

## ARTICLE IX.

## REMARKS OF JONATHAN EDWARDS ON THE TRINITY.

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THE preceding Article on this subject contains (pp. 157-177) the concluding paragraphs of Edwards's "Treatise on Grace." Mr. Grosart in his Introduction to this Treatise says: "I shall be surprised if this Treatise do not at once take rank with its kindred one, on 'the Religious Affections.' There is in it, I think, the massive argumentation of his great work, on 'The Will;' but there is, in addition, a fineness of spiritual insight, a holy fervor not untinged with the pathetic 'frenzy' of the English Mystics, as of Peter Sterry and Archbishop Leighton, and—especially toward the close—a rapturous exultation in the 'excellency and loveliness' of God, a *glow* in iteration, of the wonder and beauty and blessedness of Divine Love, and a splendor of assertion of the CLAIMS, so to speak, of God the Holy Spirit, which it would be difficult to over-estimate."<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Grosart has no doubt that the Treatise "was intended for publication." As he is one of the most accomplished and voluminous editors now living, his opinion is entitled to great regard. There are reasons, however, for supposing that if Edwards in penning the Treatise intended it for the press he afterward abandoned the intention, and formed a new plan for a volume on the same theme. There are conclusive reasons for supposing that if he had published the Treatise now under review he would have made it more consistent with itself and with his other writings; would have omitted some irreconcilable assertions, and have added some complemental definitions. In its present shape we must

<sup>1</sup> Selections from the Unpublished Writings of Jonathan Edwards, p. 12.

look upon it as we look upon one of Michael Angelo's unfinished statues, and as Michael Angelo himself looked upon the Torso of the Vatican. Some of the reasons for this opinion may be suggested in the following criticisms.

§ 6. In attempting to explain Edwards's view of the Trinitarian doctrine we must remember that the doctrine is distinct from an hypothesis or theory regarding it.

Although the two words hypothesis and theory are often used as synonymous with each other, yet they are clearly distinguished from the facts or doctrine to which the two words relate. Sometimes the term hypothesis denotes a supposition which *may* account for or explain certain facts, but is not recommended to our belief by positive argument; while the word theory is used to denote a supposition which *does* account for or explain the facts, and is supported by positive argument. When an hypothesis becomes probable it is sometimes called a theory. In one case there may be diversified proofs for the theory; in another case the only proof is derived from the circumstance that the theory is the best one or only one which accounts for or explains the facts or the doctrine. We may be authorized to believe the doctrine, however, whether we adopt one or another or neither of the various hypotheses or theories in regard to it.

Sometimes the word theory is used to denote a general collection of inferences compressed into principles and drawn from various facts or from a doctrine. We may accept the facts or the doctrine while we reject every inference drawn from them.

Again, the word theory is often used to denote that which, although believed, has no practical value. It is thus distinguished from a doctrine, for this has an important relation to practice. Theologians often speak of a doctrine as a general and fundamental principle which we cannot safely reject, while they describe a theory of the doctrine as a speculation in regard to the details of the principle, and not in regard to it as an ultimate or momentous truth. They may hold the truth with this, or that, or no speculation in regard to it.

They do not give the name of *doctrine* to such views of the Trinity as are expounded by philosophers like Hegel and Schelling, for these views reach only the head, but do not touch the heart; and are therefore distinguished as *theory*, and theologians are apt to disparage a theorizer.

An astronomer may believe in certain phenomena of the heavens and may explain them on the Ptolemaic theory. He may then reject this theory and adopt the Copernican; and afterward abandon the Copernican and have no theory at all, but still may cling to his original belief in the astronomical phenomena.

A theologian may adopt the following definition of the Trinity: The Father is God; the Son is God; the Holy Spirit is God; the three are distinct from each other by a necessity of their very substance; neither is God without the others; and there is only one God. Here is the doctrine, stated without using technical terms.

A theory of the doctrine is, that God is only one person in the psychological sense of that word, but exists in three distinct modes, — ontological and necessary modes of subsistence, and not modes of mere action or manifestation. The first of these modes is the ground on which it is distinctively proper for him to perform one class of official acts; the second is the ground on which it is distinctively proper for him to perform another class of official acts; the third is the ground on which it is distinctively proper for him to perform a still different class. As each mode is distinct from the other two, each is called a *distinction*. As each is the ontological basis of a distinct property, each is called a *subsistence*, an *hypostasis*. As each is the ontological basis on which personal acts ultimately depend, each is called a *person* in a technical, not in the philosophical, sense of the word. As each of these modes is relative to the other two, each is called an *internal relation*. God is said to exist in the three modes, distinctions, persons, relations; and the three are said to exist in him; and the three are said to *be*, as well as to be *in*, the one God. On this theory the differ-

ent *ὑποστάσεις* have only one consciousness, one will, one set of attributes; the unity being plain, the triality being mysterious. A different theory is that the three divine Persons have each a distinct consciousness, a distinct will, a distinct set of attributes; the unity being mysterious and the triality plain. A modification of this theory is that the Godhead consists of three minds, each one of which has a consciousness of the other two, and is thus one with them.

A not uncommon theory is that the infinite mind differentiates itself from itself, and then unites itself with itself; the subject projecting itself into an object of consciousness is the first Hypostasis; the object being known by the subject is the second Hypostasis; the knowledge identifying the object with the subject, or the love uniting the two, is the third Hypostasis. This general proposition in diversified forms lies at the basis of theories which do not exhibit it on the surface. In the earlier period of his life Melancthon said: "These mysteries [the doctrines of God, the Trinity, the person of Christ] are better revered than inquired into." At a later period he defined the Trinity as "the eternal necessary process of the divine self-consciousness, in which God, whose thoughts are realities, eternally sets himself over against himself, but also again unites with himself."<sup>1</sup>

The same individual may rise out of one theory into another, and still retain the doctrine intact. He may form some crude hypothesis regarding the Trinity before he knows what the word hypothesis means; he outgrows one theory after another before he has learned to express any theory in words. In his childhood he is prompted to a materialistic speculation by the ecclesiastical pictures of the Father, the Infant, and the Dove. He afterward forms a different hypothesis in noticing the emblematic triangle painted on the cathedral window. Still later he may adopt a theory like that of Dr. William Ames, who describes the Trinity as shadowed out by the similitude that the Father is *Deus intel-*

<sup>1</sup> Dorner's History of Protestant Theology, Vol. i. pp. 195, 196; Bibliotheca Sacra, Vol. iii. pp. 530, 531.

*ligens*, producing the Son by an act of understanding or speaking; the Son is *Deus intellectus* begotten by the Father; the Holy Spirit is *Deus dilectus* breathed forth from the Father and the Son. President Edwards was familiar with this theory of Ames; when a student at Yale College he recited Ames's *Medulla* every Saturday morning;<sup>1</sup> he and Ames were equally Trinitarian in *doctrine*; yet the *theory* propounded by Edwards in his *Treatise on Grace* is that the Son rather than the Father is to be represented as *Deus intelligens*, and the Holy Spirit as *Deus diligens* rather than *Deus dilectus*.

We are now led to the question: What was Edwards's doctrine of the Trinity? He has stated it as clearly as it is often stated by theologians who are writing incidentally and not expressly upon it.<sup>2</sup> In his five hundred manuscripts there has not been found a sentence expressing any doubt in regard to the Trinity as defined by one of his favorite authors: "There is but one God. The Father is that one God. The Son is that one God. The Holy Ghost is that one God. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost are three distinct persons."<sup>3</sup> From his statement, however, that the Holy Spirit is the mutual love of the Father and the Son, it has been inferred that Edwards believed in a duality rather than a triality of the Supreme Being. This is not enough. If we must suppose that he resolved the third Person into mere love, then we must suppose that he resolved the second Person into mere knowledge; and so if the former theory prove him to have believed in no more than two divine Persons, the latter theory proves him to have believed in no more than one. He speaks of the second Hypostasis as the wisdom of God; and says that, as Love, *Ἀγάπη*, is the designation of the Holy Spirit, so Reason, Understand-

<sup>1</sup> See *Memoir of Hopkins* (ed. 1854), p. 13; and more particularly *American Quarterly Register*, Vol. viii. pp. 17, 215.

<sup>2</sup> See preceding Article on pages 157, 158.

