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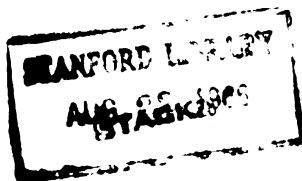
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100

CONTENTS.

JANUARY.

	PAGE
I.—Tertullian and the Beginnings of the Doctrine of the Trinity. (Second Article.) <i>Prof. Benjamin B. Warfield, D.D., LL.D.</i>	1
II.—The New Testament Account of the Birth of Jesus. (Second Article.) <i>J. Gresham Machen, A.M., B.D.</i>	37
III.—The Doctrine of Baptism in Holy Scripture and the Westminster Standards. (Third Article.) <i>Rev. T. F. Fotheringham, D.D.</i>	82
IV.—Reviews of Recent Literature.....	105
1.—Apologetical Theology. <i>Prof. William Brenton Greene, Jr., D.D.</i>	105
2.—Exegetical Theology. <i>Prof. Benjamin B. Warfield, D.D., LL.D.; Prof. John D. Davis, D.D., LL.D.; Prof. Geerhardus Vos., Ph.D., D.D., and Prof. N. M. Steffens, D.D.</i>	109
3.—Historical Theology. <i>Prof. Benjamin B. Warfield, D.D., LL.D.; Prof. John De Witt, D.D., LL.D.; Prof. Henry E. Dosker, D.D.; Prof. N. M. Steffens, D.D., and Rev. Frederick W. Loetscher, A.M., B.D.</i>	129
4.—Systematic Theology. <i>Prof. William Brenton Greene, Jr., D.D., and Prof. J. I. Good, D.D.</i>	139
5.—Practical Theology. <i>Rev. W. B. Shedd, A.B.; Rev. Frederick W. Loetscher, A.M., B.D., and Rev. Paul Martin, A.M.</i>	140
6.—General Literature. <i>Rev. Frederick W. Loetscher, A.M., B.D.</i>	144

APRIL.

I.—Tertullian and the Beginnings of the Doctrine of the Trinity. (Third Article.) <i>Prof. Benjamin B. Warfield, D.D., LL.D.</i>	145
II.—The Intellectual Life of Samuel Miller. <i>Prof. John De Witt, D.D., LL.D.</i>	168
III.—Preaching Christ. <i>Rev. Meade C. Williams, D.D.</i>	191
IV.—The Sacramental Theory of the Mediæval Church. <i>Prof. David S. Schaff, D.D.</i>	206
V.—Exegetical Note on II Cor. v. 16, 17. <i>Rev. Samuel T. Lowrie, D.D.</i>	236
VI.—Reviews of Recent Literature.....	242
1.—Apologetical Theology. <i>Henry Collin Minton, D.D., LL.D., and Prof. William Brenton Greene, Jr., D.D.</i>	242

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THE PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL REVIEW.

No. 1—January, 1906.

I.

TERTULLIAN AND THE BEGINNINGS OF THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY.

SECOND ARTICLE.

IN the last number of this REVIEW* it was pointed out that any approach which Tertullian may have made toward formulating a doctrine of a really immanent Trinity will be revealed by attending to the responses he makes to five questions. These questions are: (1) Whether he intends a real distinction of persons, in the philosophical sense of the term, by the distinction he makes between the divine "persons"; (2) Whether he supposes this distinction of persons to belong to the essential mode of the divine existence, or to have been constituted by those prolations of the Logos and Spirit which, according to his teaching, took place in order to the creation and government of the world; (3) Whether he preserves successfully the unity of God in the distinction of persons which he teaches; (4) Whether he conceives deity in Christ to be all that it is in the Father; and (5) Whether he accords to the Holy Spirit also both absolute deity and eternal distinctness of personality. We shall endeavor now to obtain Tertullian's responses to these questions.

(1) The interest with which we seek Tertullian's answer to the

* THE PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL REVIEW, October, 1905, pp. 529-557.

first of these questions, great enough in itself, has been largely increased by a suggestion made by Dr. Charles Bigg, which has been taken up and given additional significance by Prof. Adolf Harnack. Dr. Bigg suggested* that Tertullian may have borrowed the word "persona" which he applies to the distinctions in the deity, not from the schools, but from the law courts. Harnack added to this the further suggestion† that the term "substantia" in Tertullian may well have had a similar origin. On these suppositions it was thought possible that Tertullian by his formula of three persons in one substance may have meant very little more than the Monarchians themselves might supposedly be able to grant. In his *History of Dogma* Harnack returns to the matter‡ with some persistency and, we might almost say, dogmatism. Tertullian he asserts, (iv, 144),§ was not dealing with philosophical conceptions, but employing rather "the method of legal fictions." "It was easy for him," continues Harnack, "by the help of the distinction between 'substance' and 'person' current among the jurists, to explain and establish against the Monarchians, not alone the old, ecclesiastical, preëminently Western formula, 'Christus deus et homo,' but also the formula, 'pater, filius et spiritus sanctus—unus deus.' 'Substance' (Tertullian never says 'Nature') is, in the language of the jurists, nothing personal; it rather corresponds to 'property' in the sense of possession, or 'substance' in distinction from appearance or 'status'; 'Person,' again, is in itself nothing substantial, but rather a subject having legal standing and capable of holding property (*das rechts- und besitzfähige Subject*), who may as well as not possess various substances, as, on the other hand, it is possible that a single substance may be found in the possession of several persons." "Speaking juristically," he remarks again (iv, 122),|| "there is as little to object to the formula that several persons are holders of one and the same substance (property), as to the other that one person may possess unconfused several substances." That is to say, apparently, when Tertullian describes God as "one substance in three persons," we may doubt whether any other conception floated before his mind than that one piece of property may very well be held in undivided possession by three several individuals; and when he speaks of our Lord as one person with two substances, we may question whether

* *The Christian Platonists of Alexandria*, p. 165.

† *Theolog. Literaturzeitung*, 1887, 5, 110.

‡ See especially E. T., Vol. II, p. 257 note, 282; Vol. IV, p. 57, 122 sq., 144 sq.

§ German, ed. I, 1887, Vol. II, p. 307. || German, as above, p. 288.

he meant more than that the same individual may very well appear in court with two distinct "properties."

The theory certainly lacks somewhat in definiteness of statement,* and leaves us a little uncertain whether its application to Tertullian's teaching results in lowering the conception we suppose him to have attached to the term "person" or that we suppose him to have attached to the term "substance." The fact seems to be that Harnack, at least, himself vacillates in his application of it. Despite the passages already quoted, he sometimes speaks as if when Tertullian says that "Father, Son and Holy Ghost are three persons in the unity of the Godhead," we should raise the question whether by "persons" he means anything more than "capacities"—that is, whether the persons were conceived by him as much more than simply "nomina" (Harnack, iv, 57; *Adv. Prax.*, 30), and whether, therefore, his doctrine was not at least as nearly related to Monarchianism as to Nicene Trinitarianism (so Harnack, iv, 57, note). On the other hand, when he says that "God and man, two substances, are one Christ," we seem to be expected to raise the question whether by "substance" he means much more than "status, virtus, potestas"—that is, whether he really conceived the individual Jesus Christ as including in Himself two unconfused natures, or only two aspects of being. The sense of confusion produced by this attempt so to state the theory as to make it do double duty—and that, in each instance of its application—is already an indication that it is not easy to adjust it precisely to the facts it is called in to explain. What we are asked to do apparently is not merely to presume that Tertullian derived his nomenclature from the law courts; but to suppose that he was not quite sure in his own mind in what sense he was borrowing it. In other words, we are to suppose that he began by borrowing the terms, leaving the senses in which he should employ them to be fixed afterward; instead of beginning, as he must have done, with the conceptions to express which he borrowed or framed terms.

The real difficulty with the theory, however, is that it seems to be entirely without support in Tertullian's own usage of the words, and much more in his definitions and illustrations of their meaning. Harnack urges in its support little beyond the two somewhat irrelevant facts that Tertullian is known to have been a jurist,

* Mr. BETHUNE-BAKER, in his *The Meaning of Homoousios in the 'Constantinopolitan' Creed*, pp. 21 sq., and especially in his *Introduction to the Early History of Christian Doctrine*, pp. 138 sq., gives a lucid statement of the theory, and adopts it up to a certain point, but remarks that "it is going too far to describe Tertullian's conceptions as in any way controlled by juristic usage."

and so might well be familiar with juristic language, and that he used by predilection the term "substance" rather than "nature."* On the other hand, that Tertullian is here speaking as the heir of the Apologists and is dealing with conceptions not of his own framing, that, moreover, the whole drift of his discussion is philosophical, and that, above all, his own explanations of his meaning—as, for example, in the illustrations he makes use of—fix on the terms he employs a deeper sense, put this whole theory summarily out of court. It has accordingly made very few converts, and has

* The introduction of "substance" instead of "nature" appears to have been due to an attempt to attain greater precision of terminology. Augustine, *De Trinitate*, Book VII, chap. vi, §11 (*Post-Nicene Fathers*, I, iii, 112), explicitly testifies that this use of "substance" was of comparatively recent origin: "The ancients also who spoke Latin, before they had these terms, that is, 'essence' or 'substance,' which have not long come into use, used for them to say 'nature.'" In an earlier treatise, *De Moribus Manich.* (388), chap. ii, §2, Augustine had made the same remark (*Post-Nicene Fathers*, iv, 70): "Hence the new word which we now use, derived from the word for being—essence, namely, or, as we usually say, substance—while, before these words were in use, the word nature was used instead." The whole matter is exhibited again in *De Haer.*, xlix: "The Arians, from Arius, are best known for the error by which they deny that the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are of one and the same nature and substance, or to speak more precisely, essence, called in Greek *οὐσία*"; and again, in the *Contra Sermon. Arian.* xxxvi, "The Arians and Eunomians dub us Homoousiani, because against their error we defend the Father, Son and Holy Spirit by the Greek word *ὁμοούσιον*, that is, as of one and the same substance, or to speak more precisely, essence, which is called *οὐσία* in Greek; or, as it is more plainly (planius) expressed, of one and the same nature." That is Nature is the common word; Essence the exact one but stilted; Substance the nearest natural equivalent of Essence. The word "essentia" was as old as Cicero (*Sen.*, ep. 58 ad init.; cf. *Quint.*, 2. 14. 2; 3. 6. 23; 8. 3. 13), but never commended itself to the Roman ear, which esteemed it harsh and abstract: it was left, therefore, to an occasional philosopher to employ and then scarcely without apologies (*Sen.*, ep. 58. 6; *Quint.*, 2. 14. 1. 2). The more concrete "substantia" (apparently a post-Augustan word, cf. *Quint.*, 2. 15. 34) became, therefore, the usual term in careful writing. The two are constantly used as exact synonyms: e.g., Apuleius, *Dogm. Plat.*, I, vi, writes: "The *οὐσίαι* which we call *essentiæ*, [Plato] says are two, by which all things are produced, even the world itself. Of these one is conceived by thought only, the other may be attained by the senses. . . . And *primæ quidem substantiæ vel essentiæ*. . . ." Nature was simply the popular term and was held to be less exact, and was therefore avoided by careful writers. HARNACK's notion that Tertullian's preference of substantia has some deep theological significance seems, therefore, peculiarly unfortunate. For a refutation of it on its merits see STIER, as cited, pp. 76 sq. Mr. BETHUNE-BAKER (*The Meaning of Homoousios*, etc., pp. 16 and 65; cf. also *Journal of Theological Studies*, IV, 440) also appears to overstrain the distinction between 'Substance' and 'Nature' in Tertullian and his successors. Their preference for 'substantia' is sufficiently accounted for by the greater precision of the word and its freedom from qualitative implications (cf. Quintilian's distinction of 'substantia' and 'qualitas' in 7. 3. 6) The 'natura' of a thing suggests implications of kind; 'substantia' raises no question of kind and asserts merely reality.

more than once been solidly refuted.* In the aspect of it in which it comes especially before us in our present discussion, it certainly seems impossible to give it a hospitable reception.

If there is anything, indeed, that seems clear in Tertullian's exposition it is that he deals seriously with the personality which he attributes to the three distinctions of the "economy."† This is indeed the very hinge on which the whole controversy which he was urging so sharply against the Monarchian conception turns. Whatever care he exhibits in guarding the unity of the divine substance, therefore, by denying that any *separatio*, or *divisio*, or *dispersio*‡ has taken place or could take place in it, is necessarily matched by the equal emphasis he places on the reality of the *distributio*, *distinctio*, *dispositio*§ that has place in it, and by virtue of which He who is eternally and unchangeably one (*unum*) is nevertheless not one (*unus*), but three,—not, indeed, in status, substance, power, but in grade, form, species, aspect.|| The point of importance to be noted here is not merely that Tertullian calls these distinctions "persons" (which he repeatedly does),¶ but that he makes

* *E.g.*, briefly, by SEEBERG, *Lehrbuch d. DG.*, 1895, I, 85–87; and very copiously by J. STIER, *Die Gottes- und Logos-Lehre Tertullians*, 1899, pp. 74–78. Even LOOFS says (*Leitfaden z. S. d. DG.*, Ed. 2, p. 87): "These formulas show that Tertullian learned something in the course of his polemics, but are so thoroughly explicable as formalistic reworking of the Apologetic and Asian Tradition, that there is no need to derive them artificially from the juristic usage (against HARNACK)."

† Cf. DORNER, *Person of Christ*, I, ii, 59: "As he gazed on the incarnate Logos, he felt certainly convinced of His personality. For it was not a mere impersonal power, but a divine subject that had become man in Christ," etc. Cf. also p. 24, note 2.

‡ Chaps. iii, viii, ix.

§ Chaps. ix, xiii.

|| Chap. ii: "Custodiatur *oikonomia* sacramentum, quæ unitatem in trinitatem disponit, tres dirigens, tres autem non statu sed gradu, nec substantia sed forma, nec potestate sed specie, unus autem substantiæ et unus status et potestatis."

¶ Mr. BETHUNE-BAKER, *Early History of Doctrine*, etc., p. 139, note³ (cf. *Homœousios*, etc., pp. 17–18), remarks, to be sure: "Tertullian seems, however, to avoid the use of *personæ* in this connection"—that is to say, when "speaking as regards the being of God of one substance and three persons"—"using *tres* alone to express 'the three' without adding 'persons' in the case of the Trinity; just as later Augustine, while feeling compelled to speak of three 'persons,' apologized for the term and threw the responsibility for it upon the poverty of the language (*de Trinitate*, V, 10, vii, 7–10). Tertullian has the definite expression only when it cannot well be omitted—*e.g.*, when supporting the doctrine of the Trinity from the baptismal commission, he writes, 'nam nec semel, sed ter, ad singula nonima in personas singulas tinguimur' (*Ad. Prax.*, 26)." There seems, however, to be as frequent use of the term as there would be any reason to expect, and Tertullian explains (ch. xii) that when he speaks of the distinction as "one" or "another" it is on the ground of "personality." See the long list of passages in HARNACK, IV, 123.

them persons by whatsoever designation he marks them. The whole of Scripture, he declares, demands this of its readers: it attests clearly the existence and distinction of the Trinity, and indeed establishes the Rule that He who speaks and He of whom He speaks and He to whom He speaks cannot possibly be the same; nor does it fail to place thus by the first and second the third person also.* Only on the basis of this tri-personality of God, he urges, can the plural forms in which God speaks of Himself in Scripture be explained:† and how can one issue what can justly be called a command except to another? "In what sense, however, you ought to understand Him to be another," he adds, "I have already explained—on the ground of personality, not of substance—in the way of distinction not of division."‡

In this whole discussion, Tertullian's watchword was necessarily *the economy*: and the economy was just the trinity in the unity. Had he not felt bound to assert the economy, there had been no quarrel between him and the Monarchians, whose watchword was the unity. As it was, he required to begin his polemic against them with the distinct positing of the question: and this involved the distinct enunciation of the doctrine of plural personality in the Godhead. We have always believed and do now still believe, he says,§ that there is One only God—but—and it is in this "but" that the whole case lies—but "under the following *οἰκονομία*, as it is called,—that this One God has also a Son, His Word, who proceeded from Himself . . . who also sent from heaven, from the Father, according to His own promise, the Holy Ghost, the Sanctifier of the faith of those who believe in the Father and in the Son and in the Holy Ghost." This is Tertullian's anti-Monarchian Confession of Faith. His complaint is that men behaved as if the unity of the Godhead could be preserved in no other way than by representing the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost as the very selfsame person, thus in their zeal for the unity neglecting the *sacramentum οἰκονομίας*,|| which distributes the unity into a Trinity. On the contrary, he insists,¶ although the true God is one only God, He must yet be believed in with His own *οἰκονομία*—which with its numerical order and distribution of the Trinity is a support to, not a breach of, the true unity; because, he explains,** such a Trinity, flowing down from the Father through intertwined and connected steps does not at all

* Chap. xi.

† Chap. xii, *ad initium*.

‡ Chap. xii, *ad finem*. Cf. xxi, near the beginning. Cf. DORNER, I. ii, 24 note 2.

§ Chap. ii.

|| Chap. ii.

¶ Chap. iii.

