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THE TRINITY.

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Why should this be looked on as one of the most mysterious, unintelligible, and least practical doctrines of the Christian religion? This is a mistake. On the contrary, it is one of the most obviously intelligible, and intensely practical.

This paper, brief as it must be, proposes to make that appear, allowing for the limitation, with reasonable certainty; and that, too, by a strictly scientific method.

All the laws of nature, which are its doctrines, rest on inductions upon the facts of nature. All the doctrines of the Bible, wrought into the creeds of christendom, are presumed to be inductions on the facts—the verbal utterances—of the Bible. As Nature is and must be recognized as of ultimate and unquestioned authority in the one case, so the Bible must be in the other. Without this, neither secular science, nor Christian Theology can attain creditable standing. No one acquainted with the half-dozen radically distinct systems of philosophy which have gone to record, would dare assert that the objective validity of the so-called facts of nature has not been and is not now denied as stoutly as the most rampant infidelity, has ever repudiated the truthfulness and validity of the so-called facts of the Bible. The nihilism of philosophy is, in the domain of nature, the analogue of atheism in the domain of religion.

But induction, in all cases, leads only to inferential and contingent knowledge; and all inferential knowledge is faith knowledge. This is true even of the universality of the law of gravitation. Hence, unquestionably, the laws of nature as really

rest on faith, ultimately, as do the doctrines of the Bible. As matter of fact, theologians proceeded inductively in dealing with the content of the Bible long before scientists thus dealt with nature. It is not true that induction originated with Lord Bacon; Professor Huxley says that the sciences would be just where they are had Bacon never lived. I confidently venture the affirmation that the *Dictum de omni aut nullo* of Aristotle rested with him on induction. But it was not then so thoroughly practiced as now. And for a crowning proof of its application in Biblical work in the past, go to the writings of Augustine, (420 and Calvin 1564, A. D.), and it will be found that as few of their errors have required correction by subsequent investigators as of former by subsequent scientists. Much of the present parade about the new-born scientific study of the Bible is babbling pretence, without due warrant.

The doctrine of the Trinity rests on Biblical induction, and has been accepted by every branch of the Christian Church as a settled doctrine for more than twelve hundred years. The agitation and final formulation of this doctrine, based on a minute investigation of all parts of the Bible, chiefly occupied the thought of the Christian Church during the first seven centuries of the Christian era. However, it is no part of the present purpose to enter otherwise than incidentally either into the history or the metaphysics of the trinitarian controversy, but to confine attention to the plain, practical teaching of the Bible on the subject as a matter of fact.

It is proposed to submit seven distinct Biblical propositions, or generalized statements, which summarize the teachings of the Bible on the most salient aspects of this subject. Each of the seven propositions to be submitted rests on a careful induction of the verbal facts contained in the Bible, and in the Bible alone, with an endeavor to avoid error by a strict observance of the proper rules of procedure in investigation. The method is scientific, and the result to be submitted, should be and seems to be, peculiarly satisfactory.

1. The first proposition is this: The Bible teaches that *there is but one living and true God.*

Deut. iv. 35, 39—"Unto thee (Moses) it was showed, that thou mightest know that Jehovah he is God; there is none else beside him."

“Know therefore this day, and lay it to thine heart, that Jehovah, he is God in heaven above, and upon the earth beneath; there is none else.” *

Deut. vi. 4—“Hear, O Israel; Jehovah, our God, is one Jehovah.”

2 Sam. vii. 22—“Wherefore thou art great, O Jehovah, God; for there is none like thee, neither is there any God beside thee, according to all we have heard with our ears.”

1 Chron. xvii. 20—“O Jehovah, there is none like thee, neither is there any God beside thee.”

Jer. x. 10, 11—“But Jehovah is the true God; He is the living God and an everlasting King. The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, these shall perish from the earth, and from under the heavens.”

Isa. xlv. 6, 8—“Thus saith Jehovah, the King of Israel, and his Redeemer, Jehovah of hosts: I am the first, and I am the last, and beside me there is no God.”

N. T. 1 Cor. viii. 4—“There is no God but one.”

Mark xii. 29—“Jesus answered: The first (commandment) is: Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one.”

Matt. xvi. 16—“And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living and true God.”

Jno. xvii. 3—“And this is life eternal, that they should know thee, the only true God, and him whom thou didst send even Jesus Christ.”

Gal. iii. 20—“Now a mediator is not a mediator of one; but God is one.”

