

belongs rather to the department of Christian evidences than to the subject of the Rule of Faith. And, generally, the spirit of the Old Testament gend'ered to bondage (Gal. iv. 24); the Law exacted an obedience which it furnished no means of fulfilling: it provided no adequate atonement for the sins specified, while for some of a deeper dye it provided no atonement at all: and so far as this was its tendency, it is opposed to the Gospel which reveals a full atonement for all sin, and encourages the spirit of adoption whereby we cry, Abba, Father (Gal. iv. 6). The Law still has its use in convincing of sin, but so far as it is merely preparatory to the Christian standing, it is not our standard of faith or experience.

CHRISTIAN THEISM

' There is one living and true God, everlasting, without body, parts, or passions; of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness; the Maker and Preserver of all things, both visible and invisible: and in the Unity of this Godhead there be three Persons of one substance, power, and eternity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost' (Art. i.). ' The Holy Ghost proceeding from the Father and the Son, is of one substance, majesty, and glory with the Father and the Son, very and eternal God' (Art. v.). ' Ecclesiæ apud nos docent, decretum Nicænæ Synodi de unitate essentiæ divinæ et de tribus personis verum et sine ulla dubitatione credendum esse; vid, quod sit una essentia divina quæ et appellatur, et est, Deus, æternus, incorporeus, impartibilis; immensa potentia, sapientia, bonitate; Creator et Conservator, omnium rerum visibilium et invisibilium: et tamen tres sint Personæ, ejusdem essentiæ, et potentiæ, et coæternæ, Pater, Filius, et Spiritus S.' (Conf. Aug. i.). ' Deum credimus unum esse essentia vel natura, per se subsistentem, immensum, æternum, Creatorem omnium rerum . . . eundem nihilominus Deum immensum, unum et indivisum, credimus Personis inseparabiliter et inconfuse esse distinctum, Patrem, Filium, et Spiritum S.; ita ut Pater ab æterno generaverit, Filius generatione ineffabili genitus sit, Spiritus S. vero procedat ab utroque, idque ab æterno, cum utroque adorandus: ita ut sint tres non quidem Dii, sed tres Personæ consubstantiales, co-æternæ, et co-æquales, distinctæ quoad hypostases, et ordine alia aliam precedens, nulla tamen inæqualitate' (Conf. Helv. c. iii.).

CHRISTIAN THEISM, our present subject, may, as appears from our Articles and the corresponding statements of other Reformed Confessions, be considered under two divisions; one comprising those truths respecting the Divine nature and attributes which are common to all Monotheistic religions, the other the doctrine of the Trinity in Unity, which is distinctive of the Christian faith. In the following discussion this arrangement will be adopted. It must not, however, be supposed that the Monotheism of Christianity is either borrowed from natural religion, or from other sources than revelation. The unity and spirituality of the Divine Being are here to be

considered as part of the revealed doctrine of the Godhead, as resting on the authority of the Word of God, no less than the mystery of the Holy Trinity; for the Christian faith is that we worship one God in Trinity as well as Trinity in Unity.¹ Only it was the paramount object of the Jewish religion to insist upon the former truths, while the doctrine of the Holy Trinity belongs especially to the Christian revelation. But the later revelation presupposes and incorporates the earlier, so that we must not understand that the Christian faith rests on a twofold foundation, what the light of nature teaches and what Scripture teaches, respecting the nature of God, but on the one foundation of positive revelation. How far natural religion confirms the statements of inspiration is another question, which will presently come under consideration.

PART I.—ONE GOD

§ 6. NATURAL THEISM

Scripture teaches that there is but 'one God,' 'living and true,' as distinguished from the gods many and lords many of heathenism; 'everlasting' (in the Latin *æternus*); incapable, as pure spirit, of being represented in bodily shape, and therefore 'without parts,' whether physically or metaphysically; exempt from those human affections which we call 'passions' (*παθή*); among other attributes 'of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness'; the Creator and Upholder of the universe. This brief description, or rather attempt at description, of what God is, is sufficient for the needs of practical piety, and further explanations may seem unnecessary. But good reasons may be given for the considerable space devoted to general Theism, as it may be called, in all the dogmatical systems of the older theologians; reasons which certainly do not seem to have lost their force under the present aspects of theological speculation.

Questions relating to the nature and attributes of God, exclusive of the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, which, in Scripture, is always associated with the work of redemption, form that part of Christian Theism in which natural and revealed religion overlap each other, and render mutual aid. Reason confessedly is entirely at fault as regards the doctrine of the Holy Trinity; it could never have surmised, and can never fully comprehend, this great mystery of revelation. But Scripture itself recognizes a natural knowledge of God—

¹ Athanasian Creed.

α γνωστὸν τοῦ θεοῦ (Rom. i. 19)—partly innate and partly acquired, or capable of acquirement. It even indicates the lines of reasoning by which, from facts observed or experienced, man may rise to some just apprehensions of the Divine Being, and on which philosophy has expended so much thought ; as, *e.g.*, the argument from final causes in Psalms viii., civ., cxxxix. ; that from the idea of God in the mind, in Rom. i. 19 ; and that from the moral nature of man, in Rom. ii. 15. If this natural knowledge of God has, in any instance, been lost, if conscience has been perverted, Scripture ascribes the result to man's own fault, to a culpable misuse of opportunities, and a depraved will (Rom. i. 20, 21, 24). In short, if no revelation had ever been given, still man, as such, is in possession of innate notions and principles respecting the Divine Being, which he may either improve or stifle, and so rise or fall in the scale of his being. Faint, or practically inoperative, as these traces of the Divine image may be, they are not wholly obliterated. And that their existence should be recognized may be of importance to the Christian argument. For example, the evidences of revealed religion lean, to some extent, on the conclusions of natural. It has been sometimes assumed that miracles alone form the criterion of a revelation. ' In what way,' asks Paley, ' can a revelation be made but by miracles ?' In none that we are able to conceive. The remark is just in the sense that miracles, as a rule, are necessary to attest a Divine mission ; but not in the sense that nothing else is necessary. In Scripture the case is supposed of miracles, real ones, being wrought by a malignant power, and in support of error : in the Old Testament to seduce men from the worship of Jehovah (Deut. xiii. 1-5), in the New to promote the cause of Antichrist (Matt. xxiv. 24 ; 2 Thess. ii. 8-10). On what ground is such a pretended revelation to be rejected ? Not solely on that of its contradicting a previous revelation, for the question is, which is the true one, not which is the earlier ? It is a case of miracle against miracle, and mere priority does not seem sufficient to warrant a decision. What else can we fall back upon but reason, or conscience, or moral intuition, or by whatever name we choose to call the faculty of moral discrimination ; and to fall back upon it as furnishing a *relatively* independent testimony ? It is true that under the light of revelation it may be difficult to determine how much of this moral perception is original, and how much borrowed. We are reminded that the ' religion of nature has had the opportunity of rekindling her faded taper by the Gospel light, whether furtively or unconsciously taken ' ; but even so, a faded taper she must be supposed to have had, or to have. And in the instances cited, it seems to be taken

for granted that if this natural moral sense, instead of being allowed to abdicate its office, were in active exercise, it would be sufficient for spiritual guidance to this extent at least, that if the doctrine on behalf of which the miracles should be wrought were immoral or irreligious, there would be warrant for the rejection both of the prophet and his message. It was on a principle somewhat similar that our Lord, when accused of working miracles by the aid of Satan, pointed to their beneficent nature, and asked, could Satan be supposed to operate against himself? In the one case and as in the other, a certain light of nature is presumed, to which an appeal may be made with decisive effect. In Deut. xiii., the Jews, as an additional motive, were directed to the temporal benefits conferred on them, for that dispensation was one of temporal inducements: 'He [the false prophet] hath spoken to turn you away from the Lord your God which brought you out of the land of Egypt' (verse 5); but since this appeal could be addressed only to Jews, a wider basis must be sought in those innate notions of God and morality which are the common property of human nature, and coincidence with which stamps the doctrine miraculously attested, as proceeding from God. The existence of this testing moral faculty must also be presupposed in dealing with the question of the inspiration of Holy Scripture. Deborah and the authors of the Book of Psalms, for example, were inspired prophets, though not necessarily commissioned to write, or compile, the books which record their compositions (§ 4); by the aid of the moral faculty, in our case, no doubt, vivified by the teaching of Christianity, we separate in these writings the dross from the ore, and ascribe the former to the mixture of human infirmity from which no prophet but ONE has ever been quite free.

And even if this connection did not exist, or might be dispensed with, natural Theism being relegated to what might seem its more appropriate place, the philosophy of religion, the Christian believer may still derive a satisfaction from perceiving that no contrariety exists between the inferences of reason and the declarations of Scripture on this great subject; similar to that which he derives from the study of the analogy of religion as expounded by Butler. And if he has imbibed the spirit of that great apologist, he will not demand more from the natural argument than that it should lend this negative aid; since his faith rests ultimately, not on the surmises of reason, but on the announcements of revelation.

There is another reason, too, why this topic cannot be safely neglected. From its earliest dawn philosophy has busied itself with speculations concerning the existence and attributes of God,

whether there is a God, and if so, what idea we are to form of Him ; how His nature is to be defined or described : what His relation to the world, and especially to man, is. This could not be without its influence on the Church ; many of her converts from the schools of philosophy carrying with them, when they became Christians, traces of the habits of thought in which they had been nurtured. Hence, though in Church history we meet with few heresies on abstract Theism, speculations on the subject, traceable to philosophical systems, have never failed, from time to time, to make their appearance within the sacred precincts, modifying the aspects of Christian faith, and in some instances impairing its integrity. Pantheism and Dualism—the Scylla and Charybdis of ancient theistic philosophy—did not surrender their dominion without a struggle ; and it would be too much to say that even in the present day their influence is not felt. What, for example, but a phase of Dualism is the notion of a *limited* Theism, lately revived, and apparently a favourite one even with writers who profess to believe in revelation ? Theories of this kind, the offspring of philosophy (not always a comprehensive one), must be met, if possible, with the weapons which philosophy itself supplies ; and of course this need is the more urgent when they are propounded by those who reject revelation altogether.

A.—THE EXISTENCE OF GOD

The arguments on this subject have been by some assailed as of no value for their professed purpose, while by others they have been invested with the force of a real demonstration. They seem to have suffered partly from placing them all on the same level as regards cogency, and partly from undue assumptions as to the nature of those which are of real weight. In the following brief sketch, which is all that our limits will allow, an attempt will be made to adjust their claims, and to determine their bearing on Christian faith.

§ 7. A FIRST CAUSE

Everything which we see around us depends upon something else as its cause : it is not self-existent, but produced. Now the proximate cause is either itself self-existent, or it is, in its turn, the effect of another superior cause ; and the same remark applies to every link in the chain of causation, however high it may be traced. We must suppose, then, either the existence of a primary cause, itself uncaused, or of an endless succession of causes, none of which possesses the property of absolute independence. This latter supposition only pushes back the difficulty indefinitely ; for since no link

in the chain is self-existent, the whole is not so, and the question remains unanswered. On what does the whole depend? We seem thus compelled to ascend to the conception of a Being whose existence depends upon no cause external to Himself, but who is Himself the ground of His own existence (*Ens a se—Aseitas*), to whom we give the name of God.

Again everything visible is, in its nature, contingent, *i.e.*, it may, or it may not, have existed; it has no necessity of existence. And, as above, we must either suppose an endless succession of contingent existences, or arrive at last at some one whose existence is necessary. The latter hypothesis is the only one consistent with reason, and therefore we conclude that such a Being exists (*Ens necessarium—causa necessaria*).

It is obvious that these lines of thought are not really distinct, and merely denote different aspects under which we contemplate the same object. Thus the first cause of all things must exist necessarily, and a necessarily existing Being must be the first cause. It is the same fact regarded from different points of view.

The philosophical ground of this argument is what is called 'the principle of causation'; that is, that everything that comes into existence must have had a cause. But what is a cause? According to some, it is merely an antecedent, and an effect merely a consequent; and the material world exhibits nothing but a succession of antecedents and consequents: when these occur invariably in the same order, we call one cause and the other effect. But they are mere phenomenal changes, and furnish no answer to the question, Did one *produce* the other? The principle of causation, it is argued, is not a necessary truth independent of facts, but a mere assumption founded on experience; and experience can never give us more than the ideas of antecedent and consequent. Nothing, however, is more certain than that mere contiguity and succession do not convey the full idea of causation; as appears from the familiar illustration of day and night, one of which invariably follows the other, but is in no sense the effect of it. With the idea of a cause we always connect *power* to produce the effect; we conceive some occult influence passing from the one to the other. Whence do we derive this idea? The objections just mentioned seem to have arisen from overlooking the true source of it, *viz.*, not the system of physical nature, but our own consciousness. It is from this, and this alone, that we gain the idea of power as distinct from that of mere succession. By an act of volition we move our limbs, and through them produce changes in matter external to us; and when we will to move them, we put forth power in the very act; and it is from the consciousness of this

that we consider ourselves the cause of the changes that follow. By analogy, or perhaps by an act of the imagination, we transfer the idea thus gained to the case of physical antecedents and consequents, which otherwise certainly might not suggest it. How mind acts on matter is a mystery, but that it does so act as an efficient cause our consciousness tells us ; and this is sufficient to save the theistic argument. Nay, to advance it a step : for we thus learn, not only that proper causation involves the idea of power, but that Mind, so far as our experience extends, is the only or the chief really efficient cause in the universe.

This last extension of the argument is of importance in view of the objections urged against it by the disciples of Comte. Causation, it is said, applies only to changeable phenomena, but matter and force, the substrata of these phenomena, are unchangeable ; their sum never varies : they are therefore, so far as we see, uncaused. Let it be admitted then that volition also appears uncaused, and that Mind only can produce mind ; the result is simply that we have two co-ordinate principles in nature : mind and volition can only claim to be co-agents with uncaused matter and force, and must resign their pretensions to an exclusive place in the production of the universe. Two first causes, to say nothing of other possible ones, are as conceivable as one. It may be questioned whether two first, and therefore necessarily existing, causes *are* conceivable, whether such a notion is not inconsistent with the common intuitions of human reason. Certainly it seems inconsistent with the avowed aim both of Comtism, and of the materialism which this latter calls in as an ally, viz., to discover the monadic primordial principle whence the universe proceeded ; for two (not to speak of more) first causes must introduce an eternal dualism into the system of things, and of substances or essences which must mutually limit each other, and therefore cannot be self-existent. But the simple answer is that just given, viz., that we can form no idea of an efficient cause except from what passes within ourselves. Matter and force, as primary sources of physical change, elude our senses altogether ; and moreover there exists no analogy between volition and mere natural phenomena which could throw light upon the mode of action of the latter ; the argument, therefore, can never be more than a conjecture. Our own consciousness remains the sole basis of our idea of causation, and in this, as in other points, man is the true interpreter of nature.

But the validity of this inference from volition is itself disputed. 'The volition,' a distinguished writer remarks, 'a state of our mind, is the antecedent ; the motion of our limbs, in conformity to the volition, the consequent. This sequence I conceive not to be the

effect of consciousness, in the sense intended by the theory. The antecedent, indeed, and the consequent are subjects of consciousness ; but the connection between them is a subject of experience. I cannot admit that our consciousness of the volition contains in itself any *à priori* knowledge that the muscular action will follow. If our nerves of motion were paralysed, I do not see (unless by information from other people) the slightest ground for supposing that we should ever have known anything of volition as a physical power, or been conscious of any tendency in the feelings of our mind to produce motions of our bodies, or of other bodies.' ¹ It would seem more accurate to say that the antecedent, the state of the mind, is matter of consciousness ; that the motion of the body following is matter of experience ; and that the connection between the two is a mystery. No doubt, apart from experience we should never have known that volition has a power to move our bodies ; but the question is not, whence do we gain our knowledge of the connection between volition and motion ? but, what is involved in the act of consciousness, the antecedent ? When the writer admits that ' the power of the will to move our bodies ' is matter of consciousness, he seems to concede the point at issue. For this is all that is contended for, viz., that in every act of volition, followed by a motion of the body, the idea of a power is involved, and that from this we gain the true notion of a cause. From no other instance of antecedent and consequent, certainly from none of a merely physical kind, do we gain this idea ; which is tantamount to saying that to us, mind is the only efficient cause in the universe. As to the supposed case of a paralysed limb, our reasonings, surely, must be founded not on a state of disease, but on the relation of mind and body when both are in their normal condition.

Another eminent writer objects to the theory, ' that it is refuted by the consideration that between the overt act of corporeal movement of which we are cognizant, and the internal act of mental determination of which we are also cognizant,² there intervenes a numerous series of intermediate agencies of which we have no knowledge ; multitudes of solid and fluid parts must be set in motion by the will, but of this motion we know from consciousness absolutely nothing.' ³ But if we have no consciousness of these intermediate agencies, they are to us as if they did not exist. All that is

¹ Mill, ' Logic,' b. iii. c. 5.

² We are not cognizant of the act of mental determination and of the act of corporeal movement in the same sense. The former is self-determined, or matter of direct consciousness ; the latter is secondary and empirical.

³ Sir W. Hamilton, Lect. on Metaphysics, ii. Lect. xxxix. ; Mill, Logic i.

necessary to the argument is that we should be conscious of the first and of the last link in the series, and that the idea of power should intervene. The question seems independent of intermediate agencies, or of theories respecting the agency of mind on matter ; it is concerned simply with the irresistible tendency of the human mind to ascribe to every true cause power, or influence, to produce its effect.

The eternity of matter was a recognized tenet of antiquity, even with those who rejected the notion of its being uncaused. Unable to conceive the creation of the world out of nothing, most of the ancient philosophers held matter to be indeed eternal, but not self-existent ; it was dependent on the Deity, as light is upon the sun—an eternal emanation from an eternal source.¹ None but avowed atheists taught that mere matter is the sole independent principle of things ; even Hylozoism endowing it with an unconscious life by which it is moulded into its various forms.² When therefore it is affirmed that ‘ the mere existence of the world does not prove a God,’³ the statement must be taken with limitations. The existence of inert matter certainly does not lead to the ideas of personality and intelligence as connected with a first cause ; nor does this branch of the theistic argument profess to go so far. What it establishes is the reasonableness of the conception of a first cause, eternal and self-existent ; and of the high probability, from analogy, that this cause is not matter, or any property of matter, but Mind.

§ 8. AN INTELLIGENT FIRST CAUSE. FINAL CAUSES

Marks of order and design in an effect force upon us the conviction of a designer. But the world abounds with examples of orderly arrangement (whence the term *κόσμος*), and of adaptation of means to ends. This is visible not only in particular instances, *e.g.*, the structure of the eye as compared with its final cause, the power of seeing, but in the combination of these for still further ends ; nature, however high we ascend in the scale, ever presenting the same aspect of harmonious co-operation among its various parts towards a designed end, or ends. This, as it is the oldest, is the most forcible argument for the Being of a God : the most forcible, inasmuch as it rests on the clearest analogies. As certainly as we infer from the known final cause of a watch, *viz.*, to show the hour of the day, that intelligence presided over its construction, so we conclude from the subserviency of means to ends in creation that it must have had an

¹ Cudworth, Syst. b. i. c. 4.

² *Ibid.*, c. 3.

