVIEW.

VOL. XII.—No. II.

JULY, MDCCCLIX.

ARTICLE I.

FIRST PASTORAL LETTER OF THE SYNOD OF THE CAROLINAS.

PRELIMINARY STATEMENT.

The growth of the Presbyterian Church in the British colonies, now the United States of America, led to progressive changes in the boundaries of Presbyteries, of which we are reminded by the document before us. In 1716, the original General Presbytery, from which the General Assembly has been developed, was subdivided, and the Presbyteries of Philadelphia, New Castle, Snow Hill and Long Island, formed from it. In 1755, the Presbytery of Hanover was set off from the Presbytery of New Castle by the Synod of New York. In 1770, the Presbytery of Orange was erected out of that portion of the ministers and churches included in the province of North Carolina. With this were connected several ministers and churches in the upper part of South Carolina and Georgia. Fourteen years after, in 1784, the Presbytery of South Carolina was formed from the Presbytery of Orange, embracing such ministers in South Carolina and Georgia as were under its jurisdiction. In 1785, that part of the Presbytery of

ARTICLE III.

THE DISTINCTIONS IN THE GODHEAD PERSONAL, AND NOT NOMINAL.

The distinction which the Scriptures make between the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, is not one of name or attributes merely, but is a real distinction, so as to constitute each of these Divine characters a separate, divine, intelligent agent.

These three distinctions—call them what we may—cannot be, as Sabellius affirms, one and the same person. What is said of one cannot be spoken of the others. The Father cannot be called the Son, nor said to do what the Son does; neither can the Son or the Holy Ghost be described by what is attributed to the Father or to each other. The Scriptures never interchange the names or the peculiar properties, attributes, offices or works, by which each is distinguished. There is that which is peculiar to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. This is the foundation and reason of their peculiar name, and of the care with which what is peculiar is never interchanged. There must, therefore, be a sense in which they are each separate, individual and intelligent agents.

But while Scripture is thus jealously cautious not to confound these three persons in their several names and offices, it does, as we shall find, represent each of them as God, ascribing to each the names, the attributes, the works, and, indeed, every thing peculiar to God; and yet the Scriptures never speak of three Gods, but everywhere imply a union, a *oneness*, among these three—a unity of Godhead infinitely beyond our experience or comprehension. We are compelled to believe that while God is, and can be, only one in His nature, essence and Godhead, He nevertheless exists as three peculiar and separate subsistences, constituting Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

This is what we affirm to be the indubitable teaching of God's own inspired volume. It teaches us that God is one in what it terms "His eternal Godhead," and it also teaches that

the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, are each God, and yet not identical with each other in person, though they are identical with each other in Godhead.

The distinctions existing in the Deity are not, therefore, in Godhead. This is one, and only one. There are not three Godheads or natures in God, but one only—one nature, with its Divine qualities and attributes. These distinctions cannot, therefore, consist in nature or attributes, but in the relative properties and offices pertaining to each; and cannot, therefore, make three Gods. They remain one and the same in nature, essence or Godhead.

Neither Scripture nor Trinitarians represent the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, as having each an independent essence or nature, with properties peculiar to themselves, and yet as one God. But what Trinitarians deduce from the plain teaching of Scripture is, that while the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, are each united in the participation of the one Eternal Godhead, they are distinct in personal or relative properties and offices peculiar to themselves, and of infinite moment to us.

What that is, in which the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, are three distinct subsistences, and not identical in person, while yet they are identical in nature, is of course an unfathomable mystery, concerning which reason can tell us nothing. Reason does teach us that God's nature and mode of existence must be infinitely different from, and more perfect than ours. Reason also teaches that we can know absolutely nothing of that nature or mode of existence beyond what God is pleased to reveal concerning Himself; and that it is, therefore, the highest reason to receive what is so taught as infallibly true, and implicitly to be believed. No human language can fitly represent to our minds that of which we can form no idea, and to which our arithmetic, our logic, and our experience, are alike inapplicable. All that is proper or possible for human reason, is first to ascertain the facts revealed in God's word, and then to employ some Scriptural or other suitable words to indicate what is thus taught—to express without attempting to explain it. And this is what the Christian Church has done. It was at first, and for some time satisfied, to abide strictly by Scrip-

ture, and to speak of Father, Son and Holy Ghost as each Divine; and yet, as Ignatius (not long after the Apostles' days) expresses it—to speak of the Son as “proceeding from the Father, and as in that one existing and contained.” (Ep. ad Magnes, § 7.) The individuality of the Father, Son and Spirit, was unquestioned, and their community in the Divine nature was undisputed before the time of Praxeas, in the second century, and of Noetus and Sabellius in the third. These writers first began to speculate upon the nature of the Trinity in unity with the desire to reconcile this doctrine with the reason and experience of man. They were thus led to propound the theory that God is one person as well as one Godhead, who, according to his good pleasure, presents himself to man in the different aspects or forms of Father, Son and Spirit. The distinctions so clearly pointed out in Scripture they regarded, therefore, as merely nominal, and not real or personal.

Origin and Meaning of the term Person in reference to the Trinity.

These views first led the Christian Church to adopt terms by which the dangerous and presumptuous character of this heresy might be exposed and guarded against. Philosophy falsely so called—proud, arrogant reason, attempting to be wise above that which is written—first theorized on the subject of the Trinity, and, by introducing vain speculations, led Christians to adopt terms expressive of the plain and obvious teaching of the Word of God.

We find Justin Martyr, therefore, A. D. 150, very clearly expressing the distinct personality of the Father and Son. (Dial. cum Trypho, § 56.) Returning to the Scriptures, he says, “I will endeavor to persuade you that this God, who is said in the Scriptures to have been seen by Abraham, and Jacob, and Moses, is a different Being from the God who created the universe. I mean different in number or numerically, but not in counsel, for I affirm that he never did anything except what the Creator himself, above whom there is no other God, wished him to do or say.”

The doctrine is more fully presented by Justin Martyr in

other portions of his writings, so as to make it plain that the church in his day regarded the Son as personally distinct from the Father, and yet the same in nature or essence. (See Apol. § 63; Dial, § 128, 129, 221, 222.) He argues against some who regarded the Son as "a power unseparated and undivided from the Father;" and the conclusion of his argument is, "that which is begotten is numerically different from that which begets it."

To express the individuality of the three persons spoken of as Father, Son and Spirit, Tertullian, A. D. 200, introduced, or rather gave public currency to the term *person*. Thus, in his reply to Praxeas (c. 11), he says: "These few instances will show very plainly the distinction of the Trinity; for there is the Spirit who speaks, and the Father to whom He speaks, and the Son of whom He speaks. So the other words which are spoken either to the Father, concerning the Son, or to the Son concerning the Father, or to the Spirit, establish each *person* in His own individuality."

In the Western Church the term *person* has ever since been employed to signify the individuality as intelligences, of the Father, Son and Spirit, in all those respects in which they are represented in Scripture as distinguished, while yet in essence, nature, or Godhead, they are one.

In the Greek and Oriental Churches, however, the term *υποστασις hypostasis*,—employed by the Apostle in reference to Christ in his individual, personal and distinct relation to the Father (Heb. 1: 9)—was adopted.* But, as this term is more ambiguous, and came to be used in the sense of substance, and thus gave apparent sanction to the objection that the doctrine of the Trinity involved the necessity of three distinct Divine substances, it became necessary to define the meaning attached to this word in the fuller creeds which were from time to time introduced. And while in the Council of Antioch, A. D. 362, it was agreed that the word *hypostasis* was capable of being rendered either *person* or *substance*, it was at the same time

* So, also, was the term *προσωπον prosopon*, (person,) in use, and hence God was spoken of as *triprosopos*, *tri-personal*.

determined that when used to mean *substance*, God is *one*, and when used to mean *person*, God is *three*. In subsequent periods of the church, the term hypostasis was limited to the latter meaning—that is, *person*,—as it was at all times certainly designed to mean what is understood by *person*, and not substance.

The Western Church, in order, if possible, to make the sense of the church unmistakeable, introduced the terms *subsistentia* and *suppositum*. But the term *person* has long been the only term which is generally employed. And yet even the word *person* is confessedly ambiguous, and capable of perversion. Its original and primary meaning was a mask worn by actors, from which its first derivative use easily followed—that is, the character sustained by that actor. From this meaning the term came to signify any assumed character or station, and any one holding such character; and, in its more modern acceptance, “the individuality of a human being consisting of a body and a soul.”

As the term *person*, like every other term of human language, is therefore ambiguous and variable, in order to understand any proposition in which it occurs, or any doctrine of which it is an exponent, we must first understand the precise use intended to be made of it. It is otherwise impossible either to understand the doctrine or to deduce any inference from it, since *we* may attach to it one meaning, and the doctrine employ it in another.

It is then only reasonable to ask inquirers into the doctrine of the Trinity, to bear constantly in mind that the term *person*, which is employed to designate the three distinctions we have seen attributed by Scripture to the one eternal Godhead, is not thus used precisely in any one of its classical meanings, nor in that more modern sense to which we have referred. It is employed as the simplest rendering of Scripture terms and Scripture statements, to denote a living, intelligent agent, as distinguished from a mere attribute.