1 Tim. ii. 5—“For there is one God, one mediator also between God and man, himself man, Christ Jesus.”

* It should not be overlooked by readers of the Bible that Jehovah is not an appellative, but the proper name of the one living and true God, and is never used to designate any other being. “President of the United States” is an appellative, and means no one in particular, but any one who may hold that office, but “Andrew Jackson” is a proper name, and designates a particular being. The 1901 edition of the Revision of the Bible transfers this proper name in the Old Testament, instead of translating it by the appellative “Lord.” This is as it should be. And in the New Testament, “Lord,” as a rule, is the equivalent of Jehovah. The explanation is interesting, but cannot be given here. But I will say that it furnishes an unanswerable argument for the Deity of the Christ.

Shorter Catechism, Question 5: "Are there more Gods than one?"

Answer: "There is but one only, the living and true God."

These selected quotations must serve as sampling the content of the Bible. It will be seen that the answer to Question 5 of the Shorter Catechism is a conclusion, attained inductively. The writings which constitute the content of the Christian's Bible are perfectly and rigidly consistent in their monotheism. All the divine paths therein lead from and to this citadel.

Nature is older than the oldest utterances in this Bible. The relation of these two revelations is a question of profound interest, but cannot now be treated. The Bible republishes in verbal form the whole lesson of nature, and then super-adds a supernatural revelation of the unique and distinctive doctrines of Christianity. The two, properly understood, make one continuous and consistent whole.

The relation of the two, in a general way, was so aptly illustrated by a class-room incident, that I venture to give my readers the benefit of it. There was a Japanese student in my Seminary class in Apologetics; and this question was before the class. I had submitted the view, that in different ways the same God is revealed in nature and in the Bible, but that it was only by the help of the Bible that we are able to read the lesson in nature, so that those without the Bible do not from nature alone learn of the true God. An induction from a finite world cannot reach an infinite object as its conclusion. As the class seemed to wrestle with this relation as a proposition difficult to understand, I requested Mr. Tosie Takada—who died last year a missionary in his native land—to remain when the class was dismissed. I then asked him to write for me on the black-board, the Lord's Prayer in the Japanese language; and to be sure to be present at the next lesson. When, on review, the point recurred, I called the attention of the class to the markings on the board, and, excepting Mr. Takada, called for an interpretation thereof. Of course, it was a dumb show. When this was realized, I called on Mr. Takada to take the pointer and assist us in understanding, or seeing, what was there, but hid from us. He did so, and we all appreciated the helpful illustration it gave us of the doctrine that it is when we look through the eyes of the Bible and not otherwise, that we can

read the lesson in nature—and see that, as far as it goes, it is the same lesson in nature that we have in the Bible respecting God.*

The inductions on Bible phenomena are much simpler than on natural phenomena. The reason is, that the Book plainly and with great simplicity, but sporadically, tells us what its lesson is, and commits the language to us, to be read and understood, and to be verified in every part by all the parts. Hence, even our natural theology proper is not a science of discovery, as in natural science, but of construction. Much less is it true of Christian or Biblical theology. The induction whereby a school boy may now verify the law of gravitation is vastly easier than was the induction of discovery by Newton and his co-laborers, formulated in the Principia. So now, the Doctrine of Monotheism having been didactically although sporadically or miscellaneously announced, our induction thereon is not for discovery, but for constructive consistency and confirmation. Is the given utterance a part of the text? Is it isolated and incongruous, or in harmony with the whole? The doctrine of creation does not admit of an induction of discovery, but only of construction and confirmation. The fact having been verbally announced in the Bible. Under the title "Atom" in the British Encyclopedia (IX Ed.), a master hand shows that nature confirms this doctrine didactically set forth in the Bible, by leading us up to the very footstool of the Creator.

2. The second proposition is that—*This one God bears in the Bible the three names of Father, Son and Holy Spirit.*

This fact is so conspicuous in familiar Scriptures that there is no occasion for dwelling upon it. The facts for the exposition and induction are full-handed. For example, Gal. iv. 6—"God hath sent forth the Spirit³ of his Son² into your hearts, crying Abba, Father."¹ Here, in this short passage, are the comprehensive name God, and the three personal names occur. 1 Cor. viii. 6—"There is one God, the Father¹ of whom are all things—, and one Lord Jesus Christ², by whom are all things and we by

* In an essay, largely elaborated, a study of the various religions of heathenism attests that except where the light of the Bible shines, there is and has been since centuries before the Christian era, no knowledge of the God—the tri-personal God—whom we worship. Man began with God, but the knowledge died out, and it is revived only by supernatural revelation. It is only by teaching this doctrine to the rising generations that it is kept alive in the human mind.

him." 2 Cor. xiii. 14—"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ;² and the love of God¹, and the communion of the Holy Spirit³ be with you all."

