

to bring our sister church of the United States before our readers.

We are confident that every considerate parent would wish to be furnished with something to place in the hands of his children. We shall endeavour that our *weekly visitor* shall generally furnish both rational amusement and godly instruction to the younger branches of families.

We trust that we may be allowed to express, on this occasion, love to the country which gave us birth; to serve which in the gospel of our blessed Lord, and to know that that service is honoured with the increase of his grace on every side, would be our "joy and crown of rejoicing"—our "exceeding great reward." And since we have been honored with this trust committed to our hands, it is our ardent prayer that we may neither disappoint those who have so committed it, nor those for whose benefit it is intruded.

THEOLOGY

FOR THE CHRISTIAN SENTINEL.

DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY.—No. 1.

THE Doctrine of the Trinity is, by all orthodox believers, claimed as the foundation of the religion of fallen man, and as the only one which adequately provides for all his real necessities, and fully meets all the circumstances of his condition: and upon examination, there will be found a divine harmony between all its parts, no less natural than beautiful.—I use the word *natural* in a sense like the following: *just conduct is natural to God, because he is a just Being, and injustice is contrary to his nature.*

There are three great things in which fallen man is primarily and deeply interested, namely: *Government, Redemption, Sanctification*; the last including under it whatever pertains to the application of grace. But the first will embrace *justification from sin*, as that is a *judicial*, and therefore a governmental action. The ultimate object of the whole scheme, is, to restore man to a capacity for being *altogether* a good subject of the Divine government. Each of these is a distinct department by itself, but yet vitally connected with both the others. To govern, is neither to redeem nor to sanctify: to sanctify is not the same as to redeem. Yet Government, and Redemption, and Sanctification are all necessary to *Salvation*; which is their natural result, and flows out of their joint operation. Government is the *primary cause* of Salvation, because it affords protection and security. Without Government, Redemption and Sanctification would be chimerical. Without Redemption, there is no Sanctification: and without both these, to a sinner, Government is destruction: "For our God is a consuming fire."

As neither of these departments is the same with either of the others, nor has the same work assigned to it, so each seems to require its own official head, and efficient agent or operator: and to each the doctrine of the Trinity assigns such head and agent. This principal is recognized and stated in the Church Catechism, in answer to the first question arising out of the Creed, in which answer belief is professed in God the Creator and Governor; in God the Redeemer and Saviour, and in God the Sanctifier.

The divine Government of course rests on the shoulders of Deity. But the redemption and sanctification of sinners have both an intimate and indissoluble connection with the divine Government: and therefore in this case we will take the liberty of considering them, in relation to mankind, as parts and departments of it. They are a divine plan, under the jurisdiction of the divine Government, for re-

storing our fallen race to the divine favour, so that the divine law may cease to be our enemy and accuser. They are evidently a divine work, and seem to require *divine workmen* to bring them into practical operation, and to insure their ultimate success. The reason for this will appear more evident, when we consider, that in this divine Governmental work of redemption and sanctification, there should be a *community of interest* founded in the nature of federal right, (seeing each department has its own head) in which right separate individual personal interest could have no partial and distracting influence.—Hence it is manifest, that, *unity of purpose and design, unity of means and end, and unity of effort in the execution*, all co-operating together as if under the controul of a single will, should be its great and leading characteristic. In short, it appears precisely as if Trinity in Unity, and Unity in Trinity should speak out in every thing connected therewith.—The arguments and illustrations adduced in these following essays on the doctrine of the Trinity, will be founded on the premises here laid down.

And first: As to the divine Government resting on the shoulders of Deity,—it will not be disputed: so we shall devote this number to the consideration of a Mediator, the second person in the Godhead.

God the Creator and moral Governor and Judge of sinful man, cannot be approached by him, unless by the intervention of a Mediator to advocate his cause and procure him favour. The reason for it is this: The relation between God and a sinner considered simply in itself, is that of Judge and Criminal. In the eye of the law, the Judge cannot be the Criminal's Advocate. He sits to judge impartially according to evidence and established criminality: not to plead the cause of the guilty: to execute judgment: not to procure and extend mercy where there is a right to punish. He therefore who rejects a Mediator, rejects all means of access to God, whom he has offended, and, in fact, engages singlehanded in a law suit with his offended, sovereign, and just Judge: While yet, common prudence dictates to him the propriety and necessity of employing a Mediator, or as some would say, a *second* to adjust a difference with a fellow creature. Nothing is more common than the intercession of a friend.

A Mediator between God and Man, as he acts in the name and for the interests of both the adverse parties, whom sin has made enemies to each other, must, in bringing them together on terms of entire reconciliation with each other, be fully competent to sustain, in every particular, the interests of both. The honour of God, his sovereign rights and prerogatives, are to be maintained to the full against his rebel subjects; and their perfect immunity from all personal danger is to be secured against arbitrary power in the party offended. But a person to be theoretically and practically capable of sustaining such twofold office, and forming an intermediate link of communication between the two, must possess a *perfect community of interest* with both parties, founded in nature itself. The true interest of each party must be his own personal interest. It is the interest of God to maintain the honour of his royal dignity in the sight of all his subjects: it is the interest of man to avoid the consequences of a vindication of his slighted authority by a legal process on himself; because, in his presence, no man living can be justified. But such community, or meeting point of opposite interests cannot, in the nature of the case, exist in the same individual person, (who might have an entirely separate interest of his own, arising out of difference of nature or order of being together with individual personal right) unless the nature or order of being peculiar to each party were also united in him. This community of nature with each, lays the foundation of a community of interest with each. This, observation on the animal world will confirm, for we know that beasts of the same tribe will unite for mutual protection against an enemy; while different tribes will not do so for each other. The same is true of political factions. No one would help another but to serve or secure its own interests. The Mediator should be the friend and companion of both, and ambitious to bring his friends of each party, in whose separate interests he takes a generous and lively concern, to be friends to each other, as well as to himself.—"We pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled unto God." And because before reconciliation there is diversity of interest, pursued in opposite directions, he must so manage as to institute afresh a community of interests between them, that there may be a rational and self interested ground of friendship and good feeling. The common interest between God and his creatures is—on his part, sovereignty and protection arising out of his power and goodness: on man's, it consists in loving what God commands, and desiring what he promises to them that love him. (See Collect and Epist. 14th Sunday after Trinity.) And the Mediator should also know the private affairs of each party, their wishes and their desires,