³ Mill, ‘ Essay on Theism.’

intelligent Author. Nor would the argument be invalidated if, in some instances, we did not know, or could not discover, the final cause ; for the mere collocation of parts, and their dependence upon and relation to each other, would be sufficient to convince us that some end must have been intended : as, in the instance of the watch, even were we ignorant of its object, the analogy between its construction and that of other productions of human art, of which we do know the design, would lead us to place the instrument under the same category. For is it to be supposed that the parts could have arranged themselves by chance ? Even ancient philosophy, in its better schools, could not entertain the supposition. Or shall we say that the material world may ' contain the source or spring of order originally within itself, as well as mind does ? ' But abstract possibilities are one thing, inferences forced upon us by experience another ; and the only experience we have in the matter, and therefore to us the only analogy to reason from, is that adaptations of means to ends never occur apart from the agency of intelligent Personality, either our own or that of others. We are therefore entitled to infer this agency whenever we meet with a corresponding fact, in the productions of nature as well as those of art, notwithstanding circumstantial differences which may exist between them. Whether we had ever seen a watch made or not, or known of the existence of such an instrument or not, the mere inspection of its structure would be sufficient to raise a presumption of a designer who had some end in view, and framed this means accordingly.

The advance of science not only furnishes continually fresh materials for this argument, but at the same time discloses a prevailing principle of uniformity, and adapted relations as well as parts, throughout nature, so that the hypothesis of discordant wills having been concerned in the cosmical arrangements may be considered as finally abandoned by philosophy itself. There are no notes of discord in the effect, and therefore not in the agency from which it has proceeded. But it may be questioned whether this argument is really a distinct one from the former, and not rather a particular application of it—that is, of the axiom that every effect must have a cause. The difference seems to be that here it is not the effect as a whole, but the marks of design in it that is the object of thought, which, like everything else, must have had a cause. This cause, from the nature of the case, can be neither a blind necessity, nor even Mind merely as involving the idea of power, but mind as involving the idea of intelligence. And thus it supplements the inherent deficiency of the cosmological argument, which merely leads to the belief of a first cause. This might be conceived of as a blind

force, a *natura naturans* ; but the idea of intelligence cannot be separated from the doctrine of *final* causes, they and a designing mind being correlative terms. It has been objected by a great metaphysician that since the argument from final, like that from efficient, causes rests on experience, and we have never been present at the formation of a world, our own being to us a solitary instance, or 'singular effect,' we are not warranted in inferring from the marks of design in it the existence of a designing mind. But is there not a confusion here between the origin and the constitution of the world ? It is not to the creation of matter out of nothing, or to the *rudis indigestaque moles* of chaos, that the argument so much applies, as to the adaptation of means to ends in the existing frame of nature, with which we are personally acquainted. It may be difficult to establish the fact that the universe had a Creator, for certainly we have had no experience of creations ; and yet it may be easy to discover in the arrangements of our universe, or one part of it, such a multiplicity of contrivances as to convince us that mere matter could not have produced them. Moreover, the experience from which we derive the idea of final causes is, like that which gives us the idea of an efficient cause, in ourselves, and not in the physical operations of nature. When we see a watch in process of construction, all that sense tells us is that the work is proceeding from a curious arrangement of bones, muscles, sinews, etc. ; the intelligence which presides over it remains unseen. That intelligence is presiding over it we infer from the knowledge that such an instrument could not be produced by ourselves without the exercise of a designing mind ; and by analogy we transfer the same to the watchmaker. It is only a more extended application of the reasoning when from the observation of the marvellous contrivances which the *whole* of nature, so far as it comes under our knowledge, exhibits, we ascend to the conception of a presiding Mind which framed them for ends, whether we can at present discern those ends or not. With respect to this last difficulty, it may be remarked that some of the greatest discoveries in science have been made in reasoning from means to unknown ends ; as, *e.g.*, the circulation of the blood, which Harvey arrived at by asking himself what could be the design of the valves which so plentifully occur in the veins of the body. Here the final cause was unknown ; being discovered, it threw light upon the contrivance.—As to the hypothesis that the complex structures of the world may be accounted for on the principle of 'the survival of the fittest' ; the animal, *e.g.*, in its efforts to see, throwing out at first the mere rudiments of an eye, and these, in the lapse of ages, improving themselves into the perfect organ ; it seems hardly necessary to dwell

upon it. The ingenious author can hardly have seriously intended it as an argument against final causes.¹ Certainly it has nothing to recommend it, on the score of simplicity, in preference to that of an intelligent Creator.—Nor is the validity of the argument impaired by there being some things in nature of which perhaps we shall never discover the end intended, as, *e.g.*, the use of barren deserts, venomous reptiles, fierce wild beasts, or the existence of evil.² To such instances Paley's remark is applicable: 'These superfluous parts do not negative the reasoning which we instituted concerning those parts which are useful, and of which we know the use; the indication of contrivance with respect to these remains the same as it was before.'³

§ 9. ONTOLOGICAL

The first to propound this argument distinctly was Anselm of Canterbury. His reasoning is as follows: We have a conception in our minds of an all-perfect Being; but if this Being does not actually exist, we might add existence to our previous conception of Him, which, therefore, would be proved not to be the conception of an all-perfect Being; for to such a conception nothing can be added. Such a conception, therefore, necessarily involves actual existence.⁴ It afterwards became particularly associated with the name of Descartes, who devoted the fifth of his celebrated 'Meditations' to the discussion of it. 'Actual existence,' he argues, 'can no more be separated from the essence of God than the equality of its three angles to two right angles from the essence of a triangle; or the idea of a valley from that of a mountain. It is as certain that I find in myself the idea of an all-perfect Being as I do that of any mathematical figure or number; and I have no less clear a conception that an actual and eternal existence belongs to His nature than I have of the properties which I can demonstrate to belong to such a figure or number. For to such a Being no perfection can be wanting, which would be the case if He did not possess existence.'⁵ Kant's refuta-

¹ For even if we admit that the primitive germ, or protoplasm, was endowed with instinctive tendencies, we must still ask two questions: 1. Whence did these tendencies proceed? Were they self-caused? If so, the principle of causation itself, on which science rests, is annihilated. 2. How came the environments, the correlation of the instinctive tendencies, and the condition of their successful result, into existence?

² Jowett, Essay on Nat. Rel.

³ Nat. Theol., c. 5.

⁴ 'Convincitur etiam insipiens esse vel in intellectu aliquid quo nihil majus cogitari potest: et certe id quo majus cogitari nequit non potest esse in intellectu solo. Si enim vel in solo intellectu est, potest cogitari esse et in re; quod majus est. Existit ergo procul dubio aliquid, quo majus cogitari non valet, et in intellectu, et in re' (Proslog., c. ii).

⁵ Medit. v.

tion of the argument is, on purely logical grounds, unanswerable. As long as we entertain the conception of a triangle, he remarks, it would be a contradiction to suppose its angles not equal to two right angles ; but there is no contradiction in supposing such a figure not to exist at all. Remove the subject as well as the predicate, or predicates, and nothing at all remains. That a figure containing three angles should necessarily exist can never be proved ; on the *supposition* that a triangle exists, no doubt it must have three angles, but with the disappearance of the supposition the angles also disappear. So it is with the conception of an absolutely necessary Being. That God is almighty is a necessary judgment ; and the predicate cannot be removed as long as the subject God, *i.e.*, an all-perfect Being, is in the mind ; but that there is no God involves no contradiction. Moreover, existence is not a predicate which adds anything to our previous conception of a thing. A hundred actual dollars contain nothing more in the idea than a hundred imaginary dollars, though there is a great difference between them as regards a man's available resources. Whatever, then, our notion of an object may contain or involve, we must go out of it in order to predicate existence of the object.¹

There seems, in fact, to lurk an ambiguity in Descartes' use of the expression, necessary existence. It may mean either that the adequate conception of a thing involves necessary existence, or that the thing of necessity actually exists. In the former sense it is true that no adequate conception of God, *i.e.*, of an all-perfect Being, can be formed which does not contain, as part of the conception, existence *à se*, or necessary existence ; but does this involve the necessity of such a Being actually existing ? As long as I frame to myself the conception of a winged horse, the wings are an essential part of it ; but I am not entitled thence to infer that such an animal actually exists. As an intuition, however, of the human mind, the argument may hold its place. If I, an imperfect being, exist, how can I conceive an all-perfect Being as non-existent ? Every attempt to do so will prove abortive. If I exist, and am not God, and yet have an idea of God, which I have, I cannot think and therefore be convinced of my own existence (*cogito, ergo sum*) without believing that God exists ; and if He exists, He must exist necessarily. The ontological argument is only a mode of stating the fact that belief in the existence of God is a necessity of the practical reason.²

It is obvious that if, as some modern philosophers have main-

¹ Kritik der R. V. Kirchmann's edit. p. 476.

² Descartes, in *Medit.* iii., gives another turn to the argument ; viz., that the idea of an all-perfect Being could not have originated with ourselves,

tained,¹ we can form no true, albeit inadequate, conception of God, the very basis of the argument is cut away from under it. For it proceeds on the assumption that such a conception is innate, though it may be dormant ; that it exists previously to the observation of material objects, and is not derived from the mere multiplication of created perfections ; and that it is not, as an original intuition, affected by the logical contradictions which, no doubt, beset every attempt to reduce the ideas of the Absolute and the Infinite to consistency with the laws of the human understanding.

§ 10. THE MORAL NATURE OF MAN

The moral law within us seems to point to a Lawgiver. For this law is not merely a passive faculty of discriminating between right and wrong, but speaks with authority, commanding us to choose the right and avoid the wrong, and acquitting or condemning accordingly (Rom. i. 15). The voice of conscience is, in fact, the voice of God ; if not speaking directly² through it, yet indirectly, inasmuch as this wondrous faculty must have been implanted in the heart of man by the Creator. Nor is the inference invalidated by the erroneous judgments which an uncultivated conscience may deliver ; for still what it commands it conceives to be right ; it commands nothing *as wrong*, though it may err in the practical application. The evidence from the moral constitution of man bears rather on the character than on the mere existence of God ; and perhaps it is going too far to say that the 'categorical imperative'³ of conscience *necessarily* implies a Lawgiver. The obligations of morality, we are reminded,⁴ need no other support than themselves : they are eternal and immutable. But the question relates not to the nature or obligation, but to the *origin* of the moral sense. Whence comes it ? As the intuitions of the infinite and the eternal seem to imply an infinite Being from whom they proceed, so the existence of conscience seems to point to a righteous Lawgiver, the Author of the faculty.

§ 11. CONSENT OF MANKIND

This is a favourite topic with writers on the subject, and is useful, not so much in proving the existence of a God, as in proving that such a belief is the common inheritance of the race.⁵ Hardly any

but must have been implanted in us ; and, on the principle 'nihil in effectu quod non prius in causa,' by an all-perfect Being.

¹ *E.g.*, Mansel, 'Bampton Lectures.'

² See Delitzsch, 'Psychology,' iii. s. 4 (Clark).

³ Kant, Kritik der R. V.

⁴ Mill, 'Essay on Theism.'

⁵ 'Ut porro firmissimum hoc afferri videtur, cur Deos esse credamus, quod

nation, or tribe, however barbarous, but acknowledges a superior Power : the apparent exceptions are not such, when examined more closely. How is the fact to be accounted for ? A primitive revelation presupposes a Revealer : an innate idea presupposes an Author. The universality of the belief guarantees the truth of it ; not, indeed, in Descartes' sense, but as proving it to be a common intellectual judgment. A question arises, Has this common belief become impaired in the progress of civilization, so that we may describe it as the special characteristic of a rude age ? The contrary is notoriously the fact. The nations of Western Europe are theistic no less than the savage tribes to whom Cicero appealed. Nay, their theism has become more concrete, more personal, than that of ancient philosophy itself. The *Gods* of heathenism were personal, not so its abstract Divinity, the *τὸ θεῖον*, or in a more concrete form the *Dii Deæque omnes* : but the manifest testimony of human belief, in modern times, has been toward investing this supreme object of worship with the attribute of intelligent Personality. And whereas the Deity of the Jewish Revelation is more anthropomorphous (not in an erroneous sense) than the corresponding conception of heathenism the Deity of Christianity exhibits an advance, in this point, upon the Jewish, for in the Gospel, ' the Word ' Himself ' became flesh, and dwelt among us ' (John i. 14). Against the atheistic argument that religion owes its origin to the policy of legislators availing themselves of a popular error to gain authority for their institutions,¹ this *consensus gentium* may be urged with great force ; for, if the theory were true, the belief in a superior power would be found only in communities which enjoy the benefits of legislation, whereas it is found, in some form or another, in the most uncivilized tribes.

The following remarks may be made on these proofs in general. Neither singly nor collectively do they amount to a ' Demonstration *à priori* ' ² of the existence of God, much less of His attributes. No fact is capable of demonstration in the strict sense of the word, so that the denial of it shall involve a contradiction ; and neither is this one. Mathematical deductions are demonstrations and necessary truths because they are concerned not with facts but with abstractions, or mental pictures of our own minds. What is the triangle

nulla gens tam fera, nemo omnium tam sit immanis, cujus mentem non imbuerit deorum opinio. Multi de Diis prava sentiunt (id enim vitioso more effici solet), omnes tamen vim et naturam divinam arbitrantur ; nec vero id collocatio hominum aut consensus efficit, non institutis opinio est confirmata, non legibus ; omni autem in re consensus omnium gentium lex naturæ putanda est (Cic. Tusc. lib. i. c. 13. Comp. De N. D. i. 16, De Leg. i. 8).

¹ Cudworth, J. S. c. v. s. 1.

² See Clarke's Work.

the three angles of which can be demonstrated to be equal to two right angles? No such figure exists actually in nature. We cannot draw a line on paper which shall have length without breadth, or which shall lie evenly between its extreme points; that is, the demonstration is not true of any actually existing triangle. It is the ideal triangle, formed by abstraction from the actual, on which we reason. Euclid is obliged to *postulate*, or make a condition of his reasoning, that a straight line may be drawn from one point to another, which yet is practically impossible: but the postulate once granted, all the properties of a trilateral figure bounded by such mathematical lines are necessary truths. It will be seen that none of the proofs for the existence of God partake of this character. They root themselves in experience, and though they rest ultimately on certain intuitions of the mind, they never can free themselves from the imperfections of their origin. The first step in the argument is, that something must have existed from eternity, for an intuition of reason tells us that from nothing nothing can come, and so far it is of an *à priori* character; that is, the intuition is part of our mental constitution, and begins to operate directly we perceive that something exists. But whether this something is God or the world the intuition does not decide. There is no contradiction in supposing that the eternity of existence may belong to the world itself, and not to a Being independent of it; which accordingly was held by many philosophers. An intuition of reason tells us that *if* the world is an effect, it must have had a cause, but not whether it is an effect or not. That it is so can only be argued from observation of facts, and depends, therefore, on probable reasoning. Similarly it is evident that whatever has existed from eternity must have the reason of its existence in itself, or necessary existence; but that the world may not possess this property cannot be demonstrated *à priori*. There are strong reasons for thinking that the world is an effect, and therefore must have had a cause, and therefore is not self-existent; but the $\delta\acute{o}\varsigma\ \pi\omicron\upsilon\ \sigma\acute{\omega}\mu\grave{\alpha}$ is wanting for demonstrative or *à priori* reasoning on the subject. That the first Cause possesses intelligence, and that He is a righteous Lawgiver, are obviously conclusions founded on an observation of facts, in the external world, and in ourselves; and therefore are *à posteriori*. The argument therefore falls short of apodeictic cogency, which accounts for the degraded notions entertained of the Divine Being by large portions of mankind, and, as travellers affirm, even the absence of the idea of God in some particularly uncivilized tribes. We may not 'like to retain God in our knowledge' (Rom. i. 28), and the natural result may be anticipated; for we are not *compelled* by a necessity of reason to believe

in Him, much less in the God of revelation. The evidence is only probable, but probable evidence is the usual, and the sufficient, guide of life.¹ It may be added, that to us Christians, faith, grounded on the revelation of God in the Scriptures, furnishes the *δός ποῦ στῶ* which the natural argument fails to do. The natural argument is rather the confirmation than the foundation of our belief.

The proper light in which these proofs are to be regarded is that of furnishing materials from which the imperfect consciousness of a superior Power, whether or not derived from revelation, is developed into more adequate conceptions, and attains a definite shape.² 'The innate idea of God,' says Jacobi, 'resembles a mute consonant, which can only be sounded in combination with a vowel, viz., creation (*πὰ ποιήματα*, Rom. i. 20), including man and his moral nature. The faculty is there, but it is only potential until the reflective powers are directed to it. Sometimes this process never takes place, and then generations remain sunk in Fetichism, or the lower forms of idolatry. In more happily endowed races a few superior minds emancipate themselves from the grosser conceptions of the popular superstition, and from them the improvement descends until, in a greater or less degree, it permeates the mass. The conjunction of the two factors, human reason and the visible creation, being thus effected, the result is, sooner or later, a *γνωστὸν τοῦ θεοῦ* (Rom. i. 19), not merely the belief of a God, but this belief purged from the taint of idolatry, which the Apostle describes as *unnatural*, and as the penal consequence of inattention to the lessons to be derived from creation (Rom. i. 21).³

Further, the force of the evidence lies not in any one branch of it singly, but in the combination of all the branches. Inert matter could hardly suggest the idea of an intelligent, and the contrivances of nature hardly that of a righteous, Creator; in conjunction with each other, and with the evidence from the moral nature of man, they produce their full effect. This, indeed, is a feature of the evidences of Christianity itself; each of which singly possesses some force, but collectively a much greater one. It is to be observed, moreover, that these proofs, while rendering the existence of a God probable, at the same time, to some extent, make known *what* He is.

§ 12. B.—THE NATURE OF GOD—INFINITY

Although the conclusion of Simonides, when he was requested to

¹ Butler, Anal. Introd.

² See Martensen's remarks on these proofs, Dog. ss. 38-43.

³ The book of Wisdom contains striking examples of this purifying process (see cc. 13-15), in which the philosophic minds of later Judaism had the prophets as forerunners (see the latter part of Isaiah throughout).

give a definition of God,¹ must ever be substantially that of a finite understanding, it must not be supposed that His nature is absolutely incomprehensible ; otherwise it is difficult to see how He could be an object either of thought or worship. That no logical definition of God is possible, is evident : for such a definition would consist of a genus and a difference ; but neither is in this case conceivable : not the former, for there is no common notion or category between God and the creature, under which He can be brought ; not the latter, for in God no such distinction as genus and difference exists. Even the highest category, substance, is predicable of God in quite a different sense from that which it bears in ordinary language. But can that inferior kind of definition called ' description ' be applied to Him ? Theologians usually hold that it can ; but only in a limited measure, corresponding to the imperfection of our ideas on the subject. They tell us, that whereas the natural knowledge of God, which is partly innate and partly acquired (from the works of creation), is extremely imperfect (*languida et pæne nulla*), and inadequate to meet the wants of fallen man ; and even under the light of Revelation we only know so much as our limited faculties can receive ; yet our knowledge is only inadequate, not untrue as far as it extends : we do not worship the ' unknown God ' of the Athenians (Acts xvii. 23).² They appeal, in proof, to Holy Scripture, which teaches that while ' no man hath seen God ' (in His proper Being) ' at any time ' (not even Moses, the most favoured of His servants, Exod. xxxiii. 20), yet ' the only-begotten Son who is in the bosom of the Father hath declared Him ' (John i. 18) ; that while we are far from seeing ' face to face,' or knowing as we are known, yet ' we see through a glass darkly,' and ' know in part ' (1 Cor. xiii. 12) : that while God dwells ' in the light which no man can approach to ' (1 Tim. vi. 16), and the Spirit of God alone ' knows the things of God ' fully and perfectly, yet we, having ' the mind of Christ,' are admitted to a measure of this knowledge (1 Cor. ii. 10-16). They remind us that if the only approach to a formal definition to be found in Scripture is the tautology ' I am what I am ' (Exod. iii. 14 ; Isa. xliiii. 13), yet what is important for us to know is conveyed in the statements that ' God is Spirit ' (John iv. 24), and ' God is Love ' ³ (1 John iv. 8).