Said Joseph Cook in my hearing, in the Chicago Parliament of Religions: "I once saw chiseled on the marble above the tomb of the great (Mohammedan) Emperor Akbar, in the land of the Ganges, the hundred names of God. Let us beware how we lightly assert that those names are one. . . . I care not what name you give to God, if you mean by him a spirit omnipresent, eternal, omnipotent, infinite in holiness and every other attribute of perfection." I must be permitted to say that, for my part, I do care; for we might have this entire list of names and be in the dark as to the vital and most important name of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Said President Washburn, of Roberts College, Constantinople: "The ninety-nine names of God which the good Moslem constantly repeats, assign these (moral attributes) to him," (Parliament of Religions, 569, Washburn), but it must be added, that in the Creed of Islam there is no communion between Allah and his creatures; no incarnation, no divine brother and no heavenly Father. The name "Father" does not occur in the list of 99 names. "My soul," says the Psalmist, "longeth, yea, even fainteth for the living God, who pitieth us as a father his children." This cannot be said by the Mohammedan. Indeed, it may be truthfully said that the Allah of Islam is not the Jehovah-God whom Christians worship, for the constitution and character of the two are not only different, but in contrast and incompatible.*

3. The third proposition is that—*These three names are not used interchangeably nor indiscriminately, but distinctively.*

These names are used in the Bible with the discrimination and precision of proper names. The Spirit is never called the

* "There is no God but God," is the keynote of the Theology of Islam. But thereby the Mohammedan not merely denies all polytheism, but also the Trinity of persons in the Godhead. He holds that to affirm the doctrine of the Holy Trinity is to be guilty of the damnable sin of "shirk," i. e., polytheism. Almightyness, untempered by holiness or mercy, dominates the character and conduct of Allah, who bonifies us by his supra-lapsarian avowal as creator: "Verily I will fill hell altogether with genii and men." (Sura xi. 119). As the God of Islam is not the God of Christianity, hence the legitimacy of missions to the Mohammedans. (Kellog's Hand-Book of Comp. Reli. pp. 16-23).

Son; the Son is never called the Spirit; and neither the Son nor the Spirit is ever called the Father. This usage is an established usage, and stands on the very face of the Scriptures. It is a case of uniformity without a variation. There is no more confusion here than in a family as to father, mother and the children; each is a term of definite designation.

4. The fourth proposition is that—*These three names are severally objective to each other.* The audience and the speaker are objective to each other. This teaching presents a double and most interesting aspect in both language and action. (1) As to language, each of the three not only speaks of self, but also speaks to and of each of the others. And, (2) as to acts, their operations among themselves are so orderly and uniform as to mark an established mode of procedure relative to each other. For example: (1) "If a man love me (the Son²), he will keep my word; and my Father¹ will love him, and we will come unto him and make our abode with him. . . and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's, who sent me. These things have I² spoken unto you while yet abiding with you. But the Comforter³, even the Holy Spirit, whom the Father¹ will send in my name, He³ shall teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I² said unto you." (John xiv. 23-26.) In this scripture the three—Father, Son and Spirit—are set forth in actual and active correlations, distinctly and distinctively. The Father sends the Son and the Spirit, but the Spirit never sends the Son, nor does either of them ever send the Father. (2) Again: "But when the Comforter³ (Advocate-Paraclete) is come, whom I² will send unto you (Filioque) from the Father¹, even the Spirit³ of truth, which (who) proceedeth (goeth forth) from the Father¹, He shall bear witness of me."² (John xv. 26; xvi. 7.) In this passage we have a double enumeration (³, ², ¹ and ³, ¹, ²) of the three names. Each of the three names occurs twice in this brief passage. And here, again, we have the Father, Son and the Spirit in their objective and orderly relations to each other, plainly expressed both in language and in operation in this duplex or two-fold statement.

Surely it is too obvious to admit of question that in this complex sentence these three names are used with relative and distinctly objective discrimination.

This circumstance of settled usage is sometimes spoken of as

involving divinely economic and subordinate relations, but, whilst in a proper sense that it true, we are not now concerned about technicalities. It is the simple Bible fact of which we wish to speak without refinements. It is plainer without than with them. In this matter, it appears plain that order is heaven's first law. And this subject does not breathe as freely and naturally, in the attenuated atmosphere of metaphysics as in the normal air of every-day Christian experience.

