—the *peculiar essence* of an object. And  
this last seems to be the best meaning:  
in our place: His *essential being*, His  
*substance*. For in regarding the history  
of the word, we find that the well-known  
theological meaning *‘person,’* was not by  
any means generally received during the  
first four centuries. The Nicene Council  
itself uses *“hypostasis”* and *“essence”*  
in the same sense, and condemns the deriving the Son from another hypostasis or essence from the Father: and so usually  
Athanasius. The fact was, that the Easterns  
most commonly used the term to designate  
the three separate Persons: whereas the  
Westerns continued to regard it as equivalent to *essence*, and assumed but one  
*hypostasis:* and the Western bishops, assembled with Athanasius at the council of Sardica in 347, distinctly pronounced the  
assumption of three *hypostases* heretical,  
i.e. Arian. Subsequently, however, to this,  
in the Synod assembled at Alexandria in 362,  
at which Athanasius, and bishops of Italy,  
Arabia, Egypt, and Libya were present,  
the Easterns and Westerns agreed, on  
examination of one another's meaning,  
to acknowledge one another as orthodox,  
and to allow indifferently of the use of  
*three hypostases,* signifying ‘Persons,’ and  
*one hypostasis,* signifying substance, essence. On all grounds it will be safer here to hold to the primitive meaning of the  
word, and not to introduce into the language of the apostolic age a terminology which was long subsequent to it), **and  
upholding** (bearing up. The Rabbinical  
writings speak of God as *carrying all the  
worlds by His strength*) **the universe** (the  
meaning attempted to be given by some  
Socinian expositors, “the whole kingdom  
of grace,” is wholly beside the purpose :  
see Col. i. 17; Job. viii. 3; Rev. iv. 11)  
**by the word** (*expressed command:* compare ch. xi. 3) **of his** (Whose? His own,  
or the Fathers? ‘The latter is held by  
Cyril of Alexandria. And so Grotius and  
others. But Chrysostom and the great  
body of Commentators understand **his** to  
refer to the Son. The strict parallelism of  
the clauses would seem to require, that *his*  
here should designate the same person, as  
it does before in this same verse. But such  
parallelism aud consistency of reference of demonstrative pronouns is by no means observed in the New Test., e.g. Eph. i  
20, 22, “And placed Him at His right  
hand (of the Father), .... and put all  
things under His feet” (of the Son). In  
every such ease the reference must be  
determined by the circumstances, and the  
things spoken of. And applying that test  
here, we find that in our former clause it is  
quite out of the question that **his** should  
be reflective, referring, as it clearly does, to  
another than the subject of the sentence.  
But when we proceed to our second clause,  
we find no such bar to the ordinary reflective sense of **his**, but every reason to adopt it as the most obvious. For we  
have here an action performed by the Son,  
who *upholds the universe.* Whereby ? **By  
the word of His power:** where we may  
certainly say 1) that had another than the  
subject of the sentence been intended, such  
intention would have been expressed: and  
2) that the assertion would be after all a  
strange and unexampled one, that the Son.  
upholds all things by the word of the  
Father's power, So that, on all accounts,  
this second **his** seems better to be referred to the Son) **power** (not to be  
weakened into the comparatively unmeaning “his powerful word.” His Power is  
an inherent attribute, whether uttered or  
not: the **word** is that utterance, which He  
has been pleased to give of it. It is a  
“powerful word,” but much more is here  
stated—that it is the word of, proceeding  
from, giving utterance to, His power),  
**having** (or, **when He had**) **made** (the  
vulgate, *“making,”* is an unfortunate mistranslation, tending to obscure the truth of the completion of the one Sacrifice of  
the Lord. The words *“by Himself”* can  
hardly be retained in the text, in the face  
of their omission in the most ancient MSS.,  
joined to their internal character as an  
explanatory gloss. Meanwhile, the gloss  
is a good and true one. It was by *Himself,* in the fullest sense) **purification of sins** (as Bleck observes, there is no occasion to suppose the genitive here equivalent to *“from sins,”* seeing that we may say,  
*“the sins of a man are purified,”* as we  
read, Matt. viii. 3, *“his leprosy was  
cleansed.”* Sin was the great uncleanness, of which He has effected the purga-