¹ ' Roges me, quid aut quale sit Deus, auctore utar Simonide : de quo quum quæsierit hoc idem tyrannus Hiero, deliberandi causâ sibi unum diem postulavit. Cum idem ex eo postridie quæreret, biduum petivit. Cum sæpius duplicaret numerum dierum, admiransque Hiero requireret, cur ita faceret, Quia quanto, inquit, diutius considero, tanto mihi res videtur obscurior ' (Cic. De N. D. c. 22).

² Gerhard, loc. iii. c. 3. Comp. c. 1 : ' Ergo est aliquod nomen Dei absconditum, et occultum, quod scrutari non licet : est etiam aliquod nomen Dei patefactum, quod vult agnoscî, narrari, celebrari, et invocari.'

³ J. Gerh. loc. iii. c. 8. s. 70.

We have now to ask, Does Philosophy teach us anything on the subject? Reverting to the proofs of the existence of a God, we are met by a difficulty, viz., that none of them seems necessarily to lead to more than the conception of a limited Deity. That the Author of the universe must have been a Being of vast power, wisdom and goodness, may be admitted as at least highly probable; the great difficulty of the existence of evil, moral and physical, being explained on the supposition either of the refractoriness of matter, or of an Evil Being counteracting the designs of his adversary. But since the effect is not infinite, why need we suppose an infinite cause? Why assume a Deity of unlimited attributes to produce limited results? Whence, in short, do we derive the ideas of the Infinite and the Absolute as connected with the idea of God, which yet we do spontaneously connect with Him? It must be confessed that here the argument *à posteriori* fails us.¹ Even the oneness, or rather 'Oneliness'² of God cannot be thus inferred. There can of course be but One infinite Being; but there is nothing contradictory in the supposition of a number of limited deities having been concerned in the production of the world, provided we also suppose them to have been actuated by accordant wills.

Attempts have been made, with various success, to supply this defect. A traditionary method, derived from the scholastic writers, of arriving at an idea of the Divine perfections consists in three processes of thought: *Via eminentiæ*, by which we ascribe to God all the perfections which we discover in the creature, only in a superlative sense (*sensu eminentissimo*); *via remotionis*, or *negationis*, by which we separate from the idea of Him the imperfections that belong to the creature; *via causalitatis*, by which whatever perfections we observe in the works of God we ascribe to Him as their cause, on the principle that the cause must contain at least as much as the effect. But the objection still recurs, that by none of these methods do we gain the idea of absolute perfection; they are *à posteriori* methods, and the chasm between the Finite and the Infinite remains unbridged over. Others argue from necessity to perfection, that a self-existing Being

¹ A defect admitted by Clarke (Ans. to seventh Letter)—'The finite phenomena of nature prove indeed demonstrably *à posteriori* that there is a Being which has extent of power and wisdom sufficient to produce and preserve all these phenomena. But that this Author of nature is Himself absolutely immense or infinite cannot be proved from these finite phenomena, but must be demonstrated from the intrinsic nature of necessary existence.' Whatever may be thought of this latter 'demonstration,' the preceding remark holds good.

² 'Μόνωσις, unity, oneliness, or singularity, is essential to it'—the idea of God (Cudworth, c. iv. s. 10).

must be Infinite, but hardly with success.¹ For, in truth, limitation of essence is not necessarily inconsistent with necessity of Being²; at least we cannot, on merely logical grounds, pronounce it to be so. Infinity may be a condition of self-existence, or rather the most suitable idea we can connect with it, and yet it does not follow that the thing conditioned may not exist without it; as, in the hypothetical judgment, if rain falls the grass will grow, the failure of the antecedent does not involve that of the consequent, for the grass may grow even if the rain does not fall. It seems, then, that we must attempt another path; and perhaps it will be indicated if we consider that all discussions respecting the Absolute or the Infinite presuppose some idea thereof in our minds to which we tacitly refer, for we cannot be supposed to reason about a nonentity. Not an adequate conception, for the forms of logical thought are inapplicable to this subject, and we become involved in contradictions when we attempt definitions; but an idea, or immanent intuition of reason. We advance *via eminentiæ* to the utmost limits of analogical reasoning; but we are conscious of something beyond, fathomless and immeasurable, in the nature of God. 'We know,' says Pascal; 'that there is an Infinite, though we are ignorant of its nature.' And this something does not, in transcending the conceptions of the understanding, become to us a mere blank, a yawning chasm, 'without form and void'; the created perfections which have been our prompters and our guides all along, project their shadow on the boundless bosom of the Infinite. We still anthropomorphize, as we must do if we are to reason about Deity at all; and thus Infinity becomes identical with absolute perfection, and when we speak of a God of 'infinite,' we mean a God of perfect wisdom, power, and goodness.³ Let us hear Cudworth on the subject: 'Since infinite is the same as absolutely perfect, we having a notion or idea of the latter, must needs have of the former. From whence we learn also that though the word "Infinite" be in the form negative, yet is the sense of it, in those things which are really capable of the same, positive, it being all one with "absolutely perfect"; as likewise the sense of the word "finite" is negative, it

¹ See Clarke, Prop. 6.

² Kant, Kritik der R. V. b. ii. c. 3, s. 3.

³ The late Dean Mansel may perhaps be thus reconciled with his opponents. It could hardly have been the learned writer's intention (in his Bampton Lectures), to maintain that the infinite and the absolute, as applied to Deity, in other words the infinite perfections of God, are to us mere nothings, or wholly incomprehensible. But he has given occasion to objections, not altogether unfounded, against his theory by insisting too exclusively on the negative as compared with the positive notion of infinity, and by omitting to explain why it is, that while unable to conceive it, we yet must believe that this notion exists. Moreover it is not 'the infinite' in the abstract, but the 'infinite God' that we are reasoning about.

being the same with "imperfect."¹ It is, in fact, through not giving sufficient prominence to the positive element in our idea of Infinity that some modern philosophers of great name have failed to assign its due force to the theistic argument.² Etymologically the word 'Infinite' expresses a negation, that which is not limited; but philosophically it expresses an affirmation, however indistinctly the object may be apprehended; and it is in the latter sense that it denotes that element in the Divine nature which no mere *à posteriori* argument can supply. The idea of it is something more than that which we have of perfections vastly transcending our own, and something less than the immediate knowledge of Deity to which the ancient Mystics pretended; it is one of those indistinct ideas which we accept as a whole (intuitively), but are baffled when we attempt to reconcile its conflicting elements. The conclusion of the whole is that while God Himself alone knows what God is (1 Cor. ii. 11), man, by a combination of the intuitional and reflective faculties, knows too, but only in part; that partial knowledge, however, not being a mere creation of the intellect, but having correspondent realities in the Divine essence. And with this accords the language of Scripture, which refers us, for such knowledge of God as we can attain to, not to the understanding, but to faith, the intuitional organ of spiritual apprehension (1 Cor. xiii. 12; Heb. xi. 3, 6).

That there can be only one subject of these infinite perfections—one not merely in purpose but in essence—is evident; and further, that such a Being can have no 'parts,' divisibility into parts, which implies limitation, being inconsistent with the notion of infinity.

The arguments from marks of design, and from the moral sense, particularly point to the personality of God; but this has by modern philosophers been thought to involve great difficulties. How can the Absolute and the Infinite be conceived as a Person? Personality, in the ordinary sense, involves relation and limitation: a person is related to another, as not being that other, and for the same reason is limited. That the word Person admits of modified senses is seen from its use in describing the relations of the three Persons of the Holy Trinity to each other, relations which are never supposed to be inconsistent with the infinity of each; but on the immediate question before us, has not personality been confounded with individuality? An individual must be limited, but God is never represented in Scripture as an Individual. 'God,' we read, 'is' not *a* Spirit, but 'Spirit,' *i.e.*, the most perfect embodiment of intelligence and freedom; as He is 'Love,' the most perfect embodiment of goodness.

¹ Int. Syst. c. v.

² *E.g.*, Sir W. Hamilton, Discussions, etc.; McCosh, Div. Gov. App. i.

To have created other spirits, possessing a relative freedom and independence, is not to have abdicated His own essential qualities ; in Him we still live, move, and have our being (Acts xvii. 28) ; He is still the ' Father of spirits ' (Heb. xii. 9) ; it is a self-limitation, not a necessary one, that He has clothed Himself in to come down to our apprehension ; and though we must conceive of Him as possessing Personality, it is neither necessary nor correct to conceive of Him as a Person, in the sense in which each of us is. The difficulty arises, as it does also in the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, from our attaching to Personality the only conception we can form of it, viz., that derived from our own consciousness, which is always that of a limited nature : the conception may be true, but it is imperfect, and must not, any more than in the doctrine of the Trinity, be pushed to its consequences if we would avoid error. When we can understand what is involved in the title I AM (Exod. ii. 14), we can also understand what is meant by the Personality of God.

C.—ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

§ 13. ORIGIN AND DIVISIONS

The infinite nature of God does not, in fact, present itself to the mind as a single idea, but as an assemblage of properties or qualities, to each of which the idea of infinity is attached. The different wants of which we are conscious, as limited, or sinful, beings ; the different circumstances in which we are placed ; the different points of view from which creation may be regarded ; modify the aspects under which we represent to ourselves the one living and true God, and thus give rise to the doctrine of the Divine attributes. In conceiving God as the infinitely wise, good, powerful, etc., we confine our attention, in each case, to one aspect of the Divine essence we take a partial view of it suggested by existing circumstances ; and because a partial, necessarily an imperfect one ; but such a view as alone is of any religious value. There is no food for faith in the abstract ideas of the Infinite and the Absolute. How this Infinite Being is affected, what the relations He sustains, towards us, are the points with which we are practically concerned ; a God of attributes can alone be the object of worship. That this is the true origin of these conceptions, and that they are not logical deductions from one or more determinations of His essence, is evident as well from our own experience as from the representations of Scripture ; of which those portions which most abound in references to the

Divine attributes, *e.g.*, the Psalms, the Book of Job, and the latter part of Isaiah, are also those in which the varying phases of religious experience occupy a prominent place.

But the question may be asked, How come we to connect definite ideas with these Scriptural designations of the Divine Being? The methods above mentioned (*via eminentiæ*, etc.) teach us how to use the materials once supplied, but do not supply them. The answer is, that it is from human qualities we take our departure in framing predicates of God. Since revelation is conveyed in human language, it must either be unintelligible or avail itself of the innate notions and moral perceptions of the human subject; it must speak to us in our own tongue wherein we were born.¹ That is to say, in framing conceptions of God, we necessarily reason from the most perfect subject of which we are cognizant, the reasonable creature, and assign in an eminent, it may be inconceivable, sense to Him what we find in the creature. In so doing, a twofold caution is to be observed: one that we do not suppose the Divine attributes to be *identical* with the corresponding qualities in the creature. It is an axiom of theology that the attributes of God are not separable from His essence, as in the case of a man his virtue, or his wisdom, is separable from his rational nature; and therefore they partake of the incomprehensibility of His nature. When we pass from our most perfect notions of human wisdom or justice to God, we exchange, in the language of mathematics, continuous motion for motion *per saltum*: we confess the inadequacy of human thought to understand, and human language to express, the corresponding realities in the Divine nature: these form a different *species* from the former. But the other caution is no less needed; that we do not treat these predicates as arbitrary conceptions, which have no meaning when applied to God. For our flight over the chasm continues in the direction which it held when parting from the finite; neither in a reverse nor a divergent one. As the schoolmen state it, these distinctions are not those *rationis ratiocinantis*, merely conceptions of our minds, but *rationis ratiocinatae*, having a real basis of fact: there is something in the Divine nature actually corresponding to them: they are *analogically* true, however inadequate. God is not righteous merely because He acts as a righteous man would act; nor, again, merely because He is the source of righteousness in us: but He acts righteously because it belongs to His nature to do so (*οὐσιωδῶς*). He cannot be supposed as misleading His creatures when, in the language of inspiration, He describes Himself as just or merciful: His creatures, who have no means of understanding these terms,

¹ Hampden, *Phil. Evid. of Christianity*, p. 23.

except such as their own minds furnish. This is no point of merely speculative interest. A blind force, a mere *natura naturans*, a system of 'natural laws' working invariably and remorselessly, can never call forth the sentiments which Scripture encourages us to entertain towards God; in such a rarefied atmosphere all that is vital in religion perishes; love expires, prayer becomes a mockery. He who knows what is in man gives us better lessons when He authorizes us to reason from analogy to 'the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,' and tells us that if 'ye being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask Him?' (Matt. vii. 11). 'If this,' says Twesten, 'is Anthropomorphism, it is a natural and a necessary Anthropomorphism. For if we are formed in the image of God, why should we not from the image reason to the Original? Was He not in our likeness who could say, 'He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father?' (John xiv. 9).

Many divisions of the Divine attributes have been proposed which aim at an exhaustive analysis, but with indifferent success. Sometimes the distinction is not observed between the attributes and the nature of God, and sometimes the divisions run into each other. They have been classified under the heads of absolute and relative, negative and positive, proper and improper, abstract and concrete, quiescent and active; the first and the last conveying the same idea, and furnishing the only generic division under which the others can be arranged. The absolute attributes are those which we conceive as existing in God in and by Himself, the relative those which express the relations in which He stands to the creature; the former may be termed quiescent (*immanentia*), the latter active (*transeuntia*); in the former the distinction, in the latter the connection, between God and the world is more prominent. But if the origin of our conception of attributes has been correctly assigned, many of the so-called absolute attributes hardly come under the description; they either belong to the Divine essence, or are immediate deductions from our idea of it. Such are 'living and true'; infinity in its twin forms eternity and immensity; simplicity and unchangeableness, which follow from unconditioned existence; blessedness (*beatitudo*), which is implied in absolute independence. Sometimes they reappear under the form of relative attributes; as, e.g., under a certain aspect immensity becomes omnipresence. To the relative attributes then we may confine our attention.

§ 14. OMNIPRESENCE

The immensity of God, considered in relation to space as a con-

dition of creation, assumes the name of Omnipresence. For there are two ideas involved in this attribute, not separable in fact, but mentally—the Divine immensity in virtue of which God never can be absent from any of His works (*Dei adessentia*) and the Divine causality in virtue of which He is actively operative in all His works. These ideas are not separable in fact, for the attributes and the essence of God are one: wherever He is, there He acts; and wherever He acts, there He is: but under the former, Omnipresence is regarded as a quiescent and absolute attribute, involving no considerations of space (in fact out of it); under the latter as a relative one, having reference to existing things, and in immediate connection with them. For we can no more dis sever God from the world, since ‘in Him we live, move, and have our being’ (Acts xvii. 28), than we can identify Him with it. But if we are not to think of Him merely as an omnipresent spectator, the connection can be no other than that of an omnipotent agent, sustaining, guiding, impelling the course of nature. The rest of God from His works is a perpetual activity (John v. 17). And the dogmatical import of this attribute is to guard against the deistical notion that God, having once communicated to matter its forces and laws, has retired into a state of repose, leaving these laws to their regular and immutable operation; as an engineer, having set his machine in motion, withdraws from personal interference with it. The language of Scripture, of religion, and even of true philosophy, is at variance with this notion. If in the thunder the Psalmist hears ‘the voice of the Lord’ (Ps. xxix. 3); if it is He that makes ‘darkness and it is night’ (Ps. civ. 20), and gives to all creatures ‘their meat in due season’ (*ibid.* verse 27), this language is sanctioned by the spontaneous utterance of piety; as, *e.g.*, when a nation, grateful for deliverance from a threatened invasion, stops not, in commemorating the event, at the laws of nature established by God, but ascends to their Author—‘*Deus afflavit et dissipati sunt.*’ Nor does a sound philosophy lead to a different conclusion, for to an all-perfect Being we cannot ascribe a state of *otium cum dignitate*. But do we not thus annihilate the relative independence of secondary causes, and give countenance to the theory of Descartes and his followers, that God is the Direct Agent in all that happens, the properties of matter only furnishing the occasions on which He exercises His power? Nor if we bear in mind that these secondary causes are themselves dependent on God, who at the first established them, and defined their mode of working. If in His wisdom He has chosen to limit Himself to work in and through the laws of nature, it is not the less He who does the work. It is, however, the fact

that nature *appears* to have a life of its own, and to act independently ; and this difficulty especially meets us when under the term 'nature' we comprise free intelligences ; the difficulty, viz., how finite beings, free to stand or fall, can co-exist with an infinite Spirit who created, and is ever present with them. Both as regards the material and the moral world, it arises from the inability of those whose conceptions are bounded by time and space to comprehend the nature of a Being who is unconfined by those limits. Hence theology takes refuge in antinomies, or apparent contradictions : God is everywhere, God is nowhere ; He is not so much everywhere as He is that very thing which we call everywhere ; He is in every place, and yet is not contained in any place (*illocalis præsentia*). 'It is more proper,' says Augustine, 'to say that all things are in Him, than that He is anywhere, and yet they are not in Him as in a place' ; all which statements amount substantially to Chrysostom's confession, 'That God is everywhere we know and profess ; but how He is so we do not understand.'

Is God everywhere present in the same manner ? It can hardly be a matter of words when we distinguish between that presence of His which belongs to creation generally (*præsentia generalis*) ; that by which He dwells in the regenerate (John xiv. 23, *præsentia specialis*) ; and that on which the union of God and man in the person of Christ is founded (Col. ii. 9). Nor can we consider the distinctions as merely of degree, and not of kind, or specific ; as if, *e.g.*, the indwelling of the Holy Ghost in the regenerate is nothing but the general presence in a certain stage of intensity. Schleiermacher's remark, however, deserves notice : 'Properly understood, there is no difference in the Almighty presence of God, but only in the receptivity of the creature, which is greater in man than in any other created being, and greatest of all in the pious.' The question whether the Divine essence, or the Divine operation, *i.e.*, whether God Himself, or merely the virtue that proceeds from Him, is to be considered in proximity to the creature—at one time much debated—can hardly be entertained by those who hold that wherever God works there He is, and must be, in all the fulness of His Being ; yet possesses a measure of importance in reference to the crude notions of the Socinians, who maintained that God, in His essential Being, is only in heaven, all of Him that is present in creation being his attributes of Wisdom and Power.