** Chap. viii, end.

disturb the monarchy, while it at the same time guards the state of the economy. Men must not be permitted to extol the monarchy at the expense of the economy, contending for the identity of the Father and Son, whereas the very names, Father and Son, plainly declaring their distinct personality, proclaim the economy*—lest under pretence of the monarchy men come to hold to neither Father nor Son, abolishing all distinctions in the interest of their monarchy.† Thus the discussion runs on, upholding the economy against the falsely conceived monarchy, to end in the same note,‡—in the declaration that the Son, the second name in the Godhead, and the second degree of the Divine Majesty, has shed forth on the Church in these latter days “the promised gift, even the Holy Spirit—the third name in the Godhead and the third degree of the Divine Majesty, the Declarer of the one Monarchy of God, but at the same time the Interpreter of the Economy to every one who hears and receives the words of the new prophecy; and the Leader into all truth such as is in the Father, and the Son and the Holy Ghost, according to the mystery of the doctrine of Christ.” To reject the economy is, in effect, he charges, to revert to Judaism,—for to Jews not to Christians it belongs “so to believe in one God as to refuse to reckon besides Him the Son, and after the Son the Spirit”§ The distinctive mark of Christianity to him, thus, is that the unity of God is so held that God is now openly known in His proper names and persons.||

Among the passages in which Tertullian exhibits with especial emphasis the distinction which he erects between the Father, Son and Spirit under the name of persons there is a striking one¶ in which he is replying to the Callistan formula which made the Father not indeed suffer in and of Himself, but participate in the suffering of the Son. He makes his primary appeal here to the impassibility of God as such, and then falls to magnifying the distinction between the Father and the Son. “The Father,” he asserts, “is separate from the Son, though not from God.” The meaning seems to be that the Son is the name specifically of the incarnated Logos, and the incarnated Logos—as God, indeed, one in substance with the Father—is, as incarnated, something more, viz., flesh as well; and on this side of His being, which is the only side in which He suffered (for the Son, under the conditions of His existence as God, Tertullian allows, is as incapable of suffering as the Father) is not one with God, but separate from

* Chap. ix.

§ Chap. xxxi.

† Chap. x.

|| Chap. xxxi.

‡ Chap. xxx.

¶ Chap. xxix.

Him. The Monarchian might certainly reply that on this showing the Father Himself, if conceived to be incarnate, might be as truly said to share in the sufferings of the Son, or the flesh, as the Son, incarnated, could be said to have suffered. If the sufferings of the flesh were not of the flesh alone, but the incarnated Deity stood in some relation to them, this would be, on Tertullian's own showing, as conceivable of the Father, deemed incarnate, as of the Son. Tertullian, therefore, attempts to help his answer out by means of a simile. If a river, he says, is soiled with mud, this miring of the stream does not affect the fountain, though the river flows from the fountain, is identical in substance with it, and is not separated from it: and although it is the water of the fountain which suffers in the stream, yet since it is affected only in the stream and not in the fountain, the fountain is not contaminated, but only the river that has issued from the fountain. We are not concerned now with the consistency of Tertullian: how he could say in one breath that the Son as God is as impassible, being God Himself, as the Father, and in the next that it is the very water from the fountain--the very substance of God in its second distinction--that is affected by the injury which has befallen it. What it concerns us to notice is, that in this illustration Tertullian very much magnifies the distinction between the persons of the Godhead. The Son is so far distinct from the Father that He may be involved in sufferings which do not reach back to or affect the Father. The stream may be the fountain flowing forth: but the stream is so far distinct from the fountain, that what affects it is no longer felt in the fountain. Here is the individualization of personal life in an intense form, and an indication of the length to which Tertullian's conception of the personal distinction went.

In another passage* Tertullian announces the same results without the aid of a figure. He is engaged in discriminating between mere effluxes of power or other qualities from God and the prolation of a real and substantial person: in doing this, he magnifies the distinction between the original source and the prolation. Nothing that belongs to another thing is precisely that thing: and nothing that proceeds from it can be simply identified with it. The Spirit is God, no doubt; and the Word is God; because they proceed from God, from His very substance. But they are not actually the very same as He from whom they proceed. Each is God of God: each is a *substantiva res*; but each is not *ipse Deus*; but only

* Chap. xxvi.

"so far God as He is of the same substance with God Himself, and as being an actually existing thing, and as a portion of the Whole."

In still another passage Tertullian is repelling the Monarchians' scoff that as a word is no substantial thing, but a mere voice and sound made by the mouth, merely so much concussed air, intelligible to the ear as a symbol of thought, but in itself nothing at all: therefore (so they argued) the Word of God—the Logos—is to be conceived not as a substantial thing distinguishable from the Father, but only as a symbol of intelligible meaning. Tertullian reproaches them for being unwilling to allow that the Word is a really substantive being, having a substance of its own,—an objective thing and a person,—who, by virtue of His constitution as a second to God, makes, with God, two, the Father and the Son, God and the Word. He argues on two grounds that the Logos must have this substantial existence. The one is that He came forth from so great a substance: God who is Himself the fullness of Being, cannot be presumed to prolate an empty thing. The other is that He is Himself the author of substantial things: how could He, who was Himself nothing, produce things which are realities, with substantial existence? Whatever else this argument proves, it certainly proves that Tertullian conceived of the distinction between God the Father and God the Son as attaining the dignity of distinct individuality. "Whatever, therefore,"—he closes the discussion with these words—"whatever, therefore, has the substance of the Word, that I designate a Person. I claim for it the name of Son, and, recognizing the Son, I assert His distinction as second to the Father."

(2) It may remain, no doubt, a question whether Tertullian did not conceive this distinction of persons to have been the result of those movements of the divine substance by which successively the Logos and the Spirit proceeded from the fountal source of deity, so that the economy was thought of as superinduced upon a previous monarchy. It is thus, indeed, that he has been commonly understood.* In this case, while certainly he would take the personal distinctions seriously, he might be supposed not to look upon them as rooted essentially in the very being of God. God in Himself would be conceived as a monad: God flowing out to create the world and to uphold and govern it, as becoming for these purposes a triad. The "invisible God" would be a monad; the "visible God"—the God of the world-process—would become a triad.

It may be that it was after a fashion somewhat similar to this

* So, *e.g.*, DORNER, HAGEMANN, HARNACK, STIER.

that Tertullian was naturally inclined to think of God and the distinctions he conceived to exist in His being; that is to say, his thought may have run most readily in the moulds of what has come to be called an economic as distinguished from what is known as an immanent Trinitarianism. It was along these lines that the Logos-speculation tended to carry him, and his hearty acceptance of that speculation as the instrument with which to interpret the deposit of Christian truth might well lead him to conceive and speak of the Trinitarian distinctions as if they were merely "economical." But the deposit of truth subjected to interpretation by the Logos-speculation was not quite tractable to it, and it is interesting to inquire whether Tertullian betrays any consciousness of this fact,—whether in his dealing with the data embedded in the Rule of Faith he exhibits any tendency to carry back the distinction of persons in the Godhead behind the prolations by which the Logos and Spirit proceeded from it for the purpose of producing the world of time and space. So loyal an adherent of the Rule of Faith might well be expected to deal faithfully with its data, and to seek to do something like justice to them even when they appeared to be intractable to his ordinary instrument of interpretation. And so bold a thinker might well be incited by the pressure of such data to ask himself if there were nothing in the *fons deitatis* itself which might be recognized as a kind of prophecy or even as a kind of predetermination of the prolations which ultimately proceeded from it—if the very issue of these prolations do not presuppose in the Godhead itself a certain structure, so to speak, which involved the promise and potency of the prolations to come,—if, in a word, the distinctions brought into manifestation by the prolations must not be presumed to have preëxisted in a latent or less manifest form in the eternal monad, out of which they ultimately proceeded.

That some indications exist of such a tendency on Tertullian's part to push the personal distinctions behind the prolations into the Godhead itself is perhaps universally recognized. It is frequently denied, to be sure, that this tendency goes very far. Harnack's form of statement is that it gives to Tertullian's teaching "a strong resemblance to the doctrine of an immanent Trinity, without being it."* Tertullian, he says, "knew as little of an immanent Trinity as the Apologists," and his Trinity "only *appears* such because the unity of the substance is very vigorously empha-

* *Op. cit.*, iv, 122

sized.”* Johannes Stier holds essentially the same opinion. “Of an immanent Trinity in Tertullian,”† he argues, “there can be no talk, because he is absolutely explicit that a plural personality came into existence for the purpose of the world. Without the world, the primal unity would have abided. It is indeed true that the Logos and the Spirit were immanent in the unity of the divine original essence from the beginning, but nevertheless not—and this is the point—in a *personal* manner. From the beginning God, the divine original-essence, was alone; alone precisely as person (cf. *Adv. Prax.*, 5). From this (first) person, no doubt, absolutely immediately, the Logos (*ratio*, *sermo*) was distinguished as *subject*, but not yet as (second) person—he became person only pretemporally-temporally. And as for the Spirit, the matter is perfectly analogous in His case (cf. *Adv. Prax.*, 6). The Trinity of Tertullian is purely (against Schwane, p. 164, and others) economical, conceived solely with reference to the world; nothing is easier to see if we have the will to see it (cf. also Gieseler, p. 137; Harnack, I, 536; Huber, 117).” Nevertheless Harnack not only can speak of Tertullian as “creating the formulas of succeeding orthodoxy,” but can even declare that “the orthodox doctrine of the Trinity already announced its presence in him even in its details.”‡ And Stier is forced to acknowledge that Tertullian came within a single step of an immanent Trinity.§ “There needed, we must admit,” he remarks, “only a single step more to arrive at the eternal personal being of the *sermo* in God, to establish an eternal, immanent relation between the divine original-essence and His Logos as two divine personalities, to advance thence to the immanent Trinity. But Tertullian stopped with conceiving the *sermo* from eternity, it is true, along with the *ratio*,—and the discernment of this already itself means something,—but still only as the impersonal basis (*Anlage*) of a future personal *sermo*.” The reason of Tertullian’s failure to take the last step Stier, like Hagemann|| and others before

* *Op. cit.*, ii 261. Similarly Loofs remarks: “These formulas anticipate the later orthodoxy: it is all the more necessary to emphasize how strongly subordinationist they are: the ‘economical’ trinity here is just as little an eternal one as in the case of the older theologians of Asia Minor” (*Leitfaden*, etc., 2d ed., p. 89)

† *Op. cit.*, p. 95, note.

‡ iv, 121.

§ P. 81.

|| *Die Römische Kirche*, etc., pp. 173 sq. On p. 175 HAGEMANN writes as follows: “With the last idea”—the idea namely that the *sermo* is inseparable from the *ratio*, and therefore even *before* creation God was not “alone,” but His “Word” included in his “reason” was with him—“Tertullian was advancing on the right road to the recognition of the eternal and personal existence of the Word in God. The Word has its ground in the Being of God, falls in the circle of His inner life, is

him, finds in the fact that Tertullian connected the personal *sermo* so intimately with the world that had he conceived the one as eternal, he must needs have conceived the other as eternal also: and as he was not prepared to think of the world as eternal, neither could he ascribe eternity to the personal Logos (cf. *Adv. Prax.*, 6 sq.).

Possibly there is a *petitio principii* embedded in the terms in which this reason is stated. Tertullian certainly connected the prolate Logos so closely with the world that we could scarcely expect him to separate the two. But whether that involves a similar inseparable connection between the personal Logos and the world is precisely the question at issue. The prolation and the personality of the Logos seem to be for the moment confused by our critics, doubtless because it is judged that the two went together in Tertullian's mind: but this judgment cannot be justified by merely repeating it. Meanwhile we note that it is allowed that Tertullian did conceive the *sermo* as eternally existent along with the *ratio*, and this is rightly regarded as a matter of some significance and as equivalent at least to the postulation of something in the eternal mode of existence of God which supplies the basis (*Anlage*) for a future personal Logos. What this something was Stier does not indeed tell us, contenting himself merely with denying that it amounted in Tertullian's thought to a *personal* distinction, prior to the prolation of the Logos. He uses a German term to designate it—*Anlage*—which might be fairly pressed to cover all that Tertullian expresses as to his personal Logos, when he speaks of it as a *distributio*, *distinctio*, *dispositio*, *dispensatio*: and Stier can scarcely mean less than that Tertullian recognized in the eternal mode of existence of the Godhead such a distinction, disposition, distribution, dispensation, as manifested itself in the outgoing from Him of a *portio* into a truly personal distinction when He was about to create the world. Less than this

inseparably given with Him. But he had shut himself off from the full and right understanding of the matter itself, by introducing into the investigation from the start the world-idea. He could not maintain, therefore, the full and eternal existence of the Word, without at the same time admitting the full and eternal existence of the world itself; and since this was to him an impossible idea, he could not carry through the former in its whole strictness. To him the Logos hung together with the world, and his conception of the latter was decisive for the conception of the former also. To be sure, he came near to the conviction of the eternity and the full divine nature of the Logos; but just as he was about to reach the goal, the world-idea hinderingly intruded in the way. No doubt it is to be said that his insight in this matter was injuriously affected by too great dependence on the Apologists." Again, on p. 177, summing up: "Enough: in order not to allow also the eternity of the world, he had sacrificed the eternity of the Son and taught, as a progressive realization of the world-idea, so also a progressive hypostatizing of the Logos."

would come perilously near to saying merely that the Son was potentially in the Father before He actually came into existence from the Father, which, as George Bull repeatedly points out, is no more than can be said of all created beings, all of which (according to Tertullian also), before they were produced actually, preëxisted in the thought and power of God.* By as much as Stier cannot mean that Tertullian recognized in the original mode of the divine existence no deeper basis for the personal prolation of the Word than there was for the production of the creature-world, by so much must he be supposed to mean that Tertullian recognized that the very structure, so to speak, of the Godhead, from all eternity, included in it some disposition by virtue of which the prolation of the Logos, and afterward that of the Spirit, were provided for as manifestations of an eternal distinction in the Godhead. This certainly leaves only a short step to the recognition of an immanent Trinity; so short a step, indeed, that it is doubtful whether it does not lead inevitably on to it. The question is narrowed down at any rate to whether distinctions eternally existent in the Godhead, and afterward manifested in the prolate Logos and the prolate Spirit as truly personal, were conceived as already personal in the eternal mode of existence of God or as made such only by the acts of prolation themselves. We imagine that the average reader of Tertullian, while he will not fail to note how much the prolations meant to Tertullian's thought, will not fail to note, on the other hand, that these prolations rested for Tertullian on distinctions existent in the Godhead prior to all prolation, as the appropriate foundations for the prolations; nor will he fail to note further that Tertullian sometimes speaks of these ante-prolation distinctions in a manner which suggests that he conceived them as already personal.

The whole matter has been solidly argued, once for all, in the

* *E.g., Defensio, etc.*, III, ix, 3 (E. T., p. 486). DORNER does not shrink from this assimilation of the preëxistence of the Logos and of the world: to Tertullian, he affirms explicitly, "the Son has in the first instance a mere ideal existence, like the world-idea itself" (I, ii, 64), and therefore "became a person for the first time at, and for the sake of, the world" (74). "There is no place," in Tertullian's view, he says, "for a real hypostatic sonship in the inner, eternal essence of God: all that he has tried to point out, is the existence in God of an eternally active potency of Sonship" (63), "a real potency of Sonship, . . . impersonal but already a personific principle" (69). It does not appear what purpose these latter phrases serve beyond exhibiting a possible doubt in DORNER's own mind whether it is quite adequate to Tertullian's thought to represent him as assigning no more real preëxistence to the Logos than to the world—whether, in other words, the Logos, in his view, did not exist in some more real form than mere potentiality.

tenth chapter of the third book of George Bull's *Defense of the Nicene Creed* (written in 1680, published in 1685). That this notable book is marred by special pleading, and that Bull shows a less keen historical conscience, as Baur puts it,* or as we should rather say, a less acute historical sense, than Petavius, his chief opponent in this famous debate, we suppose can scarcely be denied. In the main matter of dispute between these two great scholars, we can but think Petavius had the right of it. The position which Petavius takes up,† indeed, appears to involve little more than recognizing that the literary tradition of the Church, prior to the Council of Nice, was committed to the Logos Christology: while Bull undertakes the impossible task, as it seems to us, of explaining the whole body of ante-Nicene speculation in terms of Nicene orthodoxy. The proper response to Petavius would have been to point out that the literary tradition, running through "Athenagoras, Tatian, Theophilus, Tertullian, Lactantius," together with "certain others, such as Origen,"‡ is not to be identified at once with the traditional teaching of the Church, but represents rather a literary movement or theological school of thought, which attempted with only partial success a specific philosophizing of the traditional faith of the

* *Die christliche Lehre von der Dreieinigkeit*, I, 110, where a sober estimate of the value of the work may be found. Cf. also SCHAFF, *Hist. of the Christian Church*, II, 544. MEIER (*Die Lehre von der Trinität*, etc., II, 76-77) looks upon BULL's effort to save the doctrine of the Trinity as a counsel of despair in the midst of a general decline of faith in this doctrine. Under the feeling that the doctrine could not be based on Scripture, since it is nowhere taught explicitly in Scripture, BULL undertook to show that it had for it at least the consistent testimony of antiquity. Even so, however, it was only a curtailed doctrine that he undertook the defense of. "BULL found himself also forced to make concessions; he perceived himself that he could maintain only the consubstantiality and the eternity of the Son, while allowing that differences existed as to special points—as e.g., whether the Son was begotten from the Father as respects substance: and he considers that the ground of the differences among the Fathers which PETAVIUS adduced was due to an attempt to find scholastic definitions among them. In his own faith he reverts to the pre-Augustinian period, . . . and sees himself driven back upon the Logos-idea, . . . and in this driftage we see the beginning of the destruction of the dogma even in the Church itself." It probably is a fact that every attempt to revert from the Augustinian to the Nicene construction of the Trinity marks a stage of weakening hold upon the doctrine itself. With all BULL's zeal for the doctrine, therefore, his mode of defending it is an indication of lack of full confidence in it, and in essence is an attempt to establish some compromise with the growing forces of unbelief. The same phenomenon is repeating itself in our own day: cf. Prof. L. L. PAINE's *The Evolution of Trinitarianism*, the assault of which on the Augustinian construction of the doctrine is a sequence of a lowered view of the person of Jesus gained from a critical reconstruction of the Bible.