<sup>3</sup> *Skelton's Works*, Vol. i. p. 351. Edwards cites the writings of Skelton in reference to the Trinity more frequently than he cites any other author, even the Chevalier Ramsay.

ing, personal wisdom, *Λόγος*, is the designation of the Son of God.<sup>1</sup> Elsewhere he lays down the principle that the term "God, when speaking of the true God, is used [in] two ways: (1) of the Deity, the Divine Nature; (2) of the first Person in the Godhead, who is God economically, as divines express it."<sup>2</sup> Considering this principle of interpretation we should suppose that Edwards would interpret the expression in 1 John iv. 8, "God is love," as referring to the whole Trinity, or else to the first Person in it; but no, he refers it to the third person, for the Holy Spirit "is in a peculiar manner called by the name of Love."<sup>3</sup> We should also suppose that Edwards would interpret 1 John i. 5, "God is light," as referring either to the three Persons united, or to the first of the three; but no, he refers it to the second.<sup>4</sup> Does he suppose that the second Person is the reason, the understanding as a power, or as the exercise of a power; as a faculty of knowing, or as the knowledge itself? Here, perhaps, his words are ambiguous. He says that the second Person is the wisdom, understanding, word, light, reason, image, or idea of God.<sup>5</sup> All these words may denote an exercise of the faculty of knowing. The words image and idea may be used objectively, as by Dr. Ramsay<sup>6</sup> and others; but they may also be used subjectively, denoting an act of mental apprehension, a modification of the mind itself. A sermon which Edwards preached in June 1744 on Deut. xviii. 18 may explain his use of these terms. He says that Christ "is a fit person to reveal whatsoever we need to know, being himself the wisdom of God. . . . After what manner he is so is perhaps above our capacity fully to conceive. . . . Called so in the history of Christ's life in the New Testament, Luke xi. 49. . . . Hence must be omniscient. . . . Omniscience itself; not only infinitely wise, infinite wisdom

<sup>1</sup> See p. 160.<sup>2</sup> Manuscript Sermon.<sup>3</sup> See pp. 158-160, above.<sup>4</sup> See p. 160.<sup>5</sup> See pp. 160-163.

<sup>6</sup> See p. 182, v. vi. vii. It should be remarked, however, that Ramsay uses these words ambiguously, and says that the Son is the idea, image, word, light, wisdom, knowledge, truth, representation of God. Some of these words denote a subjective state.

itself. . . . . That is fit to be the light of the world which is not only bright, but light or brightness itself. . . . . He is light. . . . . He is knowledge itself, and the infinite fountain of all knowledge, as much as the sun is of light."

According to this theory, that the Son is wisdom itself, the regenerate soul partakes of the second Person as well as of the third. In the renewal of the soul there is imparted "a true sense of the divine and superlative excellency of the things of God"; a conviction of the truth and reality of them"; this "clear apprehension of things spiritual" is spiritual light; the second Person in the Trinity is light, as the third Person is love; therefore when God imparts this spiritual light to the soul he "immediately communicates himself"; "there is nothing the creature receives that is so much of God, of his nature, so much of a participation of the Deity; it is a kind of emanation of God's beauty, and is related to God as light is to the sun."<sup>1</sup> As Edwards remarks that "we read of the saints having fellowship and communion *with* the Father and *with* the Son, never of their having fellowship *with* the Holy Ghost," but "we read of the communion *of* the Holy Ghost, which are two very different things;"<sup>2</sup> so he implies (as he must on the principle of the *περιχώρησις*, "the mutual and most peculiar inherence" of one person in another) that the saints have the communion *of* the Son, they partake *of* him, for they partake *of* wisdom, light; and wisdom is the nature, light is the nature and the name of the Son.

In our land and time it is, indeed, unusual to speak thus of the second Person in the Trinity, and still more unusual to say, with Edwards, that the third Person is the love and delight which the first and second Persons have in each other; is the love and joy, the holiness and happiness of God; is the sum of all happiness in heaven.<sup>3</sup> Still, if such expressions imply any distrust in the doctrine of the Trinity,

<sup>1</sup> See Edwards's Discussion on the Reality of Spiritual Light, Works (ed. 1843), Vol. iv. pp. 448, 438-450.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 166, above.

<sup>3</sup> See pp. 161-168, 174, 177.

then some of the most pronounced Trinitarians in the world have betrayed a similar distrust. For example: in a large variety of forms Augustine speaks of the Logos as the wisdom and the Holy Spirit as the love of God; he represents love as implying a triad — that which loves, that which is loved, and the loving act, — and these three are one mind, one essence; he says that the human mind represents, in a greater or smaller degree, the divine Trinity, — (1) Memory, (2) intelligence, contemplation, internal vision, (3) will, love, *voluntas, caritas*; the human mind remembering, understanding, loving itself is an image (imperfect, indeed, but real) of the divine mind; the Trinity is wisdom, the knowledge which wisdom has of itself, and the love which it has for itself (*sapientia scilicet, et notitia sui, et dilectio sui*), etc.<sup>1</sup> A representation essentially like that of Augustine has been made by Anselm, and by scores of theologians who were devout believers in the Trinity. If they had been led to give up the theory they would still have adhered to the doctrine. If they had been convinced that the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, should not be distinguished as the power, wisdom, and love of God, they would still have believed that each is a person worthy of supreme homage. One man may say that their theory is inconsistent with their doctrine, but he cannot accuse them of believing what they regarded as an inconsistency. He cannot impute to them an assent to his own inference. Commonly they cherished a faith in two propositions which they did not attempt to reconcile. The words of Joseph Scaliger express the opinion of Trinitarians in all ages:

“Nescire velle quae magister optimus  
Docere non vult, erudita inscitia est.”

§ 7. Whatever conclusions we may pass on the language of Edwards, they must be qualified by the fact that his style regarding the Trinity is approximate rather than complete, analogical rather than exact, initiatory rather than plenary, rudimental rather than perfected.

<sup>1</sup> See Note A at the conclusion of this Article.

In his manuscripts he often says that language was not originally formed for expressing the mysterious truths of the Bible, is not fitted to express them, and requires "such a reference to sensible and vulgar things" as "naturally confounds the mind and involves it in darkness."<sup>1</sup> Accordingly, when he affirms<sup>2</sup> that "the Scriptures plainly ascribe everything to Him [the Holy Spirit] that [which] properly denotes a distinct Person," we must qualify this affirmation by his more guarded statement that "there are three who have the same nature of the Deity, whom it is most proper for us to look upon as three Persons."<sup>3</sup> Thus his manuscripts prove that he used the word Persons approximately and analogically, and that he would endorse the language of his friend Bellamy, who says: "If we cannot conceive, for instance, what there is in the divine essence which may lay a *just foundation* for one true God,—and we know there is but one,—to speak and act *as though* he existed in three distinct Persons, yet if we find this to be in fact the case from consulting God's holy word, we may as firmly believe it, as though we could fully understand it."<sup>4</sup> Indeed the manuscripts of Edwards give us reason to believe that he would not object to the language of his friend Hopkins, who says; "If they who object to the word Person will allow that, according to the Scriptures, the *one* only true God does subsist in such a manner, and so infinitely above our comprehension, that there are *three*, viz. Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, in this *one Jehovah*, and that this distinction and manner of existence is peculiar and essential to the infinite eternal Being as the most perfect, happy, and glorious mode of existence, independent of any divine operations, *ad extra*, and the proper foundation of these; if they will grant this, it is presumed none will contend with them about the word Person."<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See his "Miscellaneous Observations," chap. vii. §§ 12-22.

<sup>2</sup> See page 157-8, above.   <sup>3</sup> Edwards's Works (ed. 1829), Vol. vii. p. 274.

<sup>4</sup> Bellamy's Works, Vol. i. p. 417.