5. The fifth proposition or inductive group of Bible teachings is this—*The personal pronouns are freely used by and of each of these three names.* This is done so frequently, explicitly, and unequivocally as to put it beyond reasonable questioning that of each of these names, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, is, in some proper and legitimate Bible sense, the name of a Person. Various Scriptures abundantly warrant this proposition: (1) I might repeat here the passages already quoted under the preceding head, but other Scriptures in abundance are at our service; in one chapter just quoted (John xiv.) personal pronouns occur over seventy times. (2) "Now *I* (the Son) go unto *Him* that sent *me*." (John xv. 5.) Here we have the first person, "I," and "me" of the Son, and, the third, "Him," of the Father. (3) "*I* am come down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of *Him* that sent *me*"—similar as to the first and second persons, but somewhat emphasizing the personal qualities. (John vi. 38.) (4) On the Mount of Transfiguration, a cloud of bright effulgence enveloped the six persons present, viz.: Peter, James, and John, Elijah, Moses, and the Christ—"And behold, a voice out of the cloud said: 'This is *my* beloved Son in whom *I* am well pleased; hear ye *him*.'" (Matt. xvii. 5.) We have the same personal pronouns in these two cases, and those used of the Father in one are used of the Son in the other. (5) The baptism of Jesus makes a valuable and impressive contribution. The voice of the Father¹ audibly and directly addressed the Son², and the Holy Spirit³, in dovelike form, sensibly and visibly descended upon him. The three Persons unite in this sensuous manifestation—this once and only this once, but that was enough, as it formally and conspicuously ushered the Incarnate Second Person upon the stage of His public earthly career with the consensus, and on either hand, the support of the other two persons, who never forsook Him till

in the article of death, the surcharged cloud of divine wrath vs. sin over-shadowed his soul, and hid for a time the light of the Father's face—"Why hast Thou forsaken me?" But it did not extinguish the presence and sustaining power of the Holy Spirit in that most tragical event in the records of time. O my Father, not my will, but thine, be done. I came not to do my own will, but the will of him that sent me. (Ps. xxii. lxix. 16-21; John iii. 34; 1 Tim. iii. 16; Heb. ix. 14.)

It is believed that, under this 4th head, the personality of the Holy Spirit should be specially emphasized, and the means of doing so are sufficiently abundant.

(1) "But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thy heart to lie to—margin, to deceive—the Holy Ghost?" (Acts v. 3, 9.) Lying is a peculiarly personal offence; it can only be done by a person to a person. Yet, Ananias lied to the Holy Ghost, which plainly implies His personality. It as plainly implies this personalty as that of Ananias. You cannot lie to a principle, nor to an influence, nor to an attribute. Lying is one of the most infamous of all sins—in its intensest degrees and consequences, it is worse than theft or murder, which it so readily compasseth. It was faith in a lie that ruined our race; and faith in the truth as it is in Jesus, the Christ, is the only remedy.

(2) 1 Cor. xii. 11, 12: "All these (Charismata) worketh the one and the same Spirit, dividing to each severally even as He will." In this passage the *voluntary* personal action of conscious discrimination is predicated of the Spirit. The one will of the Deity is exercised in the personal acts of the Holy Spirit, as has just been seen in the cases of the "Son and Father"—three distinctive individual operations of the one fundamental Power or infinite attribute of freedom.

(3) Acts xiii. 2-4—The scene is laid in Antioch, in Syria, a city of more than half a million, where the disciples were first called Christians. "And as they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost *said*, Separate *me*, Barnabas and Saul, for the work whereunto I have called them. Then when they had fasted and prayed and laid their hands on them, they sent them away. So they being sent forth *by the Holy Ghost*," etc. The personal pronoun is here articulately used in two cases and personal conduct—speaking and ordering a deliberate procedure—is

attributed to the bearer of it. This citation is very simple, unequivocal and conclusive proof of the Personality of the Holy Spirit.

(4) John xvi. 7-15: These nine verses constitute—relative to our theme—one of the most remarkable passages in the Word of God. The personal pronouns therein are used of Christ and of the Spirit between twenty and thirty times; they are used by Christ of the Spirit with the same freedom as of Himself, and with greater frequency. Comment is needless. The Saviour thus deliberately applied, in this utterance, the personal pronouns more frequently to the Holy Spirit than to Himself—at least ten times to Himself and thirteen times to the Holy Spirit. In plain Bible sense, the Holy Spirit is as truly and really a Person as the Christ Himself. This seems to be a fair inference.