† *De Trinitate*, I, 5, 7, quoted in BULL, *Introduct.*, 7 (E. T., p. 9).

‡ This is the enumeration given by PETAVIUS, *de Trinitate*, I, 5, 7.

Church. The measure of success which Bull achieved in explaining this literary tradition in harmony with the traditional faith of the Church—which was rather to be sought in the Rule of Faith and the naïve Christian consciousness of the times—is due to the constant reference which the writers with whom he dealt made in their thinking to the Rule of Faith, of which they were always conscious as underlying their speculations and supplying the norm to which they strove to make their conclusions as far as possible conform; as well as to the survival in the final product which we know as Nicene theology of such elements of the Logos-speculation as could be assimilated by it. He was able, therefore, to show repeatedly that the very men whom Petavius adduced as teachers of the inadequate formula betrayed here and there consciousness of elements of truth for which this formula, strictly interpreted, left no place; and also that language much the same as theirs—and conceptions not far removed from theirs—might easily be turned up in writers of unimpeachable orthodoxy living after the Council of Nice. In both matters he has done good service. It is unfair not to remember that these earlier writers wished to be and made a constant effort to remain in harmony with the Rule of Faith; and that we do not obtain their whole thought, therefore, until we place by the side of their speculative elaborations the elements of truth which they also held, for which these speculations nevertheless made no place. They were in intention, at all events, orthodox; and the failure of their theory to embrace all that orthodoxy must needs confess was an indication rather of the inadequacy of the theory to which they had committed their formal thinking, than of any conscious willingness on their part to deny or neglect essential elements of the truth. And it is useful, on the other hand, to be reminded that their unwearying effort to do justice—as far as their insight carried them—to the whole deposit of the faith bore its appropriate fruit, first, in the gradual, almost unnoted passing of their theory itself into something better, as the Nicene orthodoxy supplanted because transcending it, and next in the projection into the Nicene orthodoxy itself of many of the characteristic modes of thought and forms of expression of the earlier theory—conditioning both the conceptions and the terms used to embody them which entered as constituent elements into the new and better construction. Meanwhile, to fail to appreciate this historic evolution, and to attempt to interpret the inadequate conceptions of the earlier thinkers as only somewhat clumsily expressed enunciations of Nicene orthodoxy, is a grave historical fault, and could not fail to fill Bull's book with expositions

which give it as a whole the appearance of an elaborate piece of special pleading. Only when the writer with whom he chances in any given passage to be dealing had become sharply aware—or at least uneasily conscious—of one or another of the elements of truth embodied in the Rule of Faith for which the speculation he had adopted as yet provided no place, and was really striving to take it up into his theory, make even by violence a place for it, and do justice to it, is Bishop Bull's exposition altogether admirable. This is the case with Tertullian in the matter of the eternal distinctions in the Godhead, and the result is that Bishop Bull, in the chapter in which he deals with this subject, has performed a delicate piece of expository work with a skill and a clearness which leave little to be desired.

He begins the discussion by adducing what is perhaps the most striking of the passages in which Tertullian appears explicitly to deny the eternity of the personal distinctions in the Godhead. It is to be found in the third chapter of his treatise against Hermogenes and runs as follows: "Because God is a Father and God is a Judge, it does not on that account follow that, because He was always God, He was always a Father and a Judge. For He could neither have been a Father before the Son, nor a Judge before transgression. But there was a time when there was no transgression, and no Son, the one to make the Lord a Judge, and the other a Father." Here certainly, apart from the context, and that wider context of the author's known point of view, there appears to be a direct assertion that there was a time before which the Son was not: and this falls in so patly with the Logos-speculation which assigns a definite beginning to the prolated Logos, that it is easy to jump to the conclusion that Tertullian means to date the origination of the Logos at this time. Such a conclusion would, however, be erroneous; and it is just in the doctrine of the prolation of the Logos at a definite time that the passage finds its juster explanation. It emerges that the term "Son" in Tertullian's nomenclature designates distinctively the prolate Logos. He therefore asserts nothing in the present passage concerning the eternity or non-eternity of personal distinctions in the Godhead. He affirms only that God became Father when the Logos was prolated, seeing that the Logos became Son only at his prolation. Bishop Bull animadverted not unjustly on a tendency of Tertullian exhibited here to overacuteness in argument and to readiness to make a point at some cost: but he fairly makes out his case that in the present instance Tertullian is to be interpreted in this somewhat artificial sense—as if one should say there was a

time when God was not the Creator, because creation occurred at a definite point of time, before which therefore God was existent indeed, but not as Creator.* So God became Father, not when the Logos came into existence, but when He became a Son. By this neat piece of exposition Bishop Bull seeks to remove the antecedent presumption against Tertullian's admission of eternal distinctions in the Godhead, which would arise from an explicit assertion on his part that there was a time before which the Logos was not—that is to say, the prolate Logos. He shows that this is only Tertullian's way of saying that the Logos was not always prolate.

He then wisely proceeds at once to a discussion of the principal passage, wherein Tertullian seems to recognize personal distinctions in the Godhead prior to the prolations of Logos and Spirit. This is, of course, the very remarkable discussion in the fifth chapter of the tract *Against Praxeas*, in which Tertullian gives, as it were, a complete history of the Logos.† In this passage Tertullian begins by affirming that “before all things”—alike before the creation of the world and the generation of the Son, that is to say, the prolation of the Logos—God was alone (*solus*). He immediately corrects this, however, by saying that by “alone” he means only that there was nothing extrinsic to God by His side: for not even then was He really alone (*solus*), seeing that He had with Him that which He had within Himself, namely His Reason. This Reason, he continues, is what the Greeks call the Logos, and the Latins are accustomed to call Sermo—though Sermo is an inadequate translation, and it would be better to distinguish and say that Reason must antedate Speech, and that God rather had Reason with Him from the beginning, while He had Speech only after He had sent it forth by utterance—that is to say, at the prolation. This distinction, however, adds Tertullian immediately, is really a refinement of little practical importance. The main thing is that “although God had not yet sent His Word, He nevertheless already had Him within Himself, with and in Reason itself, as He silently considered and determined with Himself what He was afterward to speak through the Word.” Thus even in the silence of eternity, when God had not yet spoken, the Word in its form of Reason was with God, and God was therefore not alone. To illuminate his meaning, Tertullian now introduces an illustration drawn from human consciousness. He asks his readers

* See above, October, 1905, p. 551.

† This passage is discussed by BULL in Book III, chap. x, §§ 5-8. At an earlier point—III, v, 5—he had expounded the same passage more briefly, but not less effectively.

to observe the movements that go on within themselves when they hold silent converse with themselves; whenever they think, there is a word; whenever they conceive, there is reason. Speaking thus in the mind, the word stands forth as a "conlocutor," in which reason dwells.* "Thus," adds Tertullian, "the word is, in some sort, a second within you, by means of which you speak in thinking, and by means of which you think in speaking: this word is another."† Now, he reasons, all this is, of course, carried on in God on a higher plane (*plenius*), and it is not venturesome to affirm that "even before the creation of the universe‡ God was not alone, seeing that He had within Him both Reason and, intrinsic in Reason, His Word, which He made a second to Himself by agitating it within Himself." This Word, having within Himself Reason and Wisdom, His inseparables, He at length put forth (*protulit*) when it at length pleased Him to create the universe, that is, to draw out (*edere*) into their own substances and kinds the things He had determined on within Himself by means of this very Reason and Word.§

Nothing can be clearer than that in this passage Tertullian carries back the distinction manifested by the prolate Logos into the depths of eternity. It already existed, he says, within the silent God before the generation of the Word, that is, before the prolation of the Logos. He explicitly distinguishes its mode of preëxistence from that of things to be created, which "having been thought out and disposed," by means of that Word who was also the Reason of

* There may be a reminiscence here, and there certainly is a parallel, of the passage in PLATO's *Sophist*, 263 E, where thought is called "the unuttered conversation of the soul with itself," and we are told that "the stream of thought flowing through the lips is called speech."

† Ita secundus quodammodo in te est sermo, per quem loqueris cogitando, et per quem cogitas loquendo; ipse sermo alius est."

‡ Ante universitatis constitutionem.

§ It is interesting to observe how closely Marcellus of Ancyra, in this portion of his system, reproduced the thought of Tertullian in this chapter. To Marcellus, says LOOFS (*Sitzungsberichte d. k. p. Akad. d. Wissenschaften*, 1902, I, 768-9), "the Logos is eternal. . . . And this Logos of God is without any *γένεσις*. Before the time of the creation of the world, He was simply in God; the one God, along with whom was nothing, 'had not yet spoken' (*ἡσυχία τις ἦν*). When, however, God addressed Himself to create the world, τότε ὁ λόγος προελθὼν ἐγένετο τοῦ κόσμου ποιητής, ὁ καὶ πρότερον ἐνδοῦ νοητῶς ὀνομάζων αὐτόν. This προελθὼν in sequence to which came in the πρὸς τὸν θεὸν εἶναι of which John i. 1 speaks, did not, however, bring to a close the ἐν θεῷ εἶναι: the Logos remains *δυναμει ἐν τῷ θεῷ*, and only *ἐνεργεία* was He πρὸς τὸν θεόν; προῆλθεν δραστηκῶς *ἐνεργεία*. How this is to be understood, Marcellus—with all sorts of cautions—has illustrated by the analogy of the human Logos: ἐν γὰρ ἐστὶ καὶ ταῦτ' ὁ ἀνθρώπου ὁ λόγος καὶ οὐδενὶ χωριζόμενος ἐτέρῳ; ἡ μόνῃ τῇ -ῆς πράξεως *ἐνεργεία*." This reads (so far) almost like an exposition of the fifth chapter of the tract *Against Praxeas*.

God, existed "in Dei sensu," and only needed to be drawn out in their substances and kinds,—whereas He, the Word, from eternity coexisted with God as "a second," "another." All this Bishop Bull points out with great lucidity. He directs attention first to Tertullian's sharp discrimination at the outset between God's eternal existence "alone," so far as external accompaniment is concerned, and his inner companionship—so that He was never "alone," but ever had with Him, *i.e.*, within Him, His "fellow," the Logos. He next calls attention to the fact that by Reason in this context Tertullian does not mean God's faculty of ratiocination, by virtue of which He was rational, but a really subsisting *ὑπόστασις*—the *verbum mentis* of the schools. Still further, he animadverts on Tertullian's admission that the distinction he was drawing between the Reason and the Word was not drawn by Christians at large who, translating the Greek word "Logos" in John i. 1 by the Latin *Sermo*, were accustomed to say simply that "the Word was in the beginning," *i.e.*, eternally, and that "with God." In doing this he adverts to Tertullian's admission that he lays little stress on this distinction himself, and is fain himself to allow that the "Word" is coeternal with "Reason"—that is to say, of course, the "inner Word," not yet uttered for the purpose of creation: and further, that he allows that the Word consists of Reason, and existed in this His hypostasis or substance before He became the Word by utterance. Then, arriving at the apex of his argument, he points out that "Tertullian teaches that the Word, even anterior to His mission and going out from God the Father, existed with the Father as a Person distinct from Him." This, (1) because God is said not to be "alone"; but He only is not alone with whom is another person present. If through all eternity God was unipersonal, and there was not in the divine essence one and another, then God was alone. Hence God was not unipersonal, since He is affirmed not to have been alone. (2) Because in the illustration from human experience Tertullian distinguishes between the quasi-personality of the human inner word and the real personality of the divine inner Word. The whole drift of the illustration turns on the idea that "what occurs in man, God's image, is merely the shadow of what occurs really and in very fact in God." Finally, Bull argues that Tertullian clearly identifies the "Reason that coexisted with God from eternity with the Word prolated from Him at a definite point of time, and makes one as much personal as the other, conceiving nothing to have occurred at the prolation but the prolation itself,—the Word remaining all the while, because God, unchangeable. This argument is expanded in a supplement-

any reason which Bull gives for his conclusion by the help of a passage which occurs in the twenty-seventh chapter of the tract *Against Praxeas*. In this passage Tertullian argues that the Word, because God, is "immutabilis et informabilis"—unchangeable and untransformable: since God never either ceases to be what He was or begins to be what He was not. How, then, Bull asks, can Tertullian have believed that the Word, who is God, began to be a person only at His prolation, or, indeed, for that is what is really in question, began at that time only to be at all? From such passages, Bull justly suggests, we may learn that by all that Tertullian says of the prolations of the Logos and Spirit he does not mean to detract in any way from the unchangeableness of the divine persons concerned in these acts: nothing intrinsic was, in his view, either added to or taken from either of the two, seeing that each is the same God, eternal and unchangeable. "Tertullian does indeed teach"—thus Bull closes the discussion—"that the Son of God was made, and was called the Word (*Verbum* or *Sermo*) from some definite beginning; i. e., at the time when He went out from God the Father, with the voice, 'Let there be light,' in order to arrange the universe. But yet that he believed that that very hypostasis, which is called the Word (*Sermo* or *Verbum*) and Son of God, is eternal, I have, I think, abundantly demonstrated."†

(3) There has been enough adduced incidentally in the course of the discussion so far, to make it clear that Tertullian in insisting on the distinction of persons in the Godhead—and in carrying this distinction back into eternity—had no intention of derogating in any way from the unity of God. If in his debate with the Monarchians his especial task was to vindicate the *οὐμονομία*, the conditions of that debate required of him an equal emphasis on the "monarchy." And he is certainly careful to give it, insisting and insisting again on the unity of that One God whom alone Christians worship. This insistence on the unity of God has come, indeed, to be widely represented as precisely the peculiarity of Tertullian's doctrine of God. Says Loofs:‡ "Tertullian's Logos doctrine waxed into a

* In support of this take such a statement as the following from the thirteenth chapter: "You will find this," says Tertullian, "in the Gospel in so many words: 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God.' He who was is One: and He with whom He was is another." As it is probable that by the words "in the beginning" Tertullian understood eternity, here is an explicit assertion of a distinction of persons in eternity. Again, in chap viii, he says: "The Word, therefore, was both in the Father always, as He says, 'I am in the Father,' and with the Father always, as it is written, 'And the Word was with God.'"

† E. T., p. 545.

‡ *Leitfaden*, etc., p. 88.

doctrine of the Trinity (*trinitas* occurs first in him) because Tertullian sought to bring the Apologetic traditions into harmony with the stricter monotheism of the Asiatic theology." Similarly Harnack supposes that Monarchianism exercised a strong influence on Tertullian, "spite of the fact that he was opposing it," and remarks in proof that "no thought is so plainly expressed" by him in his tract against Praxeas "as this, that Father, Son and Spirit are *unius substantiæ*, that is *ἑμνοῦσται*";* and again, that he "expressed the *unity* of Father, Son and Spirit as strongly as possible."† We may attribute the influence which led Tertullian to lay the stress he did on the unity of God to whatever source we choose, but we must acknowledge that Tertullian himself did not trace it to the Monarchians. Though, no doubt, the necessity he felt upon him not to neglect this great truth was intensified by the fact that it was just with Monarchians that he was contending, yet Tertullian is not himself conscious of indebtedness to them for either his conception of it or his zeal in its behalf. To him it is the very principium of Christianity and the very starting-point of the Rule of Faith. Though he recognizes a monadistic monarchy as rather Jewish than Christian, therefore, and is prepared for a certain pluralism in his conception of God, all this is with him conditioned upon the preservation of the monarchy, and he has his own way of reconciling the monarchy, in which all his Christian thinking is rooted, on the one side, with the economy, which he is zealous to assert, on the other.

This way consists, briefly, in insistence not merely that the three persons, Father, Son and Spirit, are of one substance, but that they are of one undivided substance. Though there is a *dispositio, distinctio* between them, there is no *divisio, separatio*. It is not enough for him that the Three should be recognized as alike in substance, condition, power.‡ What he insists on is that the Father, Son and Spirit are inseparable from one another and share in a single undivided substance—that it is therefore "not by way of diversity that the Son differs from the Father, but by distribution; it is not by division that He is different, but by distinction."§ "I say," he reiterates, they are "distinct, not separate" (*distincte, non divise*).|| They are distinguished "on the ground of personality, not of substance,—in the way of distinction, not of division,"¶ "by disposition, not by division." The ill-disposed and perverse may indeed

* Vol. IV, p. 57, note: cf. II, 257, note, p. 259.

† II, 257 note.

‡ Chap. ii.

§ Chap. ix.

|| Chap. xi.