<sup>5</sup> Hopkins's Works, Vol. i. pp. 65, 66. Augustine says once and again that we must have some word to express the distinctions in the Trinity; so that we

Perhaps the expressions of Edwards which have *started*, we are far from saying *warranted*, the rumor that he became favorable to Monarchianism, or Dualism, or Sabellianism, are such as these: The second Person in the Trinity is spoken of as the wisdom, understanding, reason, the knowledge, omniscience, the word, idea, image of God; the third Person is spoken of as the love of God; though the Bible speaks of the first Person loving the second, and the second loving the first, yet we never once read of the first or second loving the third, nor of the third loving the first or second. We often read of the first and second Person loving men, yet we never read of the third loving men; the reason is that the third Person *is* the Divine love itself, “*is* that Divine love of God and Christ that is breathed forth primarily towards each other and flows out secondarily towards the creature.”<sup>1</sup> Such remarks are imperfect expositions of Edwards’s doctrine that the first Person is not God viewed apart from the second and third Persons; and the second Person is not God viewed apart from the first and third Persons; and the third Person is not God viewed apart from the first and second Persons; each is distinct from the other two, but each comprehends in himself the other two; the first Person is not God viewed apart from wisdom or reason, which is the second Person; and the second Person is not God viewed apart from the first Person who is the Fountain of the Trinity; and neither the first nor the second is God viewed apart from holiness or holy love which is the third Person, and the third Person is not God viewed apart from the wisdom or reason which is the second Person, and viewed apart from the power or life, or “Head of the Trinity,” which is the first Person. Edwards believed in the *περιχώρησις*, “the most singular [unparalleled] immanence of one divine Person in the other.” Each one exists with and in the other; permeates

need not be altogether silent when we are asked, *what three*, after we have affirmed that there are three. “*Quum quaeritur, quid tres, magna prorsus inopia humanum laborat eloquium. Dictum est tamen; tres personae, non ut aliud diceretur, sed ne taceretur.*” — *De Trinitate*, vii. 11. v. 10.

<sup>1</sup> See page 164, above.

the other. Edwards expresses this doctrine initially and in part when he says that the Son is the "*personal* Wisdom of God"; and the Holy Spirit is "the *personal* Love of God," "is the Deity *wholly* breathed forth in infinite, substantial, *intelligent* love," "in a different *subsistence* from the Father and the Son." The life-long theory of Edwards is that holiness is "the beauty of the Godhead and the divinity of divinity";<sup>1</sup> that God loves himself supremely and therefore loves holiness supremely, and therefore loves the Holy Spirit who is said to be holiness itself. Edwards remarks that "the Holy Spirit is the *summum* of all good. 'Tis the fulness of God. The holiness and happiness of the Godhead consist in it."<sup>2</sup> Now what is the fulness of God? It is defined thus by Edwards: "I shall often use the phrase God's fulness as signifying and comprehending all the good which is in God, natural and moral, either excellence or happiness." "The fulness of the Godhead is the fulness of his understanding, consisting in his knowledge, and the fulness of his will, consisting in his virtue and holiness."<sup>3</sup> The third Person, as comprehending the divine knowledge, is the fulness of God. So the second Person, as comprehending the divine holiness, is the fulness of God. This fulness is the glory of God, and the second Person, as well as the third, is the glory of God, for he is full of *grace* and truth, and includes holiness as well as knowledge.

§ 8. It was a life-long tendency of Edwards to emphasize, at certain times, the simplicity as distinct from the triplicity of the Godhead. He was wont to use intense language for expressing any of his ideas. This was what he would call his "nature." To his mind some phrases of the Bible revealed the simplicity of God as if there were no triplicity, and other phrases revealed the triplicity of God as if there were no fundamental simplicity. By the former class of phrases he felt himself justified in asserting that the three

<sup>1</sup> Religious Affections (New York ed. 1843), p. 114.

<sup>2</sup> See page 167, above.

<sup>3</sup> See Edwards on God's last End in the Creation of the World. Sect. ii. chap. 1; also iii. 1, v. 2, vi. 2, and vii. 2.

Persons in the Trinity have not only, what the creeds assert, an *equal* power and glory, but also *numerically the same* power and glory. Thus he says once and again: "Each of the persons in the Trinity, as they are the same God, they have the same divine essence; so they have all the same divine glory." "Jesus has in himself from all eternity the same majesty, the same power, the same wisdom, the same holiness, and the same infinite love that the Father hath. 'Tis not only an equal glory, but 'tis the same glory. He hath not only a like nature, but he hath the same nature with God the Father. The Father hath no glory peculiar to himself, distinguishing him from the Son and exalting him above him. There is a priority of order. The Father is before the Son in order of subsistence, but has no superiority above him in excellency of nature, because he has no excellency but the Son has the same; not only specifically the same as the same in kind, but numerically the same; the same individual glory so that they have but one glory that is common to both."<sup>1</sup>

The theory of Edwards in regard to the eternal generation of the Son and the eternal procession of the Spirit, led him to affirm not the equality alone but also, on the whole, the numerical sameness of the three Persons. He often affirms that the first Person "is unoriginated, underived, and from no other;" the second Person "is originated, derived, and proceeds from the first;" the emanation of the second Person "is natural and necessary"; the first Person is the sun which "necessarily shines; 'tis of the essence of the sun to shine so," and the second Person "is the shining forth" of this sun; "'tis as natural to God to subsist in three persons as 'tis to be wise and holy, or to be omnipresent and unchangeable." Hence it follows that as the first and second Persons have not two omnisciences, but only one omniscience, and as the omniscience of the first Person *is* the second Person, and as the first Person possesses omniscience necessarily, he comprehends omniscience in himself. It follows also that

<sup>1</sup> Ms. Sermon, dated April 1734.

the second Person is the omniscience of the first, and cannot exist unless it constantly and eternally emanate from the first (for knowledge emanates from or is the product, "process," of mind), so the second Person implies the first, comprehends the first in himself, and is himself comprehended in the first. As there are not two omnisciences so there are not two omniscient minds. It follows also that as the third Person is the mutual love of the first and second Persons, is the holiness of the two, and as there are not two holinesses but only one holiness in the Godhead, and as this holiness cannot exist unless it constantly and eternally emanate or proceed from the first and second Persons, and as the first and second Persons cannot be holy without the third Person, and cannot exist without being the source from which the third Person is derived, so the third Person necessarily implies the first and second, is himself necessarily comprehended in them, and comprehends them necessarily in himself. As there are not three holinesses in the Godhead, so there are not three holy minds. When the first Person and the second united in forming the Covenant of Redemption, the distinct holiness of the first Person did not lead him to accept the condition, but the holiness of the third Person was "the internal spring of all that which the other Persons" did, "and the moving cause of the whole transaction."<sup>1</sup> There are not numerically three sets of attributes belonging to God; not numerically three glories united together in forming the glory of the Godhead; each Person is numerically the one fulness, the one glory of the Godhead; for the glory of the first Person cannot exist except as including and included in, the glory of the second and third; and the glory of the second Person cannot exist except as including and included in, the glory of the first and second; and the glory of the third Person cannot exist except as including, and included in, the glory of the first and second.

In numerous and diversified forms Edwards employs an

<sup>1</sup> See page 170, above.

illustration which is tantamount to the following: If we suppose that the sun cannot exist without shining because it is the essence of the sun to shine; also that there can be no process of shining without the sun, because it is the essence of the shining to emanate from the sun, then the sun-shine is numerically one and the same thing; the sun is not specifically the same with the shining, and the shining is not specifically the same with the sun, but the sun-shine includes two distinctions, each one involving the other, each one impossible and inconceivable without the other. Another illustration employed by Edwards qualifies some of his remarks which have been suspected of Tritheism. He says: "The Godhead is perceived only by perceiving the Son and the Spirit, for no man hath seen God at any time; he is seen by his image, the Son, and is felt by the Holy Spirit, as fire is perceived only by its light and heat, seen by one, and felt by the other. Fire, by its light represents the Son of God, and by its heat the Holy Spirit. God is light, and he is love. This light, in the manner of the subsisting of the Father and the Son, shines on itself: it receives its own brightness into its own bosom. The Deity, in the generation of the Son, shines forth with infinite brightness towards itself, and in the manner of the proceeding of the Holy Ghost, it receives all its own heat into its own bosom, and burns with infinite heat towards itself. The flames of divine love are received and infolded into the bosom of the Deity."<sup>1</sup>

§ 9. Whatever may have been the *meaning* of Edwards in the paragraphs now under criticism, the *style* of them is different from that which characterizes the main body of his writings. The proportion, the perspective, the emphasis of the style distinguish these paragraphs from his other productions. This difference may perhaps in some degree account for, but can in no degree justify, the report that he adopted some theories inconsistent with Trinitarianism. For a time he admitted forms of speech which he did not admit earlier

<sup>1</sup> Edwards's Works (ed. 1829), Vol. ix. p. 408.

nor later nor long. He seems to have been attempting to express an idea in methods which he did not permanently justify. These were methods of speech rather than of thought.