But if the Omnipresence of God is not quiescent, but active and co-operative—and we cannot think otherwise than thus of it—we must take care to confine its co-operation to its proper objects. We cannot, *e.g.*, conceive of God as actively co-operating with evil, the

existence of which we feel too keenly, while we know that it could not exist without Divine permission. In what sense is God present (as in some sense He must be) to the minds and actions of evil men? This question will be more suitably considered in a following section. Nor, as has been observed, does it dispense with the operation of secondary causes, which are *relatively* independent; and if piety leads us to pray for the former, prudence forbids us to neglect the latter. We pray for recovery from sickness, and if restored to health ascribe it to God's goodness; but we also avail ourselves of the resources of medicine, and ascribe our recovery to the skill of the physician. It is in the actually constituted course of nature, with its laws and forces, that Divine co-operation properly finds its place; according to the saying of Augustine, 'God so manages all things which he created that He also permits them to exert their own energies.' We must, therefore, exclude it from creation strictly so-called, *i.e.*, the beginning of all things, when no course of nature was in existence; and from the evangelical miracles of the *creative* type, *viz.*, those on which Christianity is founded, the incarnation, resurrection, and ascension of our Lord. In the former, nature was passive; in the latter, her existing laws were suspended.¹

§ 15. OMNIPOTENCE

To whatever extent any notion, however debased, of a God exists, to the same extent power is found connected with it; power to avert evil, and bestow benefits; power to order and dispose, if not to create. But except in revealed religion this power appears limited and controlled; the inferior gods by Jupiter, Jupiter himself by Fate. In strong contrast therewith, the God of revelation is omnipotent. To have called the existing frame of nature into being conveys to our minds the idea of wonderful power; but Omnipotence comprises a further idea, that of power adequate to all *possible* or conceivable objects, *e.g.*, a new frame of nature, should such seem good to the Divine wisdom: God has not exhausted all His resources in creating the existing universe. Hence the god of Pantheism is not, and cannot be omnipotent, as being identified with the sum-total of creation, and having his will fully embodied in its laws. 'In scholastic phrase, the Divine power is infinite,' both *extensive* in respect to the range and scope, and *intensive* in respect to the mode and energy of its exercise; so that God, had it pleased Him, could have created a more perfect universe than He did. It is understood, of course, that the power of God does not extend

¹ Rather, were counteracted.—Ed.

either to what is contradictory in itself, that is, a nothing (as, *e.g.*, to undo what has happened, or to make two and two five) ; or to what is contradictory to some other of His attributes, as to pardon sin without an atonement would be contrary to His justice ; to refuse pardon to those who repent and believe on Christ would be contrary to His mercy. But this is not to introduce limitations into His nature, but to avoid doing so ; for to suppose Him capable of undoing what has been done would be to suppose Him capable of rendering false what is true ; and to suppose Him capable of acting against any of His attributes would be to connect with Him the idea of ' passive power,' *i.e.*, the power of being acted upon, whereas He is pure energy (*actus purissimus*), and to introduce division into that nature which is absolutely simple. Nor is Omnipotence inconsistent with God's acting, sometimes independently of secondary causes (as in creation), and sometimes through them (as in healing a sick person) ; for in this latter case it is He Himself who has ordained the limiting condition : of His own will He has ordered it, that certain effects shall be produced, not by a direct exercise of His power, but instrumentally through other agents. But He could, at the first, have arranged it otherwise ; and He can (as in miracles) exchange His ordinary mode of operation for another, if reasons exist for the change. His power can only become active through His will ; and therefore if it is His will to act conditionally, His power can only act thus.

§ 16. OMNISCIENCE

From the union of omnipresence and infinite intelligence we infer the attribute of Omniscience. Nothing can escape His knowledge, to whom all things are present, and who perfectly understands them in all their relations. He knows the thoughts of the heart (Ps. cxxxix.) ; every ' hidden thing of darkness ' (1 Cor. iv. 5) ; every want before it is expressed in prayer (Matt. vi. 8) ; everything in the womb of the future (Acts xv. 18) ; and, finally, He, and He alone knows Himself (1 Cor. ii. 11). As regards this attribute, we must, as with the others, separate from it (*viâ remotionis*) all imperfection, such as necessarily belongs to our knowledge : for example, the distinction of past, present, and future applies not to Him whose being is an eternal Now ; God's knowledge is not, as in man, a property annexed to His nature, but is His nature ; it is not after the manner of deduction (*discursivè*), nor succession (*successivè*) ; not by means of ideas (*species intelligibiles*), but immediate (*uno actu, se ipso*) ; it is not partial, but complete.

In the attempt to analyse the idea of Omniscience distinctions have been invented, which however add little to our comprehension of it : such as *scientia simplicis intelligentiæ*, by which is meant the knowledge of everything possible, and *scientia visionis*, the knowledge of everything actual, God Himself included ; *scientia necessaria* and *scientia libera*, etc. The mode of speaking is analogical : what we can conceive (*intelligentia*) as contrasted with what we see (*visio*) ; what we call 'natural' as belonging to God's nature (therefore *necessaria*), as contrasted with the effects which flow from His will, and which seem more arbitrary ;—these distinctions we, in whom nature and will are separable, transfer to God, in whom they are one. A distinction of some importance is attributed to the Jesuits, who made use of it in their contests with the Jansenists, viz., *scientia media*, or the knowledge of things which would have happened had certain conditions been fulfilled, which never were : as, e.g., God knew that David would be delivered into the hands of Saul if he remained in Keilah, where he did not remain (1 Sam. xxiii. 12). So our Lord knew that had Tyre and Sidon seen His mighty works (which they did not see), they would have repented (Matt. xi. 21).

The knowledge of God in respect of contingent actions,¹ those of free agents, is supposed to present peculiar difficulties. Cicero pronounces it inconceivable. And undoubtedly, when by 'knowledge' we understand 'will' or 'decree,' it is not easy to understand how such knowledge and contingency can co-exist. Under that aspect, however, it rather belongs to the topic of Divine providence (§ 21). But mere foreknowledge of an event is no more inconsistent with contingency than with necessity ; for the *nature* of the event is not altered by it : our knowing that a contingent event *has* happened does not affect its contingency ; neither, therefore, does our knowing (could we do so) that it will happen. Notwithstanding God's foreknowledge, free agents act freely, and necessary agents necessarily ; i.e., He has knowledge of free agents *as such*, and of necessary agents *as such* ; or knows that each will act according to the laws which Himself has imposed upon them. Wisdom stands in the same relation to Omniscience as Immensity to Omnipresence ; i.e., it is a quiescent or absolute attribute, or at least does not necessarily presuppose an actual creation. To 'the only wise God' (1 Tim. 1 17) we ascribe especially the first planning of the universe, with its laws and forces, its adaptation of means to ends, its final attainment of the greatest good of which it is capable.

¹ Usually called 'præscientia,' foreknowledge : not accurately, since past, present, and future have no meaning as applied to God.

Hence this attribute is closely connected with the theistic argument from final causes. But the ' manifold wisdom ' of God is especially revealed in the work of redemption, and the Church, even in its present militant state, is its highest embodiment (Ephes. ii. 10).

§ 17. GOODNESS—HOLINESS—RIGHTEOUSNESS—MERCY

These are what are called ethical, as distinguished from physical, attributes. The goodness of God may be understood in a twofold sense ; either the essential goodness of His nature (' There is none good but one,' Matt. xix. 17), or goodness in the sense of beneficence. As a relative attribute the latter is the sense which it bears. The earth teems with instances of God's goodness. ' It is a happy world after all.' The sportive movements of animals, the cheerful song of birds, the varied hues and fragrance of flowers (apparently serving no purpose but that of gratifying the senses), the pleasure attached to intellectual and even bodily exertion, all testify to the beneficence of the Creator. The existence of evil, it is true, lowers in the distance as a dark cloud, and is too important a subject not to demand special consideration. Meanwhile, thus much is evident : all the contrivances of nature have the well-being and happiness of the whole for their *natural* tendency : if the aim is not attained, it is in *spite* of natural arrangements, and because they are thwarted by some antagonist power. ' We never discover a train of contrivance to bring about an evil purpose.' If God had been indifferent to our happiness, He might have made, or permitted a rival Power to make, ' everything we tasted bitter, everything we saw loathsome, everything we touched a sting, every smell a stench, and every sound a discord.'

Holiness.—The proper idea of this attribute is separation from what is unclean. God, as He has no taint of sin in Himself, cannot tolerate it in the creature. The absolute holiness of God fences His love round ; and without the constant recollection of it, worship degenerates either into pantheistic rapture, or impure mysticism. Hence the common title, ' The Holy One of Israel ' (Isa. i. 4) ; hence the more closely man is permitted to approach the Divine Presence, the more is he reminded of his unfitness for it (*ibid.* vi. 5). In general, in proportion as God becomes the God of history and revelation, mingles in human affairs, and assumes ' a local habitation and a name ' in the congregation of Israel, the assertions of His holiness become emphatic, so as to establish a strong line of demarcation between Him and the impure deities of heathenism. Nor is the lesson unneeded under the Gospel, as the prevalence of Antinomianism at some periods, and in some sects, too plainly proves.

Righteousness.—Righteousness, or justice, is in man the virtue which rewards according to merit, and which redresses the inequality produced by wrong-doing, *i.e.*, inflicts punishment on the transgressor. Analogically, God is conceived of as righteous when He acts towards individuals as men would act under the circumstances. This attribute, then, is distinct from that of goodness, which embraces the whole creation, whereas this stands in special relation to beings endowed with personality and free-will (angels and men), *i.e.*, to their behaviour. That God is righteous, rather is righteousness itself, is declared not only in Scripture, but by the moral law in man, and by the moral government of the world; the tendency of the latter, however, occasionally thwarted, being plainly in favour of virtue. On the whole, virtue brings its own reward, while sin ends in, and is, misery. It must be confessed, indeed, that the traces of this attribute are not so clearly visible in creation as those of some others—wisdom, for example, or power; in fact, what are called ‘the inequalities of life,’ have furnished matter of objection to the unbeliever, and of perplexity sometimes to the Christian. The frequent failure of merit to achieve the success due to it; the calamities which often overwhelm the righteous while the wicked enjoy prosperity (Ps. lxxiii.) ; the apparent abortiveness of elaborate preparations for usefulness through the premature stroke of death—these are some of the difficulties which meet the inquirer, and form, in fact, a strong argument for a future state, where such inequalities will be rectified, and the righteousness of God vindicated. At present we walk by faith, not by sight; content with the assurance that however perplexing appearances may be, the Judge of all the earth will eventually justify His ways (Gen. xviii. 25). But, it may be asked, has not this doctrine of retributory justice, especially under the aspect of reward (Heb. vi. 10), a tendency to impair the Christian sentiment of humility? Not if we bear in mind that both the will and the power to do good are the gift of God (Phil. ii. 13), who, in rewarding, merely crowns His own work; and that, as regards forgiveness of sin, if He is ‘faithful and just’ to grant it (1 John i. 9), is not on account of our merits, but those of Christ, whose obedience, active and passive, becomes the property of those who believe upon Him. Inasmuch as no attribute of God is separable from His essence, and His essence is love, His righteousness can only be an efflux, and particular manifestation of His love; for which reason to attempt to set the one against the other, or to construct systems from their presumed opposition, is unscriptural, and tends to introduce something like dualism into the Divine nature.

Mercy.—Although this attribute has been denied an independent

existence, on the ground that it is identical with love, a distinction clearly exists between them. Mercy is love ; but it is love towards the fallen, the miserable. It has special relation, therefore, to the fact of sin in the world, and to the provisions of the Gospel for deliverance from the consequences of sin. Even towards the regenerate, who are reconciled to God through Christ, and have learned to cry, Abba, Father (Rom. viii. 15), there is room for its exercise ; for though they are no longer under the dominion of sin, they offend in many things (James iii. 2), and that continually ; and therefore are continually compelled to fall back upon the assurance that, like as a father pities his erring and repentant children, so the Lord is merciful to them that fear Him (Ps. ciii. 13 ; Luke xv.).

D.—THE WORKS OF GOD

§ 18. Both the earlier Creeds connect creation with the existence of God : and in this they are followed by our Article, which speaks of Him as the ‘ Maker and Preserver of all things, both visible and invisible.’ But between the attributes and the works of God there is an intermediate link by which we pass from one to the other, viz., the Will of God, or His free agency. This can hardly be called an attribute, and yet is the ground of all His works, and therefore claims a short notice. In attributing will to God, we invest Him with the essential property of a free agent, the power of choice ; we affirm that He was under no necessity, like a blind force, to do what He has actually done. And since there is no real distinction between the Will and the Being of God, the imperfections connected with human will must be removed from our conception of the Divine : thus there is no succession in it, as when we deliberate first, and then will ; no change involved, as when we pass from the power of willing to the act ; but deliberation, decree, choice of means, choice of end, are all one in God, and co-eternal with Himself. That He is under no necessity of willing any particular effect, appears from the consideration that He is in Himself all-sufficient ; which He could not be, if anything outside of Himself were indispensable as a complement to His perfection. The object of God’s will can only be absolute good, first in Himself, then in the creature : He cannot will otherwise ; but this is no limitation, but a perfection. Why His will should be described in one point of view as *absolute*, in another as *conditional* ; or as *antecedent* and *consequent* ; or as *efficacious* and the reverse ; *active* or merely *permissive* ; in other words, why an effect which He wills does not, and one which he does not

will does, take place, are questions which more properly belong to other heads of discussion.

The works of God, when we consider Him as the efficient cause of the universe, are usually described as creation, conservation, and co-operation. The first applies to the commencement, the second to the continuance, the third to the active forces of the frame of nature. It is needless to remark, that in God Himself there is neither variety nor succession of acts : all His acts are one, but to our apprehension they are distinguishable. For clearly it seems one species of act to call things into being, another to preserve them in being, and a third to co-operate with their powers. So it seems, we say, for in reality it may be doubted whether these acts do not run into one another : *e.g.*, to give existence to a thing is to give it continuance, for however short a period ; to preserve a thing is to preserve all that makes it what it is, *viz.*, its vital powers as well as its material form. The distinctions are more valuable as safeguards against imperfect views of the Divine agency than in a philosophical point of view. For instance, if we fix our attention too exclusively on the conservation of things, we may be tempted to forget either that they owe their very being to Almighty power, or that they cannot exert their inherent forces without the Divine co-operation ; if we have regard to creation alone, we may overlook the fact that, even when in existence, things could not continue so for a moment without God's sustaining presence. In this, as in other instances, it is the weakness of our faculties that compels us to consider under different aspects what is in reality one and the same operation.

§ 19. CREATION

The primary idea of creation is production out of nothing (*ex nihilo*) ; by which expression is to be understood not that ' nothing ' was a kind of material out of which God created the universe, but that there was no material at all antecedent to the creative act. It will be seen that this idea is necessary to obviate undue limitation of the Divine power. If an uncreated matter (*ὄλη*) existed independently of God, and co-eternally with Him, He would be a mere artificer, making the best use of the material to his hand, and possibly thwarted in his aim by its refractoriness, which, in fact, is one very ancient mode of accounting for the existence of evil. The emanation theory, according to which the world is an external efflux of the Divine nature, involves the absurdity of supposing that an infinite Being could throw off from Himself a finite being, *i.e.*, undergo a change of nature. The world, while dependent upon God, both for its existence and continuance, is yet distinct from Him, and conse-

quently has, in the proper sense of the word, been created ; and all the passages of Scripture which declare that there is but one God, and invest Him with infinite attributes, furnish indirect proofs of a proper creation. The Mosaic account (Gen. i.) supplies, of course, the main materials for our knowledge and our reasoning on this subject. From it we learn, that ' by the Word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing in the water and out of the water ' (2 Pet. iii. 5) ; and this general fact remains unaffected by any particular interpretation of the passage. Whether verse 1 is to be considered as a summary of what follows, or as referring to the creation of the elementary principles of matter, on which the subsequent changes proceeded ; whether the ' days ' of creation are to be understood literally, or as signifying vast intervals of time ; the true principle of creation—' He spake, and it was done ; He commanded, and it stood fast ' (Ps. xxxiii. 9)—is equally asserted.

It is plain that by ascribing the successive acts by which the world was prepared to be the abode of man, to the word of God, the writer implies that each was, in a true sense, an act of creation, that is, that they did not pass one into the other in the way of natural antecedent and consequent. Lifeless matter did not breathe into itself the principle of vegetable life, nor did vegetable life advance by any known law into animal, nor animal into rational ; there was a chasm between each of these steps, which nature of itself could not bridge over. There must, no doubt, have been a groundwork in the earlier for the later manifestations of creative energy ; a point of affinity with which the latter could connect themselves. Man, *e.g.*, was not created *per saltum* ; there was a capacity in the irrational soul for the gift of reason. But the progression was not the less above nature ; and each step involved a repetition of creative agency. Yet since this agency made use of existing materials, and built upon them, it is distinguishable from the first Divine act of creation *ex nihilo* ; whence its name of secondary, or mediate creation.

Whether the world had a beginning or not, is a question which does not necessarily affect the idea of creation ; for a world, the commencement of which we can assign to no point of time, may be as much dependent on the Creator as one to which we can assign such a point ; hence it was held to be an open question. The controversy relates not to the secondary acts of creation, the works of the six days, for they are described as occurring *in* time, and therefore must have had a beginning, but to the primary creative act. When we attempt to conceive this either as having had a beginning or as having had none, we encounter metaphysical difficulties which Kant pronounces insoluble, and which really are so if we grant his

premiss that time, in the proper sense of the word, can exist apart from the succession of events by which it is measured. Augustine's formula seems nearest the truth : ' The world was made not *in* time, but *with* time ' ; *i.e.*, time was coeval with creation, and though in *thought* we can extend it backwards beyond that point (as Scripture itself speaks of what occurred, ' before the foundation of the world,' Ephes. i. 4), yet it is then no longer time *in fact*, and we plunge into the abyss of eternity. That the world had a beginning has, therefore, come to be the commonly received opinion. Another difficulty, of very ancient date, is stated in the question of Velleius, the Epicurean, in Cicero, *De Nat. Deor.* l. i. c. 9 : ' Why,' he asks, ' should artificers of the world have suddenly appeared ? and why should they have slept for innumerable ages previously ? ' In other words, how can we conceive God's willing that the world should exist without His will immediately taking effect ? Again, if He ever existed without the world, there was a time when He was not Creator ; when He became so, did not this involve a change ? to suppose which is not consistent with proper ideas of the perfection of the Divine nature. It was on this ground that Origen was led to argue against the world's having had a beginning ; and so far as it was an idea in the Divine mind he was in the right ; it must have been eternally present to the Divine intelligence. How this is to be reconciled with the apparent doctrine of Scripture, which is, that the actual world did not exist from eternity, but that time and it came into being together, is a question for metaphysicians to discuss, and is one which dogmatic theology has little to do with. Hence, though as a rule favouring the common opinion, theologians have never considered the other as inconsistent with Christian faith.

The final end of creation can be no other than the glory of God and the communication of the highest good to the creature : things which in fact can never be separated. It would be improper, therefore, to say that God needed the world to complete His blessedness ; *i.e.*, that He *must* have created it. He is in Himself all-sufficient and all-blessed. Nor is it less improper to maintain that God created any part of the universe, especially of the reasonable creation, to show forth His glory in its eternal ruin : a tenet incompatible with the fundamental ethical truth, that God is love.