The term *person* is employed to declare rather what the Scriptures—and the doctrine of the Trinity as deduced from them—do not teach, than what they really imply. It declares that the

Father, Son and Holy Ghost, as represented in Scripture, are not one and the same Divine person spoken of under three different forms of speech, as Sabellius taught; nor yet three separate Divine beings as Arius and others taught; but that they are three individual intelligent agents, distinct and separate from each other as to that which constitute their independent personality. It declares that to such an extent,—and in a way altogether incomprehensible and yet certain,—these *persons* are distinct, and yet equal in power and glory, and identical in that substance, nature or Godhead, in which their personality subsists. The word *person*, therefore, is used not as a definition of what each of these Divine agents is, but as a declaration that they actually exist as individual intelligences in the One Eternal Godhead.

This is all that is designed in using the word *person*. It does not—and is not intended to—make the doctrine of a tri-unity in God intelligible to our finite understandings. It is not meant to declare any thing as to the nature or mode of this Divine, mysterious existence. It only states—what we have seen Scripture requires to be believed, namely:—that the Father is God, that the Son is God, that the Holy Spirit is God, and that each of these perform personal offices in the great work of man's salvation, and yet that they are not three Gods, but one God.

Great is the mystery of God, but plain and palpable is the fact, that such is God's representation of what is infinitely removed from the possibility of our comprehension or ratiocination.

By the term *person*, then, in the statement of the doctrine of the Trinity, we mean only, to use the language of Stillingfleet,* “a mode of subsistence or relative property. The true original notion of personality is no more than a different mode of subsistence in the same common nature. Personality doth suppose a distinct substance, not from the nature of personality, but from the condition of the subject wherein it is. The personality, in itself, is but a different mode of subsistence in the same common nature, which is but one. This personality, it is

* Vinet's *Essai* of the Doctrine of the Trinity; London, 1697, p. 14.

true, considered in reference to such a subject as man, would imply in each person a peculiar substance of his own. But this does not follow from the nature of personality, but from the nature of man; and when, therefore, we come to consider a Divine essence which is most perfectly one, and is wholly incapable of any separate existence or accidents, there can be no other way of distinction conceived in it, but by different modes of subsistence or relative properties in the same Divine essence."

The personality of each of the Divine beings is thus founded on the mysterious and incomprehensible mode of the Divine existence, and the person of each consists of the being thus existing, in relation to the other persons of the Trinity. That is, the one Divine essence hath three distinct ways of subsisting, according to which it subsists distinctly and differently in each of the three Divine persons.

These distinctions which controversy led the early Christians to make, in order to guard against error, and preserve and perpetuate the truth, may be included in four propositions:

1. That there are in the Deity three distinct *persons*, and but one Godhead.

2. That there are no separate and distinct substances in the three *persons* of the Trinity; the Divine nature being wholly and entirely one and undivided, and identical in each.

3. That the Divine essence is in an eternal, necessary and ineffable manner communicated from the Father to the Son, and from both to the Holy Spirit.

4. That it is a peculiar prerogative of the Divine nature and substance, (founded in its infinite, and therefore transcendent perfection,) that it is capable of residing in more persons than one, and is accordingly communicated from the Father to the Son, and from both to the Holy Ghost.*

By the term person, therefore, as applied to the three distinctions in the Divine nature, we do not mean an individual

* How this doctrine, at first simple, was gradually and unavoidably enlarged, as found in the Nicene and Athanasian creeds, see fully illustrated in Newman's *History of Arianism* in the 4th century.

intelligent agent, having a separate nature, as well as personality, as in different men; nor, on the other hand, an accidental or variable distinction of character in one and the same person; but a real difference in the mode of subsistence, as well as in character. We are assured from Scripture, that there are three to whom the Divine nature and attributes are ascribed; and yet we are also assured, both from Scripture and reason, that there can be but one Divine nature.

We are not, we would again remind our readers, attempting to make the mystery of the Trinity intelligible, or to bring it within the grasp of our comprehension. This is infinitely impossible, since we have no premises from which we can reason, and no powers with which to make observation. Our only design is to make clear what the *doctrine* of the Trinity is, and not what the *Trinity itself* is; and to shew that, although the *Trinity* is unintelligible by us, the *doctrine* of the Trinity is free from any contradiction, and requires only the belief of facts no more unintelligible than all other facts pertaining to "the Infinite unknown," as Sir William Hamilton characterizes the Deity. The most profound minds of this and every other age have had, therefore, no difficulty in receiving the *doctrine* of the Trinity as a Scriptural fact, while they admitted the incomprehensibility of the *Trinity*. To refer to but one of these mighty intellects, (much employed, indeed, on this very doctrine,)—Daniel Webster being asked by a Unitarian gentleman, as he was coming out of an Episcopal Church in Boston, whether he believed that three and one are the same thing, replied in a manner perfectly characteristic, as it properly disposes of the real difficulty of the Trinity: "Sir, I believe you and I do not understand the arithmetic of heaven."

The term *person*, to denote the three persons of the Trinity, is employed, as we have admitted, in the full knowledge that it is necessarily and unavoidably ambiguous. But, then, it is equally true that this would be the case with any other conceivable term, since every human word is symbolical, and, in its application to things super-human and Divine, must be analogical. The only method by which our ideas on these subjects can be expressed, is by selecting some appropriate term, and

carefully defining the meaning attached to it, and the purpose for which it is employed. And this is what is done in the use of the term *person*, as expressive of the distinctions in the Godhead. It is employed simply to denote that which—whatever it be—characterizes the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, as they are represented in Scripture, to be each God—each individual and distinct,—and yet each subsisting in the same identical, undivided and indivisible Godhead. It is intended to define nothing beyond the fact, that there are such real distinctions in the Godhead, that while essentially one, the Father, Son and Holy Ghost are relatively and officially distinct. As to the nature of this personality, and the mode of its existence, this term *person* expresses nothing.

To say, therefore, as Unitarians constantly do, that since the word *person* has come now to mean, in its ordinary application to men, a distinct and separate individual,—compounded of body and soul, and identical in substance with no one else,—therefore this word *person*, as applied to the distinction in the substance of the Godhead, must express distinct Godheads, and thus teach that there are three Gods, is absurd. The question is not about the original meaning, or the most usual meaning now attached to the word *person*, but about those distinctions in the Godhead of which Scripture informs us. In the endeavor—which philosophical subtlety made necessary—to give expression to the views on this subject, which Christians generally have derived from the teachings of Scripture, the word *person* was employed not in its common, but in a theological and defined sense, just as many other terms are, in regard to many other theological doctrines. The term *person*, as now ordinarily employed, represents, it is true, an individual man; a being, therefore, who is physical as well as intellectual, finite, mortal, and full of imperfections. Would it therefore be just or reasonable to say that the doctrine of the Trinity describes God as having in his Godhead three separate bodies, and three finite and imperfect human beings? The term, as used in reference to the Trinity in the Godhead, is limited and defined and is far more Scriptural in its actual

form than the term unity, which is nevertheless employed to denote an opposite doctrine.

It is not the word for which Trinitarians contend, but the triune distinctions in God, represented by the names Father, Son and Holy Ghost, which might as well be expressed by the word *hypostasis*, as in the Oriental Church, which the Apostle uses, and which our translators—in unison with the Western Church in all ages—rendered *person*; or by the word *subsistence*. The important question is whether, while the Scriptures declare that there is but one eternal Godhead, they do, or do not, declare also that there are three persons, or hypostases, who are each distinct, and yet each possess the essential attributes of that one Godhead.

Unitarians, however, insist that there cannot be a distinct person, except where there is an entirely distinct individual, and they appeal to every man's common sense for proof. But why can there not? To constitute a person in the modern common meaning of that word, there must be a nature, substance or essence, and the qualities by which it is characterized. A substance alone will not constitute an individual person, nor qualities alone. There cannot be a nature or essence apart from its qualities, nor qualities apart from the essence. Both are essential to an individual person. In the case of man, who is a compound being, there is necessary, to constitute an individual, the essence and properties of a soul, and the essence and properties of a body. But this is not the only sense in which, even in the English language, the term person is employed. It is used to signify, also, individual character or station;* and, in its most accurate philosophical meaning, it is defined by Locke to signify "a thinking, intelligent being, that has reason and reflection, and considers itself as itself, the same thinking thing in different times and places, which it does only by consciousness, which is inseparable from thinking."†

Now in this sense—which is the only one applicable to a

* See Richardson's Dictionary.

† B. 11, c. 27, Hum. Und.

spiritual being—why may there not be united in the one Divine nature three Divine persons, each consciously intelligent? We do not, by such a supposition, make three Divine and independent individuals or persons in the ordinary meaning of these terms, because to such an individual person a distinct nature is as necessary as distinct consciousness and intelligence, while in this abstract sense of the word it only implies three distinct conscious intelligences in the one identical nature or substance.

The supposition of a Trinity involves, we again and again repeat, a mystery unfathomable to our finite reason. It is, however, the Divine nature—the substance, essence or Godhead—which is the mystery of mysteries infinitely above and beyond all possible comprehension of reason. But the supposition we have made involves no contradiction and no unphilosophical use of the term person, and the only question therefore is, whether such a supposition be required by the teaching of God, concerning himself, in His own revelation, and by the very words which holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

But still further. The word person is originally Latin, and originally introduced into the Church and into theology by the Latin fathers in a sense, and for a purpose, which has been accurately defined and described. In this sense it is retained and used now, and in this sense alone—and hence it is in this sense alone it is open to criticism as applied to the doctrine of the Trinity.

Person, therefore, as thus used, does not mean or imply distinct and separate Divine natures or Godheads in the Being to whom it is applied, but only a distinct, intelligent consciousness in each of the three persons who co-exist in one and the same identical Godhead—a Trinity in the unity, a unity in the Trinity, a tri-unity of conscious intelligences in one Divine nature.