The following is one specimen of his utterances which appear to be either fragmentary or tentative. In his Treatise on Grace he explains the phrase "God is love" as a convertible proposition; one in which the subject can be exchanged for the predicate and the meaning remain the same. Love is the proper name of the Holy Spirit, and we may therefore as fitly say that Love is the Spirit as that the Spirit is Love.<sup>1</sup> In his earlier and later writings, however, he represents God as an individual person, and love as the generic virtue, and explains the phrase "God is love" as meaning that all God's moral attributes are comprehended in love. According to this explanation it would be as really improper to affirm that love is God because God is love, as to affirm that light is God because "God is light," or that a consuming fire is God because "God is a consuming fire."

Take another specimen. In his earlier and later writings Edwards makes the impression that when he applies the term "Holy Spirit" to the holiness of men, he uses the term metonymically, employs the figure of "*cause for effect.*" He teaches that the virtues and the joys of a good man are *produced by* the third Person in the Trinity, are the *result* of his operation, are the *work* of the Comforter, the same Comforter who "*searcheth* all things," who *bestowed* on men miraculous powers, etc. In the chapter from which the sentences now under review are quoted, Edwards repeatedly declares that holiness in men is "from the Spirit of God," "from the immediate influence of the Spirit of God," is the "fruit of the Spirit." The emphasis of these declarations, however, is obscured by his more prominent remarks that this holiness "is called spiritual not merely *nor chiefly*" because "it is *from* the Spirit of God," but because "it is *of the nature of* the Spirit of God;" "this love which is dwell-

<sup>1</sup> See pp. 158, 159, above.

ing in us *is* God's Spirit," "is God himself." The emphasis is still further obscured by Edwards's prominent assertions that "the Godhead, or the Divine *essence* is once and again said to be Love," — "but the Divine essence is thus called in a peculiar manner as breathed forth and subsisting in the Holy Spirit"; "as the nature of the Spirit of God is Divine Love, so Divine Love is the nature and essence of that holy principle in the hearts of the saints."

In his earlier and later writings Edwards makes the impression that our holy love is a voluntary act; that it is occasioned by the Divine Agent, who energises in the soul and, in this sense, dwells in it; that our love has the same character with that which belongs to the author of it; that the grandeur of virtue consists in this generic sameness. In the Treatise on Grace, however, Edwards makes an impression somewhat different: The Divine Agent, the Holy Spirit "*is the holiness of God in the abstract,*" and is "*a quality of the persons in whom it resided*" [resides].<sup>1</sup> "Grace in the heart" "is called spirit *not otherwise than* as the name of the Holy Ghost, the third Person in the Trinity, is *ascribed to it.*"<sup>2</sup> "That holy divine *principle*, which we have observed does *radically and essentially* consist in Divine Love, *is no other than* a communication and participation of that same Infinite Divine Love *which is God*, and in which *the Godhead is eternally breathed forth*; and consists in the Third Person in the blessed Trinity," "is *no other than that very love* of God — that is, God in one of the Persons in the Trinity uniting Himself to the soul of a creature *as a vital principle*, dwelling there and exerting himself by the faculties of the soul of man, *in His own proper nature*, after the manner of a principle of nature."<sup>3</sup>

Remarks containing similar words, but having a dissimilar *emphasis* are made in earlier treatises of Edwards, as in Part I. Section 1 of the treatise on "The Religious Affec-

<sup>1</sup> See page 177, above.

<sup>2</sup> See page 171, above.

<sup>3</sup> See page 173, above. In this Article various words are italicised which were not italicised by Edwards in his Treatise; see pp. 157–177, above.

tions." There he says: "By a *principle of nature* in this place, I mean that foundation which is laid in nature, either old or new, for any particular manner or kind of exercise of the faculties of the soul; or a natural habit, or foundation for action, giving a person ability and disposition to exert the faculties in exercises of such a certain kind; so that to exert the faculties in that kind of exercises, may be said to be his nature. So this new spiritual sense is not a new faculty of understanding, but it is a new foundation laid in the nature of the soul, for a new kind of exercises of the same faculty of understanding. So that the new holy disposition of heart that attends this new sense, is not a new faculty of will, but a foundation laid in the nature of the soul, for a new kind of exercises of the same faculty of will." It must here be noted that this "new spiritual sense," this "new holy disposition" is represented as a foundation laid by the Holy Spirit, as a *result* of the Spirit's influence, as an "*effect wrought*" by the Spirit, as "the most glorious *work* of God"; i.e. of the Spirit. "The work of the Spirit of God in regeneration is in Scripture often compared to the *giving* of a new sense," etc. In his early works Edwards does not make the impression that this new sense, this new disposition, "is the Spirit of God itself dwelling and acting in" good men. He sometimes represents the Spirit of God *as if* he were the same with the love and holiness which he calls forth in men, but the words *as if* imply that the representation is figurative. Thus in Section II. 5 of his "*Marks of the Work of the Spirit of God*" he says: "In these verses [1 John vi. 12, 13] love is spoken of *as if* it were that wherein the very nature of the Holy Ghost consisted, or, *as if* divine love dwelling in us, and the Spirit of God dwelling in us were the same thing." In the *last* work which Edwards prepared for the press he employs the same emphasis which he employed in his *first* works. He says that when Adam sinned these holy principles which are "summarily comprehended in divine love," "these divine principles which the Scripture sometimes calls SPIRIT, in con-

tradistinction to *flesh*," "these superior principles left his heart. For indeed God then left his heart; that communion with God on which these principles depended entirely ceased; the Holy Spirit, that divine inhabitant, forsook the house." God did not "continue by his friendly, gracious, vital influences to dwell with him and in him."<sup>1</sup> Holiness or love to God is here represented as *depending* on communion with God, as caused by the *influence* of God, not as *being* itself the Divine Spirit.

One reply to the preceding criticism is that in the paragraphs which this Article criticises Edwards makes his usual distinction between a literal and a figurative statement. Once and again he introduces his cautionary words *as though*. He says grace is called "spirit" "by an ascription of the Holy Ghost, even the Third Person in the Trinity, to that divine principle in the heart of the saints, *as though* that principle in them were no other than the Spirit of God itself, united to the soul, and acting in it, and exerting itself in the use and improvement of its faculties."<sup>2</sup> Here is, indeed, an important qualification. It should have its influence. It would have been more emphatic, however, if he had said that holiness is called "spirit" by an ascription of it to the Spirit, instead of "by an ascription of the Spirit to it." More than once in the paragraphs now criticised he speaks of ascribing the third Person in the Trinity to Christian virtue; but in his earlier and also his later writings he would have adopted a different style, and have said that this virtue is ascribed to the third Person, or else that the third Person is, *as it were*, ascribed to the virtue. A more fundamental reply to the criticism is this: Edwards intimates more than he expresses. His language is rudimental, not complete.<sup>3</sup> On one side of the line we may understand the nature, but not the degree, of the love which is included in the Holy Spirit; but, on the other side of the line, we are lost in the mystery of the Divine Person. So far forth as the Spirit involves a disposition, inclination, voluntary act, we may understand it, but no further.

<sup>1</sup> Original Sin, Part iv. chap. 2.    <sup>2</sup> See p. 173, above.    <sup>3</sup> See § 7, above.

“In some ineffable and inconceivable manner” “the divine essence” flows out from the Father and the Son, and flows forth “in a different subsistence or person in a manner to us utterly inexplicable and inconceivable.”<sup>1</sup> The style of Edwards induces his readers to emphasize the statement that the Holy Spirit *is* love, consists in love, but the complete idea which Edwards was aiming to express requires his readers to emphasize the statement that this love “*subsists* in the third Person” of the mysterious Trinity. The fact of the Spirit’s *being* love is in the realm of the comprehensible; the fact of this love *subsisting* in the Holy Spirit belongs to the realm of the incomprehensible.

§ 10. In explaining the language of Edwards regarding the Trinity we must consider his familiarity with the scholastic phrase, “God is *pure act*.” The authors with whom he was particularly conversant were fond of repeating such mediaeval expressions as the following: God is the simplest of all beings; in him there is no priority nor posteriority of real existence; there is no real difference between his nature and his attributes, for this would imply that his nature is *before* his attributes and his attributes *after* his nature; there is no composition in him, and thus his power does not precede nor follow his act, and cannot be viewed apart from it; there is nothing in God which is not God himself; his act is the whole Deity, and thus God is *purus actus, actus simplicissimus*.<sup>2</sup>

A peculiar emphasis is given to these sentences by contrasting the infinite with the finite mind. A man has faculties which have not the power to develop themselves; and he has a power to act when he does not exert the power. We speak of his “undeveloped faculties,” his “dormant powers,” his “reserved energies.” In the divine mind, however, there is no energy in reserve; the faculty is the infinite and immutable power, the power is the faculty acting infinitely and immutably, the infinite and immutable act is the faculty and power acting without limit and without change.