§ 20. CONSERVATION

By the schoolmen conservation was identified with creation, being described as a *creatio continua*, or a series of successive acts of the same energy which called things into existence. And, no doubt, all the works of God are, as far as He is concerned, one. To us, however,

there is a distinction between the maintenance of the existing frame of nature and its first production ; and the idea can hardly be dispensed with in our conception of the Divine causality. It expresses the fact that the world, after its creation, does not continue to exist by any independent power of its own ; and that if God's maintaining presence were withdrawn, it would relapse into pristine nothingness. Yet as things must be supposed to possess, by the gift of creation, inherent faculties and powers which naturally propagate themselves, the Divine agency in conservation is not exclusive and God maintains the frame of nature by maintaining its faculties and powers. Thus certain plants were created with medicinal properties, which so far have an independent existence ; but that they continue to exhibit these properties, and so minister to the art of the physician, is from God's sustaining power. How, then, does conservation differ from co-operation (*concursum*) ? Not specifically, for both are modes of the Divine omnipresence ; but the former represents rather the passive, the latter rather the active, side thereof ; the former is connected rather with the fundamental laws of nature (such as electricity, gravitation, generation, etc.), or with species as distinguished from individuals ; the latter rather with the manifestations of those laws, or the actions of individuals. We apply, *e.g.*, the idea of conservation to the human race, the idea of co-operation to the conquests of an Alexander or a Napoleon ; the former to the laws of storms, the latter to the particular tempest which destroyed the Spanish Armada. Yet it may be questioned whether the distinction can, philosophically, maintain its ground, whether it is not founded merely on the degree of prominence which the activity of secondary causes assumes in either case.

§ 21. PROVIDENCE

The Divine agency is here considered in relation not to efficient but to final causation. If God created the world for His own glory in the communication to it of the highest good, He must be conceived as providing for the attainment of the end, as well in the choice of means as in their combination ; disposing and directing every event, even every purpose of free agents, towards the accomplishment of His designs. He is a *negotiosus Deus* who never lets the reins of government fall from His hands. The mode of speaking is, as usual, analogical. When we propose an end to ourselves we are compelled to select and make use of other agencies as means ; but God needs not means to effect His purposes, and as regards Him the distinction vanishes : to Him everything is at once means and end. The doctrine of Providence is opposed, in the first place,

to that of blind necessity (the *fatum* of the ancients), which leaves no room for an intelligent will in the order of nature, and confronts us at every step with the iron rule of inexorable law ; and, in the next place, to the doctrine of chance, which does not, indeed, deny efficient causation, but treats the belief of a controlling Providence, disposing all events to an intended issue, as a pious illusion. It places us in the hands of Him who has told us that not even a sparrow falls to the ground without His permission, that the very hairs of our head are numbered, and that all things work together for good to them that love Him (Matt. x. 29, 30 ; Rom. viii. 28). With respect to the objects of Divine Providence, nothing is excepted from it, however insignificant it may appear to us : for, in the first place, to God nothing is either great or small, this relation existing only for finite intelligences—as in mathematics the smallest and the greatest quantity are equally nothing when compared with infinity ; and, secondly, the (apparently) most trifling event may give rise to momentous and far-reaching consequences ; as the noise of geese is said to have preserved Rome from destruction—and had Rome been destroyed how different would the history of the world have been ! The sentiment, therefore, ‘ *Magna Dii curant, parva negligunt*, ’ is as unphilosophical as it is irreligious. But though everything is an object of Providence, it does not follow that everything is equally so : hence the distinctions that have been drawn between general and special Providence, the former being concerned with nature as a whole, the latter with the Church. And, no doubt, there must be some difference between the care which God has for all His creatures, in feeding the fowls of the air (Matt. vi. 26), in blessing the labours of the husbandman with rain and fruitful seasons (Acts xiv. 17), or in His providential government of the human race (Acts xvii. 26) ; and that which He exercises towards those whom He has chosen in Christ (Ephes. i. 4), redeemed with the precious blood of Christ (1 Pet. i. 19), sanctified by His Spirit, and made heirs of eternal life. The distinctions, however, not unfrequently overlap each other : e.g., if the life and labours of S. Paul, after his conversion, were the subject of Providence in its most special sense, yet his mental endowments, his birth, his education, and other circumstances which fall under the head of general Providence, manifestly bore upon his special mission ; not to mention that if he was thus selected for a particular purpose, this again was for the sake of the heathen world which was his appointed field. Perhaps it would be more correct to say that Divine Providence has ever had one grand aim, the establishment of the Kingdom of God upon earth under Christ ; and that all its subordinate agencies, whether

in nature or in history, have been intended to promote that final result. This is the great lesson of sacred history, from the call of Abraham to the impending consummation, when the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ (Rev. xi. 15) : for this the world was created, has been preserved, and is controlled, in all its complicated movements, by the Providence of God.

There is, however, a distinction of real importance, as regards the manner in which Providence operates, that, viz., between ordinary and extraordinary, or those cases in which it works in the usual manner through secondary causes, and those in which it arrests attention by some unusual combination. The latter have received the name of special Providences. Events occur in history, or in the lives of individuals, of the greatest moment in their consequences, which have been brought about by a concurrence of circumstances so remarkable as to force upon us the idea of special Divine agency : the junction of the man and the hour has been marvellously effected ; lines of historical progression have intersected each other at the exact time and place when and where it was needful. Yet a special Providence can hardly be called a miracle : partly because in order to recognize it a retrospect is necessary, whereas a miracle addresses the senses directly ; partly because there is here no interference with the established order of nature, the miraculous element lying in the combination, not in the nature of the events ; and partly because it is not a question of authenticating a mission to introduce a new religion, and this it is that furnishes the appropriate place for miracles properly so called. True miracles come under the head rather of Creation than of Providence ; which latter is associated in our minds rather with the controlling and directing of the existing order of things, than with the originating of something new.

A main difficulty remains how to reconcile the doctrine of Providence, as explained above, with human freedom. If Providence were confined to mere foreknowledge, the difficulty (though not by any means removed, for God's foreknowledge cannot be conceived without a result in act) would be mitigated ; but if it involves, as it does, the idea of active government, how can this co-exist with liberty of human action ? That they must somehow co-exist, we know, on the testimony both of Scripture and of reason. We know that we are free to choose between contending motives, or, at any rate, actions ; and Scripture proceeds upon this fact in its promises and threatenings, its examples of reward and punishment. Yet the same Scripture asserts, as plainly, the entire dependence of created beings upon God, without whose permission and direction nothing

happens that does happen. Without human liberty there could be no virtue nor religion ; without a recognition of Providence, no just views of the Divine nature. The philosophical difficulty lies in this : that owing to the connection of cause and effect every event, according as it happens or does not happen, carries with it an interminable train of consequences, the issue of which no one can foresee ; the doctrine of free-will therefore seems to vest in man the power of permanently altering the course of nature ; and if so, the designs of God would seem to be dependent upon human choice, or caprice. The complete solution of the problem is probably beyond the reach of our faculties : ¹ meanwhile it may be observed that if anything could occur unexpectedly, so to speak, as regards God, He whose power and wisdom are infinite, can never be at a loss for means to counteract or divert its consequences. But this supposition is inadmissible ; nothing can ever occur unexpectedly as regards God. We are brought back, then, to the old tentative solution, that when God determined to create free agents, He imposed upon Himself limitations in His dealings with or through them : He must, unless He was to annihilate the freedom which He had created, allow it its proper scope ; He must permit voluntary causes to operate in their own way, as well as necessary ones in their way ; and the certainty of the event (which must be admitted) does not affect the nature of the causation which produces it, or transform freedom in necessity. Yet free as the causes may be, if God is omnipresent, not as a mere spectator, but as an efficient agent in every change that takes place (things being considered merely under the aspect of contingency, not of their moral quality ; in what sense God co-operates with evil actions is a different question), He must be supposed as, in some way inscrutable to us, shaping the ultimate result. For freedom in the creature is not independence of God, who both created and upholds free agents not less than necessary, and apart from whom neither could exist for a moment. The difficulty of explaining how God, without interfering with free causation, yet makes it subservient to His purposes, meets us also on the subject of Divine grace : *trahit volentem*, but He gives the will to be drawn, as well as draws. In the one case as in the other, the concurrence of Divine agency with human freedom is a mystery which baffles comprehen-

¹ ' Where does the difficulty in this case originate ? Where is it situated ? It originates in a province of thought wherein our notions confessedly are inadequate and imperfect ; in an estimate of the Divine nature, and the infinite perfections of God ' (Davison on Proph. dis. vii.). It should never be forgotten that in speaking of God's foreknowledge, or decrees, we anthropomorphize, and speak analogically.

sion. Attempts to evade it, by reducing Divine agency to mere foreknowledge,¹ only land us in other difficulties, and on more critical ground—the nature of the Divine perfections. The facts must be admitted, and the mystery acknowledged; and with this we must be content until an enlargement of our faculties enables us to see things in their unity, which at present exist side by side as independent truths.

§ 22. EVIL—ESPECIALLY MORAL EVIL

If a Being of infinite wisdom and goodness is the Creator of the world, the latter, it should seem, must be a perfect reflection of the Divine nature, *i.e.*, it must contain no admixture of evil. And so, in fact, we are told that when God surveyed the work of His hands He pronounced everything to be 'very good' (Gen. i. 31). Yet the actual state of the world is quite the reverse: it abounds with evil, moral and physical, so much so that it has been subject of debate, whether good or evil predominates in it. How are we to reconcile this fact with the infinite perfections of God? If it be said that creation, as it came from the hands of God, was perfect, but man, in the exercise of free-will, fell from his state of innocence, and with the fall sin and misery came into the world, it may be replied that God was under no necessity of creating the world, and if He foresaw (as He must have foreseen) that sin would find an entrance into it, why did He create it at all? or if He did choose to create it, why did He not adopt effectual safeguards against the intrusion of the foreign element?² Questions which have never yet been satisfactorily answered.

The attempts that have been made in this direction may be reduced to two principal heads: those which affect our conception of God, and those which affect our estimate of the Christian redemption. Since in either point of view they seem inimical to religious faith, it is worth while to examine how far they rest on a solid foundation.

Where the proper notion of evil was retained, as something positively antagonistic to good, it was natural, especially in the absence of revelation, to have recourse to the hypothesis of two independent principles—one the Author of good, the other the

¹ A great thinker confesses his inability to solve the problem: 'Si ad Dei naturam attendamus, clare et distincte perspicimus omnia ab ipso pendere, nihilque existere nisi quod ab æterno a Deo decretum est ut existat. Quomodo autem humana voluntas a Deo singulis momentis procreetur tali modo ut libera maneat, id ignoramus' (Spinoza, *Cog. Med.* p. i. c. 3. s. 10). See also Hume in his 'Essay on Human Understanding,' chap. 39, § 8 fin.

² See the imaginary dialogue between Melissus and Zoroaster in Bayle's *Dict.*, art. Manichees.

author of evil—who, after contending in vain for the mastery, came to a tacit agreement to retire each to his own province, and partition between them the empire of the world. The Manichees in the third and fourth centuries, and the Paulicians in the seventh, were the chief representatives of this theory, which, however, dates from a remote antiquity, and, in fact, readily suggests itself to a mind which has never entertained, or has lost, correct notions of God.¹ A dualism of this kind leads to the hypothesis of a *limited* beneficent Deity, which, of course, is inconsistent with any form of Christian faith.

Those who recoil from it—some within and some without the pale of faith in revelation—have resorted to modes of explanation which virtually consist in denying that what we call sin is sin. Far from being an intrusive principle, foreign to the intended constitution of the world, and actively opposing itself to the Creator and His beneficent purposes, it is described as a necessary factor in the order of things, which without it would be less perfect, and indeed incapable of advancing to its appointed goal; like a sour sauce, it adds piquancy to the banquet, or like a passing discord, it not only is passing (*i.e.*, has no substantial existence), but it enhances the perfection of the harmony. That this is not the idea of sin which Scripture conveys, is obvious; and not less obvious is it that the necessity and importance of the redemption which Scripture reveals are thereby disparaged; for why should man be redeemed from what is a necessary constituent in his moral progress, or an inseparable adjunct of his condition as man? It is by no means, however, so certain that the theories in question rest on a solid foundation.

One great writer, who has paid special attention to the subject, maintains that sin is a necessary consequence of the imperfection of the creature as compared with the Creator.² If the creature could be absolutely perfect, it would be as God Himself. God can bestow His gifts only in proportion to the capacity of the receiver; and even He could not create a finite being without the limitations and defects to which all such are subject. Hence the possibility of

¹ See Plutarch's confession of his own belief in his 'Isis and Osiris,' quoted by Bayle, Manichees.

² 'Il faut considérer qu'il y a une imperfection originale dans la créature, avant le péché, parceque la créature est limitée essentiellement: d'où vient qu'elle ne sauroit tout savoir, et qu'elle se peut tromper, et faire d'autres fautes' (Leibnitz, 'Théodicée,' i. s. 20). 'Dieu est la cause de la perfection dans la nature et dans les actions de la créature, mais la limitation de la réceptivité de la créature est la cause des défauts qu'il y a dans son action' (*ibid.* s. 30). 'Dieu ne pourroit pas lui donner tout sans en faire un Dieu: il falloit donc qu'il y eût des différens degrés dans la perfection des choses, et qu'il y eût aussi des limitations de toute sorte' (*ibid.* s. 31).

imperfection in knowledge, error in judgment, and perversion, or at least instability, in the will. It does not follow that these imperfections will acquire actual existence ; but they were contained in the Divine understanding, the 'Region of eternal truths,' as possibilities ; which Region of eternal truths may therefore be called the 'Ideal cause' of evil as well as of good, and is what the ancient philosophers had in their mind when they made matter as such the source of evil.¹ God therefore is the Author of sin in the same sense in which He is the Author of His own understanding ; *i.e.*, He is not the Author of it at all. But further, the source of sin being the imperfection of the creature, it is in its nature nothing positive, but merely a privation, as cold is the absence of heat, darkness the absence of light, or as the *vis inertiae* of bodies retards their velocity.² It is a nothing apart from the substance or quality which forms its opposite pole : it has no independent existence, but cleaves, like a parasite, to what is good ; as such, therefore, it needs no efficient but only a 'deficient' cause, *i.e.*, abstinence from perpetual miracles to counteract its natural tendency—which is exactly God's attitude with respect to evil. If the question be asked, Why should God have created a world with such beings in it, in their own nature limited and imperfect ? the answer is, that an infinite number of possible worlds having presented itself to the Divine mind, God was bound by a moral necessity to choose that one which, on the whole, should contain the greatest amount of good ; and that one is our present world, notwithstanding its admixture of imperfection.³

¹ Théod. i. s. 20. It is difficult to see how Leibnitz's theory escapes making sin a necessary adjunct of human nature ; but he seems to disavow the inference : 'Le mal métaphysique consiste dans la simple imperfection, le mal physique dans la souffrance, et le mal moral dans le péché. Or quoique le mal physique et le mal moral ne soient point nécessaire, il suffit qu'en vertu des vérités éternelles ils soient possibles' (i. s. 21).

² This is a favourite illustration with Leibnitz. 'Suppose,' he says, 'two barges on the same river, but one more heavily laden than the other : this one will proceed the more slowly, not because the current is less strong, but because the *vis inertiae* of the heavier load opposes a greater resistance to it. The force of the current may be compared with the action of God on the creature ; the *vis inertiae* with the natural imperfection of the creature ; the slowness of the barge with the defects which meet the eye in the action of the creature. The current is the cause of the movement, but not of the retardation ; and so God is the cause of perfection in the creature, but the limited receptivity of the creature is the cause of its deficiencies. God is as little the cause of sin, as the current is the cause of the retardation' (Théod. i. s. 30).

³ See the remarkable allegory at the end of part ii. of the 'Théodicée.' Leibnitz's reasoning on this point does not seem conclusive. His task is to prove that the existence of evil is a *sine quâ non* of the greatest amount of good ; but the proof seems to consist in the assertion that because God permitted evil, the world must be the best possible ; which is the very thing to be proved. 'Il est permis de dire que Dieu peut faire que la vertu soit dans le monde sans aucun mélange du vice, et même qu'il le peut faire aisément. Mais

The weak point in this theory does not lie in its Theodicy properly so called, for every Theodicy must aim at the same conclusion, viz., that the world would be less perfect without evil than with it, but in its views of the nature of moral evil, or sin. If the source of sin is the inherent imperfection of the creature as such, then the highest archangel is not free from it, being a creature; nor can sin ever be wholly extirpated from the Kingdom of God: whatever change may await the redeemed hereafter, they must still be creatures, and Leibnitz's reasoning will apply to them.¹ But especially, the notion of sin's being a mere privation is opposed both to Scripture and experience. Scripture speaks of sin not merely as an impediment to the Christian's progress, but as a principle of hostility against God (Rom. viii. 7): Christ and Satan, the kingdom of light and the kingdom of darkness, are engaged in irreconcilable conflict, which can only end in the destruction of the latter (Matt. xii. 26, 27; Ephes. vi. 12; 1 Cor. xv. 25). And such, in fact, does sin show itself when the restraints of law or of society are removed, and it has free scope to display its nature. The tragic page of history, individual and national, conveys far less frequently the idea of misfortune to be lamented than of wickedness to be hated and punished; and the State, as a Divine ordinance, is compelled to deal with crime under this aspect (Rom. xiii. 4). The theory, in fact, confounds metaphysical with ethical good and evil.² Metaphysical good consists in the perfection of a thing as a mere production, so that no essential constituent is wanting to it; and hence it may be predicated of the inanimate and the irrational creation, to which the idea of moral goodness is inapplicable, or applicable only in a very inferior degree. Moral goodness implies reason and free-will, and consists in their right direction—moral evil in the reverse. According to the 'Théodicée,' the difference is one of quantity, not of quality: evil is the less, good the more, perfect metaphysically; a view with which the fact that the greatest wickedness is often found combined with the greatest energy of will is irreconcilable. It is here overlooked that privation, in a moral sense, involves or presupposes a positive perversion of will: man fails of reaching the standard set before him because he does not will to reach it: his failure is criminal, and is treated as such in Scripture. This celebrated essay, then, notwith-

puisqu'il a permis le vice, il faut que l'ordre de l'univers trouvé préférable a tout autre plan l'ait demandé. Il faut juger qu'il n'est pas permis de faire autrement, puisqu'il n'est pas possible de faire mieux' (Théod. ii. s. 124).

¹ Hence his well-known description of the creature as an 'asymptote' of Deity. See Müller, 'Lehre der Sünde,' b. ii. c. 1.