There is, therefore, nothing incredible in the supposition implied in the Trinity, and nothing unwarrantable in the use of the term persons to designate the three Divine unities constituting this tri-unity; and the only question, therefore, is one of Scriptural fact.

Scripture Proof of Three Persons in the one God.

Now that in the infinite, and therefore transcendent, perfection of the Divine nature there is such a real distinction of three persons is, we believe, taught in Scripture, since it represents the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, each of them as God, while it announces only one God.

When the Apostle in Hebrews 1: 3, describes the Son of God as "the express image of his person," he ascribes to God the Father a personality different from his Godhead or essence, which could not be transferred, and never has been manifested. There is, therefore, a person in the Father, of which Christ is a manifestation distinct from his eternal and unmanifested Godhead. There is also a personality of the Son and Holy Spirit, to whom are attributed all that is characteristic of a personal, intelligent agent. And hence, as there is, and can be, but one Godhead, there must be in that Godhead three co-existing persons, as incomprehensible to us as the Godhead itself, but not more so.

Different things are said of each of these persons. They are represented as speaking to one another and of one another. The Father sends the Son, and the Son comes to do the will of Him who sent him. The Spirit is sent by the Son, and yet proceedeth from the Father.* The Father begets, the Son is begotten, the Spirit proceeds. The Word was in the beginning WITH God, not IN God, and not with, nor in, himself. The Son was in the bosom of the Father, and had glory WITH the Father, before the foundations of the world. And "the Word was made flesh." The Father "spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all." The Father declared Christ to be his well beloved Son. Christ at the same time received baptism. And the Holy Ghost descended upon him like a dove. The Son is also said to give his life a ransom for many; and to live ever to make intercession for us. And the Holy Ghost is said to renew and sanctify us, and to seal us unto the day of redemption. These are things so essentially different,

* See John 3: 16, 17; 4: 34; 6: 38; 10: 30.

as very plainly to intimate a distinction in the agents to whom they are respectively ascribed. For how can **THEY** be any other than distinct persons, who thus act, think, feel, in ways which are so entirely distinguished, and which imply distinct personal agents.

“When He, the Spirit of truth, is come, **HE** (says Christ) will guide you into all truth, for He shall not speak of himself, but whatsoever He shall hear that shall He speak, and He will shew you things to come. All things that the Father hath are mine; therefore said I, that He (the Holy Spirit) shall take of mine and shew it unto you.” At the day of Pentecost, these mighty effects and influences of the Holy Spirit thus promised were manifested. It was the Holy Spirit, who caught away Philip from the Eunuch, and who said “separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.” It was the Holy Spirit, also, who commanded Paul and Silas not to preach in Asia Minor, nor in Bithynia. And “holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.” The Holy Spirit is further said in the Scriptures, to strive, to know, to lead, to help, to testify, to reveal, to search, to prophesy, to give gifts, to work in the soul of man, to work miracles, to sanctify, to quicken or give life, and to be vexed and grieved.

Besides, these three persons are mentioned in Scripture in a different order. In the baptismal charge they are mentioned in their natural order, as Father, Son and Holy Ghost. In like manner the Apostle John, speaking of the witnesses to the truth of Christianity, takes notice of them as the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost. But, at other times, these three persons are enumerated very differently. Sometimes the Holy Spirit is first named, then follows Christ who is the Lord, and then God, who is the Father, is referred to last of all; as in that passage, in which it is said there is one Spirit, one Lord, and one God, and Father of all. (Eph. 2: 4, 5, 6.)

At other times again Christ is mentioned first, then follows the Spirit, and the Father comes last. Thus, says the Apostle, “through him, (i. e. Christ,) we both (that is, Jew and Gentiles), have access by one Spirit unto the Father.” And elsewhere the Apostle begins what he says with Christ, speaks

next of the Father, and ends with the Spirit, saying: "In whom, that is, in Christ, ye are built together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." In his closing benediction to the Corinthians, also, the Apostle places the Son before the Father, wishing them the "grace of the Lord Jesus Christ," before he prays for the love of God, or the communion of the Holy Ghost. The Apostle John also places the Spirit before the Son, wishing the seven churches of Asia "grace from the seven spirits before the throne," before he wishes it to them from Jesus Christ.

Now, in this variable mode of referring to these three persons in Scripture, we have a demonstration, *first*, that they are all equal in power and glory, otherwise that order would have been uniformly observed, in which their inequality, if any such existed, would have been clearly and invariably indicated. And, in the *second place*, this variety of order proves that those three persons are not attributes of one and the same God, or different characters or manifestations, but real distinctions or persons; since otherwise these and all similar declarations of Scripture would prove just as surely that the Father is an attribute of the Son or of the Spirit, and the Son and Father attributes of the Spirit, as that the Son and Spirit are attributes of the Father. The distinction, therefore, between these three persons—the Father, Son and Spirit—is and must be a real personal distinction.

This, however, will be still farther evident, from a consideration of the distinct offices and purposes which are assigned to each of these three persons in the Word of God.

This we might illustrate from what is said of their operation in the kingdoms of nature, providence and grace. But we will confine ourselves to the work of redemption. In accomplishing this great and ultimate design of all God's purposes and plans, the development and proclamation of which is the great aim of all prophecy, of all Scripture, and of all the means and ordinances of grace, each of these three persons is represented as fulfilling a different office. The Father, in his everlasting love, designs the scheme of redemption. The Son offers himself to fulfil it. The Father sends the Son. The

Son comes to do the Father's will. The Son sends the Spirit to abide with His Church always, and to supply his bodily absence. The Father gives the Son. The Son gives himself. The Spirit is given by the Son to whomsoever he pleaseth. The Father loves, and wills salvation to, the sinner. The Son, in order that God may be just, and yet the justifier of the ungodly, brings in an everlasting righteousness, and makes propitiation. The Spirit works in the heart to regenerate, purify and comfort. As in nature God by His omnipotent will creates; the Son orders, directs and governs; and the Spirit beautifies, adorns and perfects;—so in this work of grace God originates, the Son accomplishes, and the Spirit perfects and applies the work of redemption. We address our worship ultimately, though not exclusively, to the Father, through the Son, and by the Holy Ghost. The Father hears, the Son intercedes, the Spirit pleads in us and for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. The Father adopts. The Son gives power to become the sons of God. The Holy Ghost sheds abroad in the heart the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry *Abba Father*. The Father pardons. The Son gives repentance and remission of sins. The Spirit works in the heart that godly sorrow which leads to repentance not to be repented of. Thus it is that every grace and blessing pertaining to life and godliness, is traced in Scripture to “the love of God, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost.” “Through Christ we have access by one Spirit unto the Father.”

Thus it appears, that in the great work by which God designed ultimately to glorify himself in and through this world,—that is, the recovery and restoration of fallen man by Jesus Christ,—each of the three persons have entirely different offices assigned to them. The original purpose, design, contrivance and disposal of this glorious plan, is assigned to the counsel, love and grace of the Father.* “And on this account, says Owen, because as the Son undertook to effect whatever

* Isaiah 43: 1-3. Psalms 40: 6-8. John 3: 16. Isaiah 58: 10-12. Ephesians 1: 4-10.

the Father had so designed and purposed, there were many acts of the will of the Father towards the Son—in sending, giving, appointing of him; in preparing him a body; in comforting and supporting him; in rewarding and giving a people unto him—which belong unto the Father, on the account of the authority, love and wisdom that were in them.

The Son of God is represented as condescending, consenting, engaging to do and accomplish in his own person the whole work which, in the authority, counsel and wisdom of the Father, was appointed for him. Phil. 3: 5-8. And in these Divine operations is the person of the Son revealed unto us, to be honored even as we honor the Father.

And again: The Holy Ghost doth immediately work and effect whatever was to be done in reference unto the person of the Son, or the sons of men, for the perfecting and accomplishing of the Father's counsel, and the Son's work, in an especial application of both unto their especial effects and ends. Hereby is He made known unto us, and hereby our faith concerning Him, and in Him is directed. And thus in this great work of the new creation by Jesus Christ, doth God cause all his glory to pass before us, that we may both know him and worship him in a due manner as Father, Son and Holy Ghost."

The illustrations of this position might be multiplied. But enough surely have been given to convince any unprejudiced mind that the constant and invariable language of Scripture cannot be reconciled with the theory that, after all, the Son and Spirit are nothing more than attributes or qualities of the one God and Father.

This conclusion is, however, strengthened by the further fact, that to each one of these persons is attributed, in Scripture, every characteristic by which personal differences could possibly be distinguished. They are each and all spoken of as thinking, willing, designing, determining, grieving, being grieved and acting. All these personal acts are attributed to these persons as existing separately and at the same time, and that, too, both as it regards each other, as it regards other beings, and as it regards mankind. The Father asks.

The Son answers. The Spirit descends, co-operates and works. The Father repents that he has created man. The Spirit is grieved. And the Son executes vengeance. The Father hears the Son always. The Son prays to his Father. The Son appears to Paul on his way to Damascus. The Holy Ghost hinders the same Apostle when he would have gone into Asia, suffering him not and forbidding him. Acts 16: 6-7. The Father deserts the Son when in his last agony, thus fulfilling that Scripture, "Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd, and against the man *that is* my fellow, saith the Lord of Hosts." (Zech. 13: 7.) The Son cries out in his agony, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" The Father wondered that there was no man, and said, "whom shall I send, and who will go for us," and the Son saith, "Here am I, send me." God's law and justice demanded a propitiation, in order that "God might be just and yet justify the ungodly." The Son "was made sin for us, though he knew no sin," enduring in his human nature, which he voluntarily assumed, our griefs, and offering himself "once for all, as a sacrifice for sin." And the ever blessed Spirit, by renewing and sanctifying our hearts, qualifies and fits us for the reception of the blessings thus purchased and secured for us.