<sup>1</sup> See page 163, above.

<sup>2</sup> See Note B, at the end of this Article.

These three objects are undivided ; they may be distinguished in our finite and imperfect thought, but they are one and the same object in reality. The Deity's power to know all things is one and the same with his infinite knowledge ; his power to love the holiness and happiness of the universe is one and the same with his infinite benevolence ; conversely, this infinite benevolence includes his infinite knowledge, and this infinite knowledge includes his infinite power to love and to know. Thus the divine mind is a circle of infinite activities ; there can be no more cessation to them than there can be an end to a circular line ; every one of his powers is not only moving, but moving in every right direction which is possible ; every one of his powers is complete only in its action, and its action involves every one of his powers ; and this grand idea is supposed to have its fit, but merely approximate, expression in the words : God is *purus actus, actus simplicissimus*.

The phrase of the schoolmen, " God is pure act " is used with a variety of modifications. It sometimes denotes that God is not acted upon so as to be changed. Men and angels are passive as well as active. By another Being they are created, preserved, made happy or unhappy. God is, was, and ever will be ; not by any power out of himself, but by the power which is *in* himself, which *is* himself. As he is self-existent, so he is self-blessed. In one sense he receives nothing at all ; in another sense he receives nothing except by his active choice to receive it. Again, God is *pure act* in the sense of his producing his wonderful works by a simple choice. His mere volition without effort originates all things which have an origin. He did not exert himself in creating the universe. He merely willed and it was done.

When Edwards defines the second Person in the Trinity as omniscience, and the third Person as benevolence he is not opposing a common usage of terms, but is employing specific phrases which may be comprehended under the general phrase, God is *purus actus*. One Trinitarian theory is that the divine mind consists of three activities ; the first

activity originating the second, and the first and second originating the third. It need not be affirmed that Edwards favored this theory, nor that he regarded the Divine Being as *actus simplicissimus*; his style, however, was affected by the common usage. His Treatise on Grace develops the influence of this usage. In another Treatise he says: "The infinite essential love of God is, as it were, an infinite and eternal mutual holy energy between the Father and the Son; a pure and holy act whereby the Deity becomes, as it were, one infinite and unchangeable emotion of love proceeding from both the Father and the Son."<sup>1</sup> Obviously Edwards does not here intend to represent the entire Deity as a mere emotion. So in the main body of his writings he does not intend to represent the second Person in the Godhead as a mere intellectual act, or the third Person as a mere moral act. Here and there, however, his style bears an impress which was more familiar to him and more agreeable to his religious enthusiasm than faithful to his permanent convictions.

§ 11. Edwards's Treatise on Grace indicates his habit of emphasizing the dignity of virtue, and the loveliness of God. His theological system is characterized by a reverence for moral goodness and for the character of our moral Governor. It is misunderstood unless this distinctive mark be recognized. Dr. Channing, who, in various ways, received no little influence from Edwards, was wont, at one period of his life, to pen such words as Virtue, Right, Duty, with initial capitals. Edwards did more than this. So impressed was he by the grandeur of holiness in men that he called it, not merely divine, but the Divinity himself. He has been criticised for his disparaging views of the human soul, but he unites the soul with its Maker, and when impassioned utters the sublime thought that as "the divine essence is love," so it "is breathed forth in the Holy Spirit," and "the love which is dwelling in us is God's Spirit," and "God's Spirit is God," and thus

<sup>1</sup> Pages 476, 477 of a volume, edited by Rev. Tryon Edwards, D.D., and published in 1851 under the title of "Charity and its Fruits"; republished as early as 1872 by the Presbyterian Board of Publication under the title of "Christian Love as manifested in the Heart and Life."

our holy love "is God himself." "As the nature of the Spirit of God is Divine Love, so Divine Love is the nature and essence of [grace] that holy principle in the hearts of the saints." "Grace in the heart is no other than the Spirit of God itself."<sup>1</sup>

As our virtue is thus a participation of the divine nature, so it originates from that nature. The power which transforms the soul is "efficacious," because it is benevolence itself. The renewal of man is not a result of force, not of intellectual abstractions, not of gloom and terror, not of command and threat, but of the divine essence flowing out and breathed forth, "in infinitely pure love and sweet delight, from the Father and the Son."<sup>2</sup> The most stupendous miracle ever performed on earth was the incarnation of Christ, and this was the most signal manifestation of benevolence, for it was the work of the Spirit of God, who is "infinite, omnipotent holiness itself."<sup>3</sup> This Spirit is not only the bond of union between the first and second Persons in the Trinity, but is also "the bond of union by which the human nature of Christ is united to the divine so as to be one person." Thus the atonement itself resulted from the "divine energy," which is the "divine Spirit," which is "omnipotent holiness," which is omnipotent benevolence. The power of God is the power of love.

Here it may be asked: Do not several assertions of Edwards on the dignity of the saints need to be toned down? That is not the question. We are now considering his tendency to exalt virtue and the virtuous man. Whenever he is interested in any truth he uses language so earnest and fervid that it will be regarded as extravagant, unless it be interpreted as the efflux of an eloquent or poetic mind. His phrases are not written in the dry light of reason alone, but are illumined by the flashes of feeling and fancy. Some of his words on sin and the penalty of it are so vehement that they should not be criticised as if they were prosaic utter-

<sup>1</sup> See pp. 158-159, 170, 171, 173.

<sup>2</sup> See pp. 162-164, above.

<sup>3</sup> Comments on Luke i. 35 in various Mss. of Edwards.

ances; and some of his words on holiness and the honor of it are so ardent that they should not be quoted except in connection with his cooler statements.

§ 12. The speculations of Edwards regarding the Trinity should be looked at in the light of his belief that the doctrine is an inscrutable mystery. If we suppose that he was designing to abate this mystery, we may surmise that he considered the second Person to be nothing more than an intellectual act of the first, and the third Person to be nothing more than a volitive act of the first and second. If, however, we suppose him to have shared the opinion of Dean Swift, that our present mental faculties would be incapable of understanding this doctrine, even if there were a new supernatural revelation of it, we cannot suspect him of any design to remove its mysteriousness.

It was a remark of Cyprian that we can justly conceive of God only by recognizing him to be inconceivable. No one was more deeply impressed than Edwards by the words which he quotes from Skelton: "We can follow God but one or two steps in his lowest and plainest works, till all becomes mystery and amazement to us. How, then, shall we comprehend himself?" Throughout the manuscripts of Edwards, particularly in the later years of his life, he utters marked and pointed words on the mysteries of the divine nature. He speaks of it as "unsearchable," "impenetrable," "inexplicable," "ineffable." He insists that the utter incomprehensibility of the Trinity is a reason for believing rather than for disbelieving in it. With more or less obvious reference to this doctrine he reduplicates assertions like the following: We are logically bound to believe many propositions which "are paradoxes, attended with such seeming inconsistencies that reason cannot clearly remove nor fully explain the mystery"; "paradoxes that seem contrary to reason"; "wholly inconsistent with reason"; "inconsonant," "incompatible" with it, "repugnant" to it. "We find that the reasonings of the best metaphysicians and mathematicians concerning infinites are attended with paradoxes

and seeming inconsistencies.” “It is not necessary that persons should have clear ideas of the subject of a proposition in order to be rationally convinced of the truth of the proposition. There are many truths, of which mathematicians are convinced by strict demonstration, concerning many kinds of quantities, as surd quantities and fluxions, but concerning which they have no clear ideas.” Edwards quotes with approval the remark of Dr. Skelton: “To say that a curve line, setting out from a point within an hair’s breadth of a right line, shall run towards that right line as swift as thought, and yet never be able to touch it, seems contrary to common sense; and, were it not clearly demonstrated in the conchoides of Nicomedes, could never be believed.” He also quotes with evident approval the words of the Chevalier Ramsay: “We ought never to deny because we cannot conceive. If this were not so, then a man born blind would reason right when he forms this syllogism: ‘We know the figure of bodies only by handling them; but it is impossible to handle them at a great distance; therefore it is impossible to know the figure of far-distant bodies.’ To undeceive the blind man,—we may prove to him that this is so, from the concurrent testimony of all who surround him. But we can never make him perceive how this is so. It is, therefore, a fundamental maxim in all true philosophy that many things may be incomprehensible and yet demonstrable; that though seeing clearly be a sufficient reason for affirming, yet not seeing at all can never be a reason for denying.”<sup>1</sup>