(5) The only additional proof of the personality of the Spirit that will be given is the sin against the Holy Spirit. Whatever may be the view taken of this sin, there is a principle underlying it, and that is, that just as crime, in its essential nature, is an offence against the State only as a legal personality with moral traits, so sin is an offense against this personal member of the Godhead. Crime in the natural government, is the analogue of sin in the moral government of God. Hence, David touched the quick when, in his contrite confession, he said: "Against thee, thee only—a Personal God—have I sinned." In a word, this sin against the Holy Spirit, upon which the Saviour lays such emphasis, forcibly assumes that the Holy Spirit is a person and divine. That much is certainly true, whatever the specific offending act or state.

Without pursuing this matter farther, the evidence adduced seems adequate to make it appear beyond a reasonable doubt, that the teaching of the Bible is that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are three Persons. A person is a distinctly, subsisting, self-conscious moral agent. We never properly predicate personality of any agent destitute of the attributes of moral agency—conscious intelligence, conscience, freedom.

Here we may again cite the Catechism as summarizing inductive proofs. Shorter Catechism Question 6: "How many persons are there in the Godhead? *Answer:* There are three Persons in the Godhead; the Father, the Son, and the Holy

Ghost; and these three are one God." Each of these names of the one Living God, is, in some legitimate Bible sense, the name of a distinct person. I will repeat the definition, which is believed to be validly applicable to each of these divine personalities: *A person is a distinctly subsisting, self-conscious moral agent.* This, of course, implies that the self-consciousness of the Godhead has, what involves no great mystery, a threefold function. Every solar ray has the threefold function of light, heat and actinism.

6. The sixth generalized statement or proposition is this: *This language of the Bible* is not empty sound, mere verbosity, setting forth superficial impersonations of imaginary and fictitious distinctions; but, on the contrary: It is evident, even from the citations adduced, that this language *points out and reveals to us, that there is and must be a distinction back of this language—back of these words, in the very nature of God, who uses this language of Himself, which distinction lays the foundation for the tri-personal manifestation and the expression of it,* in word and act, as we have seen, in the familiar and undisguised phraseology and conduct of every day life. Nor is it arrayed in the technicality of the schools. It is not illusory, nor deceptive language. The distinction between differing subsistencies is as real as that in the constitution of our own minds underlying knowing, feeling and willing—intelligence, sensibility, will. We have no innate ideas, but we do have innate powers of mind and body. This popular constitutional, threefold distinction, imbedded in the very nature of the human mind, is not adventitious or acquired, but original—innate or connatural—and lies back of the will and quite beyond its control, and back of all language expressive of it. In like manner, this distinction of subsistence in the tri-personal nature of God is constitutional. He is not tri-personal because He chooses to be so, but is so from the necessity of His nature; and the distinction, therefore, lies back of His will and beyond His control. The main point before the Nicene Council was whether the Son existed by the will of the Father, as Arians had asserted, so that in their view, He was in fact a created being, however exalted. The Bible has simply disclosed to us a state of facts which has existed from all eternity. Our God is tri-personal not of choice, but from the constitution

of His being, and cannot be otherwise. Nature might illustrate, but was, and is, inadequate to reveal, this constitution of the Godhead. It has taxed the resources of Greek with one of the richest human vocabularies, to set forth the phenomena from which is an immediate inference, noumenally intuited, and cognized by faith.

And if our limited minds are competent, consistent with substantial oneness, to unquestionably embody such a radically threefold or more complex distinction of powers as that pointed out, so far as we know, there may be, with no greater mystery, as the eminent Platonic scholar, Archer Butler, has reverently conjectured, a score or more of these personally subsisting distinctions in the nature of the Infinite and Eternal God. This psychological illustration is merely suggestive, as was St. Patrick's shamrock, and not an analogy or a logical parallel that "goes on all fours." What we do know is, simply that three, and only three, persons have been revealed to us; and, considering the amount of wrestling that this modest installment has occasioned us, it would seem presumptuous and preposterous for us not to be satisfied with what we have. And, even that much we do know only by faith. To long for a revelation to us of any more persons, in this stage of our being, than the three, would transcend the demands of our condition and the teachings of the Bible. The reason for the three, as we may see, is made seemingly apparent in the conception, preparation and realization of the plan of salvation, but not for any more than three.

The lesson thus gathered from Scripture teaching is written on the very face of the Bible, so plainly that, in stead of its being strange, it could not be otherwise than, as it has occurred in fact, that the plain readers of the Bible, in all ages and countries, should have understood from it that there are, in the only living and true God of the Bible, these three Persons, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. The "us" in the first chapters of Genesis, seems like a pre-intimation of plurality.* Three distinctly subsisting and divinely active personalities. This is the Bible God and the God of Christians. It was not the speculations of Greek philosophy, but the demands of a scriptural Christian consciousness, that persistently called, in the early

* See Witsius on "The Covenant."