Surely, therefore, the scheme of salvation requires for the very conception of its plan, provisions and fulfilment, the admission of three distinct personalities in the one undivided essence of the Godhead. These persons have different names, relations and functions attributed to them, which are perfectly irreconcilable with the supposition, that these three persons are only the one personal God represented, as Sabellius taught, sometimes as Father, sometimes as Son, and sometimes as Holy Ghost.

The different order of naming the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, which we find in Scripture—the different offices and relations they are represented as sustaining—the different works and properties ascribed to them—these declarations of God himself, concerning himself, in words used under his own guidance, and which really make up all that is revealed concerning these persons—these must, according to all rules of

interpretation, and all purpose of language, signify more than a three-named unity. Our Saviour says of the Father, "there is another that beareth witness of me;" and of the Spirit he says: "I will ask the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter." These surely cannot all be one and the same Father. And when we baptize into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, this surely, in the name of common sense, and of that reason to which Unitarians are so fond of appealing, cannot mean a trinity of names, or attributes or qualities.*

The supposition is as absurd as it is blasphemous, and is utterly subversive of all faith in Scripture as a divinely inspired and intelligible book. It is impossible, with any deference to the express and multiplied declarations of the Bible, to imagine that the Father can be the Son, or the Son the Father, or the Holy Ghost either the Son or the Father. The Father cannot be the Son. The Father was never begotten, nor appointed to be a son or heir of all things. He never left that glory which He had with the Father from before the foundation of the world. He was never born. He never took part of the nature of His own creature man. The Father was never visible nor seen by any man. The Father never suffered, bled nor died. The very supposition is impossible. Neither can the Father be conceived as fulfilling the offices of a Mediator.

It is thus certain that the Father cannot, without blasphemy and absurdity, be regarded as one and the same person with the Son, as they are both represented in Scripture. But it is just as impossible to suppose that the person called the Son—the Son of God, the form of God, the express image of his person, &c.—can be one and the same person as the Father. It is impossible to conceive of the Son having a Son, an only begotten Son. The Son cannot by any latitude of expression be said to have made the Father heir and head over all things. The Son never sent the Father into the world, put Him to an open shame, and laid upon Him the iniquity of us all; and made Him a curse and a sin-offering. There is awful blas-

* See John 5: 32; 14: 16; 15: 26.

phemy in the supposition, that the Son could be regarded as doing towards God the Father what is every where represented as being done by the Father towards the Son in his Mediatorial character.

But the difficulty is just as great when we speak of the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost can not be conceived to be the Father, nor the Son, without an utter abandonment of all faith in Scripture, and in the use or value of language. The Father did not proceed from himself, nor from the Son, nor from the Spirit, but the Spirit is said to have proceeded from the Father and the Son. The Spirit was to glorify the Son and receive of what was His, and not to receive Himself, and in so doing glorify Himself. The coming of the Spirit, as the abiding comforter of the Church, depended upon the departure of the Son, and upon His being sent by the Son. At our Saviour's baptism we have the Father speaking, the Son acting, and the Spirit coming down,—a text so evidently holding forth the persons of the Trinity, in their distinct and separate existence and agency, that in ancient times when any one was suspected of being an Arian, it was said to him, go to Jordan, and there thou wilt see a Trinity—FATHER, SON and SPIRIT. And hence the scene of this baptism, as an emblem of Christianity, and a visible proof of its triune God, was a frequent pictorial representation on the very earliest Christian tombs.*

It is, therefore, beyond any reasonable controversy, that the Scriptures ascribe a real and a separate personality to the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, and that they teach us, therefore, that there is in the nature of God a perfect Trinity of persons in glory, eternity and sovereignty, neither divided nor separated. Language could not possibly teach the individual personality of each of these in stronger modes of expression. God, according to the Scriptures, is, therefore, a trinity as to person, a unity as to nature—a trinity as to office in the work of redemption, a unity in all the glory and the power, and substance and self-existing infinity of the Godhead. In this Tri-unity there is nothing either created, or servile, or adventi-

* See Maitland's *Catacombs of Rome*.

tious, or temporary. The Son was never non-existent to the Father, nor the Spirit to the Son. This tri-unity is eternally the same, unchangeable and invariable.

Testimony of the Primitive Church to the Tri-Personality of God.

The three persons in the Trinity are not, therefore, as Praxeas, in the days of Tertullian, affirmed, three names of one and the same person. But as Tertullian, who wrote about the end of the second century and beginning of the third, says in his reply to Praxeas, "we are to worship God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit: three properties, one divinity. The three are one in the Godhead, (or essence,) and the one three in properties, (or persons,) that there may be neither one in the Sabellian sense, nor three in that wicked sense now set up," viz: the Arian. God is, therefore, as Tertullian pithily says, *unum*, not *unus*. I and the Father, says Christ, are one—*unum*, one in nature and substance, not *unus*, one in person.

In the book from which we have quoted, Tertullian proves that there is a sense in which these three are distinct persons in the ONE sense of the Godhead.* He says, therefore, of the Son, that he is "Spirit of Spirit and God of God, another in mode, but not another in number."

"The Father," says Hippolytus—A. D. 220, the pupil of Irenæus, who was the disciple of Polycarp, and he of the Apostle John—"indeed is one: but there are two persons, because there is also the Son; and the third person is the Holy Spirit. For the Father commands—the Son obeys—the Holy Spirit teaches. The Father is over all—the Son is through all—the Holy Spirit is in all. We cannot understand the one God, otherwise than as we truly believe in the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Go, said Christ, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Thus did he show us, that

* There are in his works more than twenty passages in which this idea is expressed.

whosoever shall omit any one of these, he hath not perfectly glorified God; for through this Trinity the Father is glorified. The Father purposed—the Son performed—the Spirit manifested.”*

“Who, then, would not wonder,” says Athenagoras, A. D. 174, “that we should hear ourselves called Atheists, when we profess our belief in God the Father, and in God the Son, and in the Holy Ghost, showing both their power in unity and their distinction in order.”† “To this only do we strenuously apply ourselves, that we may know God and the Word who is from him; what is the unity of the Son with the Father; what is the communion of the Father with the Son; what is the Spirit; what is the unity and the distinction of these who are such, inasmuch as the Spirit, and the Son, and the Father, are united.”‡

“Him, the Father;” says Justin Martyr, A. D. 136, “and his Son, who came forth from him, and the prophetic Spirit—these we worship and we adore, honoring them in word and in truth, and to every person who wishes to learn, ungrudgingly delivering them as we ourselves have been taught.§ Atheists, then, we are not, inasmuch as we worship the Creator of this universe; and having learned that Jesus Christ is the Son of him who is truly God, and holding him in the second place, we will shew that, in the third degree, we honor also the prophetic Spirit in conjunction with the Word.|| For the Word, who is born from the unborn and ineffable God, we worship and we love next in order after God the Father; since, also, on our account, he became man, in order that, being a joint partaker of our sufferings, he might also effect our healing.”¶

Such was the simple statement of the teaching of Scripture on the subject of the three persons in the Triune God, in the earliest ages of the church. We find, therefore, that when

* Hippol. Cont. Noet., § xiv, Oper. Vol. II, p. 15, 16.

† Athen. Legat., c. x, p. 40.

‡ Athen. Legat., c. xi, p. 46.

§ Justin, Apol. I, Oper., p. 43.

|| Justin, Apol. I, Oper., 46–47.

¶ Justin, Apol. II, Oper., p. 40.

Theodosius, at the close of the second century, attempted to propagate at Rome the doctrine that Christ was a mere man, and that there is no distinction of persons in the unity of the Godhead, he was called to account by Victor Bishop of that city, in order that he might have an opportunity of vindicating or explaining his conduct. This, however, he could not do. And as he persisted in maintaining the scheme of doctrine which he had promulgated, "the consequence was, that having avowedly departed from the well known common faith of the Church, he was, by excommunication, visibly separated from the society of the faithful."*

We are, therefore, as Gregory Nazianzen expresses the doctrine—"we are to worship God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit—three properties, one divinity."

ARTICLE IV.

THE PRINCIPLES OF A LIBERAL EDUCATION.†

Gentlemen of the Euphradian and Clariosophic Societies:

My object in appearing before you is not simply to please or excite the imagination, but rather to give you food for reflection. Without further preface, therefore, I announce as the subject of my address, the principles of a liberal Education. Perhaps some may think that I owe some apology for selecting a subject so trite and threadbare. But aside from the interest which the subject must have for all of us, whether pupils or teachers, I have long ago come to the conclusion, that subjects only become threadbare to those who never think; but

* Euseb. Hist. Eccles. Lib. v. c. 28.

† An Address delivered before the Euphradian and Clariosophic Societies of the South Carolina College, April 20, 1859.

THE SOUTHERN PRESBYTERIAN REVIEW.

VOL. XIV.—NO. 1.

APRIL, MDCCCLXI.

ARTICLE I.

THE PRINCETON REVIEW ON THE STATE OF THE COUNTRY.*

The appearance of the above named article in the Princeton Review, for January, 1861, has excited the profoundest emotions of astonishment and grief in the minds of all in the South, and many at the North, who care for the interests of our beloved Church. The standing and influence of the Biblical Repertory, as well as the character of the article itself, require us to give it our special attention. The chief end that we propose is the vindication of Southern Christians from the, no doubt honestly mistaken, yet most amazing misrepresentations of the writer. Many God-fearing men have gone heart and hand with the political movements of the Southern States, and we desire to show that in so doing they have not proved themselves to be either mad men or dishonest demagogues.

