

ver, what at another it is capable of explaining? He, who dwelleth in light inaccessible, can neither be drawn from his secret dwelling, but by his own revelation of himself; nor when he hath revealed himself, can he be understood beyond the measure of knowledge, which he vouchsafes to communicate. The being of God, and the hope of eternal life, are doctrines, which are now supposed most congenial to the feelings of our nature; but let it be remembered, that even these doctrines were never known with any degree of certainty, but by revelation, and that the little glimmerings of knowledge, which are seen in the isles of the heathen, are but the spark of a glimmering and exhausted tradition, which nothing but the light of the Gospel can rekindle.—The same tradition has preserved other doctrines, as the necessity of propitiating the Deity with sacrifices, which prevails every where, and a belief of the Incarnation and a Triune God, which embellishes the intricate mythology of the East, and is not undiscernable in the poetry and philosophy of Greece and Rome. Derived from a common origin, the primitive traditions afford collateral aid to revelation, and repress the presumption of the adversary, by yielding irrefragable proof, that these mysterious and incomprehensible principles were not considered offensive to reason, at a time, when all the energies of the human mind were called into action, and man had no external light to direct him, in maintaining or rejecting the popular doctrines of the age.

It was in a country, which had made but little progress in human philosophy, and by men, with one illustrious exception, wholly uneducated, that the truths which Christ delivered, were registered and recorded for the instruction of all succeeding generations. The writers of the New Testament had no skill in weaving the web of metaphysical subtlety, and satisfied with the form of knowledge which was presented in the law, they probably knew nothing of the traditions of the heathen; they were content to repeat what they had heard, and to report what they had seen. Their minds were naturally liable to the same prejudices as other men, and if any doctrine was unreasonable or absurd, why were not they offended as well as their disciples in the present day, especially since they have not scrupled to record of themselves, that on various occasions, they were offended? When, however, in his several epistles, the most learned of their body introduces the men-