¶ Chap. xii; cf. xxi, xxi i.

press the distinction into a separation, but the procession of the Son from the Father "is like the ray's procession from the sun, and the river's from the fountain, and the tree's from the seed"*—and thus the distinction between them may be maintained "without destroying their inseparable union,—as of the sun and the ray, and the fountain and the river."†

By the aid of such illustrations Tertullian endeavored to make clear that in distinguishing the persons he allowed no division of substance. His conception was that as the sun flows out into its beams while yet the beams remain connected inseparably with the sun, and the river flows out of the fountain but maintains an inseparable connection with it, so the Son and Spirit flow out from the Father while remaining inseparable from Him. There is, in a word, an unbroken continuity of substance, although the substance is drawn out into—if we may speak after the manner of men—a different mould. The conception is that the prolation of the Logos—and afterward of the Spirit proximately from the Logos—is rather of the nature of a protrusion than an extrusion: the Godhead is, now, of a new shape, so to speak, but remains the Godhead still in its undivided and indivisible unity. As Tertullian expresses it sharply in the twenty-fifth chapter of the *Apology*: "Just as when a ray is shot forth (*porrigitur*) from the sun, it is a portion of the whole, but the sun will be in the ray because it is a ray of the sun, and is not separated from the substance but is extended (*extenditur*), so from Spirit [is extended] Spirit, and from God, God, as light is kindled from light. The *materiæ matrix* remains *integra et indefecta*, although you draw out from it a plurality of *traduces qualitatis*; and thus what has come forth (*profectum*) out of God is God, and the Son of God, and the two are one. Similarly as He is Spirit from Spirit and God from God, he is made a second member in manner of existence, in grade not state, and has not receded from the matrix but exceeded beyond it (*et a matrice non recessit sed excessit*).” In a word, the mode of the prolation is a stretching out of the Godhead, not a partition of the Godhead: the unity of the Godhead remains *integra et indefecta*.

The unity of the Godhead is thus preserved through the prolations themselves, which are therefore one in a "numerical unity," as it afterward came to be spoken of—though in Tertullian's usage this language would not be employed, but he would rather say that the persons differ in number, as first, second and third, while the substance remains undivided. It is precisely on the ground that

* Chap. xxii.

† Chap. xxvii.

in their view the prolations involved a division and separation of substance that he separates himself from the Valentinians.* "Valentinus," says he, "divides and separates his prolations from their author. . . . But this is the prolation of the truth, the guardian of the unity, wherein we declare that the Son is a prolation of the Father without being separated from Him. For God sent forth the Word (as the Paraclete also declares†) just as the root puts forth the tree, and the fountain the river, and the sun the ray. For these are *προβολαί* of the substances from which they proceed. . . . But still the tree is not severed from the root, nor the river from the fountain, nor the ray from the sun; and neither is the Word separated from God. . . . In like manner the Trinity, flowing down from the Father, through intertwined and connected steps, does not at all disturb the monarchy, while it at the same time guards the state of the economy."‡

Harnack, therefore,§ does considerably less than justice to Tertullian's conception, when he represents it as substantially the same as that of Valentinus, differing only in the number of emanations acknowledged—because, as Hippolytus certifies, the Valentinians "acknowledge that the one is the originator of all" and "the whole goes back to one." Nor does he improve matters when he adds in a note that "according to these doctrines, the unity is sufficiently preserved, (1) if the several persons have one and the same substance, (2) if there is one possessor of the whole substance, *i.e.*, if everything proceeds from him." Tertullian, on the contrary, is never weary of asseverating that his doctrine of unity demands much more than this,—not merely that it is out of the one God that all proceeds—nor merely that what thus comes forth from God is of His substance, so that all of the emanations are of the substance of God,—but specifically that this going forth from God of His prolations is merely an *extension* of the Godhead, not a division from it. Thus the unity, he says, is preserved through the prolations; and no separation from God is instituted by the prolations. These abide unbrokenly "portions" of the deity, not fragments broken off from the deity. Nor is Harnack much happier when he goes on|| to say that Tertullian conceived God up to the prolation of the Logos "as yet the only *person*." According to his explicit exposition of the life of God in eternity, Tertullian held that there never was a time when God was alone, except in the sense that there

* Chap. viii.

† *I.e.*, this is a doctrine supported by the Montanistic prophecies.

‡ Chap. viii.

§ II, 258.

|| P. 259.

was no created universe about Him: in the beginning itself that Reason which the common people, simply translating the Greek of John's Gospel, call the Word, was with Him, though within Him, as Another. Thus in the unity of the Godhead there always was a distinction of persons, even before, by the prolations of Son and Spirit, this distinction was manifested *ad extra*.

The distinctions of persons in the Godhead, accordingly, as Tertullian conceived them, were not created by the prolations of Son and Spirit. These prolations merely brought into manifestation the distinctions of persons already existing in the Godhead. Neither did he suppose that these distinctions would cease on the recession of these prolations back into the Godhead,—as Tertullian anticipates will take place when their end is served. It is the prolations, not the personal distinctions, which in his thought have a beginning and ending; and when he teaches that these prolations come forth at the Father's will, fulfill their purpose and retire back into the Godhead, this cannot in any way affect his doctrine either of the unity of God or of the Trinity in the unity. In all this process, rather, he is tracing out only an incident in the life of God, a temporary outflowing of God to do a specific work. The whole exposition which Harnack gives of this transaction is colored by misapprehension of Tertullian's import. It is indeed more infelicitous than even this circumstance would indicate. No doubt Tertullian's subordinationism is very marked. Though he conceives the prolate Logos and the Spirit as truly God, they are, in his view, God at the periphery of His being, going forth, in a certain reduction of deity, for the world-work.* But to speak of even the prolate Logos as a "Being which must be a derived existence, which has already in some fashion a finite element in itself, because it is the hypostatized Word of creation, which has an origin"; and to add, "From the standpoint of humanity this deity is God Himself, *i.e.*, a God whom men can apprehend and who can apprehend them, but from God's standpoint, which speculation can fix but not fathom, this deity is a subordinate, nay, even a temporary one"—is to go beyond all warrant discoverable in Tertullian's exposition. It is of the very essence of Tertullian's thought that there was no "finite element" in the Logos, or in the Spirit

* Cf. DORNER, *Person of Christ*, I, ii, 460, 186, 108. DORNER somewhat misses the point by failing to see that Tertullian recognized the eternity of the personal distinction and so distinguished between the unprolated and the prolated Logos (see *below*, p. 26 sq.): but even Dorner perceives that there was some limit to Tertullian's subordinationism: "An Arian subordinationism was foreign to his mind" (p. 74; cf. p. 108).

which constitutes the third in the Godhead—"as the fruit of the tree is third from the root, or as the stream out of the river is third from the fountain, or as the apex of the ray is third from the sun";* that these prolations are, in a word, nothing but God Himself extended for the performance of a work—nothing, if the simile can be allowed, but the hand of God stretched out for the task of bringing a world into existence and guiding its course to its destined end. As such the Logos mediated between God and the world; but to make Tertullian teach, to use words of Bull's,† that "the very nature of the Son is itself a mean between God and the creatures," that is to say, is something distinguishable alike from the supreme nature of God on the one side, and from the rest of created beings on the other,—is to confound his whole conception. He not only did not teach that the Logos is a creature of nature different from that of God, of a derived existence, having an absolute origin, and destined to reach an end: but he explicitly teaches the contradictory of these things. The Logos existed eternally, he asseverates, in God: the prolation of the Logos, indeed, had a beginning and will have an end; but the Logos Himself who is prolated, is so far from being a derived existence, which has a finite element in it, and has an origin and is to make an end—that He is just God Himself prolated, that is, outstretched like a hand, to His work. And what is true of the Logos is true of the Spirit. He is not, as the Arians imagined, the creature of a creature, but just the still further prolated God—the tips of the fingers of the hand of God.‡

(4) With this conception of the relation of the prolations to the divine essence Tertullian was certainly in a position to do complete justice to the deity of our Lord. Had the prolate Logos been to him a "middle substance"—something between God and man in its very nature—then it no doubt would have been impossible for him to do full justice to our Lord's deity as the incarnation of this Logos. But seeing that the Logos was to him God Himself prolated, one in substance with the primal deity itself, no question of the complete deity of the incarnated Logos could arise in his

* Chap. viii, *ad fin.*

† III, ix, 11 (E. T., p. 503).

‡ Irenæus makes use of the simile of God's hands to explain his conception of the relation of the Son and Spirit to God. Cf. IV *præf.* § 4: "Man was moulded by God's hands, *i.e.*, by the Son and Spirit to whom He said, Let us make," etc. Cf. also IV, 20, 1; V, 1, 3; V, 5, 1; V, 28, 4. At a later date the Sabellians employed the figure of the alternately outstretched and withdrawn arm and hand as a figure of their notion of the successive movements of the divine revelation (DORNER, I, ii, 155, 159, 168). Augustine in *Joann.*, 53, 2-3, in criticising this Sabellian use of it, recognizes the propriety of the figure in itself.

mind. "We shall not approximate," he says,* "to the opinions of the Gentiles, who if at any time they be forced to confess God, yet will have other Gods below Him: the Godhead has, however, no gradation, for It is only one" and can, therefore, "in no case be less than Itself." Accordingly he is constant in declaring the Son, as He is God, to be "equal with" the Father.† All that is true of the Father, therefore, he would have us understand, is true also of the Son: they are not only of the same substance, but of the same power also; and all the attributes of the one belong also to the other. "The names of the Father," he says‡—"God Almighty, the Most High, the Lord of Hosts, the King of Israel, He that Is—inasmuch as the Scriptures so teach, these, we say, belonged also to the Son, and in these the Son has come, and in these has ever acted, and thus manifested them in Himself to men. . . . When, therefore, you read Almighty God, and Most High, and God of Hosts, and King of Israel, and He that Is, consider whether there be not indicated by these the Son also, who in His own right is God Almighty, in that He is the Word of God Almighty." Again,§ "'All things,' saith He, 'are delivered unto Me of the Father'. . . . The Creator hath delivered all things to Him who is not less than Himself,—to the Son: all things, to wit, which He created by Him, *i.e.*, by His own Word." Accordingly, Tertullian does not hesitate to speak of the Son as God or to attribute to Him all that is true of God. He does not scruple, for example, to apply Rom. ix. 5 to Him—affirming Him in the words of that text to be God over all, blessed for ever.||

If it be asked how Tertullian made this recognition of the full equality of the Son with the Father consistent with the subordinationism which he had taken over from the Apologists along with their Logos Christology, the answer appears to turn on the identification of the Son with the prolate Logos. The strong subordination of the Son belongs to Him as prolated, not specifically as second in the Godhead. "It will, therefore, follow," says Tertullian in an illuminating passage,¶ "that by Him who is invisible, we must understand the Father *in the fullness of His majesty*, while we recognize the Son as visible *by reason of the dispensation of His derived existence (pro modulo derivationis)*; even as it is not permitted us to contemplate the sun in the full amount of his substance which is in the heavens, but we can only endure with our eyes a ray by reason of

* *Adv. Hermog.*, VII (BULL, p. 580).

† *Adv. Praxeas*, VII, xxii; *De Resur. Carn.*, VI.

‡ *Adv. Prax.*, chap. xvii (BULL, p. 198).

§ *Adv. Marc.*, iv, 25 (BULL, *loc. cit.*).

|| *Adv. Prax.*, xiii, xv.

¶ xiv.

the tempered condition of this portion which is projected from him to the earth. . . . We declare, however, that the Son also, *considered in Himself*, is invisible, in that He is God, and the Word, and the Spirit of God." In this passage it is affirmed that in Himself, because He is God, the Son shares all the qualities of God, and becomes "reduced God," if we can be allowed such a phrase, only *pro modulo derivationis*, that is to say, as the result of the prolation by virtue of which He is extended outwards for the purpose of action in and on the world. This passage will aid us also in apprehending how we are to understand Tertullian when he speaks of the Son as a "portion" only of the Godhead. Again it is, of course, only as prolate Logos that He is so spoken of: and as prolate Logos He is conceived under the figure of the ray which as a "portion" of the sun is "tempered" to the eyes of men. Similarly the prolate Logos is a "portion" of the Godhead, that is to say, not a separated part or even a particular part of the Godhead, but the Godhead itself "tempered" for its mission relatively to the world. This "portion" is not to be conceived, then, as a fragment of Godhead; it is in and of itself all that God is. Tertullian not only distinctly affirms this on all occasions, but expressly explains that it is neither separated from the Godhead nor in anything less than it, but is "equal to the Father and possesses all that the Father has."* Nay, Tertullian

* We are here quoting BULL, II, vii, 5 (p. 200), where, as well as pp. 536 *sq.*, the meaning of "portio" is discussed. It is discussed also in HAGEMANN, pp. 182 *sq.*, cf. p. 283: who suggests, with a reference to *De virg. vel.*, c. 4, *ad fin.*, that it is a technical logical term, and imports the 'specific' as distinguished from the 'general,' in which case the Logos as a *portio* of the deity would rather be a "particularization" of deity than a "fragment" of deity. DORNER (I, ii, 78) thinks that the employment of such "inappropriate physical categories of the Son" is due to the "somewhat physical character of Tertullian's view of God," and "should be set to the account rather of his mode of expression than of his mode of thought": it "really disguised Tertullian's proper meaning" (cf. p. 121-2). From the manner in which Tertullian uses the term "portio" it would seem probably to be a technical term in the Logos Christology and that would imply its currency in the debates of the day. It is interesting to observe in a *Sermon of the Arians* which was in circulation in North Africa early in the fifth century what looks very much like a repudiation of the phraseology by the Arians—for Arianism was very much only the Logos Christology run to seed, the "left" side of the developing schemes of doctrine. In this document, at c. 23, it is said: "The Son is not a part or a portion of the Father, but His own and beloved, perfect and complete, only-begotten Son. The Spirit is not a part or a portion of the Son, but the first and highest work (*opus*) of the only-begotten Son of God, before the rest of the universe." Augustine (*Contra. Sermon. Arian.*, XXVII, 23) answers only: "But what Catholic would say the Son is a part of the Father or the Holy Spirit part of the Son? A thing they [the Arians] think is to be so denied as if there were a question between us and them on it." It looks very much as if the whole past history of the use of this phraseology was out of memory in the opening fifth century.

tells us with crisp directness that this "*portio*" of the Godhead is Itself "consort in Its fullness" (*plenitudinis consors*). "If you do not deny," he argues with Marcion,* "that the Creator's Son and Spirit and Substance is also His Christ, you must needs allow that those who have not acknowledged the Father have likewise failed to acknowledge the Son, seeing that they share the same substance (*per ejusdem substantiæ conditionem*): for if It baffled men's understanding in Its Plenitude, much more has a portion of It, especially since It is consort in the Plenitude."†

It cannot surprise us, therefore, when we observe Tertullian representing a distinctive way of designating our Lord as in part due merely to a desire to be clear and to avoid confusion in language. He is speaking‡ of the habit of distinguishing between God the Father and the Son by calling the former God and the latter Lord. There is no foundation for the distinction, he tells us, in the nature of things. Any one of the persons of the Godhead may with equal propriety be called either God or Lord. He "definitely declares that *two* are God, the Father and the Son, and with the addition of the Holy Spirit, even *three*, according to the principle of the divine *αἰχονομία*, which introduces number." He will never say, however, that there are two Gods or two Lords, yet "not as if," he explains, "it were untrue that the Father is God, and the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God, and each is God." This apparently can only mean that the three are all together the one God,—and, indeed, one of his characteristic phrases is the famous *deus ambo* or even *tres*.§ But though Christ is thus rightly called God, it is best, he thinks, in order to avoid mistakes, to speak of Him as Lord when the Father is mentioned at the same time, and to call Him God only when He is mentioned alone. For there is no gradation in the Godhead, as Tertullian elsewhere remarks,|| although there are three "grades" in the Godhead: which is as much as to say that considered in themselves, those who are distinguished as first, second and third—that is to say, in the modes of their existence as source and prolations of the first and second order—are yet consorts in the plenitude of God.¶

* III, 6, near the end.

† Cf. BULL, II, vii, 6.

‡ *Adv. Prax.*, chap. xiii.

§ xiii, *med.*

|| *Adv. Hermog.*, 7 (quoted above).

¶ BULL, IV, ii, 5 (E. T., p. 581) treats with great care the apparent contradiction between Tertullian's assertion in *Adv. Hermog.*, 7, that "the Godhead has no gradations," and the assertion in *Adv. Prax.*, 2, that the persons of the Godhead are three "not in state but in gradation." Tertullian, BULL tells us, "means in the latter passage by 'gradation,' *order*, but not greater or less Godhead." "For," continues BULL, "whom he acknowledges to be three in gradation, them he denies to

On this basis Tertullian, in developing his doctrine of the person of Christ in the formula of "Deus homo, unus Christus," could strenuously insist on the complete deity as well as perfect humanity of this one divine-human person. And in this insistence we may find the culminating proof that he sought to do full justice to the true deity of Christ. He approaches this subject* in the course of a confutation of the Monarchian attempt to find a distinction between Father and Son by understanding the Father to be the divine Spirit incarnated and the Son to be the incarnating flesh. Thus, says Tertullian, while contending that the Father and Son are one and the same, they do, in fact, divide them and so fall into the hands of the Valentinians, making Jesus, the man, and Christ, the inhabiting Spirit, two. Proceeding to expound the true relation between the incarnated Spirit and the incarnating flesh, he next argues that the process of incarnation was not that of a transformation of the divine Spirit into flesh, because God neither ceases to be what He was nor can He be any other thing than what He is. Accordingly when the Word became flesh, this was accomplished not by His becoming transmuted into flesh but by His clothing Himself with flesh. No less is it insupposable, he argues, that the incarnation was accomplished by any mixture of the two substances, divine Spirit and flesh, forming a third substance intermediate between the two.† At that rate Jesus would have ceased to be God while not becoming man: whereas the Scriptures represent

be different in state. But with Tertullian, as we have seen, for a thing to be different from another in state, means not to be set under it, but to be on a par and equal to it. Hence in the same passage, presently after, he expressly says, that the three Persons of the Holy Trinity are all of *one power*; and consequently that no One of Them is more powerful or excellent than Another. Therefore the Godhead 'has no gradation,' that is, 'is in no case less than Itself,' as Tertullian distinctly explains himself: yet there are gradations in the Godhead, that is, a certain order of Persons, of whom One derives His origin from Another; in such wise that the Father is the first Person, existing from Himself; the Son second from the Father, while the Holy Ghost is third, who proceeds from the Father through the Son, or from the Father and the Son." This is a very favorable specimen of BULL's reasoning: and Tertullian's language may be made consistent with itself on this hypothesis. On the whole, however, it seems more likely that the real state of the case in Tertullian's thought was that indicated in the text. In the Godhead there are no gradations: but after prolations grades of being are instituted.