* This article comes to us from a much respected correspondent in one of the border Southern States, and we very willingly admit it to our pages, although, of course, it does not look at the subject from exactly the same point of view occupied by ourselves in these Confederate States.—Eds. So. PRES. REV.

VOL. XIV., NO. I.—1

ARTICLE IV.

THE TRINITY OF THE GODHEAD THE DOCTRINE
OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.*

IV. The Scriptures declare the three persons of the Trinity to be equal in all that constitutes God.

We proceed to remark, as a fourth proposition deduced from the teaching of Scripture, that these three persons are equal in all that constitutes God. We assume, as undoubted by any one, and as agreeable both to reason and to revelation, that there are attributes and operations (or by whatever more suitable term we may designate them,) which are peculiar and essential to the Deity; such as creative and preserving power, absolute prescience, moral sovereignty, and the like. These are necessarily included in our notion of the incommunicable nature of God; “ever present, actively coöperating, and exerting their own distinguishing influence in all His laws, providences and acts. Thus, if God be eternal or omnipresent, we consider His

* We resume in this number, and shall complete (*D. V.*) in our next, this argument, which we commenced in No. 1, Vol. XI., and continued in No. 2 of the same volume, and resumed again in No. 2, Vol. XII. Circumstances which we could not control have hindered the progress of it until now. We state here, for the purpose of distinctly exhibiting the course of the argument, that it consists of five propositions, as follows:

I. The Scriptures teach that *God is one.*

II. The Scriptures teach that *the unity of the Godhead admits a plurality of persons.*

III. The Scriptures teach that *the distinctions in the Godhead are personal, not nominal.*

IV. The Scriptures teach that *the three persons of the Godhead are equal in all that constitutes God.*

V. The Scriptures teach that *the three Divine persons of the Trinity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, are not three Gods, and therefore that they are one God.*—[EDS. S. P. R.]

power, knowledge, and holiness to be coeternal and coextensive with Him. Moreover, it would be an absurdity to form a comparison between these and God Himself; to regard them as numerically distinct from Him; to investigate the particular mode of their existence in the Divine mind; or to treat them as parts of God, inasmuch as they are all included in the idea of the one indivisible Godhead." This, however, is not a matter of doubt or speculation, for we are most expressly assured that the blessed God has a name which He alone can possess,* and a glory which he will not give to another.† God, then, who is a jealous God, and whose name is jealous, must be characterized in His own Word by those titles, attributes and works, which are peculiar to His name and glory.

If, therefore, we find that in Scripture God ascribes to the Son and Spirit the very same names, and represents them as in all respects to be honored with the same glory, as that which is ascribed to the Father Himself, we surely must conclude that, however otherwise the Father and the Son and the Spirit are distinguished from each other, they are not three separate Gods—one supreme and two subordinate Gods—but that they must necessarily be one and the same God, in three persons—that is, a triunity of persons in one Godhead.

The Son of God, as mediator, and, therefore, as God manifest in the flesh, and the Spirit of God, as the attribute or agent of the Deity, might, indeed, have the name of God *figuratively* applied to them, and yet not be really God. But, while this is conceivable, it will be surely admitted that, in a book given to convey the only knowledge of God's nature which is possible to his creatures, such a figurative application of the title and glory of God would be so cautiously used, and so carefully guarded and explained, as to leave no doubt as to its real and figurative import.

* Ps. 83, 18.

† Isa. 42, 8.

This, however, is very far from being the case. Throughout the Scriptures the names or titles appropriated to God—the attributes and works attributed only to the Supreme Being—and the divine worship, in which this God is reverentially and exclusively adored, are all ascribed to the Son and to the Spirit, as well as to the Father, and hence the Father, Son and Holy Ghost are in this way most unquestionably proved to be severally God, coequal, co-existent, and coeternal, in nature, power and glory.

The proof of this position we design to advance in a separate discussion of the supreme Deity of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. At present, we assume that the proof is at hand, and we conclude that, as there is only one Godhead—as in this Godhead there is a plurality of persons—and as these persons are the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, that, therefore, these three are one. This doctrine is plain and comprehensible, as a fact revealed, but unsearchable and irreconcilable, as are many other primary and demonstrable truths.

This is a fact respecting the mysterious economy of the Divine nature, which the Divine wisdom has been pleased to reveal. As a fact, it is at once plain and indubitable. God, by revealing it as a fact, makes that plain to our comprehension, by the manifestation of its actual operation and practical effects, which, in its nature, is a mystery that ever has been, and ever must be, incomprehensible, and past our finding out.

St. Augustine determined to give three days and nights in succession to prayer and meditation, that he might understand the mystery of the Trinity. On the third night he was overcome with sleep, and dreamed he was walking on the sea-shore. There he saw a little child, who was scooping a hole in the sand, and filling it with sea-water from a shell. "What art thou doing, my child?" said the saint. "I am going," was the answer, "to put all the sea in this hole." "My child, you can never do

that," said Augustine. Then the child looked up, the Light of the world beaming from his divine eyes, and said, "I can do it, Augustine, as easily as thou canst comprehend the subject of thy thoughts." *

But the fact is neither incomprehensible nor "hard to be understood." All it requires, is the "obedience of faith," the acceptance of God's testimony, as the most infallible of all evidence. And, surely, there can be no excuse for hesitation in believing, as a fact, what is revealed and manifested in all the doctrines and duties, of which it is the foundation, when we are compelled to believe in the existence of our own mental and moral nature, while we have not even the consciousness of its existence, or of the existence of any one of its powers, except as they are manifested by their effects.†

It is precisely on the same ground we believe in the eternity of God, or His duration without beginning and without end; in the omniscience, in the omnipresence, in the providence, in the power and in the moral government, of God. These all surpass the power of the human mind to grasp them. In believing them as facts, it is unable to comprehend what it assents to, or to reconcile one with the other, in their apparently contradictory conclusions. The truths or facts are established by indisputable evidence, but their apparently contradictory principles and conclusions remain inexplicable. And this is true of all natural and revealed religious truths. When God is a term in any proposition, we can not reason—we can only listen and adore.

The necessity of believing as facts or truths what we can not comprehend in their nature or harmonize in their relations to one another, is not peculiar to these logical

* The visitor to the Vatican Palace, in Rome, will see this significant incident, designed by Raphael, on one of the panels of the famous picture, "Stanzas of Raphael."

† The mind and its powers are entirely out of consciousness, and only known by their effects.—*Sir Wm. Hamilton.*

truths. It is equally true of mathematical science, in which there are not a few propositions which are demonstrably certain, and yet, so far as reason can comprehend them, incredible, or impossible; and yet they are not only believed, but are made the foundation of other principles, and of incalculable results.

The same is true of natural science, also, in which such laws as gravitation, chemical and magnetic attraction, electricity, vegetable and animal life, etc., demand assent, while nothing is or can be known of their real nature. To carry out the principle on which Unitarianism rejects the doctrine of the Trinity, viz: That a man can not rationally believe any thing he can not understand, is both absurd and unphilosophical, and would reduce man to universal ignorance and idiocy.*



ARTICLE V.

BUNSEN ON THE BIBLE.

Bunsen's Bibelwerk. Vollständiges Bibelwerk für die Gemeinde. In drei Abtheilungen. Von CHRISTIAN CARL JOSIAS BUNSEN. Leipzig: F. A. Brockhaus; 1858, 1859, 1860. Large 8vo., pp. cccxciv., 345, 826, 642.

The above is the general title of a work on the Scriptures, by the Chevalier Bunsen, designed for the people

* For to pretend to apply reason to subjects with regard to which our own short views, and even our experience, will shew us it can not be depended on, (and of such subjects he had before given, as examples, those of infinity, immensity and eternity, as ascribed to God,) this is vanity and conceit and unreasonableness.—*Butler's Anal. Pt. 1, ch. VI.*

THE SOUTHERN PRESBYTERIAN REVIEW.

VOL. XIV.—NO. 2.

JULY, MDCCCLXI.

ARTICLE I.

NATURAL HISTORY AS A BRANCH OF SCHOOL
EDUCATION; AND THE SCHOOL, THE COLLEGE,
AND THE UNIVERSITY, IN RELATION TO ONE
ANOTHER AND TO ACTIVE LIFE.

In our article on the Principles of a Liberal Education, (Vol. XII., p. 310,) as also in an Inaugural Address delivered by us, we endeavored to show the importance of *organic science* as a means of mental culture. In our article on Morphology, (Vol. XII., p. 83,) we undertook to point out the philosophic connection of that branch of organic science with fine art. Finally, in our article on the Relation of Organic Science to Sociology, (Vol. XIII., p. 39,) we attempted to explain the philosophic connection of the same science with the most important concerns of life. If there is any truth in any of these views, (and we are perfectly confident there is,) the great importance of a full introduction of organic science into our courses of liberal education becomes evident at once. Our college curriculum, therefore, requires modification in this respect. It is in vain to contend that other equally or more

VOL. XIV., NO. II.—24

ARTICLE II.

THE TRINITY OF THE GODHEAD THE DOCTRINE
OF THE SCRIPTURES.

V.—The three divine persons in the Trinity—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost—proved not to be three Gods, and, therefore, one God.