² J. Müller, 'Lehre der Sünde,' b. ii. c. 1.

standing the just reputation which it enjoys, solves the problem by essentially altering one of its conditions, *i.e.*, it fails to solve it.¹

Another explanation is that the animal nature of man, as contrasted with his higher one, is the source of sin. Man is connected with the outer world by means of the senses, which not only convey impressions, but are the avenues through which, as in the case of our first parents, temptations find an entrance to the soul. 'The flesh lusteth against the spirit' (Gal. v. 17), and since in infancy and childhood the animal nature gets the start of the spiritual, the latter is placed at a disadvantage, its orderly development is checked, it advances by fits and starts, experiences frequent reverses, and sometimes never gains the ascendancy; and the result is—sin.² The *possibility* of sin is here sufficiently accounted for, but as an explanation of its *origin* the theory is a failure. The animal nature itself cannot be sinful, otherwise sin might be predicted of the brute creation; and moreover such a doctrine tends directly to Manichæism. How comes it, too, that the superior factor in human nature should, as experience shows, be so universally and permanently overcome by the inferior? Whence the feeling of *guilt*, if after all not the man, not his true self, *i.e.* his 'spirit,' but something which is not so, is the source of sin? Are there not special sins of the spirit which have no apparent connection with the flesh, such as those mentioned in Gal. v. 20? In Scripture the Pharisees, to whose charge sins of the flesh are not laid, are described as farther from the Kingdom of Heaven than the publicans and harlots. Above all, our Lord Himself cannot, on this hypothesis, be pronounced free from sin; for the Eternal Son in becoming flesh became subject to temptation as we are (Heb. iv. 15), and experienced the shrinking of nature from suffering (Matt. xxvi. 39; Heb. v. 7), or, in other words, its resistance to the higher law of the spirit; if, notwithstanding this, He was 'without sin' (Heb. iv. 15), the seat of the latter cannot be merely in the animal part of man. We have still then to ask, What is the intermediate factor between the flesh and the spirit, *i.e.* the

¹ The rudiment of the theory that sin is a mere privation, a nothing in short, appears in Augustine, *e.g.*, De Civ. Dei, lib. xii. c. 7: 'Nemo quærat efficientem causam malæ voluntatis: non enim est efficiens sed deficiens: quia nec illa effectio est sed defectio. Deficere namque ab eo quod summe est ad id quod minus est, hoc est incipere habere voluntatem malam. Causas porro defectionum istarum, cum efficientes non sint, ut dixi, sed deficientes, velle invenire tale est ac si quisquam velit videre tenebras, vel audire silentium: quod tamen utrumque nobis notum est: neque illud nisi per oculos, neque hoc nisi per aures, non sane in specie sed in speciei privatione.' From Augustine it passed into the systems of the great Roman Catholic theologians. See Bellarm. De Stat. Pec. l. ii. c. 18.

² Schleiermacher, 'Glaubenslehre,' ss. 66–7.

lower and the higher parts of man's nature, whereby the latter is compelled to abdicate its natural supremacy, and make itself the servant of the former? (Rom. vi. 17). In this factor lies the true source of sin. But the theory in question supplies no answer. It is to be remarked, too, that it leaves the fall of the angels, purely spiritual beings, quite unaccounted for.¹

But admitting that sin is more than a mere privation, or a necessary consequence of an animal nature—that, in fact, it is nothing less than a principle of active opposition to the law of God—do we not see that opposition and contrast pervade the whole of human life, and are the indispensable conditions of improvement, whether in the individual or the community? Action and re-action is a law of matter; in the human body every muscle has its antagonist; light and darkness are correlatives; every resultant is composed of diverging forces. In the domain of art, a picture without shadows would be without lights, and a piece of music without occasional discords would sound flat and insipid. What health means is known by sickness, and rest presupposes labour. In communities, especially free ones, opposite tendencies, opposite parties, supplementing and correcting each other, are the very materials of national progress; and the foremost of civilized nations have only won their position through protracted, and sometimes sanguinary, struggles. Thus the clashing of opposite elements is everywhere the condition of a higher unity; and why should we be surprised if we find the same law prevailing in the spiritual progress of the race? To be known as such, goodness must have its contrast and foil in evil, which therefore has a necessary, though transient, existence; and moreover, when felt, acts as a stimulus to improvement. Such is another rationale of evil, which can number among its supporters names of great authority.²

That it is inconsistent with the teaching of Scripture needs hardly to be observed, particularly with the doctrines of the sinlessness of Christ and the future sinlessness of His Church: for according to it, moral perfection is only attainable through the knowledge and

¹ That the word *σάρξ*, so common in S. Paul's Epistles, means much more than the mere natural affections and impulses of which the body is the organ, is abundantly proved by J. Müller, *Lehre*, etc., b. ii. c. 2. See also Tholuck on Rom. i. 3; Harless on Ephes. ii. 3; Neander, *Geschichte der Pflanzung*, etc., p. 572, 3rd edit.

² This theory reaches its culminating point in Hegel and his school. Scripture tells us that man was created in the image of God (Gen. i. 27), but the philosopher's doctrine is that 'Man must eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, otherwise he is not a man, but a beast' (Hegel, quoted by Müller, *Lehre*, etc., b. ii. c. 4); on which Martensen pertinently remarks that Hegel's paradise is a 'zoological garden' (Dog. s. 82). Novalis describes sin as the poignant relish which makes religion palatable (*ibid.* s. 85).

antagonism of sin. But, in fact, it rests upon erroneous premises. It is assumed that goodness, apart from its foil of evil, is a mere passive quality, without activity or progress ; than which nothing can be further from the truth. The Source of all goodness is perpetually active (John v. 17) ; it was our Lord's meat and drink to do the will of Him that sent Him ; the introduction of Christianity into the world is compared to leaven which never ceases to work until it has permeated the mass (Matt. xiii. 33). Goodness has its spring of energy within itself, and needs no foreign force to impel it on its path. Besides this, so far from being a necessary condition of moral or spiritual progress, evil impedes, corrupts, perverts every step of advance towards that perfection. In the individual, sin wars against the better law of his mind ¹ ; in the community it is an active principle of disintegration and ruin. Avowed enmity, not friendly co-operation, is its real character. It is true that the higher we ascend in the scale of organization the greater the number and variety of constituent elements which, in a certain sense, present contrasts ; as in man, the summit of terrestrial creation, body and soul, sensation and reflection, understanding, affections, will : but, according to the ordinance of God, these divers faculties are intended not to counteract but to aid and supplement each other, so that no jarring discords shall mar the result. It is the same in communities ; the beneficial effect of different ranks, pursuits, and opposite parties, depends on the degree in which all are actuated with a zeal for the common welfare, and are prepared to unite if it be endangered. So too in the Church : there are ' diversities,' and ' differences of administrations,' but they all proceed from the same Spirit, and all tend to the edification of the body (I Cor. xii.). No such tendency can be perceived in sin ; it is an enemy to be expelled, not an ally to be admitted. According to this theory, the first man could not have had a sinless development, or arrived at the knowledge of good and evil by a decision in favour of obedience ; to emerge from an immature state of innocence he needed a fall ; which is a gratuitous assumption. Man may have needed to be *tempted* in order to spiritual progress, but had he, like the second Adam, withstood the temptation, he would, in a manner analogous to that in which God does,² have arrived at the knowledge of good and evil ; he would have attained it in the right way, whereas he took the wrong one.

It appears then that, for all the light that philosophical theories

¹ ' Sed trahit invitum nova vis, aliudque cupido Mens aliud suadet ; video meliora proboque Deteriora sequor.'

² ' The Lord God said, Behold the man is become like one of us, to know good and evil' (Gen. iii. 22). In whatever way God possesses this knowledge, it cannot be through the intermediate step of sin.

have thrown upon the matter, the origin of evil is as much a mystery as ever. Nor does Scripture profess to explain it. It assumes the fact; it describes sin as positive depravity; and it tells us how it found an entrance into *this* our world; but how angelic beings came to fall it leaves in darkness. That philosophy has not superseded the Scriptural statements on the nature of sin, and therefore the need of a Redeemer is evident; and this is all that we are concerned with. We can perceive, however, that the gift of free-will, and therefore the *possibility* of sin, is the condition of some advantages which, apparently, could not otherwise have been secured. If there had been no free-will, there would have been no sin; but, on the other hand, no moral virtue, no superiority to the brute creation. The prerogative was a perilous one, and must be accepted with its hazards. Nor should we forget that though God is not the Author of evil, He can make it the occasion of far greater good. Thus the crime of Joseph's brethren was overruled to the preservation of the chosen family from whom Christ was to come (Gen. xlv. 5); and thus Adam's fall itself was the occasion of a greater restoration.¹

This last remark leads us to consider the relation in which evil actions stand to the Divine causality, which, as we know, embraces all things, or at least is never wholly inactive in respect of them. God cannot be the Author of a sinful action; and yet nothing can be conceived of as wholly independent of God—this is the difficulty. The scholastic distinction is *Deus concurrit ad materiale, non ad formale actionis malæ*; i.e., the Divine co-operation is confined to what in an action cannot be called evil, viz. the natural powers and faculties of the agent, and does not extend to the perversion of those powers, which is solely owing to a corrupt will.² In fact, if God were to withdraw His sustaining power for a moment, the whole frame of creation, including evil men, would collapse; to this extent, then, He must be considered as co-operating with such men, but only in the sense in which He co-operates with the motion of the planets. Hence the importance of the distinction between creation and conservation. Had God *created* man with a taint of sin, it would have been impossible to disconnect sin from the Divine

¹ 'O felix culpa, quæ talem et tantum meruit habere redemptorem!'

² 'Concurrit in malis actionibus divina providentia naturam sustentando, in ipso enim movemur' (Acts xvii. 28). 'Est autem stupenda Dei longanimitas, quod sustentat membra, conservat vires ac motus in illis etiam actionibus, in quibus summa afficitur contumelia' (J. Gerh. loc. vii. c. 8). 'Cum actus quæ talis semper bonus sit quoad entitatem suam, Deus ad illum concurrit *effective et physice*, non modo naturam conservando sed motus etiam ejus et actiones ciendo motione physicâ utpote quæ sunt bona naturalia, quo sensu dicimur in Deo vivere, moveri, et esse' (Turretine, lib. vi. q. 7). Compare Chemnitz, Examen, p. i. lib. 7, s. 1.

causality ; not so if He merely does not, because some reasonable beings in the universe misuse their faculties, withdraw the sustaining power by which all things consist (Heb. i. 3) ; in such a case, the misuse may, and in fact does, proceed not from God but from themselves. This distinction sometimes appears under another form, viz., that God neither wills nor produces sinful acts, but only permits them. But how can God permit what He abhors, when He has power to prevent it ? The answer is that the Divine permission applies not to the sin directly, but to the free agency from which it proceeds. It pleased Him to create beings who possess an independent spring of action within themselves, who can originate and carry on a moral development in the direction either of good or evil. By so doing He has limited, not under necessity, but freely, the exercise of His omnipotent power, and acts accordingly even when evil rather than good is chosen by the creature. He permits the continued existence of free agency, with the full foreknowledge of the possibility, and even of the fact, of its choosing the wrong ; and He does this because, though He hates the sin, He could not forcibly prevent it without destroying that in which Personality, *i.e.* a capacity for re-union with Himself, consists. It is thus that the language of the Old Testament is to be understood in passages which seem to refer evil directly to God. God is said to have ' raised up ' Pharaoh to show in him His power (Exod. ix. 16), because, Pharaoh's will being already perverse, God did not interfere with its exercise, and could not have done so without destroying Pharaoh's responsibility. He is said to have ' hardened ' the heart of Pharaoh, or of the children of Israel (Exod. vii. 13 ; Isa. lxiii. 17) ; because having hardened their own hearts they were not forcibly restrained from the choice they had made, and because the commandment which came to them, in itself ' holy, just, and good,' became the innocent occasion of increasing their rebellion and their guilt. Yet, in thus permitting the free-will of man to work out its own results, God is by no means an indifferent spectator of the process. For not only does the Divine law from without, and the voice of conscience from within, testify against the sinner, but the sin itself, once committed, does not escape from the control of Divine providence. God can place limits to its natural tendency ; He can check one sin by another ; He can make the sinful agent a means of executing His righteous judgments (Isa. x. 7) ; and we may rest assured He will overrule it to promote the interests of His kingdom. The greatest of sins was thus made the means of conveying the greatest of blessings to mankind (Acts ii. 23).

But besides moral evil, or sin, the world abounds with suffering,

mental and bodily ; and this too seems inconsistent with its having proceeded from a Creator of infinite goodness. The difficulty here, however, is less than in the former case, for, the fact of sin once admitted, suffering is only its natural consequence, under the government of a righteous Creator, and indeed can, in most instances, be directly traced to it ; the amount of suffering which we could not avoid being insignificant as compared with that of which our own sins, or those of others, are the direct cause. ' By one man sin entered into the world, and death ' (the comprehensive term for all kinds of woe) ' by sin ' (Rom. v. 12) ; it could not be otherwise, consistently with the moral order of the universe. God permits this order to be violated by free agents, but He does not permit the transgression to pass unvisited : there is a recoil of the eternal law upon the sinner, which, as far as is possible, annihilates his sin, and restores the supremacy of right. This is the true idea of punishment, natural or positive—a point forgotten by those who limit its object merely to be a warning to transgressors, or to improve them. The extreme penalty of the law is an instance in point ; there is here no question of improvement ; a crime has been committed which, if the community is to be purged from the taint of complicity, must be expiated by death. And since the State no less than the Church is God's ordinance (Rom. xiii.), and a revelation of His will, there is here a clear manifestation of His displeasure against sin. It is quite another aspect of suffering when we view it as *chastisement*, intended to promote the good of the sufferers (Heb. xii.), and meted out by infinite wisdom ; here it is no longer punishment, *i.e.* retribution, but fatherly discipline. To be subjected to this discipline is the privilege of the Church ; and her light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for her a far more exceeding weight of glory (2 Cor. iv. 17), to be manifested on that day when suffering, as well as its parent, sin, shall for ever disappear from the kingdom of God Rev. xxi. 4).

PART II.—THE HOLY TRINITY

§ 23. ONE GOD, FATHER, SON, AND HOLY GHOST

The attributes and works of God, as we have seen, present to us the one Divine agency under various aspects and in different relations ; and thus far Christian Theism coincides with that of other monotheistic religions, at any rate with the Jewish, which leaves nothing to be supplied as regards the purity and loftiness of its con-

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ceptions of the Divine being. Does the later revelation add anything to our knowledge of the nature of God? The answer to the question is contained in the Confession of the Catholic Church at all times and in all places, that 'in the Unity of the Godhead there be three Persons, of one substance, power, and eternity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost'; in other words, that in the one Godhead there are three, and no more, Subjects of whom Divine attributes are predicated, and to whom Divine works are ascribed.

The usual arrangement, which our Article follows, of placing the doctrine of the Trinity under the general head of Theism is open to objection. For the interest which the Christian feels in this doctrine is of a practical rather than of a speculative character; that is to say, he is not so much concerned with the fact that in the Godhead there is a Trinity of Persons, as with the offices which the three Persons discharge in the work of redemption. The inner constitution of the Divine nature may be, and must be if Scripture reveals it, a subject of hallowed contemplation; but if it terminates in itself as a question of philosophy, or even if it occupies the foreground in our discussions, to the forgetfulness of its practical import in the Divine plan of salvation, it proportionably loses its Christian character. The immediate object of the Christian's faith is not the ontological Trinity, or the relations of the first, second, and third Persons to each other, but the Trinity of redemption, the Father who created, the Son who redeemed, and the Holy Ghost who sanctifies us. It is a disadvantage then to approach the subject, in the first instance, from the ontological side, or to introduce the terms of the Athanasian Creed before showing the practical foundation on which they rest; which, however, is a very common method of proceeding. It is hardly necessary to observe, that it is not the method of Scripture. The New Testament, as we shall see, is not silent on this mysterious topic, but the hints which it furnishes are comparatively few and obscure, and the prominent aspect is ever the love of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, in devising, accomplishing, and applying the means of our restoration from the effects of the fall. In following this method it is difficult not to anticipate, to some extent, what properly belongs to other topics, viz., the Person of Christ, and the work of the Holy Spirit; but we thus avoid the abrupt introduction of formulas and modes of expression which cannot be understood except in connection with the history of the Trinitarian controversy.

The central figure of the New Testament is Jesus Christ, born of the Virgin, crucified under Pontius Pilate. He announces Himself not merely as a teacher sent from God, approved by miracles which

no one, unless in intimate connection with God, could perform (John iii. 2), but, as His name imports, the anointed Saviour, foretold by the prophets, and now appearing in the fulness of time (Luke xxiv. 27); as come to seek and to save the lost (Matt. xviii. 11); as having power on earth to forgive sins (Matt. ix. 6); as hearing and granting prayer (John xiv. 13); as the bread of God which gives life unto the world (John vi. 33); as the resurrection and the life (John xi. 25); and as the future Judge of quick and dead (Matt. xxv. 31). Unless Jesus was either a deceiver or self-deceived in appropriating to Himself such exalted functions, which not even the greatest of the prophets of the Old Testament venture to do, we must at least, with Arius, grant Him a rank in the scale of existence second only to that of the supreme Deity; He must be, if not eternal and self-existent (*ἦν πότε ὄτε οὐκ ἦν*), a kind of *δεύτερος θεός*, or the highest of created things. But Scripture goes beyond this, and uses language which cannot be understood otherwise than as asserting His absolute Godhead. Let us take, for example, the title 'Son of God,' which, though not the one chosen by Himself to designate His person, is of frequent use, and is never disclaimed by Him as unsuitable or improper (Mark i. 1; Luke viii. 28; Rom. v. 10; and above all, John vi. 69). In what sense is it used? There is no doubt that in Scripture the title is of wide application. Israel collectively, or as a nation, is called the Son of God (Exod. iv. 22; Hosea xi. 1); Christians are sons of God (Rom. viii. 14); all men are so in a certain sense (Acts xvii. 29). It may mean, also, merely *ethical* resemblance to God (Matt. v. 45). But in some of the passages alluded to the connection in which it occurs leaves no doubt as to its meaning. On two occasions (John v. 18; x. 33) the Jews sought to put Jesus to death because they understood Him, in saying that God is His Father, to assert His equality with God; and this in their eyes was blasphemy. If they misunderstood Him, why did He not remove the impression by disavowing the imputation? Still more to the point, when the High Priest adjured Him in the most solemn manner to declare whether He were the Son of God, He replied in the affirmative (Matt. xxvi. 63); and in what sense the question was put is plain from the exclamation of the proposer, 'He hath spoken blasphemy' (verse 65). Nor must the distinguishing epithet, 'only begotten' (*μονογενής*) be overlooked which S. John (i. 18) introduces in connection with the title, and which, without entering at present further into its meaning, is evidently intended to establish an essential difference between the Sonship of Jesus and that of any other being. But passages are not wanting in which He is directly spoken of as God. As for instance, the exclamation of Thomas, when con-

vinced of His resurrection, ' My Lord and my God ' (John xx. 28), which elicits no reproof from the risen Saviour ; S. Paul's statements that His second coming will be that of ' our great God and Saviour ' (Titus ii. 13), that ' in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily ' (Col. ii. 9), that He ' is over all, God blessed for ever ' (Rom. ix. 5) ; and S. John's, that He is ' the true God and eternal life ' (1 John v. 20). To which we may add that worship is represented as offered to Him (Rev. v. 12), and that by Jews to whom ' the gods many and lords many ' of heathenism were an abomination.