* Chap. xxvii.

† Accordingly we must not understand the phrase "Homo Deo mixtus," which occurs in the *Apol.*, c. 21, to imply that the two substances were "mixed," so as to make a *tertium quid*. What he means to say is only that Jesus Christ was neither man nor God alone, but the two together. Cf. BETHUNE-BAKER, *Homoousios*, etc., p. 22, note.

Him to have been both God and man. Accordingly we must believe that there was no confusion of the two in the person of Jesus, but such a conjunction of God and man that, the property of each nature being wholly preserved, the divine nature continued to do all things suitable to itself, while the human nature, on the other hand, exhibited all the affections that belong to it. Jesus, thus, was in one these two—man of the flesh, God of the Spirit: and in Him coexist two substances, viz., the divine and the human,* the one of which is immortal and the other mortal. Throughout this whole discussion the integrity of the divine nature—immortal, impassible, unchangeable—is carefully preserved and its union in the one person Jesus Christ with a human nature, mortal, passible, capable of change, is so explained as to preserve it from all confusion, intermixture or interchange with it. We could not have a clearer exhibition of Tertullian's zeal to do full justice to the true deity of Christ.

(5) It scarcely seems necessary to add a separate detailed statement of how Tertullian conceived of the Holy Spirit. While we cannot say with Harnack† that Tertullian exhibits no trace of independent interest in the doctrine of the Spirit, it is yet true that he speaks much less fully and much less frequently of Him than of the Logos,‡ and that his doctrine of the Spirit runs quite parallel with that of the Logos. He has spoken of Him, moreover, ordinarily in connections where the doctrine of the Logos is also under discussion and therefore his modes of thought on this branch of the subject have already been perhaps sufficiently illustrated. The *distinct personality* of the Spirit is as clearly acknowledged as that of the Logos Himself. In the *οικονομία* the unity is distributed not into a duality, but into a trinity, providing a place not for two only but for three,—the Father, Son and Holy Ghost; who differ from one another not in condition, substance or power but in degree, form and aspect.§ And everywhere the third person is treated as just as distinct a personality as the second and first. There is no clear passage carrying this distinct personality back into *eternity*. That Tertullian thought of the personality of the Spirit precisely as he did of that of the Logos is here our only safe guide. On the other hand, there is no lack of passages in which the *unity of substance* is insisted upon relatively to the Spirit also.|| After explaining that

* Chap. xxix, *ad init.*

† II, 261, note.

‡ Cf. NÜSGEN, *Geschichte der Lehre vom heiligen Geiste*, p. 21.

§ ii *ad fin.*, cf. iii near end, viii, xi *ad fin.*, xiii, xxx. Cf. STIER, *op. cit.*, 92 note.

|| ii *fin.*, iii *fin.*, iv *init.*, viii, ix *init.*, etc.

the substance of the Son is just the substance of the Father, he adds: "The same remark is made by me with respect to the third degree, because I believe the Spirit to be from no other source than from the Father through the Son."* So again: "The Spirit is the third from God and the Son, as the fruit from the tree is the third from the root, and the stream from the river is third from the fountain, and the apex from the ray is third from the sun. Nothing, however, is separated from the matrix from which it draws its properties; and thus, the Trinity flows down from the Father through *consectos et connectos gradus* and in no respects injures the monarchy while protecting the economy."† On this view the *true deity* of the Spirit is emphasized as fully as that of the Logos, and Tertullian repeatedly speaks of Him likewise shortly as God,‡ as "the Third Name in the Godhead and the Third Degree of the Divine Majesty."§ Accordingly when he "definitely declares that two are God, the Father and the Son," he adds,|| "and with the addition of the Holy Ghost, even *three*, according to the principle of the divine economy, which introduces number, in order that the Father may not, as you perversely infer, be believed to have Himself been born, and to have suffered." To Tertullian, therefore, the alternative was not the complete deity of the Spirit or His creaturehood; but the unity of Monarchianism or the Trinity in the unity of the economy. He never thinks of meeting the Monarchian assault by denying the full deity of the Spirit, but only by providing a distinction of persons within the unity of the Godhead. The most instructive passages are naturally those in which all three persons are brought together, of which there are a considerable number.¶ To quote but one of these, he explains that "the connection of the Father in the Son, and of the Son in the Paraclete, produces three coherent Persons, [distinct, nevertheless] one from the other: these three are one [substance,—*unum*], not one [person,—*unus*], as it is said, 'I and my Father are one [*unum*],' in respect of unity of substance not singularity of number."** There can, in short, be no question that Tertullian had applied to the Spirit with full consciousness all that he had thought out concerning the Son, and that His doctrine of God was fully settled into a doctrine of Trinity. His mode of speak-

* iv *init.*† viii *fin.*

‡ He seems to be the first in writings which have chanced to come down to us to apply the name "God" to the Spirit; but this is mere accident.

§ xxx *fin.*|| xiii *med.*¶ E.g., ii *init. et fin.*, iii *fin.*, viii *fin.*, ix *init.*, xiii *med.*, xxv, xxx.** Chap. xxv *init.*

ing of the Spirit introduces no new difficulty in construing his doctrine—which is something that cannot be said of all his predecessors.

By such expositions as these, Tertullian appears, in seeking to do justice to the elements of doctrine embalmed in the Rule of Faith, fairly to pass beyond the natural reach of the Logos-speculation and to open the way to a higher conception. A symbol of this advance may not unfairly be discovered in the frequent appearance in his pages of the new term "Trinity." The Greek equivalent of this term occurs in his contemporary Hippolytus,* but scarcely elsewhere, at this early date, to designate the distinctions in the Godhead,—unless indeed we account the single instance of its employment by Theophilus of Antioch a preparation for such an application of it.† In any event, there is a fine appropriateness in the sudden apparition of the term in easy and frequent use,‡ for the first time, in the pages of an author whose discussions make so decided an approximation toward the enunciation of that doctrine to denote which this term was so soon to become exclusively consecrated. The insistence of Tertullian upon the *οὐκωνομία* in the monarchy—on unity of substance, with all that is implied in unity of substance, persisting in three distinct persons who coexist from eternity—certainly marks out the lines within which the developed doctrine of the Trinity moves, and deserves to be signalized by the emergence into literature of the term by which the developed doctrine of the Trinity should ever afterward be designated.

It is possible that something of the same symbolical significance may attach also to Tertullian's use of his favorite term *οὐκωνομία*. Of course, *οὐκωνομία* is not a new word; but it is used by Tertullian in an unwonted sense,—a sense scarcely found elsewhere except in his contemporary Hippolytus,§ and, perhaps as a kind of preparation for their use of it, in a single passage of Tatian.|| Tertullian constantly employs it, as we have seen, to designate, as over against the monarchy, the mystery of the Trinity in the unity. There can be no question of its general implication in his pages: but it is, no doubt, a little difficult to determine the precise

* *c. Noët.*, 14.

† *Ad Autol.*, II, 65. Here the term *τριάς* first occurs in connection with distinctions in the Godhead; and it is customary, therefore, to say that here first it is applied to express the Trinity. So *e.g.*, KAHNIS, HARNACK, LOOFS, SEEBERG. As NÜSGEN (pp. 13-14) points out, however, it is by no means certain that the word here has any technical import.

‡ *E.g.*, *Adv. Prax.*, 2, 3, 11, 12, etc.

§ *con. Noët.*, chaps. 8 and 14.

|| *Ad. Græc.*, 5.

significance of the term itself which he employs. The fundamental sense of the word is "disposition"; but in its application it receives its form either from the idea of "administration," or from that of "structure." If it is used by Tertullian in the former shade of meaning, its employment by him need not have great significance for his Trinitarian doctrine. He would, in that case, only say by it that the monarchy of God is administered by a disposition of the Godhead into three several personalities, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, through whom the single Lordship is carried on, as it were, by deputy; while the precise relation of these personalities to one another and to the Godhead itself would be left to the context to discover.

An argument which occurs in the third chapter of the tract against Praxeas seems to many to suggest that it was in this sense that the term was employed by Tertullian. Tertullian here explains that "monarchy has no other meaning than single and unique rule"; "but for all that," he adds, "this monarchy does not preclude him whose government it is . . . from administering his own monarchy by whatever agents he will": and much less can the integrity of a monarchy suffer by the association in it of a Son, since it is still held in common by two who are so really one (*tam unicis*). Applying these general principles to the monarchy of God, he argues that this monarchy is therefore by no means set aside by the circumstance that it is administered by means of legions and hosts of angels"; and much less can it be thought to be injured by the participation in it of the Son and Holy Spirit, to whom the second and third places are assigned, but who are inseparably joined with the Father, in His substance. "Do you really suppose," he asks, "that those who are naturally members of the Father's own substance, His congeners,* instruments of His might, nay, His power itself, and the entire system of His monarchy, are the overthrow and destruction thereof?" It seems tolerably clear that Tertullian is not here comparing the economy with the administrative agents of a monarchy: with them he rather compares the hosts of angels through whom the divine monarchy is administered. The economy is rather compared to the sharing of the monarchy itself between father and son as co-regents on a single throne. In that case, so far is economy on his lips from bearing the sense of administration that it is expressly distinguished from it, and referred to something in the Godhead deeper than its administrative functions. The illustration, therefore, emphasizes, indeed, the

* *pignora* = pledges of his love, i.e., his close relations.

personal distinctions of the economy—they are comparable to the distinction between father and son in a conjoint rule—but it suggests equally the penetration of this distinction behind all matters of administration into the Godhead, the Ruling Being, itself.

Nor is this impression set aside by the implication of the other figures employed by Tertullian to explain the relations of the persons in the Godhead. When he compares them to the root, the tree and the fruit, or to the fountain, the river and the stream, or to the sun, the ray and the apex, his mind seems undoubtedly to be upon the prolated Logos and Spirit; these figures indeed, so constantly upon his lips, seem inapplicable to eternal distinctions, lying behind the prolations. But it must be remembered, first, that these illustrations are not original with Tertullian, but are taken over by him from the Apologists along with their Logos-speculation—although they are doubtless developed and given new point by him; next, that the precise point which he adduces them to illustrate is not the whole import of the economy, but the preservation of the unity of substance within the economy of three persons; and finally, that the ordinary engagement of his mind with the Trinity of Persons, in what we may call its developed form—its mode of manifestation in God acting *ad extra*—need not by any means exclude from his thought a recognition of an ontological basis, in the structure of the Godhead itself, for this manifested Trinity. And if in one passage he presses his illustrations to the verge of suggesting a separation of the Son from the Father—intimating that the Son may be affected by the sufferings of the God-man while the Father remains in impassible blessedness,* in another, on the other hand, he seems expressly to carry back the distinction of persons into the eternal Godhead itself—affirming that God was never “alone” save in the sense of independence of all external existence, but there was always with Him, because in Him, that other self which afterward proceeded from Him for the making of the world.† The fullest recognition, therefore, that Tertullian habitually thought of the Trinity in, so to speak, its developed form—with the Logos and the Spirit prolate and working in the world—by no means precludes the possibility that the very term *οικονομία* connoted in his hands something more fundamental than a distinction in the Godhead constituted by these prolations.

And certainly the word was currently employed in senses that lent it a color which may very well have given it to Tertullian the deeper connotation of internal structure, when he applied it to the

* Chap. xxix.

† Chap. v.

Godhead. To perceive this, we have only to recall its application to express the proper adjustment of the parts of a building, as Vitruvius, for example, uses it,* or to express what we call the disposition, that is the plan or construction of a literary composition, as it is used, say, by Cicero, when he speaks of the *οἰκονομία perturbata* of his letter,† or by Quintilian,‡ when he ascribes to the old Latin comedies a better *οἰκονομία* than the new exhibited.§ A very interesting instance of the employment of the word in this sense of "structure" occurs in the *Letter of the Church of Smyrna*, giving an account of the martyrdom of Polycarp.|| The martyrs were so torn by the scourge, says this passage, that "the *οἰκονομία* of their flesh was visible even so far as the inward veins and arteries." Lightfoot translates here, "*the internal structure and mechanism*," and refers us to Eusebius' paraphrase, which tells us the martyrs were so lacerated that "the hidden inward parts of the body, both their bowels and their members, were exposed to view."¶ There can be no doubt that this very common usage of the term was well known to Tertullian the rhetorician, and it may very well be that when he adopted it to express the distribution of the Godhead into three persons it was because it suggested to him rather the inner structure, so to speak, of the Godhead itself, than merely an external arrangement for the administration of the divine dominion.

That Tertullian's usage of the term implies as much as this is recognized, indeed, by the most of those who have busied themselves with working out the interesting history of this word in the usage of the Fathers.** Dr. W. Gass, for example, after tracing the word

* i, 2.

† *ad Att.*, C. 1.

‡ *Inst.*, I, 8.

§ This sense is discussed by DANIEL, as below, note **, under his division 4, where a number of examples are given. See also LIGHTFOOT, on Eph. i: 10, and the Lexicons.

|| Chap. ii. See the note of Lightfoot on the passage in his great work on Ignatius (II, ii, 950).

¶ *Hist. Ecc.*, iv, 15; McGiffert's Translation, p. 189a.

** An account of the several attempts to trace the history of the word is given by GASS in the article referred to in the next note. The more important are: VON CÖLLN in Ersch and Gruber sub. voc. *Œconomia*; H. A. DANIEL in his *Tatian der Apologet.* p. 159 sq.; MÜNSCHER in his *Dogmengeschichte*, III, 137 sq.; GASS' own extended article; and LIGHTFOOT in his posthumously published volume entitled *Notes on Epistles of St. Paul*, p. 319 (on Eph. i. 10), with which should be compared his notes on Col. i. 25, Ign. *ad Eph.* xviii, (II, i. 78), and *Martyr. Polycarp.*, ii (II, ii, 950). The discussion of GASS is by far the fullest, but needs the preceding ones to supply the earlier philological development, and LIGHTFOOT's clear statement as a supplement. See also the Bishop of Lincoln's (KAYE's) *Justin Martyr*, 176, and BAUR's *Dreieinigkeit*, I, 178 note. HAGEMANN (*Röm. Kirche*, pp. 136, 150, 167, 175, etc., as per index) constantly represents the *οἰκονομία* as (even in Tertullian) merely "the sum of the divine acts which have reference

up to Tertullian and finding it employed up to that point to express "the outward-going revelatory activity of God, whether creative and organizing or redemptive,"* remarks upon the sudden change that meets us in Tertullian. "It has been justly thought remarkable," he continues, "that this same expression is applied by Tertullian to the inner relations of the Godhead itself. He employs 'economy' as an indispensable organon of the Christian knowledge of God, in his controversy with Praxeas." Then, after quoting the passages in the *Adv. Praxean*, chaps. 2 and 3, he proceeds: "Monarchy and economy are therefore the two interests on the combination and proper balancing of which the Trinitarian conception of God depends; by the former the unity of the divine rule, by the latter the right of an immanent distinction is established, and it is only necessary that the latter principle should not be pressed so far as to do violence to the former." Without laying too much stress on so nice a point, it would seem not unnatural therefore to look upon Tertullian's predilection for the term *oikonomia* as, like his usage of the term *Trinitas*, symptomatic of his tendency to take a deeper view of the Trinitarian relation than that which has in later times come to be spoken of as "merely economical."

We derive thus from our study of Tertullian's modes of statement a rather distinct impression that there is discoverable in them an advance toward the conception of an immanent Trinity. The question becomes at once in a new degree pressing how far this advance is to be credited to Tertullian himself, and how far it represents only modes of thought and even forms of statement current in the Christianity of his time, which push themselves to observation in his writings only because he chanced to be dealing with themes which invite a rather fuller expression than ordinary of this side of the faith of Christians. We shall hope to return to this question in the next number of this REVIEW.

to the government of the world," "the sum of the external revelations of God," "the internal distributions of the original unitary Godhead into a purely divine and a finite substance, and the division of the latter into a graded plurality of beings which make up the *pleroma*"—which last is the Gnostic way of expressing it.

* In an article on *Das patristische Wort oikonomia*, in Hilgenfeld's *Zeitschrift für wissenschaftl. Theologie*, xvii (1874), p. 478 sq.

Princeton.

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I.

TERTULLIAN AND THE BEGINNINGS OF THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY.

THIRD ARTICLE.

