nor diſbelieve that doctrine. It is however to be remem­bered, that all our notions oſ God are more or leſs analo­gical ; that they muſt be expreſſed in words which, literally interpreted, are applicable only to man ; and that propositions understood in this literal ſenſe may involve an appa­rent contradiction, from which the truth meant to be ex­preſſed by them would be ſeen to be free, had we direct and adequate conceptions of the divine nature. On this account it is to be wiſhed that men treating of the myſtery of the holy Trinity, had always expreſſed themſelves in ſcripture language, and never aimed at being wiſe beyond what is written ; but since they have acted otherwiſe, we muſt, in juſtice to our readers, animadvert upon one or two ſtatements of this doctrine, which we have reaſon to believe are earneſtly contended for by ſome who conſider themſelves as the only orthodox.

In the ſcriptures, the three perſons are denominated by the terms Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, or by God, the word, who is alſo declared to be God, and the Spirit of God. If each be truly God, it is obvious that they muſt all have the ſame divine nature, just as every man has the ſame human nature with every other man; and if there be but one God, it is equally obvious that they muſt be of the ſame individual ſubſtance or eſſence, which no three men can poſſibly be. In this there is a difficulty ; but, as will be ſeen by and by, there is no contradiction. The very terms Father and Son imply ſuch a relation between the two perlons so denominated, as that though they are of the ſame ſubſtance, poſſessed of the ſame attributes, and equally God, juſt as a human father and his ſon are equally men, yet the ſecond muſt be perſonally ſubordinate to the firſt. In like manner, the Holy Ghost, who is called the Spirit of God, and is ſaid to *proceed from* the *Father,* and to be *ſent* by the *Son,* muſt be conceived as ſubordinate to both, much in the ſame way as a ſon is ſubordinate to his parents, tho’ poſſessed of equal or even of ſuperior powers. That this is the true doctrine, appears to us undeniable from the words of our Saviour himſelf, who, in a prayer addreſſed to his Father, ſtyles@@\* him by way of pre-eminence, “ the only true God,” as being the fountain or origin of the Godhead from which the Son and the Holy Ghoſt derive their true divinity. In like manner, St Paul, when oppoſing the polytheiſm of the Greeks, says expreſsly@@\* that “ to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in, or for, him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.”

That the primitive fathers of the Chriſtian church main­tained this ſubordination of the ſecond and third perſons of the blessed Trinity to the firſt, has been evinced with ſuch complete evidence by biſhop Bull, that we do not per­ceive how any man can read his works and entertain a doubt on the ſubject. We ſhall tranſcribe two quotations from him, and refer the reader for fuller ſatisfaction to sect*.* 4. of his *Defensio fidei Nicenae.* The firſt ſhall be a passage cited from *Novation,* or whoever is the author of the book on the Trinity publiſhed among the works of Tertullian, in which the learned prelate aſſures us the ſenſe of all the ancients is expreſſed. “ Quia quid eſt Filius, non ex se eſt, quia nec innatus eſt ; ſed ex patre eſt, quia geni­tus eſt: five dum verbum eſt, five dum virtus eſt, five dum ſapientia eſt, five dum lux eſt, sive dum Filius eſt, et quic- quid horum eſt, non aliunde eſt quam ex Patre, Patri ſuo originem ſuam debens.” The next is from Athanaſius, who has never been accuſed of holding low opinions respecting the ſecond perſon of the holy Trinity. This father, in his fifth diſcourſe againſt the Arians, ſays, ϰαlα γαρ *τoν Ιωαννην εv ταυlη τη αρχη ηv ό λογος ϰαι* ό λογος, *ην προς τov θεοv. Θεος γαρ εοlιν ή αρχη, ϰαι επειδαν εξ αυlης εοlι,* δια *τoυτo ϰαι* θεος ην λογος ; *according to John, the word was in this first prin­ciple,*

*and the word was God. For God is the principle ; and becauſe the word is from the principle, therefore the word is God.* Agreeably to this doctrine, the Nicene fathers, in the creed which they publiſhed for the uſe of the uni­versal church, style the only begotten Son, God of God θεος εϰ θεου.

Regardless however of antiquity, and, as we think, of the plain ſenſe of ſcripture, ſome modern divines of great learn­ing contend, that the three perſons in Deity are all *coηsubstantial, co-eternal, co-ordinate,* without *derivation, ſubordina­tion,* or *dependence,* of *any sort,* as to nature or eſſence ; whilſt others affirm, that the ſecond and third perſons derive from the firſt their personality, but not their nature. We ſhall conſider theſe opinions as different, though, from the obſcurity of the language in which we have always ſeen them expressed, we cannot be certain but they may be one and the ſame. The maintainers of the former opinion hold, that the three perſons called *Elohim* in the Old Teſtament, naturally independent on each other, entered into an agree­ment before the creation of the world, that one of them ſhould in the fulneſs of time assume human nature, for the purpoſe of redeeming mankind from that miſery into which it was foreſeen that they would fall. This antemundane agreement, they add, conſtitutes the whole of that paternal and filial relation which ſubſiſts between the firſt and ſecond perſons whom we denominate Father and Son ; and they hold, that the Son is ſaid to be begotten before all worlds, to indicate that *He* who was before all worlds was *begotten,* or to *be* begotten, into the office of redeemer ; or, more deciſively, to signify that he undertook that office before the creation, and *aſſumed* to himſelf ſome appearance or figure of the reality in which he was to execute it ; and he is called μονογενης or the only begotten, becauſe he *alone* was begotten into the office of redeemer@@\*.

To many of our readers we doubt not but this will ap­pear a very extraordinary doctrine, and not eaſy to be re­conciled with the unity of God. It is however sufficiently overturned by two ſentences of holy ſcripture, about the meaning of which there can be no diſpute. “ In this (ſays St John@@\*) was manifeſted the love of God towards us, becauſe that God ſent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.” Taking the word so*n* in its uſual acceptation, this was certainly a wonderful degree of love in the Father of mercies to send into the world on our account a person ſo nearly related to him as an only ſon ; but if we ſubſtitute this novel interpretation of the words *only begotten son* in their ſtead, the apoſtle’s reaſoning will loſe all its force. St John will then be made to ſay, “ In this was manifeſted the love of God toward us, be­cauſe that God ſent a divine perſon equal to himſelf, and no way related to him, but who had before the creation cove­nanted to come into the world, that we might live through him.” Is this a proof of the love of the perſon here called God ? Again, the inſpired author of the epiſtle to the He­brews, treating of our Saviour’s prieſthood, ſays, among other things expreſſive of his humiliation, that “ though he was a son, yet learned he obedience (or, as others would render the words ευαθεν ύπαϰοην, he taught obedience) by the things which he ſuffered@@\*.” If the word so*n* be here underſtood in its proper ſenſe, this verſe diſplays in a very ſtriking manner the condeſcension of our divine Redeemer, who, though he was no leſs a perſon than the proper Son of God by nature, yet vouchſafed to learn or teach us obe­dience by the things which he ſuffered ; but if we ſubſtitute this metaphorical ſonſhip in place of the natural, the reaſon­ing of the author (for that he is reaſoning cannot be denied) will be very extraordinary. “ Though this divine perſonage agreed before all worlds to ſuffer death for the redemption of man, yet learned he obedience, or yet taught

@@@[m]\* John xvii. 3.

@@@[m]\* 1 Cor. viii. 6.

@@@[m]\* See Ridgeley's Body of Divinity.

@@@[m]\* John iv. 9.

@@@[m]\* Heb. v. 8.