We are now led, as a fifth link in our chain of argument in proof of the Scriptural character of the doctrine of the Trinity, to conclude that the existence of one infinite divine essence, or Godhead, and of three coequal persons in that Godhead, does not imply the existence of three Gods.

Though these three divine persons are distinguished from each other by proper and personal characteristics, attributes, offices, and works, yet all that is essential to the nature of the Godhead is common to them all, so that the Son is not a different God from the Father, nor the Spirit a different God from the Father and the Son. They are not three separate Gods. The Godhead—that which constitutes each person God—is one and the same. They are all three but one, and all three necessary to the full conception of the one God. The Godhead, or essence, is not multiplied so as to make three Godheads. The Word was God, but not another God. The Holy Ghost is not man, but God, and yet not another God. Neither is there a divine nature, essence, or Godhead, which is distinct and different from that common to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. There is no other divine nature but that which is common to the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, and by virtue of which they are each “God over all, and blessed for ever.”

Neither are we to imagine that this Godhead first existed, and that then a trinity of persons was formed out of it, but we are to conceive the existence of three modes, or per-

sons—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost—in one common Godhead, as being essential to the very nature of that Godhead, and as being as necessary as its existence. The whole divine nature is in the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. The Father, Son, and Holy Ghost constitute that nature. They are not different either in nature, attributes or perfections. But yet they are not the same in their mode of personal subsistence, or in their relations to each other, or in their relations and functions towards creatures, in the various dispensations of providence and grace. These persons in the Godhead, therefore, can neither be divided nor destroyed. They are one in nature. They are equal in power, attributes, and glory. They are different and distinct in mode of subsistence, in person, relation, and offices. Every one of these three persons has—not a *part*—but the *whole* Godhead in himself, so that each is “the living,” and “the only living and true God.” And yet, in this one Godhead each person is in such a way distinct, as to be capable of distinct relations, offices, and worship. Another observation, important to be borne in mind, is, that while in worshipping the Son, we “honor Him even as we honor the Father,” and while in worshipping and seeking the grace of the Spirit, we honor Him even as we honor the Son, and while we must, in every case, approach God only in the way of His own appointment, yet, when we do so, our worship of the Spirit and of the Son is equally the worship of the Father, and equally acceptable to Him, since in honoring one person in the Trinity we honor all. And hence, in baptism, we are devoted, not to the one undivided essence and Godhead of the Deity—not to the Father, merely—but to each of the distinct persons of the Godhead separately and severally, because this is the way in which God in Christ has manifested Himself to us—the way in which He works out redemption for us—and the way in which that redemption is to be sought and obtained from Him.

The Christian system can be stated, explained, supported, defended, and made practically efficacious, in no other way. The whole economy of man's salvation is based upon the fact, that while there is but one Godhead, there is in this Godhead a three-fold distinction, not in name or character, but a real, personal distinction. To each of these persons is attributed distinct offices in the work of redemption—in its origination, its completion, its application, and its consummation—while, at the same time, to each is ascribed all and every thing that is attributed to this one Godhead. Each person is thus declared to possess the common Godhead. There are, therefore, three persons in one Godhead.

The same Divine Works—Creation, Resurrection—attributed absolutely to Each Person, and to God alone.

This will appear, further, from the fact that, while each person has His peculiar relations and offices assigned to Him, yet, as if it was *designed* to prove that there are three distinct persons, and yet only one Godhead, we find that the same divine power and operation is attributed, equally and undividedly, to each of these persons, as God, and THE God by whom they are possessed and accomplished.

As this is a very essential point, we will illustrate it by two instances—which have been already presented, to prove the personal diversity of the Father, Son, and Spirit—that we may now prove by them the unity of their Godhead.

The first illustration is the work of creation.

It is the express and uniform teaching of Scripture, that God “is the maker of all things, by HIMSELF ALONE.”*

Here, then, God claims that work of creation which is the most essential, and in itself the absolute demonstration of an almighty, infinite and personal God, as His work, and as *exclusively* His, and *His alone*.

* Acts 14 : 15 ; Gen. 1 : 1 ; Is. 44 : 24 ; Ps. 33 : 6. See the Jewish Commentators in Gill, Allix, Jameson. John 1 : 1-3.

And yet God, in His own Word, and in words inspired by Himself, represents each of the "three persons as all connected with, and coöperating in, creation. With the honors of a work usually ascribed to the Father, Paul crowns the Son. Mark what he says of the Son: 'By *Him* were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, whether they be thrones or diminions, or principalities, or powers.' And, speaking elsewhere of God, he says: 'He, who at sundry times, and in divers manners, spake to our fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son, whom He hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also He made the worlds.' Now, as to the third person, or Holy Spirit, we discover indications of His existence even in the Mosaic record of creation. He appears in the earliest epochs of time, and amid those sublime and magnificent spectacles with which the Bible opens."

"The curtain rises upon the first act of creating power, and, through the enveloping shroud of darkness, we see the earth—a shapeless mass, crude and chaotic. It is a world in embryo. 'The earth was without form and void.' Yet at this early period, when there was neither golden cloud nor blue sky, nor green land, nor silver sea; when no waves broke upon the shore, and there were no shores for waves to break on; when no mountains rose to greet the morning sun, and there was no sun to shine on them; when no wing of bird was cleaving the silent air, nor fin of fish the waters; when—like the rude and various materials from which an architect intends to rear the fabric he has designed—the elements of fire, air, earth, and water, lay mingled in strange confusion, through the darkness that lies on the face of the deep, we discover some mighty Presence. He is moving and at work. It is the Spirit of God. He presides at the birth of time. He is evoking order from confusion, forming the world in the womb of eternity, and preparing a theatre for scenes and events of surpassing grandeur. Concerning that early period of creation, Moses

has recorded this important fact: 'The Spirit of God moved on the face of the waters.' In this glorious creation, therefore—in this beautiful world, and the starry skies that rose over it—we behold the mighty monuments of His presence and power. He sprung the arch of this crystal dome, and studded it over with those gems of light. Listen to the magnificent hymn of the Patriarch: 'He stretcheth out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing. He holdeth back the face of His throne, and spreadeth His cloud upon it; He hath compassed the waters with bounds, and divideth the sea with His power. By His *Spirit* he hath garnished the heavens.' In the temple of nature, therefore, as in that of grace, we adore a Godhead—the Three in One; and see Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, the presiding and coequal authors of a first creation."

What, then, must be our inference from these several declarations of God respecting the highest exercise of God-like power? What can it be but that the three persons—the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost—are alike uncreated, since they were each of them the author of creation; and, secondly, that as there is and can be but one Creator, because there is but one God, these three persons are and must be one God? In the ancient language of the Church: "The Father is uncreate; the Son is uncreate; the Holy Ghost uncreate: and yet there are not three uncreated, but one uncreated." *

The same conclusion may be deduced from what Scripture declares concerning another creating work, that of the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead.

Reject the doctrine of the Trinity, and the statements of Scripture on this subject can not be reconciled. Admit it, and all is clear.

* See, also, Westminster Conf. of Faith, ch. iv., § 1.

In Gal. 1 : 1, it is said : "Paul, an apostle, not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ and God THE FATHER, who raised Him (*i. e.*, Christ) from the dead." Again : in John 11 : 19, our Lord, speaking of His resurrection, says : "Destroy this temple," (meaning his body,) "and in three days I will raise it up again." And 10 : 17 : "I lay down my life, that I might take it again. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again."

From this, it is plain that our Lord assumes to Himself the act of raising His own body from the dead, so that here the resurrection is attributed to *the Son*.

Thirdly : 1 Peter 3 : 18, we read : "Christ hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit."

Once more, then, we see that Christ is said to be *quickened*, or brought to life, by *the Holy Ghost*.

Lastly : Peter and the other Apostles, when they are brought before the Council, in Acts 5, say, at verse 30, "The God of our fathers raised up Jesus."

Now, compare all these passages together. In the first place, observe we all admit that God raised Jesus from the dead. Next we read, that the Father raised Him up, therefore, the *Father is God*. Again we read, that Christ the Son raised Himself up; therefore, the *Son is God*. Thirdly, we find that the Holy Ghost raised Jesus from the dead; therefore, the *Holy Ghost is God*. And yet, they are not three Gods, but one God; for Peter says: "The God of our fathers raised up Jesus." And how does Moses describe this God of of their fathers? "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is *one* Lord." If, now, from a candid comparison of these Scriptures, the Trinity in Unity and Unity in Trinity must not of necessity be believed, we would ask, What, then, do these passages mean? Is it at all probable that the writers of the New Testament would use such unguarded language as this is, if they did not mean us to believe the divinity of

each of the three persons of the Trinity? Certainly not. No writer of common prudence could have done so, much less one writing by the direction of the spirit of wisdom and truth. How such a union can exist we are *unable*, and, therefore, not required, to understand. But that it *does* exist—that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost are each of them a *distinct person*—each of them God, and yet but one God, we *are* required to believe—to believe it on the peril of our souls; “for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.”

Nor are these exceptional cases. They are only illustrations of the general tenor of Scripture. Thus we find that the work of Providence, or the preservation of all things, is ascribed equally to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. “Jehovah is the preserver of man and beast, and the eyes of all wait upon Him.” In like manner, Christ “upholdeth all things by His own power.” And so, also, when the Holy Spirit is withdrawn, “they die and return again to their dust,” but “Thou sendest forth Thy SPIRIT, they are created, and Thou renewest the face of the earth.”*

Again: spiritual and divine operations are attributed equally to the Father, to the Son, and to the Spirit. “It is the same God which worketh all in all.” Christ is “all in all.” “But all these worketh that one and self-same Spirit.”† “Whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world.”‡ “Every one that doeth righteousness is born of Him,”§ that is, of Christ. “Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit he can not enter into the kingdom of God.” Believers are sanctified by God the Father.|| Paul, in his prayer for the Thessalonians, prays that the very God of

* Neh. 9 : 16; Ps. 145 : 15; Col. 1 : 16; Heb. 1 : 3; Ps. 104 : 29, 30.