Where, now, according to Edwards’s *Treatise on Grace*, is the peculiar mysteriousness of the Trinity? It lies here: The omniscience of God is one distinct Person, the benevolence is another. This is virtually asserted in the *Treatise*. This is the statement which Edwards copied and recopied from the writings of Ramsay. The Chevalier says: “The Spirit conceiving, Idea conceived, and Love proceeding from both—are not three single attributes or modes, but three different persons or self-conscious, intellectual agents”;<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ramsay’s *Philosophical Principles of Religion*, Vol. i. pp. 22, 23. See Note C, at the end of this Article.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 180, above.

they must be "three distinct beings, realities, somethings, or persons."<sup>1</sup> Dr. Ramsay repeats the same idea in passages not quoted by Edwards; he says that "the eternal, infinite, and immutable love which proceeds from the idea God has of himself" is "a being, distinct from himself and equal to himself, that loves him infinitely."<sup>2</sup> As we glance at particular sentences of the "Treatise on Grace" it seems to be advocating a speculation of the schools rather than a doctrine of the church: to be resolving the triune nature of God into a mental constitution like that of a man. The human mind is a trinity of power, knowledge, and volition; or of the subject, object, and the reciprocal action of the two. In like manner there are sentences in the Treatise which seem to represent the eternal "generation" of the Son and "procession" of the Spirit as they are represented by German philosophers, and not by the Nicene Fathers; that which is "generated" seems to be mere intelligence, and that which "proceeds" seems to be mere virtue. When, however, we notice that, according to Edwards, we can no more explain these doctrines than we can explain the statement that God is a being whose centre is everywhere and his circumference nowhere, or the statement that his eternal duration is "*vitae interminabilis tota simul et perfecta possessio*," we perceive that his views are far from being rationalistic, and are simply abysmal.

§ 13. Edwards's belief in the special mysteriousness of the Trinitarian doctrine is indicated in the freedom with which he connects his view of the divine threeness with his view of the divine oneness. *Here*, he speaks of the Divine Being as one person in the psychological sense of the word; *there*, as three persons in the same sense; *again*, as three persons in an entirely different, a peculiarly mysterious sense. His right to form these different conceptions of the Divine Mind is derived by him not from reason, but from the inspired word. He combines in one doctrine the varied representa-

<sup>1</sup> See p. 185 [xvii.].

<sup>2</sup> The Philosophical Principles of Natural and Revealed Religion, p. 85.

tions of the Bible. When introducing his speculations on the distinctive character of the Holy Spirit, he says: "In an enquiry of this nature I would go no further than I think the Scripture plainly goes before me. The word of God certainly should be our rule in matters so much above reason and our own notions."<sup>1</sup> The argumentation of Edwards appears to be this: The Bible is infallibly true; it applies the personal pronouns I, Thou, and He in the singular number to the Deity, and thereby authorizes us to believe that He has only one reason, one will, one consciousness; it applies each of the same personal pronouns to each of the three Distinctions in the Deity, as if each had a distinct reason, a distinct will, a distinct consciousness; it thereby authorizes us to believe in the mysterious triplicity of the Divine Mind, and to conceive of the three ineffable Distinctions as if they were three Persons in the psychological, as they are three in the technical, sense of the word. In this method of reasoning Edwards adopts the style of Archbishop King, from whom in other respects he differed radically. The Archbishop says: "The nature of God, as it is in itself, is incomprehensible by the human understanding; and not only his nature but likewise his powers and faculties, and the ways and methods in which he exercises them, are so far beyond our reach that we are utterly incapable of forming exact and adequate notions of them."<sup>2</sup>

Throughout the bulk of his writings Edwards gives more prominence to the triplicity than to the simplicity of the Divine Mind, and has been thought to expose himself, as many other Trinitarians have been exposed, to the charge of Tritheism. In some passages, however, he gives more prominence to the simplicity than to the triplicity, and, like many other Trinitarians, has been suspected of denying the divine triad. The pendulum swings from one to another extreme. In some of his writings Edwards has been wondered at as if

<sup>1</sup> Rev. A. B. Grosart's Selections from the Unpublished Writings of Edwards, p. 43.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. King's Discourse on Predestination, § 3. 1.

he were approaching both extremes at once. So Abelard was thought to have denied a real triplicity in the Godhead, and to have favored Tritheism. In the mislaid Essay containing the "remarks" alluded to in the preceding Article on this subject,<sup>1</sup> Edwards combines his two views of the Trinity in a notable manner, and seems to indicate a readiness to bring them into close proximity, and a confidence that they are not really, although they may be apparently, incompatible with each other. That Essay was divided in fact though not in form into two parts.

If the first part were separated from the second it would produce on some minds the impression that there are three wills, three consciousnesses, three sets of attributes in the three Persons of the Godhead. The Father is the "Head of the society of the Trinity," "the Fountain of the Deity," and as such has the "right" to take the precedence in governing the universe, to "elect and appoint the Son" to the mediatorial office. The Son originates from the Father, is "in some respects dependent upon him," and therefore acts in subordination to him. He takes the office for which the Father elected him, and to which the Father appointed him; he engages to perform a certain work for which the Father promises to bestow on him a certain reward. This mutual agreement between the two Persons is called the covenant of redemption. This covenant presupposes a certain "order of acting," a particular arrangement or "establishment," according to which the first Person "determines to allow a redemption" and is "the first mover in it"; "proposes the matter" to the Son, and "offers him authority for the office." This order of acting is called the economy of the Trinity. The word economy suggests a style of remark which is misunderstood unless the etymology of the word be borne in mind. In the Greek lexicons *οικονομία* (*οικός* and *νόμος*) is defined as the "management of a household or family," "the management of a household or estate, of a family or domestic affairs," etc. In agreement with this etymology some divines have spoken of the three Persons as

<sup>1</sup> See p. 147, above.

a family. They have adopted a more familiar style of remark than is adopted by Edwards, but his imaginative mind led him to adopt a figurative mode of speech more familiar than is consonant with modern taste. He says that "the Persons of the Trinity of their own will have, as it were, formed themselves into a society" for the accomplishment of the general good; that "there is a natural decency or fitness" in the economy of the three Persons; that the covenant of redemption is an establishment for "most conveniently obtaining a great end"; that the Holy Spirit is the "emissary and consummator" of the designs of the Father and the Son. The main intent of the first part of the essay is to state the ground on which one divine Person is subordinate to another. This ground is the fact that the second Person proceeds from the first, and the third proceeds from the first and second. Throughout his writings Edwards uses the term procession as including the generation of the second Person as well as the spiration of the third. In one of his manuscripts he says: "The eternal generation of the Son is nothing more than a shining forth of the Father's glory"; in another he speaks of Christ as the word breathed forth from the Father; he does not maintain a rigid uniformity of terms, but he does maintain a uniformity of doctrine in regard to the dependence of one upon another divine Person.

As the first part of the Essay states that the covenant of redemption is made not between the three, but "only between two of the Persons of the Trinity," and that the "obedience" of the second Person is meritorious, but "the obedience of the third Person is not meritorious for us," the objection arises that the honor of the third Person is not equal to that of the other two. This objection is answered in the second part of the Essay. This part contains the "remarks"<sup>1</sup> which have been supposed to be anti-trinitarian: but they were in fact designed to exhibit the dignity of the Holy Spirit. They present the three following arguments; "The Holy Spirit is concerned in the Covenant of Redemption between the Father and the Son [in] these three ways.

<sup>1</sup> See p. 147, above.

"1. As his nature is the Divine love that is between the Father and the Son, he is the bond of union between the two covenanting parties, whereby they with infinite sweetness agree and are infinitely, strongly united as parties joined in Covenant." At one period of his life Edwards was fond of such expressions as these: the Holy Spirit, i.e. love, is "the bond of union" between one saint and another, between all the saints and God, between the human and divine nature of Christ, also between the divine nature of Christ and the nature of the Father.

"2. As the Holy Ghost is the infinite Love of God to himself and the creature, so he is the internal spring of all that which the other Persons do in covenanting, and the moving cause of the whole transaction, as it was a marvellous transaction of love, the greatest that ever was." It would have been characteristic in Edwards to attempt a reconciliation between this remark and a remark previously made that the first Person was "the first mover" in the covenant of redemption;<sup>1</sup> but the two remarks confront each other face to face, and there is no endeavor to harmonize them.