But the title ' Son of God,' which, taken in connection with other statements of Scripture, establishes the Deity of the man Christ Jesus, involves another conception of God, viz., as the ' Father of our Lord Jesus Christ ' ; which, accordingly, repeatedly occurs in Scripture, and nowhere more emphatically than in our Lord's own discourses (see John xvii. ; 2 Cor. i. 3 ; Ephes. iii. 14). The Deity and Personality of the Father are not matter of dispute ; but His distinction from the Son is equally marked. The Father did not come into the world, but sent His Son to redeem it (John iii. 16 ; Gal. iv. 4, 5) : nor does Christ say that He is the same, but that He is one with the Father ; that He is in the Father and the Father in Him (John x. 30 ; xiv. 11) ; that He works as the Father works (John v. 17) ; and that He came not to do His own will, but the will of the Father which sent Him (*ibid.* 30). The Father is said to love the Son (John iii. 35), and to bear witness to the Son (John v. 37) ; and on two solemn occasions this witness is recorded when a voice from heaven was heard saying, ' This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased ; hear ye Him ' (Matt. iii. 17 ; xvii. 5). The language employed suggests an analogy to the human relation, and it is plain that the titles cannot be indiscriminately applied to the same Subject ; that is, that the Father cannot directly be said to be the Son, nor the Son the Father.

But before His departure from the world the Saviour promised His disciples that He would pray the Father to send them another ' Comforter,' or Advocate, to take His place (John xiv. 16), and again that He Himself would send this Comforter (*ibid.* xvi. 7), whom He calls the ' Spirit of Truth,' and the Holy Ghost. We learn that shortly after His Ascension this promise was fulfilled, and thenceforward the Holy Ghost appears so prominently as the Divine Administrator of the Church that the Gospel dispensation is fitly described as the ' ministration of the Spirit ' (2 Cor. iii. 8). The Holy Ghost is spoken of in terms which imply a Divine nature. He is said to ' search the deep things of God,' which reason tells us no

created being can do (1 Cor. ii. 10, 11); spiritual blessings are invoked from Him conjointly with the Father and the Son (2 Cor. xiii. 14); to Him, and also to God, spiritual operations such as the New Birth (John iii. 5), the dispensing of gifts (1 Cor. xii. 11), the inspiring of prophets (1 Pet. i. 11), are ascribed. And lest we should suppose that nothing more is meant than an emanation, or influence, from God, He is invested, equally with the Father and the Son, with a personal character: the Holy Ghost teaches (John xiv. 26); appoints ministers (Acts xiii. 2); sends an apostle on a mission (Acts x. 19); bestows gifts as He wills (1 Cor. xii. 11); can be 'grieved' (Ephes. iv. 30); makes intercession for the saints (Rom. viii. 26). And He must be distinguished from the Father and the Son in the same way and to the same extent as they are distinguished from each other. He who is sent by the Father and the Son cannot be either of them *as such*; if He receives of Christ (John xvi. 14) He cannot, *so far*, be Christ; if He descended upon the Saviour at His baptism, while a voice from heaven proclaimed, 'This is My beloved Son' (therefore the Father's voice), His could not be the voice.

Finally, in appointing the initiatory rite of the Christian Church, our Lord formally associates the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, as the sacred Name into which converts are to be baptized (Matt. xxviii. 19).

The above statement, which contains little more than an enumeration and collation of passages of the New Testament, presents to us the *facts* on which we are to reason; and the problem is, as in the analogous case of natural philosophy, to frame an hypothesis which, though it may not be without difficulties, shall best comprise the whole of the facts, without omission or distortion. Our starting-point is the fundamental truth of revealed religion, *viz.*, the unity of the Godhead, which is as strongly implied in the New Testament as it was expressed in the Old (Mark xii. 29; 1 Cor. viii. 4; 1 Tim. ii. 5). Where the Father is, there is the Son, and there is the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost, *e.g.*, was promised to abide with Christ's disciples, but immediately afterwards it is the Father and the Son in reference to whom the same promise is made (John xiv. 23); and so S. Paul prays that 'Christ may dwell' in the Christian's heart by faith (Ephes. iii. 17), which heart is also described as the habitation of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. iii. 16). Yet, unless the language of Scripture was framed to mislead, in the unity of the Godhead there are three Divine Subjects, or what, for want of a better term, we call Persons, to whom distinct offices in the work of redemption are assigned: to the Father election (Ephes. i. 4), to the Son atonement

(*ibid.* 7), and to the Holy Ghost sanctification (2 Thess. ii. 13). And under this, its practical aspect, the doctrine reposes in many minds, which accept it, as thus stated, without difficulty, and are only conscious, in a general way, of a threefold causality in the work of salvation, which commends itself to the felt necessities of the Christian life.

To what extent the doctrine of the Holy Trinity formed part of the Jewish revelation is to Christians rather a matter of interest than importance. It could not be expected that as long as redemption itself was subject of prophecy or type, and not a fact, a doctrine so intimately connected with it should have been revealed as it is under the Christian dispensation : the revelation of the Godhead naturally kept pace with the unfolding of His purposes towards fallen man. The facts may be thus summed up : there are preparations in the Old Testament for the doctrine, but no explicit statement of it. If we cannot argue from the plural Elohim, nor from the Theophanies of the Old Testament, no more can the fact be overlooked that this Elohim, the abstract Deity whom the heathen ignorantly worshipped (Acts xvii. 23), manifests Himself in Israel under the name Jehovah, the God of history and revelation, entering into mundane relations with the chosen people. That the ' Angel of the Lord,' of whom mention is so often made in the earlier Books of Moses, was no created being appears from his being identified with Jehovah Himself ; and yet a distinction is made between Jehovah and the angel ; the angel is sent by Jehovah, though Himself bearing the sacred name, *i.e.*, being partaker of the Divine nature (Exod. xxiii. 20, 21). Moses cannot see God as He is in Himself, but a shaded ray of the Divine Glory passes before him (Exod. xxxiii. 22). In the prophets, especially Isaiah, another phase appears : The ' Spirit of the Lord ' confers on the prophet his mission (Isa. xlvi. 16) ; is to abide in all His fulness on the predicted Branch of David (Isa. xi. 1, 2) ; and to display Himself, at a future time, in a manifold variety of gifts (Isa. xlv. 3 ; Joel ii. 28). In the Book of Proverbs the ' Wisdom of God ' assumes a hypostatical character : it was ' set up ' (anointed) ' from everlasting, or ever the earth was ' ; ' brought forth when there were no depths ' ; was with God ' daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him,' yet also ' rejoicing in the habitable parts of the earth, with the sons of men ' (Prov. viii. 23-31). With the light of the New Testament reflected on them, these notices of the Old seem to acquire significance, and stand in the same relation to the later revelation as the Law itself did to the Gospel—as a prefigurement and anticipation ; but more than this can hardly be found in them

§ 24. THE IMMANENT TRINITY

The two principal heresies on the subject of the Holy Trinity were Sabellianism and Arianism, for information on which the reader is referred to the works which treat of the history of dogma. Sabellius, a presbyter of Ptolemais in the middle of the third century, in order to avoid the semblance of Tritheism in the doctrine of the Church, taught that in the Godhead itself there is no distinction of Persons, but that Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are only different manifestations of the One Supreme Deity, who assumed these names and corresponding functions for the purposes of redemption only (*πρὸς τὰς ἐκάστοτε χρείας*), revealing Himself under a different character (*Persona*) as occasion required. Arianism, on the contrary, so strongly distinguished the Persons as to 'divide the substance,' subordinating the Son to the Father as the creature to the Creator, and the Holy Ghost to the Son. Both, it will be seen, tended ultimately to the same result, viz., such a unity of the Divine Being as excluded any essential and eternal distinction of the Persons; but in Sabellianism this was attained by making the Persons merely dramatic parts which could be put on and off, in Arianism by robbing the Second and Third Persons of the proper attributes of Deity.

The Arian heresy, after a long struggle, was expelled from the Church, and under the name of Unitarianism exists only in bodies external to it. It laboured, from the first, under the twofold absurdity of introducing a species of being intermediate between the Creator and the creature, and of teaching the union of two created beings in the one Person of Christ. But Sabellian tendencies, under various names, such as Modalism, etc., occasionally reappear within the sacred precincts; and indeed this mode of explaining the statements of Scripture is not unlikely to be the first to suggest itself to a mind impressed with the difficulties of the subject, and anxious to save the great truths of the unity of the Godhead, and of what seems connected therewith, His proper personality. For how, it may be urged, can such a personality be conceived as divided among three Subjects? That the orthodox doctrine is not chargeable with this error will be explained hereafter. The question now before us is, What does Scripture teach on the subject? Does it represent the distinction between the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, as meaning merely that to us, and in time, God exhibits Himself in a threefold aspect, or as belonging to the Divine nature itself, and immanent therein? Are the *operationes ad extra* founded on *operationes ad intra*, i.e. upon relations in the Godhead itself, and therefore eternal? Or, to put it in another way, Does the *τρόπος*

ἀποκαλύψεως (the mode of revelation) imply a *τρόπος υπάρξεως* (a mode of existence)? This is the question with which our first Article 'of faith in the Holy Trinity' is properly concerned.

The first remark to be made is, that as God reveals Himself, so He must be presumed to be; otherwise the revelation would convey inaccurate notions of His nature. If in Scripture the salvation of man is derived from a threefold causality, or from God as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and *never from more*, e.g. a fourth, this raises a strong presumption that the terms signify more than mere aspects under which the one God may be regarded, mere characters which He assumes as need requires. For, on the Sabellian hypothesis, what reason can be assigned why He should reveal Himself under precisely three, and not any number that may be imagined, seeing He stands towards the creature in manifold relations? Apart from an immanent, or ontological Trinity, the Trinity of redemption seems to have no proper foundation, and to become an arbitrary assumption. But to the Scripture testimony. Let us note, then, the language of S. John respecting that Word of Life, which he had seen with his eyes and his hands handled: had seen as the Christ of history, the Word become flesh. In the first chapter of his Gospel he tells us that 'in the beginning' (*ἐν ἀρχῇ* = *בְּרֵאשִׁית*, Gen. i. 1), that is, at the commencement of creation, this Word did not then first come into existence, but was actually in being (*ἦν*, not *ἐγένετο*); thus disconnecting His existence altogether from the idea of time, which is coincident with creation. Further, that the Word was with God (*πρὸς τὸν Θεόν*), in closest fellowship with God, yet in some sense distinct from God. And then, apparently to obviate Philo's doctrine of a *δεύτερος Θεός*, he adds, 'and the Word was God' (*Θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος*). If the first clause hardly by itself establishes the *eternal* existence of the Word, the third supplies the defect; for if He is God He must be eternal. Here then, the Deity of the Word, and a distinction in the Godhead, are both intimated, and this without reference to creation or redemption; for it is not until the third verse that we are told that 'through Him all things were made,' in accordance with the usage of Scripture, which ascribes creation to the Father, but through the Son (Col. i. 16; Heb. i. 2).¹ In the eighteenth verse we again find the Word described as in closest connection with, and yet distinct from, God (*εἰς τὸν κόλπον* = *πρὸς τὸν Θεόν*), but under another name, viz., 'the only-begotten Son,' a

¹ This seems to imply a *personal* distinction, and not merely that between the *λόγος ἐνδιάθετος* and the *λόγος προφορικός* of Philo and Theophilus. Compare 1 Cor. viii. 6: Θεὸς ὁ πατήρ, ἐξ οὗ τὰ πάντα . . . Κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς δι' οὗ τὰ πάντα.

relation which necessarily implies the corresponding one of Father. This use of the word 'Son,' in an absolute sense, and abstractedly from the Incarnation, is common with S. John (*e.g.* v. 19 ; viii. 36), but occurs also in the other Gospels (Matt. xi. 27).

Another class of passages which deserves notice is composed of those in which the Son is described as the 'Image,' or counterpart, of the invisible God. Thus Heb. i. 1-3, the writer, after referring to the revelation of God in and through His Son, *i.e.* the incarnate Word, proceeds to speak of that Son's pre-existence, as the Maker and Upholder of all things, and describes the Son as the 'brightness of God's glory, and the express image of His person'; which latter words, according to the best commentators, describe not the revelation of God's glory in the incarnate Son, but the identity of the Son with the Father as regards His Divine nature¹; and yet seem to establish a distinction between them analogous to that between the splendour of light and its source, or between a seal and its impression; and this without reference to creation or redemption. With this may be compared Col. i. 15, in which Christ is described not only as *πρωτόκοκος*, *i.e.*, in existence before the birth of creation, but as the 'image' *εἰκὼν* 'of the invisible God,' God as the Father contemplating Himself in the Person of the Son, and therefore not formally the same with the Son.² And in a corresponding passage, Phil. ii. 6, the expression 'in the form of God,' which, from its opposition to the 'form of a servant,' is now usually held to relate to the pre-existence of the Logos, implies, like the word 'image' above, a certain distinction from God, when God is considered under another aspect, *viz.*, as the ground or fountain of Deity.³

As regards the Holy Ghost, if He searches the 'deep things of God,' in a manner analogous to that in which the 'spirit of man' knows 'the things of a man' (1 Cor. ii. 11)—and this Divine energy cannot be understood to apply merely to creation or redemption—not only is the personality of the Holy Ghost indicated, but He appears as a distinct subject in the Godhead, a third relation of God to Himself not to be confounded with the other two.

¹ *ὄν*, as in John i. 1; not *γενόμενος*. On the whole passage see Bleek's Commentary.

² As Olshausen (Com.) remarks, the whole passage speaks of Christ under a twofold aspect: verses 15-17, as He is the Logos, antecedently to time; verses 18-20, as He is incarnate, and the Head of the Church.

³ This passage, as is well known, admits of two leading interpretations, one applying the whole to Christ in His human nature, the other applying verse 6 to Him as the Logos, and verses 7-11 to Him as incarnate. The former was generally adopted by the Lutheran theologians, as furnishing ground for their doctrine of the communication of Divine properties to the manhood of Christ; the latter by the Reformed. (See also Dr. Gifford on the Incarnation.—Ed.)

The result seems to be that the New Testament, besides revealing the œconomical Trinity, or the Trinity as related to the Church and operative *ad extra*, furnishes a revelation of the same Trinity as it exists intrinsically and is operative *ad intra*, and teaches that apart from all manifestations of God in creation or in redemption, He is in Himself not an abstract Monas, but a Trinity of immanent relations, expressed under the terms Father, Son, and Holy Spirit ; that is, that in the Godhead there exist energies which terminate in itself. To defend and illustrate this doctrine was the main object of the great writers, and of the councils, of the Church for several centuries after the Apostolic age ; and the result is seen in the statements of the Œcumenical Creeds.

§ 25. ECCLESIASTICAL DEFINITIONS

The doctrine of the Church, as laid down at the second Constantinopolitan Council (A.D. 381), may be summed up in the words of the Athanasian Creed : ‘ We worship one God in Trinity and Trinity in Unity, neither confounding the Persons nor dividing the substance. For there is one Person of the Father, another of the Son, and another of the Holy Ghost ; but the Godhead of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, is all one, the glory equal, the majesty co-eternal.’ ‘ The Father is made of none, neither created nor begotten ; the Son is of the Father alone, not made, nor created, but begotten ; the Holy Ghost is of the Father and of the Son, neither made, nor created, nor begotten, but proceeding.’

Let us first ask, What does the word Person here mean ? The idea we commonly attach to it is that of an individual ; and a Trinity of persons in one Godhead might be supposed to resemble the classification of three individuals, John, Peter, Thomas, under the one species, man. But this would be an erroneous conception of its meaning in the Creed. It would be equivalent to denying the numerical existence of the Godhead, for the species ‘ man ’ is but an abstraction, having no existence outside the mind that frames it ; that is, it would ‘ divide the substance,’ and lead to Tritheism. It must not be forgotten that what we mean by personality belongs to the Divine *essence* as it is distinguished from the Trinitarian relations ; just as the personality of a human father resides not in his paternity as a mere relation, but in his individuality as a man. The word *persona*, of which Person is the translation, properly signifies a dramatic part, or character ; and was adopted, as Augustine tells us,¹ by the Latins on account of the poverty of their

¹ ‘ Sed quia nostra loquendi consuetudo jam obtinuit ut hoc intelligatur cum dicimus essentiam (*ovola*) quod intelligitur cum dicimus substantiam

language, which has no word exactly corresponding to the *ὑπόστασις*¹ of the Greeks, the term employed by the latter to denote each of the three Subjects of the Holy Trinity. The meaning of *persona*, then, must be determined by that of hypostasis. Now this term, as distinguished from essence (*οὐσία*), signifies the Divine being when viewed in connection with a particular 'Personal property' (*Proprietas personalis*),² that is, the property which compels us to make a distinction between the Persons; which in the first Person is pater- nity, in the Second filiation, and in the Third procession; so that the Father means God considered as begetting, the Son God considered as begotten, and the Holy Ghost God considered as proceeding (*essentia divina cum proprietatibus personalibus*). The personal properties flow from acts immanent in the Divine Being (*opera ad intra*), viz., generation (active) the act of the Father, generation (passive) the act of the Son, and spiration (procession (passive) the act of the Holy Ghost; ³ and as these acts cannot be ascribed indiscriminately to the three Persons, so far forth as they are Persons, we have the well-known canon, '*Opera ad intra divisa sunt*'—the immanent acts of the Trinity belong respectively to only one Person.⁴ Thus the three Persons are not three Gods, but God under three inner relations, or modes of subsistence (*τρόποι ὑπάρξεως, modi subsistendi*). These relations, however, are not

(*ὑπόστασις*), non audemus dicere unam essentiam, tres substantias, sed unam essentiam vel substantiam, tres autem personas: quemadmodum multi Latini ista tractantes et digni auctoritate dixerunt *cum alium modum aptiorem non invenirent quo enuntiarent quod sine verbis intelligerent*' (De Trin. lib. v. c. 10).

¹ The word *πρόσωπον* would have exactly corresponded to the Latin 'persona,' and it is actually used by J. Damasc. as equivalent to *ὑπόστασις* (*Χρῆ δὲ γνώσκειν ὡς οἱ ἅγιοι πατέρες ὑπόστασιν καὶ πρόσωπον τὸ αὐτὸ ἐκάλεσαν—Dial. c. 43*); but it fell into disuse, lest it might lead to Sabellianism.

² In Greek, *ὑποστατική ιδιοτης*. See J. Damasc. De Fid. Orth. lib. i. 138. 'Character hypostaticus, sive proprietas personalis, est relatio in actu personali fundata, personam in esse certæ personæ constituens, et per oppositionem relativam realem ab alia persona distinctionem inferens' (Höllaz, p. i. c. 2, q. 8).

³ It may be asked, How can the *generatio passiva*, the being begotten of the Son; and the *spiratio passiva*, the being breathed, or proceeding, of the Holy Ghost, be described as *acts*, when they seem more like *passivities* (if such a word may be used)? And we know that God, as *actus purissimus*, is incapable of being acted upon. But when, as in this case, the subject and the object are the same, the passive form is merely grammatical; e.g. I think of myself, and I am thought of by myself, are identical in meaning. Therefore the procession of the Holy Ghost is really an act of God considered as proceeding; and in like manner the *generatio passiva* of the Son is an act of God considered as begotten, though the corresponding active term cannot here be used, on account of the special relation between Father and Son (Twest. ii. 246, to whom the author is indebted for this remark).