Church, for a credal statement of this doctrine of one God of three Persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

It is in the name of this triune God that we have all been baptized, and that the missionary work of the Church, in disciplining the nations, was originally instituted and is now conducted; and it is in relation to Him that these disciples or converts are organized into His service and enjoyment here and hereafter.

If scriptural teaching shows that the Holy Spirit is a person, as has been so plainly seen and emphasized above, there is not and cannot be, the shadow of a doubt as to the personality of the Father and the Son. History shows this.

It is noted, that in years past, the doctrine of the Holy Spirit had seemingly slipped or faded out of the distinct consciousness of the Church; but is it not again-awakening? This present Christian era, or administration, is, in the orderly procedure of the triune Godhead in accomplishing man's salvation, properly esteemed, by way of eminence, the administration of the Holy Spirit, which, in its conspicuous and obtrusive character, was ushered in by himself on the Day of Pentecost, as Christ promised. In removing the two and only obstacles in the way of fallen man's return to the divine favor, the Godhead, in the person of the Father, conceived the plan of salvation, and in the person of the Son, prepared for it to the extent of removing the external obstacle of the broken law, opening the door for and joining the Father in sending the Spirit; and, then, the Holy Spirit follows up this preparation and advantage of an open door and completes the work by removing the internal barrier, or the evil heart of unbelief. Of him all the guests are effectually called, with a keen relish for the viands of the royal feast, prepared by the Son of the King. Say what we may in our creeds and preaching, the bestowment of the blessing of salvation is suspended on the good pleasure of the Holy Spirit. Personal election and glorification are realized only as the fruit of his work. "Jesus answered, Verily, verily I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God." In this sphere of gracious and divine personal activity, it may be truthfully said again: that *order is heaven's first law*. This gift of the new birth, the Spirit bestows as he will. For this new birth man is absolutely dependent on

the divine will as operative in the Holy Spirit, the third person. But the rational ground of that determination of the Spirit's action is the secret of election—individual election.

7. The seventh and only remaining proposition to complete our statement of the Bible teaching, which clusters around our theme, is this: *That the sacred Scriptures affirm four classes of divine marks or predicates of each one of these three persons:* 1. Divine names and titles; 2. Divine attributes; 3. Divine works; 4. Divine worship. The detailed verification of this proposition, however, will be omitted. It is plain sailing.

REMARKS:

1. Neither of these persons is God without or apart from the others. Hence the doctrine here presented is as wide apart as the poles from tritheism, or the belief in three co-equal gods. They are persons of one and the same God. When Dr. W. E. Channing, the distinguished Unitarian, brought this charge of tritheism against Trinitarians, it must be said that he created his own difficulty, and did not find it in the Bible, nor in orthodox creeds, such as the Westminster Confession of Faith. But Dr. Channing was so impressed by the miracles and supernatural element in the character of Jesus, that he supposed him to be an incarnate angel, who set for man a shining example of sacrifice and devotion to duty. Dr. Channing's Saviour, therefore, was neither God nor man.

The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are one God, and only one; this one true God of the Bible is the Father, and the Son and the Holy Spirit. He is not the infinite, nor the absolute, nor any other abstraction; Hegelian or Neoplatonic, nor Manse-
lian zero, but a living Being—a concrete, personal Being—a Being absolute, in that He is absolved from all dependence on aught outside of or other than Himself; an infinite living Being, in that he is subject to no limitations other than those that are internal, and that arise out of his own nature. The speculators who deny personality to God because it implies consciousness, which is possible only under limitations, need to be taught that the God of the Bible is revealed as subject to abounding limitations, but they are all ab intra-internal conditionings. The persons condition or limit each other, and each attribute limits and conditions every other attribute. This is a mark of self-sufficient perfection.

Of course, the persons, as co-equal and co-eternal, constitutionally condition each other in actual operation and manifestation, as seen above; and they cannot be fairly regarded as merely figurative, or metaphorical and fictitious impersonations of attributes, such as love, wisdom and the like, or of manifestations or operations, whether of creation, providence or grace, but as designating subsisting and predetermining properties of the internal divine nature of the one living and true God.

It is almost obvious to remark that when the Scriptures speak of the Son of God as the "begotten," or "only begotten," (John iii. 16. Gr.) derivation and dependency, as in the human relation, are not implied. The importing of this derivation into the divine nature was the *proton pseudon* of Arianism. The language descriptive of the human relation is chosen as best serving to suggest to our finite minds the eternal and underived filiation of the Son of God to the Father. Filiation and procession are expressive of the transcendent and co-eternal relations of Father, Son and Spirit.

