and the other, we are utterly unable to tell. The case is one which admits of no explanation. The divine nature and its manner of existence is, to us, wholly incomprehensible ; and we might with greater reason attempt to weigh the mountains in scales, than by our limited faculties to fathom the depths of infinity. The Supreme Being is present in power to every portion of space, and yet it is demonstrable, that in his essence he is not extended, (see Metaphysics, p. 699.) Both these truths, his inextension and omni­presence, are fundamental principles in what is called *na­tural religion;* and when taken together they form, in the opinion of most people, a mystery as incomprehensible as that of the Trinity in unity. Indeed there is nothing of which it is more difficult to form a distinct notion than *unity* simple, and absolutely indivisible. Though the Tri­nity in unity, therefore, were no Christian doctrine, myste­ries must still be believed ; for they are as inseparable from the religion of nature as from that of revelation ; and atheism involves the most incomprehensible of all mysteries, even the beginning of existence without a cause. We must in­deed form the best notions that we can of this and all other mysteries ; for if we have no notions whatever of a Trinity in unity, we can neither believe nor disbelieve that doc­trine. It is however to be remembered, that all our notions of 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 above what is written ; as all attempts to ex­plain or simplify this doctrine have proved singularly futile, ending either in pompous absurdity, or in a virtual negation of the doctrine to be explained.

***Obs.*** 1. An attempt bas been made by some of the opponents of this doctrine to represent it ns borrowed by the early Christians from the speculations of the later Platonists. But if this be the case, we may properly ask, whence bad those Platonists the doctrine themselves ? It is not surely so simple or so obvious as to be likely to have occur­red to the reasoning mind of a Pagan philosopher ; or if it be, why do Unitarians suppose it to involve a contradiction ? Plato indeed taught a doctrine in some respects similar to that of the Christian Trinity, and so did Pythagoras, with many other philosophers of Greece and the East ; but though these sages appear to have been on some occa­sions extremely credulous, and on others to have indulged themselves in the most mysterious speculations, there is no room to suppose that they were ***naturally weaker men*** than ourselves, or that they were capable of inculcating as truths what they ***perceived*** to involve a ***con­tradiction.*** The Platonic and Pythagorean trinities never could have occurred to the mind of him who merely from the works of creation endeavoured to discover the being and attributes of the Creator ; and therefore as those philosophers travelled into Egypt and the East in quest of knowledge, it appears to us in the highest degree probable, that they picked up this mysterious and sublime doctrine in those regions where it had been handed down as a dogma from the remotest ages, and where we know that science was not taught systematically, but detailed in collections of sententious maxims and traditionary opinions. If this be so, we cannot doubt but that the Pagan trinities bad their origin in some primæval revelation. No­thing else indeed can account for the general prevalence of a doctrine so remote from human imagination, and of which we find vestiges in the sacred books of almost every civilized people of antiquity. The corrupt state in which it is viewed in the writings of Plato and others, is the natural consequence of its descent through a long course of oral tradition ; and then falling into the hands of men who bent every opinion as much as possible to a conformity with their own speculations. The trinity of Platonism therefore, instead of being an objection, lends, in our opinion, no feeble support to the Christian doctrine, since it affords almost a complete proof of that doc­trine’s having made part of the first revelations communicated to man.

***Obs. 2.*** See Pearson on the Creed ; Burnet's Exposition of the Thirty- nine Articles; Wardlaws Discourses on the Socinian Controversy; Stuart's Letters to Dr. Channing; Horsley’s Letters to Priestley; Fuller’s Works, vol. i. and vol. iv. ; Waterland’s Importance of the Doctrine of the Holy Trinity asserted ; Faber’s Λpostolicity of Trinitarianism,

Sect. IV. *Of the Manifestation of Deity in the Works of Creation and Providence.*

The essence of this self-existent, all-powerful, infinitely wise, and perfectly good Being, is to us wholly incompre­hensible. That it is not matter, is shown by the process of argumentation by which we have proved it to exist : but what it is we know not, and it would be impious presump­tion to inquire. It is sufficient for all the purposes of reli­gion to know that God has formed all things, and is some­how or other present to every part of his work ; that exist­ence and every possible ]>erfection is essentia) to him ; and that he wishes the happiness of all his creatures. That he is the former of all things is explicitly stated in Scripture, as in many places, so especially in the first sentence of Genesis already quoted. That by “ the heavens and the earth,” in that passage, is meant the whole universe, visible and invisible, is known to every person acquainted with the phraseology of Scripture ; and we need inform no man con­versant with English writers, that by *creation,* in its pro­per sense, is meant bringing into *being* or making that to *exist* which existed not *before.* It must, however, be ac­knowledged, that the Hebrew word ברא does not always imply the production of substance, but very often the form­ing of particular organized bodies out of pre-existing mat­ter. Thus when it is said, (Gen. i. 21, 27), that “ God *created* great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly after their kind,” and again, “ that he *created* man male and female though the word ברא is used on both occasions, we are not to conceive that the bodies of the first human pair, and of these animals, were brought into being from nonentity, but only that they were formed by a proper organization being given to pre-existent matter. But when Moses says, “ In the beginning God *created* the heaven and the earth,” he cannot be supposed to mean, that “ in the beginning God only gave form to matter already existing of itself;” for in the very next verse we are assured that after this act of creation was over, “ the earth was still *without form* and void,” or in other words, in a chaotic state.

That the Jews, before the coming of our Saviour, under­stood their lawgiver to teach a proper creation, is plain from that passage in the second book of the Maccabees, in which a mother, to persuade her son to suffer the cruellest tortures rather than forsake the law of his God, uses the following argument : “ I beseech thee, my son, look upon the heaven and the earth, and all that is therein, and consider that God made them of things that were not.” To the same purpose the inspired author of the epistle to the Hebrews, when magnifying the excellence of faith, says, “ Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear;” where, as Bishop Pearson has ably prov­ed, (Exposition of the Creed), the phrase *μη ἐκφαιvομεvωv* is equivalent to *ὀυκ* *ἐξ ὀντων,* in the quotation from the Mac­cabees.

The very first verse, therefore, of the book of Genesis informs us of a most important truth, which all the unin­spired wisdom of antiquity could not discover. It assures us, that as nothing exists by chance, so nothing is neces­sarily existing but the three divine persons in the one God­head. Every thing else, whether material or immaterial, derives its substance, as well as its form or qualities, from the fiat of that self-existent Being, “ who was, and is, and is to come.”

It does not, however, follow from this verse, or from any other passage in the sacred Scriptures, that the whole uni-