† 1 Cor. xii. : 6; Col. iii. : 11; 1 Cor. xii. : 11.

‡ 1 John v. : 4.

§ 1 John ii. : 29.

|| Jude, ver. 1.

peace would sanctify them wholly.* But the same Apostle, ascribes this divine work to Jesus Christ, when he says: "He that sanctifieth (that is, Christ) and they who are sanctified, are all of one; for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren."† And yet this divine operation is also ascribed to the Holy Ghost, by whom Christians are often declared to be sanctified."‡ We might show, further, that a commission to the work of the ministry—the judging of the world, the raising of the dead, and many other divine and omnipotent works, are ascribed in Scripture equally to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost.

Interchangeable use of the name of God.

As, however, the proofs of these points are given in almost every work on the Trinity, § we proceed to remark that a still further and very striking proof of the identity of all that is essential to the Godhead, of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, is found in the indiscriminate and interchangeable application to each of the names of God.

The term God is employed to denote the absolute Deity, in all that is comprehended in His nature, essence, and attributes, and is, therefore, synonymous with our words Deity and Godhead. Now, this term is applied to each of the three persons, in the following, among other passages: "The Lord our God," "The Word was God," "Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God." When used alone, therefore, the word God appears to import the absolute Deity, apart from any consideration of unity or trinity. To the English word *God* corresponds the term *Elohim* in Hebrew, and *θεος* (*Theos*) in Greek,|| which is used by the Apostles

* 1 Thess. v. : 23.

† Heb. ii. : 11.

‡ Rom. xv. 16.

§ See the proofs given in Jones on Trinity, ch. iv., and in West's and Eadie's Concordances to the Bible.

|| See Hävernicks, in Kitto's Cyclopædia, art. God.

always in the singular, as it is in other languages, because they want the grace and propriety of the Hebrew, and are not adapted to convey, as it does, the primitive revelation of a God whose plurality in unity is conveyed by His Hebrew titles, Elohim and others.

The Monarchy of the Godhead, and the personal relations and subordination of the Son and Spirit.

It is when thus spoken of in his absolute Godhead, simply as God, that God is declared to be invisible, unrevealed, unknown, and incomprehensible. Jehovah is the Elohim revealed, the manifested, only perfect and holy One, our Redeemer the God of Israel, the angel of the covenant, He who was to come, who is come, who is the *ερχομενος*, he who is yet to come.* As thus revealed and manifested, God is made known in three distinct modes of subsistence, having mutual relations to each other, and yet having one essence or Godhead common to each. This mode of subsistence constitutes the personality, and this, together with the distinct relation in which each of these stands to the others, constitutes the persons. Upon this revealed nature of the Godhead is founded the conception of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and of their relations to each other, and of all the duties of creatures towards them.

In point of authority and order, the Father is first, the Son second, and the Holy Spirit third. In point of office, the Father is supreme, the Son subordinate to the Father, and the Holy Spirit subordinate to both. The Father is the everlasting fountain of the other persons, by whom, in an eternal generation, the Son is begotten, and from whom, in eternal procession, the Spirit proceeds. In order of nature, rank, office, and prerogative, the Father is supreme,

* See Hävernicks, *Introd. to the Old Testament*, p. 56, *seq.*

and the Son and Spirit ministrative, and officially subordinate.*

"This relation of the persons of the Trinity is carefully preserved in all Scripture representations of the economy of redemption. The Father appoints, the Son executes, and the Holy Ghost applies. The Father, in a more particular manner, sustains the character of the offended Deity, and asserts the honors of divine government, for which reason He is more frequently called God than the other adorable persons. The Son appears as mediator, assuming the place of men, yet invested with the rights of the Godhead; and the Holy Ghost represents both the Father and His Son Jesus Christ, supplying the absence of the latter. We need not wonder, therefore, that the name of God, which is common to all the persons of the most holy and glorious Trinity, should be more frequently given to the Father, who sustains the divine character in a very particular manner in the wonderful economy of redemption."

But while this is true, and while this explains, and makes even necessary, all the language which implies inferiority, subjection, obedience, and ministration, in the Son and Spirit, yet we are abundantly taught that this is a distinction only of order, office, and relation, and not of dignity, derivation, or essential perfection. For, as has been seen, this order of naming the persons is not invariably observed in Scripture.† The term Father is not always used to designate that distinction in the Godhead which we commonly describe by the term *the first person*, but, also, in some cases, as a general title of divine nature.‡ In the same manner

* See Horsley's Tracts, Letter XV., p. 29; Newman's Hist. of Arianism, p. 180, etc.; Bull's Def., IV., 2, § 1, and especially Bishop's Bull's Three Treatises, and Waterland's Works.

† Mat. 28 : 19; John 5 : 7; Eph. 4 : 4-6, and 2 : 18; 2 Cor. 13 : 14; Rev. 1 : 4, 5.

‡ Deut. 32 : 6; Isa. 63 : 16; 64 : 8; Mat. 5 : 16, 48; 6 : 4; 7 : 11; John 8 : 41.

the title Lord, or Jehovah, is applied often to Christ in particular, and to God as a general appellation; and that the titles Spirit, Spirit of God, and Holy Spirit, are also employed as a general designation of the entire Godhead, is admitted by all parties.

So perfect is the union between the Father and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, that, in respect of their essential glories, what is asserted of the one, is to be understood of the other. Jesus, therefore, does not only say, "I and the Father are one;" He also affirms, "He who honors the Son, honors the Father also." And again, he says: "ALL that the Father hath is mine. He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father also." Again, it is said, "The things of God knoweth no one, but the Spirit of God." We are plainly taught by such expressions that such is the infinite union and communion of the Holy Spirit with the Father and the Son, that they are only known and comprehensible by each other, and that all that is spoken of one may be said of each and all.

There is not, therefore, one glory of the Father, and another glory of the Son, and another glory of the Holy Ghost. The glory of the Father is the glory of the Son, and the glory of the Holy Ghost. There is but one divine glory which God will not, and can not, give to another; and as this pertains equally to each person, the Father is called "the Father of glory"—Eph. 1 : 17; the Son, "the Lord of glory"—1 Cor. 2 : 8; and the Holy Spirit, "the Spirit of glory"—1 Pet. 4 : 14. They are thus all equally glorious, and all gloriously equal in that glory which they had with each other from before the foundation of the world.

*Our object only to state Revealed Facts, and not to explain
Inexplicable Mysteries.*

We have ventured on these remarks, not, we again repeat, with any intention of explaining or of removing the mys-

tery of the Trinity. To do so would be absurd. The mystery remains, and must ever remain, in all that relates to the divine nature or attributes. Our only design has been to state clearly all that has been revealed, and all that is expressed, in the doctrine of the Trinity. On the one hand, the Son and Spirit are represented to us as ministering to God, and therefore are personally subordinate to Him; and, on the other hand, in spite of this official relative inequality in the offices thus ascribed by Scripture to the Son and Spirit, nevertheless the Son and Spirit are represented as being partakers of the fullness of the Father, and as being equal to Him in *nature*, and in their claims upon our faith and obedience, as is sufficiently proved by the form of baptism and the forms of doxology and benediction.

● The fact that God is one, and yet that the Father, Son, and Spirit, while each partaking of this one essence, are capable of subsisting in such a manner, and of holding such relations to each other and to us, as to devise, execute, and carry on the scheme of man's redemption, is, therefore, essential to the truth of the Christian system, and to all that is vital to the hopes and happiness of man—to his proper and acceptable worship of the true God—to his reconciliation to Him, confidence towards Him, obedience to His will, conformity to His image, and to a fit preparation for the enjoyment of Him in a blessed immortality.

Of these facts we may be satisfactorily and experimentally convinced, without pretending to assign a reason for, or so much as being able to conceive, the nature of these distinctions in the Godhead, or of the manner of their operations. All attempts to explain what is inexplicable, and to render intelligible what is infinitely above and beyond the reach of our intelligence, only darken counsel by words without knowledge, create differences among those who hold the truth as it is in Scripture, and give occasion to the enemy to blaspheme.

How, then, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost subsist in the one divine nature we can not tell, and may willingly remain ignorant, since God has not thought it best, if it were even possible, to discover it to us. The Scriptures nowhere tell us, either in what manner the Son is begotten of the Father, or in what manner the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and Son. And how, then, can we pretend to say how these three, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, subsist in one? Surely, it does not become us to determine the way and manner of God's subsistence, when He in His Word is silent concerning it. It may, and it should, be enough for us, that the facts of God's unity in a trinity of persons, of the relations in which we stand to these persons, and our duties and hopes founded upon them, are clearly revealed.

Summary, and Conclusion of the Argument.

Believing, then, that in nature—that is, in all that is essential to Him as God—God is and can be only and absolutely one, so that there can not possibly be more Gods than one; believing that, according to the uniform and constant language of Scripture, there are, and must be, distinctions in this divine unity; believing that these distinctions are real and personal, and not nominal nor figurative; believing that each of these persons is, by every form of expression that could convey the fact, most certainly declared by God to be God, and to possess and to do all God possesses and does, and to be equal with God in power, in glory, in worship and works; and believing, nevertheless, these three persons are one God over all, and blessed for ever; believing, we say, these things, is to believe only THE FACTS which are presented to our faith by God himself in His own Word, which was given by inspiration through holy men of God, who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, and which Word was given for the very purpose of revealing God to us, His own nature, and will, and—

mercy, so far as was necessary for our present duty and consolation.