2. The objection that the word Trinity is not in the Bible, is adequately answered, in that the thing meant is in the Bible, and if the thing designated by the word is in the Bible, there can be no reasonable objection to the word itself, for the content of these propositions, laid down and explained above, which summarize the teachings of the Bible, constitutes the content of the word Trinity—a term expressive of the intelligible psychological concept.

In view of what is said above, a like answer may be made in regard to the use of the word person, to designate the revealed characters of the divine hypostasis. Simple existence does not imply nor pre-suppose an efficient cause as does dependence or change or beginning. The self-existent is self-sufficient.

3. The Apostles' Creed. The very essence of this creed is the doctrine of the Trinity. This is made sufficiently manifest by a mere skeleton quotation of it. Credo: (1) "I believe in God the Father; (2) And in Jesus Christ, his only Son; (3) I believe in the Holy Ghost." The legend, perpetuated by the Roman Catholic Church, that the Apostles, before they separated, "composed this creed,"* lacks verification. It was never acted on by any council; it was the gradual outgrowth of the first four or

five centuries. It is the most remarkable instance in existence of the spontaneous and constrained expression or formal crystallization of the Biblically enlightened Christian consciousness of the early Church. What was the faith of the early disciples, embodied therein, has been the faith of the disciples of Christ in all subsequent ages. From the time of the formation of the Westminster Shorter Catechism, near the middle of the seventeenth century, this now venerable symbol has been placed alongside the so-called Apostles' Creed. Indeed, it may be observed, that, perhaps, the simplest notion we can have of the structure of this Catechism is that it is little other than the so-called Apostles' Creed, (Questions 4-38), the Ten Commandments, (Questions 39-81), and the Reformation doctrines of grace with the Lord's prayer (Questions 82-107), transformed into questions and answers. What precedes the law does not so literally follow the creed as does some other Catechisms, but it does so substantially. My own experience is, that the best way to teach the Shorter Catechism is, for the pupil to first memorize and recite exactly the Creed, the Ten Commandments and the Lord's Prayer; and then omit Questions 43-81, certainly at first. This surprisingly relieves the case of abstractions and without loss. All the children of the Church, therefore, who are taught this Shorter Catechism and the Creed, are drilled in the doctrines of the Trinity. And when we say that this is a fundamental doctrine of Christianity, the meaning is, of course, that if you take away this doctrine, the whole superstructure of Christianity falls—tumbles into utter chaos.

4. The Great Commission. This was the nucleus and productive germ of the Apostles' Creed.

Matthew xxviii. 19—"And Jesus came, and spake unto them, saying: All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

Rev. v.—"And Jesus came to them, and spake unto them, saying: All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth. Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations,

* See "Perry's Catechism for Catechists," endorsed by Cardinal McClosky, of New York, 1884, page 50.

baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost."

The second reading of this Scripture is from the Revised Version, from which all the quotations in this article are taken.

There are three variations which may be noted in passing:

1. The old has "all power," the new "all authority" is given unto me. The original allows either, and each implies the other, for power without authority would have been a nullity, and authority without power would have been merely nominal.

2. The old has "teach all nations," and the new "make disciples of all the nations." The new is the better, for it renders explicit what the other implies.

3. The old has "baptizing them *in* the name." and the new, "*into* the name." This is a doubtful improvement, for what is explicit in each is implied in the other, and though both are allowable, yet they give occasion for explanation, the new being somewhat the more liable, perhaps, to be pressed into the service of error. The administration of this organizing ordinance "in" the triune name of God means, of course, that it is administered by his authority, and seals by implication the subject of it in a new relation to Him; whereas "into" designates the fact and intimacy of the constituted relation thereby symbolized, and implies the authority exercised in administering baptism. When the maiden is married into the name of her chosen husband by the authority of Church or State, the intimacy of the relationship thereby established, does not obliterate her identity or individual personality, however important, legally and morally, may be the re-adjustment of responsibility springing from the new relation.

It may be sufficient to remark, that the old version and the new version of this passage, and in general, are substantially the same. This text, with its context, is familiarly known as *The Great Commission*. Having proclaimed His unlimited possession of all the power and authority in heaven and on earth, He issues not an exhortation, but a command, to His followers to disciple and baptize all the nations. This great commission not only gives the Church authority, but imposes on her the solemn obligation to execute this command. This missionary campaign, therefore, is for the conquest of the world, whatever, in the economy of God, that may mean. We are soldiers of the Church

militant, and aspire to be crowned victors in the Church triumphant.