⁴ Thus 'active generation,' an *opus ad intra*, belongs only to the Father; but 'creation,' an *opus ad extra*, is the work of the whole Trinity.

merely creations of our minds, not merely relations of God to the world which may be supposed as ceasing when the occasion ceases : they have an eternal ground of subsistence in the Divine nature itself, or in the language of the schools, they depend not upon *ratio ratiocinans*, but upon *ratio ratiocinata*. There is no actual distinction between the 'substance' and the hypostatical character of each Person taken *singly* : God the Father is very God, with all the fulness of the Divine attributes and perfections, and so is God the Son, and so is God the Holy Ghost¹ ; paternity, filiation, and, procession, adding nothing in each case to the Divine essence. But when the Persons are considered *collectively*, these distinctions become in some sense real, for otherwise there would be no distinction, except in our minds, between Father, Son, and Holy Spirit² : God is not ἄλλο καὶ ἄλλο, but certainly ἄλλος καὶ ἄλλος : the Divine essence (or 'substance') is in the Father ἀγεννήτως, in the Son γεννήτως, and in the Holy Ghost ἐκπορεύτως ; yet this does not affect the simplicity of the Divine nature, for according to the ancient Canon, 'Relations do not compound' (are not constituent parts of a thing), but merely 'distinguish' ; e.g. if John is the father of Thomas, the relation distinguishes John from Thomas, but does not *divide* John into two parts, himself and his paternity. There is a distinction (as Keckermann illustrates it), and in some sense a real one, between the *degree* of light at noonday and that at twilight ; and yet degrees of this kind do not affect the composition of light. In fact, distinct relations in the Godhead no more introduce into it the idea of composition than do the distinct quiescent attributes (infinite, eternal, immense, unchangeable, etc.). It will be seen, then, that the word Person in the Creeds must mean something very different from what it does in common speech ; and in fact, as J. Damasc. remarks, while in created things the distinction of individuals or persons exists in *fact* and their common nature only in conception (John, Thomas, etc., are actually existing persons, their common nature man is a logical entity), the opposite holds good in the doctrine of the Trinity ;—the common nature, or essence, of the Godhead exists in fact, and possesses real personality,

¹ This is what is meant by the περιχώρησις, 'circumincessio, immanentia,' of old writers ; viz., that the Father is in the Son, the Son in the Father, and the Holy Ghost in both : and it hardly deserves the censure bestowed upon it, and kindred scholastic terms, by Abp. Whately (Logic, App. Person). These terms are attempts, more or less successful, to translate Divine mysteries into human language. 'Singula sunt in singulis, et omnia in singulis, et singula in omnibus, et omnia in omnibus, et unum omnia' (Aug. De. Trin. vi. 12).

² 'Relatio ad essentiam comparata non differt re sed ratione tantum ; comparata autem ad oppositam relationem habet virtute oppositionis reale discrimen' (T. Aquinas, p. i. q. 39, art. 1).

and the personal distinctions, though not indeed logical abstractions, yet have no distinct will or intelligence apart from the nature in which they inhere as relations. Yet they are so far real that they constitute subjects which cannot be used as predicates: *e.g.* as Thomas is a subject which cannot be the predicate of any one but Thomas (not like 'man,' which may be predicated of any number of individuals), so the Father cannot be a predicate of the Son, nor the Son of the Father, nor the Holy Ghost of either. And with this imperfect notion of a Trinitarian 'Person' we must rest content: and with a not less imperfect one of the difference between 'generation' and 'procession' as applied to God. In truth, these are points which, pushed beyond a certain limit, bring us too near 'the light which no man can approach unto' (1 Tim. vi. 16), and in reflecting on which we shall do well, with Augustine, never to forget the inherent limitations of human reason.

But if the Father alone is God *ἀγεννήτως*, while the Son is so *γεννήτως*, and the Holy Ghost *ἐκπορεύτως*, does not this introduce something like subordination among the three Persons, so that Arius may seem to have been unjustly accused of heresy? If the subsistence of the Son is grounded in that of the Father and the subsistence of the Holy Ghost in that of the Father and the Son (as in fact the Father is sometimes called by orthodox writers *πηγή Θεότητος*, *fons et origo Trinitatis*), how is the statement of the Creed to be understood, 'And in this Trinity none is afore or after other, none is greater or less than another'? Unquestionably there is a difference, but one that does not necessarily imply a gradation of dignity, or at any rate inferiority of nature. The difference consists not in reference to *time*, for all three Persons are co-eternal; nor in reference to *essence*, for all three are God; but in reference to the *order* of subsistence (*ordo subsistendi*), according to which the Father is the first, the Son the second, and the Holy Ghost the third Person. The ideas of finite and infinite, and generally the category of quality, belong to a thing itself, not to the modes of its subsistence: as, *e.g.*, the human relation of father and son does not imply that the son is inferior in *nature*, but merely that he owes his existence to his father, who in this case must be antecedent in time. If we remove the element of priority of time, which necessarily inheres in the human relation, and conceive an eternal generation, we arrive at the Catholic doctrine, that while a certain inequality must be admitted, the three Persons are, as regards their Deity, co-equal. So that the Son *as God* is not inferior to the Father *as God*, but the former as a Person of the Holy Trinity stands to the latter as a Person of the same Trinity in the relation of begotten to begetting. Nor

should it be forgotten that when we say the Son has His subsistence in the Father, we cannot, indeed, affirm the direct converse, that the Father has His subsistence in the Son ; but we can say that paternity, the ' personal property ' of the Father, could not be conceived without the ' filiation ' of the Son, and that to this extent the Father is not without the Son ; and the same remark applies to the relation (' spiration ') between them and the Holy Ghost.

In contrast with the *opera ad intra*, acts which terminate in the Deity itself, are the *opera ad extra*, acts in which God enters into relations with the creature : and to the Father is especially assigned the work of creation, to the Son that of redemption, and to the Holy Ghost that of sanctification. With respect to these the rule is, *Opera ad extra sunt indivisa ; i.e.*, in them the three Persons cooperate to the result. When, therefore, a work *ad extra* is ascribed to any one Person by himself, the others have a share in it ; in other words, when one Person only is named, the name is to be taken not *ὑποστατικῶς* but *οἰσιονδῶς*, not as referring to the Person but to the substance. Thus, when one person is addressed in prayer, the other two are simultaneously invoked. The incarnation especially belongs to the second Person, but Christ is also said to have been conceived of the Holy Ghost (Matt. i. 20) : and we have seen above that to the Son, to the Holy Ghost, and to the Father, is indifferently ascribed indwelling in the Church : and in general, ' Whatsoever things the Father doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise ' (John v. 19). What reason then, it may be asked, is there for ascribing a special work to each Person ? In attempting to answer this question, theologians experienced great difficulty. They remark, in general, that an order in working (*ordo et modus agendi*) may be expected to correspond to the order of subsistence (*ordo subsistendi*) ; and since, according to this latter, ' the Father is made of none, neither created, nor begotten ; the Son is of the Father ; and the Holy Ghost of the Father and the Son ' ; therefore such works as election and creation, which seem to be especially *ex nihilo*, are appropriated to the Father, while others, as redemption and sanctification, which are not of so absolute a character, as being performed in time, are more properly connected with the second and third Persons. And this is the meaning of the rule, *Opera ad extra tribus Personis communia sunt, salvo tamen earum ordine et discrimine* ; or, as it is otherwise expressed, special works are attributed to each Person *terminativè* : e.g. the atonement is the work of the whole Trinity, but it ' terminates,' or finds its completion, in the second Person ; and the special Divine presence in the Church is the work of the whole Trinity, but it terminates in the third Person.

The procession of the Holy Ghost was, as is well known, the occasion of a schism between the Greek and the Latin Churches which exists to this day. The original Constantinopolitan Creed, while affirming the Deity of the Holy Ghost, had simply declared that He proceeds from the Father ; which appeared insufficient to some of the Western Churches. By Augustine the procession from both Father and Son was taught ; and under the influence of his great name the word *Filioque* came to be introduced into the Creed, and received formal sanction in the third Council of Toledo, A.D. 589. This gave umbrage to the Greeks, who refused to admit the addition, partly on exegetical grounds, but principally because they objected to any change being made in the Creed without the consent of the whole Church. As regards the usage of Scripture, the Greeks urged that the Holy Ghost is not said to proceed from the Son, but only from the Father (John xv. 26) ; but the Latins replied that, though the term 'proceeding' may not be used, others equivalent to it are, as, e.g., 'the Spirit of Christ' (Rom. viii. 9), 'the Spirit of His Son' (Gal. iv. 6), compared with the 'Spirit of your Father' (Matt. x. 20) ; if this last means 'proceeding,' why should not the former ? They referred also to the symbolical action of our Lord, when, after His resurrection, He breathed on the Apostles, using the words 'Receive ye the Holy Ghost' (John xx. 22) ; and to such passages as, 'All things that the Father hath are Mine' (John xvi. 15) ; inferring from the latter, that since Procession from the Father is the Father's, it must also belong to the Son. But especially they insisted, with reason, on the fact that the *sending* of the Holy Ghost is, in express words, attributed both to the Father and the Son (John xiv. 26 ; xv. 26) ; with reason, because mission in time corresponds to procession in eternity. Some of the Greeks were willing to use the formula that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father *through* the Son ; but this was objected to by the Latins on the ground that it savoured of Arianism, while the double procession seemed to the other party to affect their favourite tenet of the Father's being *πηγή Θεότητος*. But, as Anselm observes, the ground of subsistence of Father, Son and Spirit is not that in which they are distinct (the *relationes oppositæ*), but that in which they are one (the *essentia*, or 'substance') : therefore, if the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father (in His Divine essence), He must also proceed from the Son. But why may it not, by parity of reasoning, be inferred from the generation of the Son from the Father, that He is also generated from the Holy Ghost ? Because the necessity of an 'opposed relation' stands in the way. Filiation is opposed to paternity, but spiration is not opposed to generation ; and so it might happen that the Son would

be conceived as both generated and proceeding, and the Holy Ghost as both proceeding and generated; and thus the Son and the Holy Spirit would constitute but one Person, for want of an 'opposition of relation' between themselves. This is supplied by the relation of *spirans* and *spiratus*: the necessary caution being added that Father and Son are to be conceived, not as a twofold, but as a single Principle of spiration. The dispute culminated with mutual ex-communications in the eleventh century, and has never since been adjusted.

§ 26. NATURAL ANALOGIES

At an early period attempts were made not indeed to establish, but to illustrate, the doctrine from various sources: some of which are proofs of the pious zeal rather than of the judgment of their authors. But that derived from the human consciousness is of a more solid character. Augustine here led the way and is followed by the schoolmen. If a man, he observes, is created in the image of God, it may be expected that in the mind, or its faculties, some resemblance will be found to the Archetype. Now if we consider the Mind itself in the act of knowing and loving, we find three aspects under which it presents itself: the Mind as subject, a knowledge of itself, and the love which springs from that knowledge; and yet these are really one: or, if we consider the principal faculties of the Mind, we again find them to be three, viz., Memory, Intelligence, and Will; and these three also inhere in one subject. Apart from Augustine's particular theory, it is a fact that in our mental operations *ad intra*, i.e. abstractedly from external things, we can distinguish between the Mind which makes itself an object of contemplation (the subject), the Mind which is thus contemplated (the object), and the Mind which, by the union of the two, attains its full consciousness: yet it is the same Mind, or Ego, which is thus conceived under a threefold aspect. The analogy must be transferred with due caution to the Divine essence; yet it may serve to explain how neither the unity nor the simplicity of that essence is affected by energies which terminate within itself. The orthodox doctrine is, in fact, opposed not to the unity of the Divine Being, but to the notion of an abstract, impersonal Monas, without will, or affection, the Monotheism of Judaism and Deism. If the fulness of life, the plenary consciousness of blessedness, is to be ascribed, as it surely is, to the Godhead, the Trinitarian hypothesis of God generating from eternity a counterpart or image of Himself, and dwelling with ineffable complacency upon that image, is the only one which supplies such an idea, and effectually secures the *αὐτάρκεια*, or self-sufficiency, of

the Divine Being. Hence, where the Trinitarian doctrine is rejected, the remedy is sought in Pantheistic theories ; as in modern sceptical philosophy. The Divine Monas, deprived of living movement in *Himself*, comes first to a consciousness of Himself in the act of creation, and maintains that consciousness only in and through the ceaseless evolutions, the manifold movements, of the universe ; that is, God and nature are practically identified.

§ 27. CONCLUDING REMARKS

The question may be asked, Of what value, at the present day, are these abstruse distinctions and the technical phraseology in which they are clothed ? Do they not seem invented only to perplex plain minds, and furnish matter of disparaging comment to the sceptic ? What bearing have they on practical piety ? Why should we not relegate them to the lumber-room of antiquity, and fall back upon the simplicity of Scripture, distinguishing between the revealed facts and the theories which have been raised upon them ? As regards the former demand, it may be replied that it is as impossible for us to fall back on the simplicity of Scripture as to put back the dial of time and live in the second or third century. It is with the (legitimate) development of doctrine as it is with the progress of constitutional polity ; in either case, to revert to earlier forms is impossible, because it is impossible to obliterate the traces of the past. For good or for evil, controversies arose respecting the Person of Christ, and the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, even within the pale of the Church ; controversies which were vitally important. It was to meet the ever-shifting forms of error that Creeds were framed, and from time to time enlarged ; and as long as there is danger of the revival of these, or similar forms of error, the Creeds must be retained, at least in substance. And such a danger never can be pronounced imaginary, for human nature remains the same from age to age, and phases of thought which seemed to have lived their day, may at any time reappear under new forms and in unexpected quarters. A composition like the Athanasian Creed, with its laboured and nicely balanced statements, every one of them bristling with controversy, may not be a very edifying study ; but the question is, Could the Church have guarded the true *Scriptural* doctrine against heretical subtleties without resorting to similar subtleties on her side ? It does not appear that she could have done so ; and it may be affirmed that if the ancient controversies were again to come up, they would have to be met by the same weapons, and in the main determined in the same sense, if the substance of revealed doctrine

was to be preserved. Particular expressions may be open to doubt whether they are happily chosen ; but if the Creeds, as a whole, were expunged from the literature of the Church, it seems we should be compelled before long to draw up formularies substantially the same, as terms of communion. They may not be the truth in its Scriptural *form*, but they are the casket that contains it, and preserves it from essential depravation. In short, like our first parents we have come to the knowledge of good and evil, and it were a mere fiction of the imagination to suppose we can revert to a state of paradisaical innocence. Moreover, it is not the province of Scripture to supply summaries of doctrine, or defensive statements against heresy ; Scripture furnishes the materials which it is the office of the Church, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, to explain and to harmonize in such a manner as to be an adequate expression of her faith.

With respect to the other point, that we should distinguish between the revealed facts and theories based upon them, we ask, What *are* the facts ? If it be replied, The facts of the Gospel *history*, e.g., that Jesus of Nazareth was born of the Virgin, died on the Cross, rose again, and ascended to heaven, and that the Holy Ghost came down, with visible signs, on the day of Pentecost, we must remind the objector that the *doctrines* of revelation which connect themselves with these facts are themselves facts as much as the visible events, but facts for our knowledge of which we depend upon Divine revelation. Who, e.g., or what, was the Jesus who died on the Cross ? Who, or what, is the Holy Spirit who came according to Christ's promise ? What relation, or connection, exists between Christ, the Holy Spirit, and the Father ? What was the import, and the effect, of Christ's death ? What the offices He discharges now that He has ascended to heaven ? The answers to these questions, if Scripture furnishes them, are as really *facts* as the events that met the eye. An atonement has been made for the sins of the world : this, if true, is not a mere doctrine in the sense of an opinion or theory ; it is a fact just as much as the visible death of Christ, of which it forms the invisible side, or aspect. In this enlarged sense of the word the facts, so far from being independent of the theories, are the ' theories ' themselves, only not formally arranged or clothed in the current language of the age. They are independent of the theories so far as this, that they might be translated into other language than that of our present Creeds, provided the substance were retained ; but somehow or other, the substance must be retained if the revelation of God is to be preserved in its integrity. Thus, as regards the present subject, the nature of the Divine being in Himself is not a mere hypothesis, but a fact—most mysterious and incomprehensible—

but still a fact of revelation ; and no creed which did not declare it more or less explicitly could lay claim to be an adequate representation of the teaching of Scripture on the subject, and therefore of the appointed measure of our faith.

MAN BEFORE AND AFTER THE FALL

THE ANGELS

' Original sin standeth not in the following of Adam (as the Pelagians do vainly talk), but it is the fault and corruption of the nature of every man, that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam ; whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness, and is of his own nature inclined to evil, so that the flesh lusteth always contrary to the spirit ; and therefore in every person born into the world, it deserveth God's wrath and damnation. And this infection of nature doth remain, yea even in them that are regenerated : whereby the lust of the flesh, called in Greek " phronema sarkos," which some do expound the wisdom, some sensuality, some the affection, some the desire of the flesh, is not subject to the law of God. And although there is no condemnation for them that believe and are baptized, yet the apostle doth confess that concupiscence and lust hath of itself the nature of sin ' (Art. ix.). ' The condition of man after the fall is such that he cannot turn and prepare himself by his own natural strength and good works, to faith and calling upon God. Wherefore we have no power to do good works pleasant and acceptable to God, without the grace of God by Christ preventing us that we may have a good will, and working with us when we have that good will ' (Art. x.). ' Item docent quod post lapsum Adæ omnes homines secundum naturam naturam propagati nascantur cum peccato, hoc est, sine metu Dei, sine fiducia erga Deum, et cum concupiscentia ; quodque hic morbus seu vitium originis vere sit peccatum, damnans et afferens nunc quoque æternam mortem his qui non renascantur per baptismum et Spiritum Sanctum ' (Conf. Aug. p. i. 2). ' De libero arbitrio docent quod humana voluntas habeat aliquam libertatem ad efficiendam civilem justitiam et deligendas res rationi subjectas. Sed non habet vim sine Spiritu Sancto efficiendæ justitiæ Dei seu justitiæ spiritualis, quia animalis homo non precipit ea quæ sunt Spiritus Dei (1 Cor. ii. 14) ; sed hæc fit in cordibus quum per verbum Spiritus Sanctus concipitur (*ibid.* 18). De causa peccati docent quod tametsi Deus creat et conservat naturam, tamen causa peccati est voluntas malorum, videlicet diaboli et impiorum, quæ, non adjuvante Deo, avertit se a Deo ' (*ibid.* 19). ' Assuunt (Pontificii) et alias sententias, naturam non esse malam. Id in loco dictum non reprehendimus ; sed non recte detorquetur ad extenuandum peccatum originis ' (Apol. Conf. 43). ' Damnamus Manichæos qui negant homini bono ex libero arbitrio fuisse initium mali. Damnamus etiam Pelagianos qui dicunt hominem malum sufficienter habere liberum arbitrium ad faciendum præceptum bonum ' (Conf. Helv. 1566, c. 9). ' Homo perfectissima Dei in terris imago, primasque creaturarum visibilibus habens, ex anima et corpore constans : quorum hoc mortale, illud immortale est : cum esset sancte a Deo conditus, sua culpa in vitium prolapsus, in eandem secum ruinam genus humanum totum traxit, ac eidem calamitati obnoxium reddidit. Atique hæc lues, quam originalem vocant, genus totum sic pervasit ut nulla ope iræ filius inimicusque Dei curari potuerit. . . . Unde sic homini liberum arbitrium tribuimus ut, qui scientes et volentes agere nos bona et mala experimur, mala quidem agere sponte nostra queamus, bona vero amplecti et persequi nisi gratia Christi illustrati, excitati