IN a discussion printed in the two immediately preceding numbers of this REVIEW * it has been pointed out that there is discoverable in Tertullian's modes of statement a rather distinct advance towards the conception of an immanent Trinity. We wish now to inquire how far this advance is to be credited to Tertullian himself, and how far it represents modes of thought and forms of statement current in his time, and particularly observable in Tertullian only because he chanced to be dealing with themes which invited a fuller expression than ordinary of this side of the faith of Christians.

We have already seen that there is a large traditional element in Tertullian's teaching; that even the terms, "Trinity" and "Economy," in which his doctrine of the distinctions within the Godhead is enshrined, are obviously used by him as old and well-known terms; and that he betrays no consciousness of enunciating new conceptions in his development of his doctrine, but rather writes like a man who is opposing old truth to new error.

* THE PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL REVIEW, October, 1905, pp. 529-557; January, 1906, pp. 1-36.

Indeed he openly asserts that this is the case. If we are to take his own point of view in the matter, we cannot hesitate to assert, then, that he has himself made no advance, but is simply enforcing the common Christian faith against the innovations of destructive heresy. Of course this common Christian faith, which he is zealous thus to enforce, is fundamentally the Rule of Faith. But it can scarcely be denied that it is more than this; Tertullian's own view clearly is that his expositions embody also the common understanding of the Rule of Faith. He is not consciously offering any novel constructions of it, or building up on his own account a higher structure upon it. No doubt he is doing his best to state the common faith clearly and forcibly, and to apply its elements tellingly in the controversy in which he was engaged; and he may certainly in so doing have clarified it, and even filled it with new significance, not to say developed from it hitherto unsuspected implications. How far, however, this can be affirmed of him can be determined only by some survey of the modes of thought and statement of his predecessors and contemporaries who have dealt with the same doctrines.

What first strikes us when we turn to the Apologists with this end in view is that most of Tertullian's modes of statement can be turned up, in one place or another, in the Apologetic literature. We say "in one place or another" advisedly, for the peculiarity of the case is that they do not all appear in the pages of a single writer, but scattered through the writings of all. Thus if the term *τρίας* appears in Theophilus, it is in Tatian that the term *οἰκονομία* meets us in a sense similar to that in which Tertullian uses it. If Athanasius seems to struggle to carry back the divine relationships into eternity,* and Theophilus by the use of the distinction between the *λόγος ἐνδιάθετος* and the *λόγος προφορικός* at least seeks a basis for the distinction of God and His Logos prior to the prolation of the Logos, Justin leaves us uncertain whether he thought of the Logos as having any sort of being before the moment of His begetting. The simile by which the relation of the Logos to God is compared to the relation of the light to the sun is already found in Justin: but it is to Tatian that we must go to discover such a careful exposition of the relation of the Logos to God as the following: "He came into being by way of impartation (*κατὰ μερισμόν*) not of abscission (*κατὰ ἀποκοπήν*); for what is cut off is separated from the primitive (*τοῦ πρώτου*), but what is imparted, receiving its

* Cf. BETHUNE-BAKER, *Early History of Doctrine*, etc., p. 129.

share of the Economy,* does not make him from whom it is taken deficient." The result is that while we could from fragments, derived this from one and that from another of the Apologists, piece together a statement of doctrine which would assimilate itself to Tertullian's, we could verify this statement from no one of the Apologists, but, on the contrary, elements of it would be more or less sharply contradicted by one or another of them. There are, in other words, hints scattered through the Apologists that men were already reaching out toward the forms of statement that meet us in Tertullian, but only in him are these hints brought together. We assent, therefore, when Harnack† says: "We cannot at bottom say that the Apologists possessed a doctrine of the Trinity." Only we must in this statement emphasize both the terms "at bottom" and "doctrine." There are everywhere discoverable in the Apologists suggestions of a trinitarian mode of thought: but these are not brought together into a formulated doctrine which governed their thinking of the being of God.

The phenomena are such, in one word, as to force us to perceive in the writings of the Apologists—as has been widely recognized by students of their works—a double deposit of conceptions relative to the mode of the divine existence. There is their own philosophical construction, which is, briefly, the Logos-speculation. And underlying that, there is the Christian tradition,—to which they desired to be faithful and which was ever intruding into their consciousness and forcing from them acknowledgment of elements of truth which formed no part of their philosophical confession of faith. This divided character of the Apologetic mind is by no one more clearly expounded than by the late Dr. Purves in his lectures on *The Testimony of Justin Martyr to Early Christianity*. Justin was, as Harnack remarks,‡ "the most Christian among the Apologists," and this feature in his dealing with doctrine is perhaps especially marked in him: but it is shared also by all his congeners. Dr. Pur-

* This is a very obscure phrase: *οικονομίας τὴν αἵρεσιν προσλαβόν*. CLERICUS declared that in his day it had never been successfully explained. DANIEL (p. 164) explains: "What has arisen through participation, as one light is kindled from another, has of course part in the nature of the thing from which it is derived, and is of the same nature with it; but does not make the thing from which it is taken any poorer in this nature." BAUR translates the whole passage thus: "What is cut off is separated from the substance, but what is distinguished as a portion, what by free self-determination receives the œconomy, the plurality in the unity, causes no loss to that from which it comes." BETHUNE-BAKER (p. 126) renders: "Receiving as its function one of administration," and explains: "The part of *οικονομία*, administration of the world, revelation."

† II, 289, note¹ at the end.

‡ II, 203 note².

ves fully recognizes that Justin was, in his thinking about God, first of all the philosopher: and that his "own thought strongly tended away from the doctrine of a Trinity"*—toward a sort of ditheism which embraced a doctrine of "the consubstantiality of the Logos and the Father of all." And yet there crops up repeatedly in his writings testimony to the worship by the Christians of three divine persons. This testimony is particularly remarkable with reference to the Spirit. For "Justin's own theology had really no place for the Spirit," and yet "Justin speaks of the Spirit as not only an object of worship but as the power of the Christian life." "Thus Justin," concludes Dr. Purves,† "in spite of himself, testifies to the threefold object of Christian worship. He even finds in Plato an adumbration of the first, second and third powers in the universe, though in doing so he misunderstands and misinterprets that philosopher. Justin's own conception is vague, or, when not vague, unscriptural in certain important points. . . . But . . . he . . . effectively testifies to the traditional faith of the Church in the Father, Son and Spirit as the threefold object of Christian worship, and the threefold source of Christian life." What was true of Justin was true, each in his measure, of the other Apologists. "Two conceptions of deity were struggling with each other"‡ in their minds. Dominated by their philosophical inheritance, they could only imperfectly assimilate the Christian revelation, which therefore made itself felt only in spots and patches in their teaching. What was needed that the Christian doctrine of God should come to its rights was some change in the conditions governing the conceptions of the leaders of Christian thinking by which they might measurably be freed from the philosophical bondage in which they were holden.

The appearance of juster views precisely in the expositions of Tertullian would seem thus to be connected ultimately with a certain shifting of interest manifested in Tertullian as compared with the Apologists. The Apologists were absorbed largely in the cosmological aspects of Christian doctrine.§ In Tertullian these retire into the background and the soteriological interest comes markedly forward. In their cosmological speculations, the Apologists, for example, scarcely felt the need of a Holy Spirit; all that they had clamantly in mind to provide for, they conceived of as the natural function of the Logos. Their recognition of the Holy Spirit was therefore

* *Op. cit.*, p. 275.

† P. 279.

‡ P. 145.

§ General discriminations like this must, of course, not be pressed to extremes. See e.g., Purves, *The Teaching of Justin Martyr*, p. 277. Cf. BETHUNE-BAKER, *Early Christian Doctrine*, 125.

largely conventional and due to allegiance to the Christian tradition. A new point of view has been attained when Tertullian, out of his soteriological interest, thinks of the Spirit profoundly as the sanctifier of men, the "vicarious power" of the Logos for applying His redemptive work. This shifting of interest inevitably led to a new emphasis on the distinctive personalities of the three persons of the deity, and to their separation from the world-process that justice might be done to their perfect deity as the authors—each in his appropriate sphere—of salvation.* It is instructive that in his *Apology*, addressed like the chief works of the Apologists to the heathen, Tertullian still moves, like them, largely within the cosmological sphere: whereas in his tract *Against Praxeas*, addressed to fellow-Christians, the soteriological point of view comes more to its rights. And it is equally instructive that among preceding writers it is in Irenæus who, with emphasis, eschewed philosophy and sought to build up a specifically Biblical doctrine, that we find forms of statement concerning the three persons whom Christians worshiped as the one God most nearly approaching the construction adumbrated by Tertullian. Perhaps it is not too much to say that the supplanting among Christian thinkers of the Logos-speculation by a doctrine of immanent Trinity was largely mediated by the shifting of interest from the cosmological to the soteriological aspect of Christian truth, and that in Tertullian we see for the first time clearly marked the beginning of the process by which this change was wrought.

This suggestion receives notable support from a comparison of Tertullian's modes of statements with those of his contemporary Hippolytus, in his treatise against Noëtus—a treatise which, as it arose out of conditions remarkably like those which called out Tertullian's tract against Praxeas, contains so much that is similar to what we find in that tract that it is hard to shake ourselves entirely free from the illusion that one borrows from the other.

* For the point of view of the text cf. e.g., NÖSGEN, *Geschichte der L. v. d. h. Geiste*, pp. 24 sq.: "Precisely with this writer (Tertullian) there begins, on the ground of Christian experience, to break through the recognition of the inner necessity of the Holy Spirit for the nature of the Triune God. . . . His interest in the third Person of the Trinity hangs on the fact that the Holy Spirit leads the children of God (*credentes agat*). . . . Accordingly it must not be made a reproach to him that he permits the immanent relation statedly to shine through only as the background of the self-revelation of the Triune One. It is precisely because he does this that he first marked out definitely the point of departure from which the peculiarity of the Holy Spirit as God and as trinitarian Person could be really grasped." Cf. KAMNIS, p. 296.

Hippolytus' relation as a pupil to Irenæus,* whose language in regard to the Trinitarian relationships approaches that of Tertullian most nearly of all previous writers, and from whom Tertullian himself frankly draws, is doubtless another factor of importance in accounting for the resemblance between the two tracts. But as we have already suggested, we are persuaded that this resemblance, so far as it is real, is mainly due to the fact that Tertullian and Hippolytus, alike heirs of the Logos-speculation, and alike determined to do justice to the deposit of truth in the Rule of Faith, were alike called upon in the new conditions of the early third century to uphold the common faith of Christendom against the subtlest form of the Monarchian attack. If this be true, nothing could hold out a better promise of enabling us to discriminate in Tertullian's statements the traditional element from his personal contribution than a comparison of them with those of Hippolytus.

The first thing that strikes us in attempting such a comparison is the extent of the common element in the two. We meet in Hippolytus the same terminology which we have found in Tertullian. He, too, employs the term Trinity;† and, as well, Tertullian's favorite term, "the Economy"‡—although perhaps not with the same profundity of meaning; even Tertullian's phrase, "the mystery of the economy."§ We almost feel ourselves still on Tertullian's ground when we read in Hippolytus: "For who will not say there is one God? Yet he will not on that account deny the Economy."|| This feeling is increased by the occurrence in Hippolytus of similar illustrations of the relations of the Logos to the primal Godhead. "But when I say another," he remarks, "I do not mean that there are two Gods, but that it is only as light from light, or as water from a fountain, or as a ray from the sun."¶ Even the same proof-texts are employed in the same manner. Thus the declaration in John x. 30, "I and the Father are one," is treated quite in Tertullian's manner. "Understand that He did not say, 'I and the Father *am* one, but *are* one.' For the word '*are*' is not said of one person, but it refers to two persons and one power."** So again, like Tertullian, Hippolytus insists strongly on the true deity of Christ and supports it after much the same fashion. He calls Him "God,"†† "the Almighty,"‡‡ appeals just like Tertullian to Matt. xi. 27, and like Tertullian even applies to Him the great text, Rom. ix. 5, commenting: "He who is over all, God blessed, has been born; and

* Cf. *e.g.*, HARNACK, *Chronolog.*, II, 213 and 223.

† Chap. 14.

‡ Chaps. 3, 4, 8, 14.

§ Chap. 4, no fewer than three times.

|| Chap. 3.

¶ Chap. 11.

** Chap. 7.

†† Chap. 8.

‡‡ Chap. 6.

having been made man, He is God for ever."* His doctrine of the Person of Christ, moreover, is indistinguishable from Tertullian's. "Let us believe, then, dear brethren," he says, "according to the tradition of the apostles, that God the Word came down from heaven into the holy Virgin Mary, in order that, taking the flesh from her, and assuming also a human, by which I mean a rational soul, and becoming thus all that man is, with the exception of sin, he might be . . . manifested as God in a body, coming forth, too, as a perfect man: for it was not in mere appearance, or by conversion, but in truth that He became man."† Underlying and sustaining all these detailed resemblances, moreover, is the great fundamental likeness between the two writers arising from their common application of the Logos-speculation to the facts of the Christian tradition, and their common opposition to the Monarchian heresy.

With a little closer scrutiny, however, marked differences between the two writers begin to develop.

In the first place, we observe that Hippolytus does not very well know what to do with the Holy Spirit. He repeats the triune formula with great emphasis: "We cannot think otherwise of one God," he says, "but by believing in truth in Father and Son and Holy Spirit." "The Economy of agreement is gathered up into one God: for God is One: for He who commands is the Father, and He who obeys is the Son, and that which teaches wisdom is the Spirit."‡ "We accordingly see the Word incarnate, and through Him we know the Father, and believe in the Son and worship the Holy Ghost."§ He manifestly desires to be led in all things by the Scriptural revelation: from no other quarter, he declares, than the oracles of God will he derive instruction in such things, and therefore as they declare to us what the Father wills us to believe, that will he believe, and as He wills the Son to be glorified, so will he glorify Him, and as He wills the Holy Spirit to be bestowed, so will he receive Him.|| Nevertheless it is quite clear that he can hardly assimilate the Biblical doctrine of the Spirit, and when he comes to speak out his mind upon Him, he makes it apparent that he does not at all think of Him as a person. It is curious to observe, indeed, the circumlocutions he employs to avoid calling Him a person. "I shall not indeed say there are two Gods, but one; two persons, however, while the third economy is the grace of the Holy Spirit. For the Father indeed is one, but there are two persons, because there is the Son also: and then

* Chap. 6.

† Chap. 17.

‡ Chap. 14.

§ Chap. 12.

|| Chap. 9.

there is the third, the Holy Spirit."* From a passage like this, Hippolytus' fundamental thought would seem to have been, like Justin's, a kind of ditheism, somewhat violently transformed into a tritheism under the pressure of the traditional faith.

When we look further we perceive that even this ditheism is far from pure. We observe a notable effort to avoid that clear assertion of substantial unity of the Father and Son which constitutes the very core of Tertullian's doctrine. When the declaration of our Lord in John x. 30, "I and the Father are one," is quoted,† Hippolytus' exposition is: "It refers to two persons and one"—not substance, as Tertullian would have said, but—"power." And then Hippolytus calls in illustratively John xvii. 22, 23, where our Lord expresses His desire that His disciples may be one, even as He and the Father are one, and asks triumphantly, "Are all [the disciples] one body in respect of substance, or is it that we become one in the power and disposition of likemindedness?"‡ "In the same manner"—thus he applies the illustration—"the Son . . . confessed that He was in the Father in power and disposition." This view of the unity of Father and Son as consisting in unity in mind and power only is consistently preserved throughout;§ and the revelatory character of the Son is in harmony with this hung, not on His identity with God, but on His character as the *image* of God.|| Accordingly, we discover that the Logos is not thought by Hippolytus to have been eternally with God, but is assigned an absolute beginning at a definite point of time previous to the creation of the world. Like Tertullian, he tells us that God subsisted from all eternity alone, having nothing contemporaneous with Himself. But he does not, like Tertullian, tell us that though thus existing alone, so far as things external to Himself are concerned, there was within Him another, His fellow, His eternal Word, a second to Him. Quite differently, he tells us that though alone, He was many,—a plurality.¶ And then he goes on to explain that this means that God was never "reasonless, or wisdomless, or powerless, or counselless, but all things were in Him and He was in all."** In other words,

* Chap. 14. That the personality of the Holy Spirit is here denied is held by MEIER, *Lehre von d. Trinität*, I, 88; HARNACK, E. T., II, 262, note; NÖSGEN, *Geschichte d. L. v. d. heilig. Geiste*, 20. Cf. also J. SJÖHOLM, *Hippolytus och Modalismen*, Lund: 1898. On the other hand, see DÖLLINGER, *Hipp. and Callist.*, E. T., 193-194, and HAGEMANN, *Röm. Kirche*, 268 sq. † Chap. 7.

‡ τῇδυνάμει καὶ τῇ διαθέσει τῆς ὁμοφρονίας ἐν γινόμεθα; § E.g., chaps. 8 and 16. || Chap. 7 fin. ¶ Ch. 10, *ad init.*, αὐτὸς δὲ μόνος ὡν πολλὸς ἦν.

