

THE TRINITY IN CREATION.

God as
Creator.

Allusion has been already made to the Redemptional Trinity as the manifestation of the Eternal Triune One in the salvation of man. Between these may be interposed an Economical Trinity, in some sense mediatorial, but not redemptional: the revelation, that is, of Three Persons after a special manner and order in the production of the universe.

The
Trinity.

1. Each Person is in Scripture plainly connected with the act of creation: plainly, that is, according to the universal law of gradual development that has been so often referred to. The Old Testament dimly but not uncertainly gives its evidence, when its words are interpreted in the light of the New. *My Father worketh hitherto*, is our Lord's testimony, *and I work*: not so much indicating successive stages as claiming for Himself all Divine acts, and making them His own: *the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He seeth the Father do*. The Father here is the eternal Father; for, the eternal Second Person, both as *The Word* and as *The Son*, is expressly asserted to be the author of creation. *All things were made by Him*. St. John's witness is repeated and con-

John v.
17, 19.

John i. 3.

firmed by St. Paul, *All things were created by Him*; and this in a passage which declares that *the Son of His love was the Firstborn of every creature*: *πρωτότοκος*, begotten before all creaturely existence. These passages in their combination lead our minds to our Lord's only other reference to creation: *Thou lovedst Me before the foundation of the world*. To this give all the Scriptures witness. Carrying the evidence back now to the Old Testament we find that it renders to the Spirit the same tribute which the New renders to the Son. *Thou sendest forth Thy Spirit, they are created*; and, before the words *Let us make man*, we read that *the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters*. The doctrine of the Essential Trinity gives harmony and consistency to the whole. Without it the entire fabric of Scripture is unintelligible: it ceases to be a fabric; it is itself without form and void, and darkness rests upon its entire face.

Col. i. 15,
16.

John xvii.
24.

Ps. civ.
30.
Gen. i. 26,
2.

2. But there is evidently an Economical Trinity here, the foreshadowing of the Redemptional. What man's word is to his act, the expression of his will, the Eternal Word was in creation: *By Whom also He made the worlds*, where the Word is *the Son* who is the Mediator of the creation of the *αἰῶνες*, or orders of worlds, which He sustains by the word, *τῷ ῥήματι*, of His power. His omnipotence as God and His mediatorship as the Word in the created universe are one. The *διά*, generally used, also indicates this. He is the Mind and Will and Act of His Father. This economical relation does not so expressly extend to the Holy Spirit; but we have seen that of Him also as of the Son it may be said, *without Him was not anything made that was made*. All this is revealed for the suppression of the notion that matter, or the substance of the visible universe, is eternal; or, supposing it created, that any inferior Demiurgus was employed in the creation; also for the establishment of our faith in the worthiness of all created things; and, finally, to show that the scene of creation was prepared as to be in due time the scene of redemption also.

Economical Trinity

Heb. i. 2.

John i. 3.