Without this revelation we are in the condition of ancient philosophers, as described by Lucretius :

“ Stretching unfathomably at boundless thought,
Intensest visions were before him brought,
Unreal shadows ; yet his spirit stern
Did still unconscious for that Presence yearn
Which clothes itself with circumambient day,
Swifter than solar beams or lightning ray.
Grasping infinity, he nothing found,
Then from the vacuum shrunk that yawn'd around ;
Spread like the blind his hands, therein to clasp
Annihilation in his feeble grasp ;
As if some fiend that mock'd him in its place
Left but a shadow in his void embrace.
And thus he fail'd that mystery to scan,
The greatness and the littleness of man.”

To the law and testimony, therefore, be our appeal, and to it let us render “the obedience of faith.” Reason requires us to come to it with implicit deference, knowing that it must contain things too high for us, things else unimaginable and always mysterious, and that it must be heard in reverent docility and teachableness, not according to any private interpretation, but in the plain teaching of the Holy Ghost.

And as the question before us is the doctrine of Scripture, no forced construction can give us that doctrine. And hence the unavoidable tendency of the Unitarian views to destroy the authority and inspiration of Scripture, is palpable proof that its witness, which is true, is destructive of that system ; while the presumptive argument leading us to anticipate in Scripture the doctrine of the Trinity, is in itself a proof, that in teaching, as it does, the doctrine of the Trinity, it is what it claims to be, the Word and the Wisdom of God.

What saith the Scriptures is, therefore, the only rational controversy. For if the premises are taught in Scripture, then to reject the conclusions is to be wiser than God. It is to call God a liar. It is to affirm and to deny when ignorance is complete, and the subject is infinite, and the speaker is divine. It is to say a trinity of persons contradicts a unity of essence in the ever-blessed God, when both the nature of the essence and the nature of the personality are infinitely incomprehensible.

Yea, the heathen themselves will rise up in judgment against such presumption, and condemn it, seeing that Plato and others were led to regard the doctrine of a Trinity as agreeable to, and in no way contrary to, reason, and never suspected that it was liable to the charge of nonsense, contradiction and absurdity, and seeing that this was reserved for such atheists and sceptics as Porphyry, and Lucian, and Celsus, and Plotinus, and Proclus.*

* "In the opinions of the Pagan Platonists we have, in some degree, an experimental proof that this abstruse doctrine can not be the absurdity which it seems to those who misunderstand it. Would Plato, would Porphyry, would even Plotinus, have believed the miracles of Mahomet, or the doctrine of transubstantiation? But they all believed a doctrine which so far, at least, resembles the Nicene, as to be loaded with the same or greater objections."

After showing that Plato's doctrine was referred by the Fathers to his knowledge of Moses, Stillingfleet remarks: "They never suspected it to be liable to the charge of nonsense and contradictions, as our modern Unitarians charge the Trinity with; although their notion, as represented by Porphyry, be as liable to it. How came these men of wit and sense to hit upon, and be so fond of, such absurd principles, which lead to the belief of mysterious nonsense and impossibilities, if these men may be trusted?" "That this hypostasis did maintain its reputation long in the world. For we find it continued to the time of Macrobius, who mentions it as a reasonable notion, viz: of one Supreme Being, Father of all, and a mind proceeding from it, and soul from mind. Some have thought that the Platonists made two created beings to be two of the divine hypostases; but this is contrary to what Plotinus and Porphyry affirm concerning it, and it is hard

Without controversy, great is the mystery of Godliness. Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out.

Testimony of the Primitive Church to the Monarchy in the Trinity.

The views of some of the earliest Fathers will appropriately close and complete this article.

The following quotation from Dionysius Romanus (A. D. 260) defines the catholic doctrine of the Trinity with as much precision as Athanasius himself could have used:

"It would be right," says Dionysius, "for me to address myself next to those who divide and separate and destroy the holiest doctrine of the Church of God—the Unity—into three essences and divided existences, and three Godheads. For I hear that there are some among your teachers and preachers of the Word, who countenance this notion; who are opposed, as I may say, diametrically, to the opinion of Sabellius. For the blasphemy of the latter consists in saying, that the Son is Himself the Father, and *vice versa*; but these others preach in a manner THREE GODS, dividing the holy Unity into three existences, foreign from each other, and altogether separate: whereas, the divine Word must be united with the God of the universe; and the Holy Ghost must reciprocally pass into, and dwell in, God; in short, the divine Trinity must be summed up and brought together into one, as a head, I mean the almighty God of the universe." After condemning the heresy of Marcion, and the notion of Christ being a creature, he continues: "We must, therefore, neither divide the wonderful and divine Unity into three Godheads; nor destroy the dignity

to give an account how they should, then, be essentially different from creatures, and be hypostases in the divine essence." See Stillingfleet on the Trinity, pp. 214, 217; Horsley's Tracts, pp. 75, 82.

and exceeding greatness of the Lord, by making him a creature; but we must believe in God the Father Almighty, and in Christ Jesus his Son, and in the Holy Ghost; and that the Word is united with the God of the universe: for 'I,' says he, 'and the Father are one,' (John x. : 30,) and 'I am in the Father, and the Father in me,' (xiv. : 10,)—for thus both the divine Trinity, and the holy doctrine of the Unity, will be preserved."*

Tertullian (A. D. 200) says of Praxeas: "He thinks that we can not believe in one God in any other way, than if we say that the very same person is Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; as if *one* might not be *all*, (if *all* proceed from *one*), by unity of substance, and still the mystery of the divine economy be preserved, which divides the Unity into a Trinity, pointing out three, the Father, the Son, and Holy Ghost: but three, not in condition, but in order; not in substance, but in form; not in power, but in species; but of one substance, and of one condition, and of one power. These persons assume the number and arrangement of the Trinity to be a division of the Unity; whereas, the Unity, which derives a Trinity from itself, is not destroyed by it, but has its different offices performed. They, therefore, boast, that two and three Gods are preached by us, but that they themselves are worshippers of one God; as if the unity, when improperly contracted, did not create heresy; and a trinity, when properly considered, did not constitute truth."†

Again, he says: "Thus, the union of the Father in the Son, and of the Son in the Comforter, makes three beings united one to the other; which three are one thing (*unum*), not one person (*unus*); as it is written, 'I and the Father

* Decret. Syn. Nic., c. 26, p. 281, *et apud*. Routh Relig. Sacr., Vol. III., p. 179. Burton's Test. of Fathers, pp. 128, 129.

† Burton's Test. of Fathers, p. 68.

are one,' (John x. : 30,) with respect to the unity of substance, not to numerical individuality."*

"It is impossible," Origen says, "to compare God the Father, in the generation of his only begotten Son, and in his mode of existence, to any man or other animal who begets; but there must necessarily be some thing special, and suited to God, for which no comparison of any kind can be found, not only in existing things, but not even in thought and idea, so as for human thought to comprehend how the unbegotten God is made the Father of an only begotten Son. For the generation is eternal and everlasting, in the same manner as effulgence is generated from light. For he does not become a Son from without, by spiritual adoption, but is a Son by nature." Origen proceeds to confirm this by passages of Scripture, such as Heb. i. : 3; but he dwells particularly on Col. i. : 15, where the Son is called "the image of the invisible God." He considers in what sense the term *image* can be applied to the Son of God; and having observed that every son may be called the image of the father who begat him, he says, that in this sense the Son of God may be *the image of God*; "which image contains the unity of nature and substance, of Father and Son."†

Irenæus (A. D. 185) says: "And thus there is shown to be one God the Father 'who is above all, and through all, and in all things.' The Father is *above all things*, and He is the head of Christ; the Word is *through all things*, and He is the head of the Church; the Spirit is *in all of us*, and He is the living water which the Lord supplies to those who believe rightly in Him, and love Him, and know that *there is one Father, who is above all, and through all, and in us all.*" Again, he says: "That the Word, that is, the Son, was always with the Father, I have proved at much

* Burton's Test. of Fathers, p. 80.

† *Ibid.*, pp. 88, 89.

length; but that Wisdom, also, which is the Spirit, was with Him before all creation, he says in the words of Solomon (Prov. iii. : 19, 20; viii. : 22-27.)*

Clemens Alexandrinus, (A. D. 194,) says: "Nothing, therefore, is hated by God, nor yet by the Word, for both are one, God; for He says: 'In the beginning the Word was in God, and the Word was God.'" This same idea, of *both being one*, is found still more strongly expressed at the end of this treatise, where Clemens addresses a prayer to the Logos, and begins it with these words, which it is difficult to translate: "Be merciful, Instructor, to Thy children, O Father, the Director of Israel, Son and Father, both one, Lord."† Again: Clemens asks leave to "offer praise and thanksgiving to the only One, to the Father and Son, Son and Father, to the Son, who is Instructor and Teacher, together with the Holy Ghost, in all things one, in whom are all things, through whom all things are one, through whom is eternity." There may be parts of this sentence which are difficult to be comprehended; but it is unquestionable, that the Son and Holy Ghost are united with the Father as objects of praise, and the Greek words can hardly admit any other construction than that which declares the three persons to be one.‡

* Burton's Test. of Fathers, pp. 49, 50.

† *Ibid.*, p. 56.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 57.