image of God is to be understood certain gifts and powers supernaturally infused by the Holy Spirit into the minds of our first parents, to guide them in the ways of piety and virtue. This opinion they rest chiefly upon the authority of Tatian, Irenaeus, Tertullian, Cyprian, Athanasius, and other fathers of the primitive church ; but they think, at the same time, that it is countenanced by several passages in the New Testament. Thus when St. Paul says, (1 Cor. XV. 45, 46,) “ and so it is written, the first man Adam was made a living soul, the last Adam was made a quicken­ing spirit they understand the whole passage as relating to the creation of man, and not as drawing a comparsion between Adam and Christ, to show the great superiority of the latter over the former. In support of this interpretation they observe, that the apostle immediately adds, “ howbeit, that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural, and afterwards that which is spiritual;” an addition which they think was altogether needless, if, by the quickening spirit, he had referred to the incarnation of Christ, which had happened in the very age in which he was writing. They are therefore of opinion, that the body of Adam, after being formed of the dust of the ground, was first animated by a vital principle, endowed with the faculties of reason and sensation, which entitled the whole man to the appellation of a living soul. After this, they suppose certain graces of the Holy Spirit to have been infused into him, by which he was made a quickening spirit, or formed in the image of God ; and that it was in consequence of this succession of powers communicated to the same person, that the apostle said, “howbeit, that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural.”

We need hardly observe that, with respect to a question of this kind, the authority of Tatian and the other fathers quoted is of no great weight. Those men had no better means of discovering the true sense of the scriptures of thc Old Testament than we have ; and their ignorance of the language in which these scriptures are written, added to some metaphysical notions respecting the soul, which too many of them had derived from the school of Plato, ren­dered them very ill qualified to interpret the writings of Moses. Were authority to be admitted, we should con­sider that of Bishop Bull and his modem followers as of greater weight than the authority of all the ancients to whom they appeal. But authority cannot be admitted ; and the reasoning of this learned and excellent man, from the text of St. Paul, is surely very inconclusive. It makes two persons of Adam ; a first, when he was a natural man, composed of a body and a reasonable soul ; a second, when he was endowed with the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and by them formed in the image of God. In the verse following, the apostle expressly calls the second man, of whom he had been speaking, “ the Lord from heaven ;” but this ap­pellation we apprehend to be too high for Adam in the state of greatest perfection in which he ever existed. That our first parents were endowed with the gifts of the Holy Ghost may be granted ; but as these gifts were adventiti­ous to their nature, they could not be that image in which God *made* man.

Since man was *made* in the image of God, that phrase, whatever be its precise import, must denote something *pe­culiar* and at the same time essential to human nature; but the only two qualities at once natural and peculiar to man are his *shape* and his *reason.* As none but an anthropomorphite will say that it was Adam’s shape which reflected this image of his Creator, it has been concluded that it was the faculty of reason which made the resemblance. To give strength to this argument, it is observed by Warburton, (Divine Leg, book ix.) that when God says, “ let us make man in our image,” he immediately adds, “ and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth but as many of the cattle have much greater bodily strength than man, this dominion could not be maintained but by the faculty of reason bestowed upon him and withheld from them.

If the image of God was impressed only on the mind of man, this reason seems to be conclusive ; but it has been well observed by Gill, (Body of Divinity, book iii. chap. 3,) that it was the whole man, and not the *soul alone,* or the *body alone,* that is said to have been formed in the divine image ; even as the whole man, soul and body, is the seat of the new and spiritual image of God in regeneration and sanctification “ The very God of peace,” says the apostle, “ sanctify you wholly ; and may your whole *spirit, soul,* and *body,* be preserved blameless to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” It is worthy of notice, that the reason as­signed for the prohibition of murder to Noah and his sons after the deluge, is, that man was made in the image of God. “ Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of God made he man.” These texts seem to indicate, that whatever be meant by the image of God, it was stamped equally on the soul and on the body. In vain it is said that man cannot resemble God in shape. This is true, but it is little to the purpose ; for man does not resemble God in his reasoning faculty more than in his form. It would be idolatry to suppose the su­preme majesty of heaven and earth to have a body or a shape ; and it would be little short of idolatry to imagine that he is obliged to compare ideas and notions together ; to advance from particular truths to general propositions ; and to acquire knowledge, as we do, by the tedious processes of inductive and syllogistic reasoning. There can, there­fore, be no direct image of God either in the soul or in the body of man ; and the phrase really seems to import no­thing more than those powers or qualities by which man was fitted to exercise dominion over the inferior creation ; as if it had been said, “ Let us make man in our image, after our likeness, that *they may have* dominion,” &c. But the erect form of man contributes, in some degree, as well as his rational powers, to enable him to maintain his autho­rity over the brute creation ; for it has been observed by travellers, that the fiercest beast of prey, unless ready to perish by hunger, shrinks back from a steady look of the human face divine.

By Dr. Gill and other writers, who have admitted the probability of this interpretation, another has been devised of the expression that man was formed in the image of God. All the members of Christ’s body, say they, were written and delineated in the book of God’s purposes and decrees, and had an ideal existence from eternity in the divine mind ; and therefore the body of Adam might be said to be formed after the image of God, because it was made ac­cording to that idea. But to this reasoning objections may be urged, which we know not how to answer. All things that ever were or ever shall be, the bodies of us who live at present, as well as the bodies of those who lived 5000 years ago, have from eternity had an ideal existence in the Divine mind ; nor in this sense can one be said to be prior to another. It could not, therefore, be after the idea of the identical body of Christ that the body of Adam was formed ; for in the Divine mind ideas of both bodies were present together from eternity, and each body was formed after the ideal archetype of itself. It may be add­ed, likewise, that the body of Christ was not God, nor the idea of that body the idea of God. Adam, therefore, could not, with propriety, be said to have been formed in the image of God, if, by that phrase, nothing more were in­tended than the resemblance between his body and the body of Christ. These objections to this interpretation ap­pear to us unanswerable ; but we mean not to dictate to our readers. Every man will adopt that opinion which he thinks supported by the best arguments ; but it is obvious,