"3. As the Holy Spirit is the Infinite riches and fulness of the Godhead to be communicated in the work of Redemption, so he is the great good covenanted for, and the end of the covenant." The Spirit is holiness and happiness; the covenant of redemption was designed for the holiness and happiness of men; thus it was designed to secure for men the Holy Spirit, who is the treasure, "the riches and fulness" of God.

Here are the salient points in the first and second parts of the Essay written in 1752, 53, or 54.<sup>2</sup> Not a single thought is expressed in these two parts which is not expressed in Edwards's recently published "Observations"<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See p. 359, above.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 147, above.

<sup>3</sup> "Observations concerning the Scripture Oeconomy of the Trinity and Covenant of Redemption. By Jonathan Edwards. With an Introduction and Appendix. By Egbert C. Smyth. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1880." Edwards was wont to pen his thoughts as they occurred to him; thus he often expressed substantially the same thoughts in different manuscripts. The present writer's remembrances of the Essay, and his pencilled memoranda of some pecu-

and in his *Treatise on Grace*. The first part of the *Essay* contains nothing more than the substance of the *Observations*, and the second part contains nothing more than the substance of the third chapter of the *Treatise*. The first is an offset to the second. The *Observations* have been criticised as Tritheistic; the first part of the mislaid *Essay* is equally so. That *Treatise* has been criticised as inconsistent with the triality of the Godhead; the second part of the *Essay* is equally so.<sup>1</sup> The second part of the *Essay* contains the only "remarks" which are suspected of Sabellianism; but the most important of these "remarks" were copied from the *Essay*, and are here quoted precisely as copied. They were also inserted in a note on page 170 above, for the purpose of facilitating a comparison, and illustrating the resemblance between the second part of the *Essay* and the *Treatise on Grace*. The *Observations* which are thought to be Tritheistic, and the *Treatise* and "remarks" which are thought to be Sabellian, illustrate the comprehensiveness of the author's mind; on the one hand, his penetration and sagacity in prying into the reasonableness of a doctrine; on the other hand, his docile and childlike faith impelling him to accept a scriptural doctrine whether it seems to be reasonable or unreasonable. He was a philosopher, a mystic, a poet; above all a believer. In reading him one must be mindful of his metaphysics and his metaphors; above all of his submission to the inspired word.<sup>2</sup>

liar words in it are inserted on this and the three preceding pages, and correspond with the "Observations" as published by Prof. Smyth.

<sup>1</sup> Both parts of the *Essay* contain statements which are either ambiguous, or else incongruous with the author's views as expressed elsewhere. One of these statements is that the Deity and glory of the Father are "as it were, repeated or duplicated," "or expressed again," in the Son. This statement may be considered as implying, what is implied in other remarks of the *Essay* (see p. 338 above), that the Father is the subject knowing and the Son is (not the knowledge but) the object known, and the Holy Spirit is the love (including the knowledge) which unites the subject and the object; and thus the three are *numerically* one Person; or else the statement may be regarded as inconsistent with Edwards's assertion that all the excellency of the Father is "*numerically*" the same with that of the Son (see p. 344, above). A duplicate of an object is not numerically the same with that very object.

<sup>2</sup> See Note D.

## NOTE A.

*Representations of the Trinity as imaged forth in the Human Mind*; pp. 338-340.

These representations are too various to be here repeated. They are such as these: (1) a Trinity of the thinking subject, the object of thought, and the thought itself, — *intelligens, intelligibile, intelligere*; (2) of the thinking subject, the object thought, and the mutual love of the subject and object; (3) of the mind as a substance, the act of knowing, the act of loving, *esse, nosse, velle*, (4) of the power to know and to love, the knowledge, and the love; (5) of the act self-originated, and originating all other acts; the knowledge originated by the preceding act, and the love originated by the two preceding acts. These and other representations may be comprehended under the general statement of Nicolaus of Cusa: God is “Unitas, Aequalitas, Connexio”; — “ab unitate gignitur unitatis aequalitas; connexio vero ab unitate procedit et ab unitatis aequalitate.”<sup>1</sup> One of the general statements borrowed from Schelling by Mr. S. T. Coleridge is: “In the Trinity there is, 1. Ipseity, 2. Alterity, 3. Community. You may express the formula thus, — God, the absolute Will or Identity = Prothesis. The Father = Thesis. The Son = Antithesis. The Spirit = Synthesis.”<sup>2</sup>

Perhaps it cannot be said that President Edwards was familiar, but numerous coincidences make it apparent that he was acquainted, with Augustine’s Treatise on the Trinity; particularly the statements made in the ninth, tenth, and fifteenth books of that Treatise. Some of Augustine’s more quotable passages are the following. *De Trinitate*, IX. 4. “Ipsa mens, et amor, et notitia tria quaedam sunt et haec tria unum sunt, et quum perfecta sunt, aequalia sunt.” L. X. 18. “Haec igitur tria, memoria, intelligentia, voluntas, quoniam non sunt tres vitae sed una vita, nec tres mentes sed una mens, consequenter utique non tres substantiae sed una substantia.” L. XI. 2. “Cum aliquid amo, tria sunt;

<sup>1</sup> Ueberweg’s History of Philosophy, Vol ii. p. 24.

<sup>2</sup> Specimens of Coleridge’s Table-Talk, pp. 44, 45.

ego, et quod amo, et ipse amor. — Tria ergo sunt, amans, et quod amatur, et mutuus amor.” — L. XI. 6. “Atque ita fit illa trinitas ex memoria, et interna visione, et quae utrumque copulat voluntate. Quae tria cum in unum coguntur ab ipso coactu cogitatio dicitur. Nec jam in his tribus diversa substantia est”; see also 7–18. L. XIV. 11. “Mens meminit sui, intelligit se, diligit se; si hoc cernimus, trinitatem cernimus:” see also XII. 4. L. XV. 31. “Sicut unicum dei verbum proprie vocamus nomine sapientiae, quum sit universaliter et spiritus et pater ipse sapientia, ita spiritus sanctus proprie nuncupatur vocabulo caritatis, quum sit universaliter caritas et pater et filius.” (Compare with this statement the words of Edwards in the preceding number of Bib. Sac., pp. 158–160.) L. XV. 37. “Si caritas, qua pater diligit filium et patrem diligit filius, ineffabiliter communionem demonstrat amborum, quid convenientius quam ut ille dicatur caritas proprie qui spiritus est communis ambobus.” (Compare Edwards in the preceding number of the Bib. Sac. pp. 163–168.) L. XV. 39. “Quae tria [memoria, intelligentia, voluntas aut caritas] in sua mente divinitus instituta, quisquis vivaciter perspicit, et quam magnum sit in ea, unde potest etiam sempiterna immutabilis natura recoli, conspici, concupisci, reminiscitur per memoriam, intuetur per intelligentiam, amplectitur per dilectionem, profecta reperit illius summae trinitatis imaginem”: see also 6, 10, 29, 38. Compare F. C. Baur; *Die christliche Lehre von der Dreieingkeit und Menschwerdung Gottes. Erster Theil, I. iv. 1.* — G. A. Meier: *Die Lehre von der Trinität. Erster Band, §§ 202–219.*

#### NOTE B.

*God is purus actus, actus simplicissimus*; pp. 351–353.

Among the writers familiar to Edwards, who adopt the ancient style of emphasizing the simplicity of the Godhead, is Wollebius. He says: “Deus est ens vere simplicissime unum. — Nempe, nec ex partibus, nec ex genere et differentia, nec ex substantia et accidentibus, nec ex potentia et actu, nec ex esse et essentia compositum. — Nihil ergo in

Deo est quod non sit ipse Deus." — "Deus  $\delta\lambda\omega\varsigma \delta\lambda\omega\upsilon$  est, seu totaliter totum: totus in se; totus in omnibus, totus in singulis, totus extra omnia." "Trinitas non numerus numerans est sed numeratus."<sup>1</sup> No single property, attribute, or accident in God is a completed unit to which another property, attribute, or accident as a completed unit can be added. He is not composed of discrete quantities, one adding itself to another, but he is numbered simply as *one and indivisible*.