** οὐτε γὰρ ἄλογος, οὐτε ἄστροφος, οὐτε ἀδύνατος, οὐτε ἀβοήλευτος ἦν· πάντα δὲ ἦν ἐν αὐτῷ. αὐτὸς δὲ ἦν τὸ πᾶν.

it is not of a personal Logos as the eternal Companion that Hippolytus is thinking, but of the ideal world, the *κόσμος νοητός*, as constituting an eternal "plurality" of God. Accordingly when in another place* he is again describing the origin of the Logos, the eternal existence which he attributes to Him is not an existence as a personal Logos, but only as the "indwelling rationality of the universe." The Logos thus for Hippolytus exists from all eternity only ideally. From this ideal existence He came into real existence for the first time when God, intending to create the world, begat Him "as the Author and Fellow-Counsellor and Framer of the things that are in formation,"† and "thus," says Hippolytus,‡ "there appeared another beside Him"—thus and then only. Here it must be remarked is a doctrine of the absolute origination of the Logos by the will of the Father, so that the Logos appears distinctly as a creature of the Father's will.§

Nor does Hippolytus in the least shrink from this conception. When explaining that Adam was made a man with the characteristics and limitations of a man, not by inadver-

* *Philosoph.*, x, 33 (xxix)—ἐνδιάνητος τοῦ παντός λογισμός.

† *Adv. Noëtum*, chap. 10—ἀρχηγὸν καὶ σύμβουλον καὶ ἐργάτην.

‡ Chap. 11.

§ On the extreme emphasis put by Hippolytus on the divine will, cf. HAGEMANN, *Röm. Kirche*, p. 197: "No one of the earliest representatives of Christian science lays such stress on the will of God as Hippolytus. With great emphasis, often several times in succession in almost identical phrases, he repeats, when speaking of the origin of the Logos or of creation in general, the formula in which he expresses his proposition that the whole revelation of God *ad extra* is grounded in His will, that He can create or not create, retain the Logos in Himself or permit Him to proceed out, as He wills. He even speaks once of the Logos himself as a product of the divine will (c. 13; cf. c. 8, 9, 10, 11)." For the fundamental significance of this see *ante*, October, 1905, p. 552 note ¶, and the references there given. Natural as this stress on the voluntariness of the divine action, even in the prolation of the Logos, was on the lips of the Apologists in protest against the natural processes of emanation taught by the Gnostics, there underlay it in its application to the prolation of the Logos a view of the relation of the Logos to the Father which scarcely did justice to the real state of the case, and was near to a conception of the Logos as absolutely originating in this act of the divine will, and hence as of creaturely character. This point of view was that of some of the Apologists, and was revived by the Arians. In opposition to it the Nicene Fathers (Athanasius, *Or. cont. Ar.*, iii; *de Decret. Nic. Syn.*; Ambrose, *De Fide*, IV, 9) learned to go behind the will of God in the generation of the Logos. There is a sense, of course, in which, as DÖLLINGER points out (*Hippolytus and Callistus*, E. T., 198), God as voluntary subject does all He does voluntarily; but after all said and done as the Arian contention that the Son owed His being to an act of will on the part of the Father was meant to imply that the Son was a creature, this mode of speech is Arian in tendency and it is best frankly to say—taking will in its natural sense—that the act of eternal generation is not an act of will but a necessary movement in the divine being. (Cf. DORNER, I, ii, 460.)

tence or because of any limitation of power on God's part, but by design, he says: "The Creator did not wish to make him a God and failed in His aim; nor an angel—be not deceived—but a man. For if He had wished to make thee a God He could have done so : *you have the example of the Logos.*"* To Hippolytus, therefore, the Logos is distinctly a created God, whom God made a God because, shortly, He chose to do so. He has indeed preëminence above all other creatures, not only because He was made a God and they were not, but also because He alone of creatures was made by God Himself while all other creatures were made by Him the Logos; and because they all were made out of nothing, while "Him alone God produced from existing things (*ἐκ τῶν ὄντων*)," and, as God alone existed, that means from His own substance.† The Logos is therefore only in this sense of the substance of God, that He was framed out of the Divine substance; although what the process was by which God thus "begat Him as He willed," Hippolytus declines to inquire as too mysterious for human investigation.‡ He has no hesitation, however, in speaking of him as a creature who came into existence at a definite time, is only what His maker willed, and is God and possessor of the power of God and therefore almighty only by gift and not by nature.§

It is not necessary to pursue this inquiry further. Enough has been brought out to show that Hippolytus' Trinity consisted in a transcendent God who produced at a definite point of time a secondary divinity called the Logos, to whom He subjected all things; and along with these a third something not very definitely conceived, called by the Church the Holy Spirit. Here is not one God in three persons; here is rather one God producing a universe by steps and stages, to the higher of which divinity is assigned. In other words, we see in Hippolytus a clear and emphatic testimony indeed to a rich deposit of Christian faith, but overlying and dominating it a personal interpretation of it which reproduces all the worst defects of the Logos-speculation. In this he forms, despite the surface resemblance of his discussion to Tertullian's, a glaring contrast with that writer. In Tertullian the fundamental faith of the Church comes to its rights and is permitted to dominate the Logos-speculation. And it is just in this that his superiority as a theologian to Hippolytus is exhibited. Hippolytus' thought remains in all essential respects bound within the limits of the Logos-

* *Phil.*, x. 33 (xxix).

† *Ibid.*

‡ *Adv. Noëtum*, chap. 16.

§ Cf. also chap. 6, where Christ is said to have been "appointed almighty by the Father."

speculation. Tertullian's has become in all essential respects a logical development of the Church's fundamental faith. It is, therefore, that it is he and not Hippolytus who became the Father of the doctrine of an immanent Trinity.

A comparison of Novatian's treatise *On the Trinity** will still further strengthen our respect for Tertullian. Novatian seems to have been a diligent student of Tertullian;† it might be presumed, therefore, that in this treatise he has drawn upon the master whom he honored by his imitation but never names. Despite, however, Jerome's declaration that the book is only "a kind of epitome"‡ of Tertullian's work, and the repetition of this judgment by a whole series of subsequent writers,§ we find ourselves doubting whether the presumed fact is supported by the treatise itself. Novatian goes his own way, and it is questionable whether there is much common to his treatise and Tertullian's tract against Praxeas which may not be best accounted for on the ground of the traditional elements of belief underlying both.|| No doubt Novatian must be supposed to have known Tertullian's treatise and his own thinking may have been affected by its teaching. But there seems little or no evidence that he has drawn directly upon it for his own work. Novatian's tract, unlike those of Tertullian and Hippolytus, is not in the first instance a piece of polemics with only incidental positive elements; but is primarily a constructive treatise and only incidentally polemic: moreover, its polemic edge is turned not solely against Monarchianism, but equally against Tritheism. In point of form it is an exposition of the Rule of Truth,¶ which requires us

*There seem no real reason for doubting the authorship of this book by Novatian, though HAGEMANN (p. 371 *sq.*) doubts it, and QUARRY even ascribes it to Hippolytus. Cf. HARNACK, *Chronologie*, II, 396, note 1, and 400, note 2. HARNACK dates it c. 240 (p. 399).

† Cf. HARNACK in the *Sitzungsberichte der k. p. Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin*, 1895, II, p. 562, and *Chron.* II, 399-400. ‡ *De virr. inlust.*, 70.

§ E.g., LOOFS' *Leitfaden*, p. 105: "There is scarcely a thought that cannot be pointed out in Tertullian." But HARNACK, *Chronolog.*, II, 399-400, recognizes that in any event Jerome's statement is overdrawn, though he finds a real connection between the two books.

¶ We have the support in this, at least, of HAGEMANN, *Röm. Kirche*, p. 379.

¶ Novatian's own phrase is always Rule of Truth, although the title of his treatise has Rule of Faith, whence KUNZE infers that the title is not from his own hand (pp. 5-6). Novatian, remarks KUNZE (p. 178), makes use of the Roman Baptismal Creed (Apostolicum), but evidently "only the Trinitarian formula stood to him as a Formula, and we may even say that to him the notion of *regala veritatis* belonged only to it and not to the 'Apostles' Creed,'; and to the 'Apostles' Creed' only so far as it is built up upon the Trinitarian Formula." This is, however, in effect the essential conception of all the early Fathers: that is to say, the Apostles' Creed to them is not the Rule of Faith, but only a commodious summary of it.

to believe in God the Father and Lord Omnipotent, in the Son of God, Christ Jesus, the Lord our God, and in the Holy Spirit, once promised to the Church; and its disposition follows these three fundamental elements of the faith (chaps. i-viii; ix-xxviii; xxix; with a conclusion, xxx-xxxi). To its expository task it gives itself with a conscious effort to avoid wandering off into the refutation of heresies, farther than may be necessary to subserve the purpose in view. "I could set forth the treatment of this subject," he remarks on one occasion when a heresy is engaging his attention, "by all the heavenly Scriptures . . . except that I have not so much undertaken to speak against this special form of heresy as to expound the Rule of Truth concerning the person of Christ."*

The positive exposition Novatian has set himself to give is very richly worked out and quite justifies Jerome's admiration of the book. In particular the exegetical demonstration of the divinity of Christ which it offers is very thorough and noble and can scarcely find its superior in ancient literature. Alongside of its zeal for the deity of Christ, its zeal for the unity of God burns warmly, and its Trinitarian doctrine seems to be dominated by the interaction of these two factors. The key to the whole is revealed by Novatian himself when he declares our chief duty to be to contend earnestly that Christ is God, but in such a way as not to militate against the Scriptural *fundamentum* that there is but one God.† It is indeed Tritheism rather than Monarchianism which causes Novatian the deepest anxiety and though he argues stoutly against the latter, it is his opposition to the former which most decisively determines his own forms of statement. Thus, although he exhibits little vital interest in the Logos-speculation for its own sake, and writes rather from the standpoint of the traditional faith, he is thrown back strongly upon the linear development of the Trinity which is the product of the Logos-speculation.‡ Laboring to secure the unity of God at all hazards, he feels that he can do this only by emphasizing the origination of the Son; and not attaining to a clear grasp of the conception of eternal generation, he is led to protect the origination of the Son by emphasizing His posteriority to the Father.§ Amid these ideas, it must be confessed, he somewhat flounders. He is earnestly desirous of doing full justice to the deity of Christ, and he feels that in order to do so he must assimilate Him to the eternal God. But he does not know quite how to do this consistently with a fitting proclamation of the unity of God.

* Chap. 21.

† See above, October, 1905, pp. 554-5.

‡ Chap. xxx, near the beginning.

§ Chap. xxxi.

Accordingly he tells us, on the one hand, that the Son "was always in the Father" because the "Father was always Father": but he at once turns to argue, on the other hand, that the Father must in some sense precede the Son, because it is "necessary that He who knows no beginning must precede Him that has a beginning"; and to insist over and over again that there would be two Gods, if there were two who had not been begotten, or two who were without beginning, or two who were self-existent. The doctrine of "eternal generation" is here struggling in the womb of thought: we do not think it quite comes to the birth.

And thus Novatian seems to us to fall back essentially upon the Logos-construction, but on the Logos-construction so far purified that it is on the point of melting into Nicene orthodoxy. In order to protect the unity of God, in other words, he was led to emphasize not the sameness of the Son and Spirit with God the Father, as Tertullian did with his developed doctrine of the numerical unity of substance, but their difference from Him. The nerve of Novatian's Trinitarianism thus becomes his strong subordinationism. Though he knows and emphasizes the difference between creation and procession* and urges as few others have urged the true divinity of Christ, yet our Lord's deity is to Him after all only a secondary deity. He had a beginning; He was not self-originated; He was the product of His Father's will; He exists but to minister to that will; though He be God, He is not God of Himself, but only because "He was begotten for this special result, that He should be God"; and though He is Lord, He is Lord only because the Father so willed and only to the extent the Father willed.† When He says "I and the Father are one," therefore, "He referred to the agreement, and to the identity of judgment, and to the loving association itself, as, reasonably, the Father and Son are one in agreement and love and affection."‡ Tertullian would here have referred to sameness of substance: even Hippolytus would have referred to sameness of power: Novatian's zeal for the unity of God holds him back, and though he believes the Son to be consubstantial with the Father in the sense that as the son of a man is a man so the Son of God is God,§ yet he must believe also that He is second to the Father in the strongest sense of that word.

* Cf. HARNACK, II, 259, note 3.

† All these phrases are from c. xxxi.

‡ Chap. 27.

§ Cf. BULL, III, 17, and see NÖSSEN, 26, note 2. Novatian is treated by BULL, especially pp. 131, 297, 479, 511, 528, 582, 597, 607, E. T. The best that can be said for him is there said.

This subordination of the Son to the Father is repeated, in his view, in the similar subordination of the Spirit to the Son. So clear is it that, with all his good intentions and upward strivings, Novatian remains, in his theoretical construction of the relationships of the three persons he recognized as God, under the domination of the Logos-speculation and fails to attain the higher standpoint reached by Tertullian. Revolting from the tritheism of Hippolytus, he yet does not know any other way to secure the unity of God but Hippolytus' way—that is, by so sharply emphasizing the subordination of the two objects of Christian worship additional to God the Father as to exalt the Father into the sole Self-Existent, Beginningless, Invisible, Infinite, Immortal and Eternal One. That he guards this subordination better than Hippolytus is a matter of degree and does not erect a difference of kind between them. Novatian marks, no doubt, the highest level of Trinitarian doctrine attainable along the pathway of subordinationism. That this level is lower than the level attained by Tertullian is only evidence that Tertullian's organizing principle had become no longer subordinationism but equalization. It is, in other words, Tertullian's formula of numerical sameness of essence with distinction of persons, not the formula of the Logos-speculation in which the stress was laid on subordinationism,* that had in it the promise and potency of the better things to come.

From such comparisons as these we obtain a notion of the nature of the step toward the formulation of the Church's ingrained faith in an immanent Trinity which was made by Tertullian. The greatness of this step is fairly estimable from the fact that Tertullian's statements will satisfy all the points on which Bishop Bull laid stress in his famous effort to show "the consent of primitive antiquity with the fathers of the Council of Nice." These points he sums up in four:† "first, that Christ our Lord in His higher nature existed before [His birth of] the most blessed Virgin Mary, and, further, before the creation of the world, and that through Him all things were made;

* Speaking of the Logos-doctrine, Prof. I. I. PAINE says truly: "In this view the subordination element is vital, and it became the governing note of the whole Logos-school" (*Evolution of Trinitarianism*, p. 31). Where Prof. PAINE is wrong is in not perceiving how deeply this subordinationism was contrary to the fundamentals of the Christian faith: and by this failure he is led to do grave injustice alike to Athanasianism—in which he discerns more subordinationism than really existed in it—and to Augustinianism—whose reproach to him is that it is determined to be rid of subordinationism. Prof. PAINE, in other words, misconceives both the historical development and its meaning.

† BULL, *Defence*, etc., Conclusion, *ad init.*, E. T., p. 655.

secondly, that in that very nature He is of one substance with God the Father, that is [that] He is not of any created and mutable essence, but of a nature entirely the same with the Father, and consequently very God; thirdly, which is a consequence of this, that He is coeternal with God the Father, that is a divine Person, coexisting with the Father from everlasting; lastly, that He Himself is, nevertheless, subordinate to God the Father, as to His Author and Principle." Tertullian teaches, in other words, the preëxistence, consubstantiality, eternity and subordination of the Son, and likewise of the Spirit. What, then, lacks he yet of Nicene orthodoxy? It is this question which Bishop Bull presses; but, as he presses it, he only makes us aware that Nicene orthodoxy cannot quite be summed up in these four propositions. Meeting these four tests Tertullian yet falls short of Nicene orthodoxy, retaining still too great a leaven of the Logos-speculation. But that he is able to meet Bull's tests, which none of his predecessors or contemporaries can meet, indicates the greatness of the step he marks toward the Nicene orthodoxy.

That we may fairly call Tertullian the father of the Nicene theology there seems to be wanting nothing but some clear historical connection between his work and that of the Nicene fathers. It is over-exigent no doubt to demand an external proof of connection. The silent influence of Tertullian's discussion supplemented by that of Novatian* supplies a sufficient nexus. But we naturally desire to trace in some overt manifestations the working of this influence. A step toward providing this is afforded by the episode of the "two Dionysii," in which the Roman Dionysius out of his Western Trinitarian consciousness corrects and instructs his less well-informed Alexandrian brother, who had permitted himself to speak of our Lord after a fashion which betrayed the most unformed conceptions of the relations of the distinctions in the Godhead. The letter of Dionysius of Rome (259-269 A.D.) *Against the Sabellians*, a considerable portion of which has been preserved by Athanasius in his *Letter in Defense of the Nicene Definition*,† is very properly appealed to by Athanasius as an instance of Niceneism before Nice. It seems clearly to be dependent on Tertullian, though, as Harnack puts it, "no single passage in it can be pointed out which is simply transcribed from Tertullian, but Dionysius has, rather in opposition to the

* On the great influence of Novatian's treatise see BETHUNE-BAKER, *Early History*, etc., p. 191.

† Chapter vi or §§ 26-27 (*Post-Nicene Fathers*, II, iv, 167-168).

formula of Dionysius of Alexandria, developed further in the direction of orthodoxy Tertullian's Trinitarian doctrine."* Quite in the Roman manner† Dionysius turned the edge of his polemic as much against Tritheism as against Monarchianism, and thus, by insisting on "the gathering up of the Divine Triad into a summit," preserved the unity of the common essence and so helped forward to the formulation of the *homoousios*. Similarly by his insistence that the Son was no "creature" (ποίημα) and was not "made" (γεγονέναι) but "begotten" (γεννηθῆναι), he laid the foundations of the Nicene formula of "begotten, not made," which also thus goes back through him to Tertullian. Nothing could be more instructive than the emergence into the light of history of this instance in the latter half of the third century of the greater readiness of the West to deal with the Trinitarian problem than the East.

