he us obedience, by the things which he ſuffered.” What ſenſe is there in this argument ? Is it a proof of condeſcenſion to fulfil one’s engagement ? Surely, if the meaning of the word son, when applied to the ſecond perſon of the bleſſed Trinity, were what is here ſuppoſed, the inſpired writer’s argument would have been more to the purpoſe for which it is brought had it run thus ; “ Though he was *not* a son, i. *e.* though he had made no previous agreement, yet condeſcended he to learn or teach,” &c.

The other opinion, whith ſuppoſes the Son and the Holy Ghoſt to derive from the Father their perſonality, but not their nature, is to us wholly unintelligible ; for perſonality cannot exist, or be conceived in a ſtate of ſeparation from all natures, any more than a quality can exiſt in a ſtate of ſeparation from all ſubſtances. The former of theſe opinions we are unable to reconcile with the unity of God ; the lat­ter is clothed in words that have no meaning. Both, as far we can understand them, are palpable polytheism ; more palpable indeed than that of the Grecian philoſophers, who though they worſhipped gods many, and lords many,· yet all held one God supreme over the rest. See Polythe­ism, n⁰ 32.

But if the Son and the Holy Ghoſt derive their nature as well their perſonality from the Father, will it not follow that they muſt be poſterior to him in time, ſince every effect is poſterior to its cauſe ? No ; this conſequence ſeems to fol­low only by reaſoning too cloſely from one nature to another, when there is between the two but a very diſtant analogy. It is indeed true, that among men, every father muſt be prior in time as well as in the order of nature to his ſon ; but were it eſſential to a man to be a father, ſo as that he could not exiſt otherwiſe than in that relation, it is obvious that his ſon would be coeval with himſelf, though ſtill as proceeding from him, he would be poſterior in the order of nature. This is the caſe with all neceſſary cauſes and ef­fects. The viſible ſun is the immediate and neceſſary cauſe of light and heat, either as emitting the rays from his own ſubſtance, or as exciting the agency of a fluid diffused for that purpoſe through the whole ſyſtem. Light and heat therefore muſt be as old as the ſun ; and had he exiſted from all eternity, they would have exiſted from eternity with him, though ſtill, as his effects, they would have been be­hind him in the order of nature. Hence it is, that as we muſt ſpeak analogically of the Divine nature, and when treating of mind, even the Supreme mind, make uſe of words literally applicable only to the modifications of mat­ter, the Nicene fathers illuſtrate the eternal generation of the ſecond perſon of the bleſſed Trinity by this proceſſion of light from the corporeal ſun, calling him *God of God, light of light.*

Another compariſon has been made uſe of to enable us to form ſome notion, however inadequate, how three Di­vine perſons can ſubſiſt in the ſame subſtance, and thereby conſtitute but one God. Moses informs us, that man was made after the image of God. That this relates to the ſoul more than to the body of man, has been granted by all but a few groſs anthropomorphites ; but it has been well obſerved@@\*, that the ſoul, though in itſelf one indiviſible and unextended ſubſtance, is conceived as consiſting of three principal faculties, the *understanding,* the *memory,* and the *will.* Of theſe, though they are all coeval in time, and equally eſſential to a rational ſoul, the underſtanding is in the order of nature obviouſly the firſt, and the memory the ſecond ; for things muſt be perceived before they can be re­membered ; and they muſt be remembered and compared to­gether before they can excite volitions, from being, ſome agreeable, and others diſagreeable. The memory therefore may be ſaid to ſpring from the underſtanding, and the will from both ; and as theſe three faculties are conceived to conſtitute one ſoul, ſo may three Divine perſons partaking of the ſame individual nature or eſſence constitute one God.

Theſe parallels or analogies are by no means brought forward as proofs of the Trinity, of which the evidence is to be gathered wholly from the word of God ; but they ſerve perhaps to help our labouring minds to form the juſteſt notions of that adorable myſtery which it is poſſible for us to form in the preſent ſtate of our exiſtence ; and they ſeem to reſcue the doctrine ſufficiently from the charge of contradic­tion, which has been ſo often urged againſt it by Unitariann writers. To the laſt analogy we are aware it has often been objected, that the soul may as well be ſaid to conſiſt of ten or twenty faculties as of three, ſince the paſſions are equally eſſential to it with the underſtanding, the memory, and the will, and are as different from one another as theſe three faculties are. This, however, is probably a miſtake ; for the beſt philoſophy ſeems to teach us, that the paſſions are not in inate ; that a man might exiſt through a long life a ſtranger to many of them ; and that there are probably np two minds in which are generated *all* the paſſions (ſee Passion) ; but underſtanding, memory, and will, are abſolutely and equally neceſſary to every rational being. But whatever be in this, if the human mind can be *conceived* to be one indiviſible subſtance, consiſting of different faculties, whether many or few, why ſhould it be thought an impoſſibility for the infinite and eternal nature of God to be communicated to three perſons acting different parts in the creation and government of the world, and in the great ſcheme of man’s redemption.

To the doctrine of the Trinity many objections have been made, as it implies the divinity of the Son and the Holy Ghoſt ; of whom the former aſſumed our nature, and in it died for the redemption of man. These we ſhall notice when we come to examine the revelations more peculiarlyy Chriſtian ; but there is one objection which, as it respects the doctrine in general, may be properly noticed here. It is ſaid that the firſt Chriſtians borrowed the notion of a Tri-une God from the later Platoniſts ; and that we hear not of a Trinity in the church till converts were made from the ſchool of Alexandria. But if this be the caſe, we may properly aſk, whence had 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 (ſee Platonism, Polytheism, and Pythagoras) ; but tho' 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.* This 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 had their origin in ſome primoeval

@@@[m]\* Leslie's Socinian Controversy.