Thomas Hobbes says: The phrase "*actus simplicissimus* signifieth nothing:" "Does any man understand *actus* for a substance, that is for a thing subsisting by itself? Is not *actus* in English either an *act* or an *action* or nothing? Or is any of these *substance*?"<sup>2</sup> It may be easily shown that many advocates of the phrase, "God is *pure act*" tacitly acknowledge what they openly disown, and without being conscious of their inconsistency with themselves, admit in one form what they reject in another. Instead of uniformly saying God is *purus actus*, they often say God is ever *in actu*. In his characteristic style Richard Baxter remarks: "Though God be said to be *purus actus*, it is *actus entitativus* including *potentiam seu virtutem agendi*; and *οὐσία* or substantiality is a necessary *prior* fundamental conception; for it doth *superare captum humanum* to conceive of an act that is not *alicujus actus*. He that causeth all substantiality and existence is eminently existing substance. Many have made it a dispute whether the *creature* have any *entity* or be a *shadow*; but none whether God be so."<sup>3</sup>

#### NOTE C.

*The right to believe in that of which the believer has no clear ideas*; pp. 355, 366.

In defence of this right the manuscripts of Edwards contain remarks which bear a striking resemblance to the follow-

<sup>1</sup> Wollebius, *Compendium Theologiæ Christianæ*, Lib. i. cap. 1; *Canones*, 1, 2, 4, cap. ii. Canon 1.

<sup>2</sup> Hobbes's *English Works*, Vol. iv. pp. 301, 304.

<sup>3</sup> *End of Controversy* (ed. 1791), chap. i. sec. 25, p. xvii.

ing extract from the "Letters on the Evidences, Doctrines, and Duties of Christianity, by Olinthus Gregory, LL.D., Professor of Mathematics in the Royal Military Academy at Woolwich."<sup>1</sup>

"Mathematicians can demonstrate that a space *infinite* in one respect may, by its rotation, generate a solid of *finite capacity*; as is the case with the solid formed by the rotation of a logarithmic curve of infinite length upon its axis, or with that formed by the rotation of an Apollonian hyperbola upon its asymptote. They can also show, in numerous instances, that a variable space shall be continually augmenting, and yet never become equal to a certain finite space. And they frequently make transformations with great facility and theoretical elegance by means of expressions to which no definite idea can be attached. Can, we for example obtain any clear comprehension, or, indeed, any notion at all, of the value of a power whose exponent is an acknowledged *imaginary quantity*, as  $x\sqrt{-1}$ ? Can we, in like manner, obtain any distinct idea of a series constituted of an infinite number of terms? In each case the answer must be in the negative. Yet the science in which these and numerous other *incomprehensibles* occur is called *Mathesis*, THE DISCIPLINE, because of its incomparable superiority to other studies in evidence and certainty, and therefore, its singular adaptation to discipline the mind.

"How does it happen that, when the investigation is bent towards objects which cannot be comprehended, the mind arrives in that in which it acquiesces *as certainty*, and rests satisfied? It is not, manifestly, because we have a distinct perception of the *nature* of the objects of inquiry; but because we have such a distinct perception of the *relation* which those objects bear one towards another, and can assign positively, without danger of error, the exact relation as to identity or diversity of the quantities before us, at every step of the process. . . . No mathematician can tell the precise value of  $\sqrt{2}$  or  $\sqrt{5}$ , while every one can tell the precise value

<sup>1</sup> See Prof. Crawford's *Mysteries of Christianity*, pp. 397-399.

of  $\sqrt{4}$  or  $\sqrt{9}$ ; yet no one has any more hesitation in declaring that  $\sqrt{5}$  exceeds  $\sqrt{2}$ , than in declaring that  $\sqrt{9}$  exceeds  $\sqrt{4}$ ; that is, that 3 is greater than 2.

“Again we cannot possibly know *all the terms* of the infinite series  $\frac{1}{a} - \frac{c}{a^2} + \frac{c^2}{a^3} - \frac{c^3}{a^4} + \frac{c^4}{a^5}$  etc., *in infinitum*; neither can we know *all the terms* of the infinite series  $\frac{1}{c} - \frac{a}{c^2} + \frac{a^2}{c^3} - \frac{a^3}{c^4} + \frac{a^4}{c^5}$  etc., *in infinitum*. Yet we can show that these series are equal to one another. For we can demonstrate that the first series is an expansion of the quantity  $\frac{1}{a+c}$ ; and that the second series is an expansion of the evidently equal quantity  $\frac{1}{c+a}$ . In like manner we can have no clear conception of the quantities  $\sqrt{-a}$ ,  $\sqrt{-b}$ ; yet we are as certain that  $\sqrt{-a} = \sqrt{-b} \times \sqrt{\frac{a}{b}}$ , as that  $20 + 30 = 50$ , since we can demonstrate that equality subsists in the former expressions as completely as we can in the latter. Every mathematician can fully prove that the conclusions he obtains by means of these quantities, although he cannot comprehend the quantities in themselves, must necessarily be true. He therefore acts wisely when he uses them, since they facilitate his inquiries; and knowing that their *relations* are real and ascertainable, he is satisfied, because it is only in these relations that he is interested.”

#### NOTE D.

From the fact that the manuscripts of Edwards contain statements inconsistent with themselves and with the main body of his writings, the report arose that he penned remarks which he did not permanently approve. The writer of this Note has believed this report during the last fifty years, and has been surprised to find that the “tentative” remarks are by no means so numerous or important as the rumor indicated. The growth of the rumor verifies the old maxim: “*Ex minimo crescit, sed non cito fama quiescit.*” The report

has now assumed a new form, and appears thus in various publications: "It has long been matter of private information that Professor Edwards A. Park of Andover had in his possession an unpublished manuscript of Edwards of considerable extent, perhaps two-thirds as long as his Treatise on the Will. As few have ever seen this manuscript, its contents are only known by vague reports. Its importance may be exaggerated, although it is impossible to exaggerate the interest, one would say, of an unpublished work of Edwards. It is said that it contains a departure from his published views on the Trinity, and a modification of the view of original sin. One account of it says that the manuscript leans toward Sabellianism, and that it even approaches Pelagianism. In the recollection of some, the title of it is 'Divine Charity,' or 'Love of God.' . . . . But it matters little what this manuscript contains. . . . . Everything that Edwards wrote has a value either as literature or as doctrine. . . . . If the importance of the suppressed manuscript is exaggerated in regard to its reported relaxing of uncompromising doctrines, the only way to show this is to publish it. If it is what it is reported to be, its publication is demanded by common morality."

I have never seen that "unpublished manuscript." Until the month of June, 1880 I had never heard of it. I have never seen the slightest proof that any such manuscript was ever written, there is indubitable proof that no such manuscript was ever written, by Edwards. The manuscript could not have contained "a modification of the [his] view of original sin"; for his Treatise on that subject was his latest work and "was in the press when he died."<sup>1</sup> It could not have been his volume on "Charity and its Fruits," or "Christian Love," for that volume was published thirty years ago; the sixth edition of it is now circulated by the Presbyterian Board of Publication; thousands have perused it, and have seen in it the opposite of all doctrines akin to Pelagianism. The great majority of Edwards's

<sup>1</sup> See Hopkins's "Life and Character" of Edwards (ed. 1799), p. 103.

manuscripts have been carefully examined by four, and only four, men now living, and neither of the four has ever seen the reported manuscript, or ever seen any reason to believe that there is, or ever was, one in which Edwards "leans towards Sabellianism," or "approaches Pelagianism." The larger part of all his remarks which New England clergymen would regard as deviations from the Trinitarian creed, are contained in pp. 157-177, 333-362 of the *Bibliotheca Sacra* for 1881. There is no unpublished manuscript of Edwards which contains a discussion of theological doctrines, and is more than one twentieth part "as long as his *Treatise on the Will*." Next to his *Treatise on Original Sin*, the last and most important work which he "prepared for the press" was that on the "Nature of True Virtue."<sup>1</sup> None of his writings develops his persistent orthodoxy more than this.

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## ARTICLE X.

### THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION.

#### NO. VII.—PRIVATE INSTRUCTION FOR THE MINISTRY.

THE beginnings of civilized life in New England were very peculiar. Among the early ship-loads of passengers landing in the Massachusetts Bay, two hundred and fifty years ago, there were a large number of highly educated men from the English universities. They were clergymen of the church of England fleeing from their native land because fines and imprisonments were behind them. They were such men as John Wilson, John Eliot, John Cotton, Thomas Hooker, John Norton, John Davenport, Thomas Shepard, Samuel Stone, Charles Chauncey, Richard Mather, and many others of the same general stamp. They were men of such literary culture that they were able to organize a college and transfer the ripe learning of England to these wild shores. This they did; and only nine years after the organization of

<sup>1</sup> See *Bib. Sac.*, Vol. x. pp. 411, 212.