We need seek no other historical link, however, between Western orthodoxy and the East than that provided by "the great Hosius" himself, who was the channel by means of which the formulas beaten out in the West, primarily by Tertullian, were impressed on the East in the Nicene symbol. We are credibly told by Socrates‡ that Hosius disputed in Alexandria on "substance" (οὐσία) and "person" (ὑπόστασις) prior to the Nicene Council; and his dominant influence with the emperor as well as the prominent place he occupied in the Council itself afford sufficient account of the successful issue of that Council in establishing Tertullian's formula of "one substance and three persons"—the *ὁμοούσιος* in effect—as the faith of the whole Church.§ If despite Athanasius' hint that it was Hosius who "set forth the Nicene Faith,"|| we cannot quite say that Hosius was the "draftsman" of the Nicene Creed,¶ since that Creed was formally framed by a series of amend-

* *Sitzungsberichte* of the Berlin Academy of Sciences, 1895, II, 563.

† Callistus, Novatian, Dionysius.

‡ *Hist.* c. iii 7.

§ Cf. HARNACK, iv, 5, 11 and 50, 121, and *Sitzungsberichte*, etc., p. 364, especially the former references where the matter is argued. See also GAMS, *Kirchengeschichte von Spanien*, II, i, 140. When Socrates (iii. 7) tells us that on Hosius' visit to Alexandria in 324 τὴν περὶ οὐσίας καὶ ὑποστάσεως πεποίηται ζήτησιν, we are tempted to see not only a priming of the Alexandrians for what was to come, by this Westerner, the heir of the Western Trinitarianism, but in the choice of the term 'hypostasis' for 'person' a reflection of Tertullian's *substantiva res*,—especially as we are told that Hosius was on this occasion especially zealous in guarding against Sabellian tendencies. We must not, however, push the details of Socrates' report too far.

|| *History of the Arians*, c. 42.

¶ Mr. BETHUNE-BAKER, *Homoousios*, etc., p. 11, note: "That Hosius—for many years previously the most influential bishop in the West, the intimate friend and trusted adviser of Constantine—was the real 'draftsman' of the Creed seems

ments out of a formula offered by Eusebius of Cæsarea, yet what is implied in such a statement is essentially true. Hosius was the effective author of the Nicene Creed, and that is as much as to say that in its fundamental assertions that Creed is a Western formulary,* and its roots are set in the teaching of Tertullian. It was thus given to Tertullian to mark out the pathway in which the Church has subsequently walked and to enunciate the germinal formulas by means of which the Arians were ultimately overcome.

It would be wrong, of course, to derive from these facts, striking as they are, the impression that Tertullian's influence was the only important force operative in the Church for the formation of the doctrine of the Trinity. It would be truer to see in Tertullian and in his definitions only one manifestation of a universally working tendency making steadily toward this end. Wherever the Rule of Faith, which was rooted in the formula of the baptismal commission, formed the fundamental basis of Christian belief, and wherever the data supplied by this Rule of

certain." LOOPS, *Herzog*³, VIII, 378: "That Hosius, the confidant of the emperor, was of great influence at the Synod of Nice lay in the nature of the circumstances, . . . and the statement of Athanasius that 'he set forth (*ἔθετο*) the faith at Nice' (*hist. Ar.*, 42), although not exact in its affirmation—for the Nicænum was framed by amendments out of a draft offered by Eusebius of Cæsarea—nevertheless is in essence true." ZAHN, *Marcellus von Ancyra*, p. 23: "Hosius from the beginning of the Arian controversies exerted the most decisive influence on the course of external events, *i.e.*, on the Emperor. It was due to him that Constantine came forward so positively for the *ὁμοούσιος*, that Eusebius could speak as if the Emperor were the actual originator of that term. Hosius is said to have raised the question concerning *ὁμοία* and *ἰσότηας* on the occasion of his visit to Alexandria, and Athanasius makes his enemies declare of him, 'It was he that set forth the faith at Nice' (*hist. Arian. ad men.*, 42)—by which he assigns him not merely a share in the development of the Nicene faith, as HEFELE supposes (I, p. 280), but a controlling influence in the debates on the faith which took place at Nice, and that means nothing less than in the choice of the formula." ZAHN adds that Socrates' statement of what happened in Alexandria finds support in the independent report of Philostorgius (I, 7), that Alexander had come to an understanding with Hosius as to the *ὁμοούσιος* before the Synod. It seems clear, in any event, that antiquity thought of Hosius as bearing the prime responsibility for the *homousios* in the Nicene Creed.

* LOOPS, *Herzog*³, II, 15. 16: "The Nicænum became what it is under Western influences"; II, 14. 54: "The positive declarations of the symbol can be historically understood only when we remember that the emperor was a Westerner and . . . was directed by the advice of Western counsellors, especially Hosius"; IV, 45-46: "Only the influence of the West—Constantine (although he understood Greek) had Western counsellors—explains the acts of the Synod of Nice: the characteristic terminology of the Nicænum fits, in its entirety, only Western conceptions."

Faith were interpreted in the forms of the Logos-speculation, there was constantly in progress a strenuous effort to attain clarity as to the relations of the distinctions in the Name designated by the terms Father, Son and Holy Ghost. And this is as much as to say that every thinking man in the Church was engaged with all the powers of construction granted to him in working out this problem. Even the Monarchians themselves, to whom in the providence of God it was given to keep poignantly before the eyes of men the items of the faith which were likely to be neglected by the Logos-speculation, were yet apt to express themselves more or less in its terms.* Accordingly from the very beginning Christian literature is filled with adumbrations of what was to come. Already in Athenagoras Tertullian's doctrine of eternal pre-prolate distinctions in the Godhead almost came to birth; already in Theophilus Origen's doctrine of eternal generation seemed on the verge of conception. Least of all did the great Alexandrian divines wait for Tertullian's initiative. Origen, for example, his younger contemporary, and at once the calmest and profoundest thinker granted to the Church in the Ante-Nicene age, went his own independent way toward the same great goal. Only, Origen sought the solution of the problem not with Tertullian by separating the Logos from the cosmic processes and thereby carrying the distinctions in the Godhead, freed from all connection with activities *ad extra*, back into the mysteries of the innermost modes of the divine existence, but by pushing the cosmic processes themselves, along with the Logos, back into, if not the immanent, at least the eternal modes of the divine activity. Thus he gave the Church in full formulation the doctrine of the eternal generation of the Son of God, indeed, but along with it also the doctrine of eternal creation: and by his failure to separate the Son from the world, with all that was, or seemed to be, involved in that, he missed becoming the father of the Christian doctrine of the Trinity by becoming instead—well or ill understood, but at least not unnaturally—the father of Arianism. It was not along this pathway that the Church doctrine of the Trinity was to be attained, but rather along that beaten out by the feet of Ter-

* The same is true also of the Montanists—to whom the function was committed of emphasizing the doctrine of the Spirit in the Church—if we can judge by the example and trust the testimony of Tertullian. HARNACK (E. T., iv, 108) is right in assigning to them an important place in the development of the doctrine of the Spirit: he is wrong in the specific function assigned them in this development. If we can judge by the example of Tertullian, the effect of their movement was to elevate and deepen the conception of the Spirit and His work.

tullian.* And this, simply because the Church doctrine of the Trinity could not come to its rights within the limits of the Logos-speculation, and Origen's construction preserved the essential elements of the Logos-speculation while Tertullian's prepared the way for transcending it.

To put the matter into somewhat abstract form, the immanent movement of Christian thought, we conceive, took some such course as the following. The Logos-speculation laid its stress on the gradations of deity manifested in the Logos and the Spirit, and just on that account did less than justice to the Church's immanent faith in which the Father, Son and Holy Ghost appeared as equal sharers in the Name. That justice might be done to the immanent faith of the Church, therefore, it was essential that the stress should be shifted from gradations of deity to the equality of the persons of the Godhead. This correction carried with it the confession not merely of the eternity of these persons, but also of their unchangeableness, since not only eternity but also unchangeableness is an essential attribute of deity, and must belong to each person of the Godhead if these persons are to be seriously conceived to be equal. That justice might be done to these conceptions, it obviously was not enough, then, that a basis for the prolations should be discovered in the eternal existence form of God, nor indeed merely that personal distinctions underlying these prolations should be carried back into eternity, nor merely that the prolations themselves should be pushed back into eternity. In the last case the eternal prolates must further be conceived as in no sense inferior to the unprolate deity itself, sharers in all its most intimate attributes—not only in its eternity and unchangeableness, therefore, but also in its exaltation, or in the speech of the time, its "invisibility," including self-existence itself. But so to conceive them involved, of course, the evisceration of the entire prolation speculation of its purpose and value—as may be readily perceived by reading in conjunction the chapters of Tertullian (who is still so far under the control of the Logos-speculation) in which he argues that "invisibility" is the peculiarity of the Father in distinction from the Son, the very characteristic of the Son being His "visi-

* HARNACK (E. T., iv, 110), speaking of the development of the doctrine of the Spirit, although he recognizes that in his doctrine of the pre-temporal *processio* of the Spirit Origen is in advance of Tertullian, for Tertullian does not teach this *explicitly* (see above, pp. 27-8), yet remarks that "by the *unius substantiæ*, which he regards as true of the Spirit also, Tertullian comes nearer the views that finally prevailed in the fourth century."

bility,"* and the discussion of Augustine† in which he solidly argues that the Son and Spirit are, because equally God with the Father, also equally "invisible" with the Father.‡ The orthodox doctrine of the Trinity could not become complete, in other words, until, under the pressure of the demand of the Christian consciousness for adequate recognition of the true and complete deity of the Son and Spirit, the whole conception of prolations of deity for specific functions had been superseded by a doctrine of eternally persisting personal distinctions in the Godhead itself. The way was prepared for this historically, no doubt, in large measure, by pushing the idea of prolation back into eternity, as Origen did, where it took the form of a doctrine of eternal generation and procession, and in so doing lost its primary significance and grew nigh to vanishing away,—

* *Cont. Prax.*, xiv-xvi.

† *de Trinitate*, II.

‡ There is, of course, a stream of better teaching running through the very fathers who denied "invisibility" to the prolate Logos in the interests of the Logos-speculation. The passage in Ignatius, *Ad. Ephes.* (end of c. iii) sets the norm of this better mode of speech. See also Melito, *Frag.*, 13 (Otto, p. 419), and Tertullian himself who, despite his elaborate "distinction of the Father from the Son by this very characteristic, that the Son is visible and the Father invisible," nevertheless, "in the very same book and chapter"—viz., the fourteenth chapter of the *adv. Prax.*, remarks "that the Son also, considered in Himself, is invisible" (BULL, IV, iii, 9). But the doctrine of the like invisibility of the Son with the Father came to its rights only with Augustine. On the whole subject of the patristic ideas of the "visibility" of the Logos and the "invisibility" of God as such, the discussions—which certainly involve no little special pleading—of BULL, Book IV, chap. iii, are well worth consulting. To the general student of doctrine these discussions of BULL have an additional interest, inasmuch as—although it doubtless would have shocked him to have had it suggested to him—his defense of the subordinationism of the fathers on the ground that they conceived it due not to any difference between the Father and Son in essence or attributes but to an "economy," is equivalent to attributing to the fathers and adopting for himself the essential elements of what is known in the history of doctrine as the "Covenant Theology"—a theology that was being taught by many Reformed theologians in BULL's day. When BULL says of the fathers (IV, iii, 12, E T., I., p. 615): "They by no means meant to deny that the Son of God, equally with the Father, is in His own nature immeasurable and invisible; but merely intimated this, that all such appearances of God, and also the incarnation itself, had reference to the economy which the Son of God undertook,"—he has only in other words enunciated the Covenant idea. When he adds: "Which economy is by no means suited to the Father inasmuch as He had not His origin from any beginning and is indebted for His authorship to none"—apart from his unwonted phraseology, he does not necessarily go beyond the Covenant theologians, who were quick to contend that the terms of "the Covenant" are themselves grounded in the intrinsic relations of the three persons. These, they taught, are such as made it proper and fit that each person should assume the precise functions He did assume—as, in a word, made it alone suitable that it should be the Son and Spirit who should be "sent" and not the Father, and the like. The alternatives, in a word, would appear to be either an Arianizing subordinationism or the Covenant theology: all other constructions are half views and inherently unstable.

for what is the value of an essential, eternal and unchangeable prolation of deity which, just because essential, eternal and unchangeable, can have no inherent relation to activities *ad extra*? But the real goal was attained only when the whole idea of prolation, thus rendered useless and meaningless, had fallen away, and the Logos-speculation gave place to something better. And it was Tertullian's definitions, not Origen's speculations, which prepared the way for the attainment of this goal. So that it was not Origen but Tertullian who became the real father of the Christian doctrine of the Trinity.

It is, of course, quite possible to exaggerate the measure in which this revolution of thought is traceable in the pages of Tertullian. It is first discernible in its completeness in the expositions of Augustine two centuries later. But it seems sufficiently clear that the beginnings of the line of development which ended in Augustine are perceptible in Tertullian.* Their mark is his insistence on the equality of the Son and Spirit with the Father, an insistence in which he fairly enunciated the great conception afterward embodied in the term *homoousios*. Tertullian, however, still lived and moved and had his being under the spell of the Logos-speculation; he did not even perceive, as did Origen, that the notion of prolations before time must give way to the higher conception of eternal generation and procession—much less that even this latter conception is of doubtful utility. Athanasius himself, indeed, did not perceive this last—and therefore the Nicene doctrine of the Trinity, worked out under his inspiration, still preserves these shells of outlived speculation, the kernel of which has withered away.† The phraseology in which they are embodied keeps its place even in the forms of statement of Augustine. The hold which the Logos-speculation had on the minds of men is in nothing made more manifest than in such persistence of its forms in subsequent thought, after they had lost all their meaning. In very truth the Logos-speculation provided the common ground on which the whole world of fourth-century Christian thought still stood; and Arian differed from Athanasian largely only as the left wing differs from the right wing

* Even DORNER, who does not perceive that Tertullian had in principle separated the Divine Persons as such from the world-process, yet admits that in his "conception of the Three Persons as inwardly connected (as *concertos, coherentes*)" Tertullian's view "includes a speculative element, to which the later doctrine of the Church was long in attaining" (*Person of Christ*, I, ii, 76-77).

† Cf. the very judicious remarks of DORNER (*Person of Christ*, I, ii, 327 sq.) on the survivals in the Nicene construction: see also pp. 184, 203-4, 491.

of the same fundamental type of thinking.* The merit of Tertullian is that his definitions, though still adjusted to the forms of the Logos-speculation, had in them the potency of a better construction and were sure sooner or later to burst the shell in which they were artificially confined. In his recognition of the eternity of the personal distinctions in the Godhead apart from all questions of prolation, and in the emphasis he laid upon the equal deity of these persons, he planted fruitful seed which could not fail of a subsequent growth. Men might still cling to the old forms and seek merely to match the downward development which emphasized the distinction of the prolations from the fontal deity until it had degraded them into temporal creatures of the divine will, by emphasizing for themselves rather their eternity and their equality with God.† But by this very movement upward it was inevitable that the very idea of prolation, which was the core of the Logos-speculation, should lose its significance and be pushed first out of notice and then out of belief,—until the whole conception of a linear trinity should disappear and there should emerge the completed Trinitarianism of an Augustine, to whom the persons of the Trinity are not subordinate one to another but coördinate sharers of the one divine essence.

It is, of course, not the close of this process of thought that we see in Tertullian, but its beginning. But in him already appears the pregnant emphasis on the equality rather than the graded subordination of the personal distinctions in the Godhead, by the logical

* Cf. HAGEMANN, p. 134: "When the origin of the Son out of the essence of God is placed in immediate connection with the creation of the world, there is needed in the way of great logical acuteness only a single unimportant step to set the Son in the sense of an Arius alongside of the world, as creature and Creator. No doubt Origen had guarded against this by ascribing not to the Son only but to the world as well an eternal origin: but the latter necessarily fell away as an open contradiction to the creed, and so nothing remained except either to join the Son so essentially with the Father that now the idea of His deity would come to its full rights and He should be recognized as in His Being wholly independent of the origin of the world, by which there would necessarily be raised again the problem of the unity of essence of the Father and the Son; or else so to connect Him with the temporal origin of the world that He should fall thereby out of the circle of the divine life and be conceived as a kind of created God in Plato's sense, as an Under-God by the side of or rather beneath the Father, who would embrace the whole divine world in Himself, the one God over all. Already in the case of Dionysius of Alexandria we have noted in *theory* a tendency to this latter development, even though his faith-consciousness remained free from this evil. In the case of Arius the theory, however, obtained a decisive victory over the faith. . . ." In this passage, we conceive, the essential logical relations of Orthodoxy and Arianism to their common basis in the Logos-speculation are lucidly set forth. Cf. DORNER, as cited, pp. 267-80, and pp. 454-5.

† Cf. DORNER, as cited, p. 328.

inworking of which the whole change in due time came about. So far as we can now learn it was he first, therefore, who, determined to give due recognition to the elements of the Church's faith embodied in the Rule of Faith, pointed out the road over which it was necessary to travel in order to do justice to the Biblical data. Say that he was in this but the voice of the general Christian consciousness. It remains that it was left to him first to give effective voice to the Christian consciousness, and that it was only by following out the lines laid down by him to their logical conclusion that the great achievement of formulating to thought the doctrine of the Triune God was at length accomplished.

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