The fact that the discussion of the doctrine of the Trinity culminates in this Commission, which created the Church of Christ a militant organization, suggests that every Christian church is a missionary body. This is eminently so recognized by our Church. Soon after its organization as a distinct denominational body, the Presbyterian Church in the United States courageously and conscientiously entered on the work of foreign missions. Fity, its first concern was our "Indians and then China. Perhaps, it is not as articulately and emphatically urged as it deserves to be, that it is pre-eminently the doctrine of the Trinity which authorizes and vitalizes the work of Christian missions, home and foreign. The Great Commission was historically the nucleus, out of which the Apostles' Creed grew into the faith and life of the early Church, and it has been heartily cherished in all subsequent ages. Our Book says: "Christ as a King has given to His Church officers, oracles and ordinances. . . His system of doctrine, government, discipline and worship . . . nothing to be added or taken away." (F. G. 10). His Church is an institution, and has a business-like governmental organization. It is not only the right, but the duty, of missionaries, therefore, to organize their converts into particular churches for the worship of the tri-personal God, in and into whose name they have been baptized as soldiers of the cross for godly living, and the proclamation and disciplinary enforcement of the laws of Christ, by the courts of this Church. The growth of our Church, as of all other Christian Churches, is by the addition of individual converts, at home or abroad, to existing individual churches, or the addition of particular churches, newly organized of new converts. Our ministers have no warrant to baptize infants or adults except in actual or contemplated, immediate connection with a particular organized church of our own "faith and order." Christianity is an organized institution, and not a scheme of free will, individualism or anarchy. And in thus organizing a particular church by our home pastors or foreign missionaries, as our Church constitution explicitly provides, the officiating minister is bound to make the following prescribed declaration as crowning the transaction: "I now pronounce and declare that you are constituted a church,

according to the Word of God and the faith and order of the Presbyterian Church in the United States: *In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.*" (Book of Church Order and Form of Gov., chap. ii. sec. v.)

At the outset, it was remarked that this doctrine of the Trinity is intensely practical, in both the individual and the church life. This prescribed formal organization of converts into churches, under their covenant vows, illustrates and emphasizes this remark.

The Apostle Paul, who, as a foreign missionary, was directly chosen and sent forth in his mission work from Antioch by the Holy Spirit, promptly organized his converts into churches (Acts xiv. 23, Gr.), and then, to the day of his death, through peril and hardship, he cared for them by personal instruction, in visitations and sojourns, by letters and by special messengers, by enjoining discipline, and by authoritatively establishing uniform order in all the churches as one. He did not establish different kinds of churches or church order. Ignoring church organization in foreign lands must discredit our home Church, and also the official work of the Holy Spirit, and withhold from the converts what we conceive and believe to be the best type of the Church's faith and order for growth and discipline which has come down to us, and which we have fondly believed should be extended and transmitted by us in the sacred name of the tri-personal God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

In all the ages, those by whom the Incarnate Son of God has been worshipped have never faltered over the like personality and deity of the Holy Spirit, or the doctrine of the Trinity. Those who worship Christ in his true character, as the atoning, incarnate Son of God, are Christians and Trinitarians, for the two expressions are then, in strictness, equivalent, and those who do not thus worship Him are not Christians nor Trinitarians. It is a test most simple and practical and far-reaching, for it applies alike to the intelligent child or to the adult. Take the child's prayer:

"Now I lay me down to sleep,
I pray the Lord my soul to keep;
If I should die before I wake,
I pray the Lord my soul to take."

Poets have not been able to improve, much less to supersede, this prayer. But, only think of it: This prayer is addressed to "the Lord," the Christ. Thousands at the same time, and widely separated, offer it. Omnipresence to hear, omniscience to understand, and omnipotence to answer them are all implied, and these are the attributes of deity, and entitle the Saviour to this worship. Otherwise it would be idolatry. But, if it is His due, what must be the consequent to those who withhold it?

These things being so, it need hardly be said that the doctrine of the Trinity is fundamental, and taking, as it does, this practical shape in the worship of the Lord Jesus Christ, no doctrine is more simple, intelligible and precious to the child or to the wayfarer. The worship of Christ led to the articulate formulation of the doctrine of the Trinity during the first seven centuries. (681.) It abides and will ever abide.

Brethren, our people hunger for this doctrine. What a mistake it is for preachers to avoid it, under the impression that it is mysterious and impractical. Certainly no doctrine of the Word of God is more simple and practical, both in the individual and church life. The question of worshipping the Christ carries the whole case, in converting the heathen, and in building up the organized churches in all parts of the earth.

"The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds through Jesus Christ our Lord: and may the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, abide with you, evermore. Amen."

Washington, D. C., January 10, 1907.