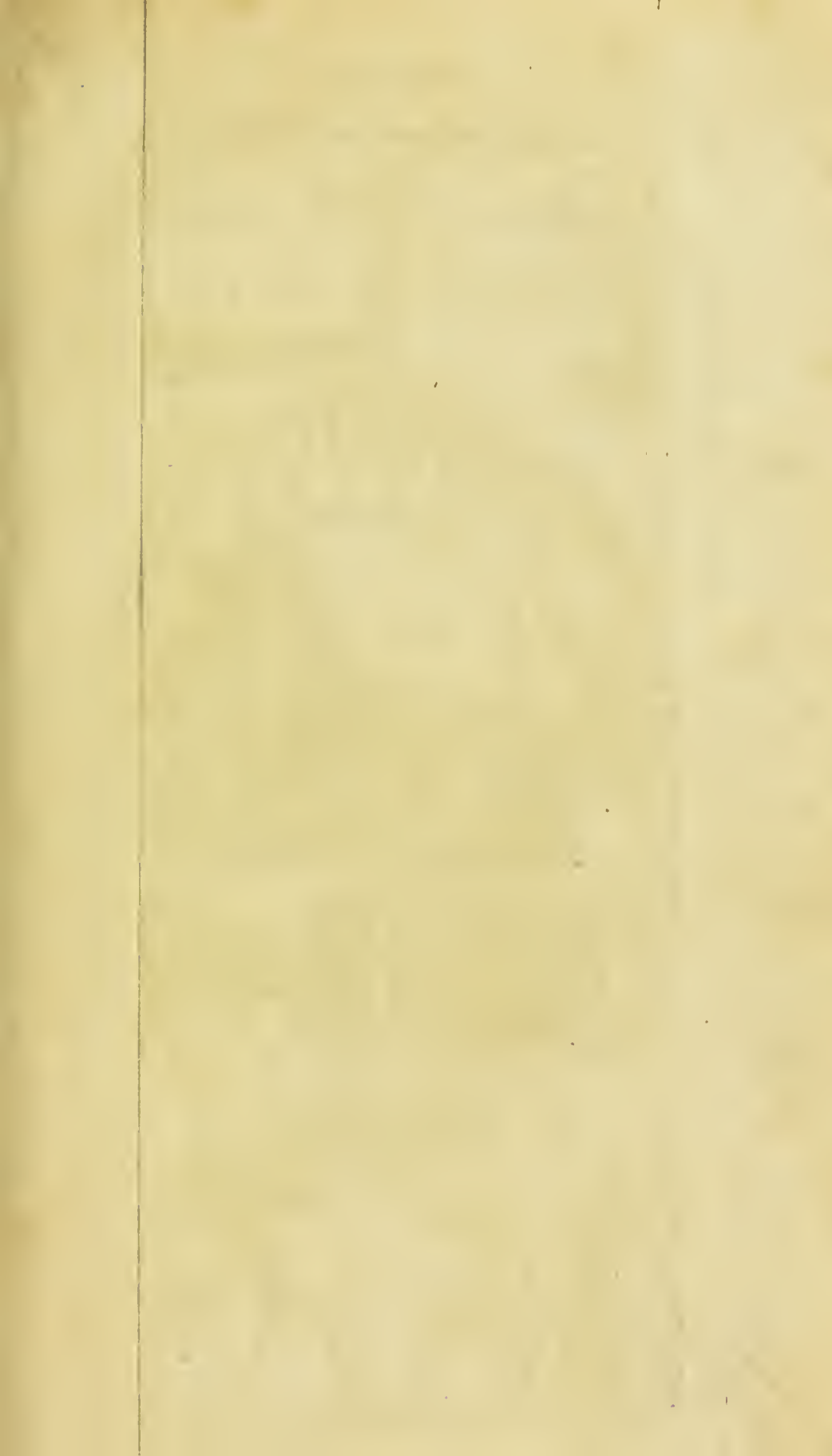




MAURICE, THOMAS







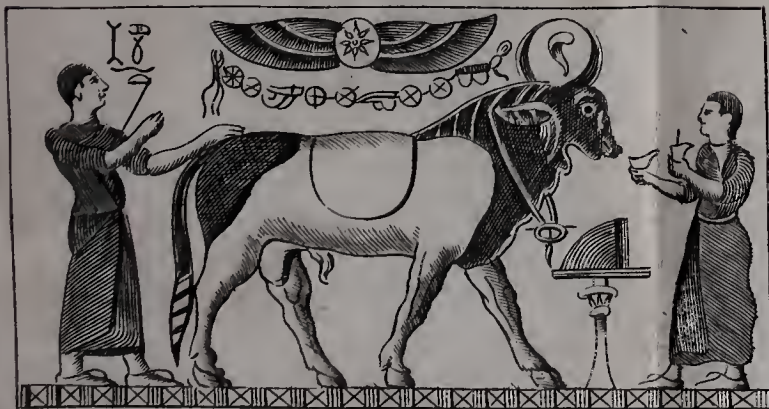
*Various ORIENTAL SYMBOLS allusive to the SOLAR ORB, the BULL, the LION, the EAGLE, and the SERPENT, so conspicuous in the MYTHOLOGY of the Ancients.*



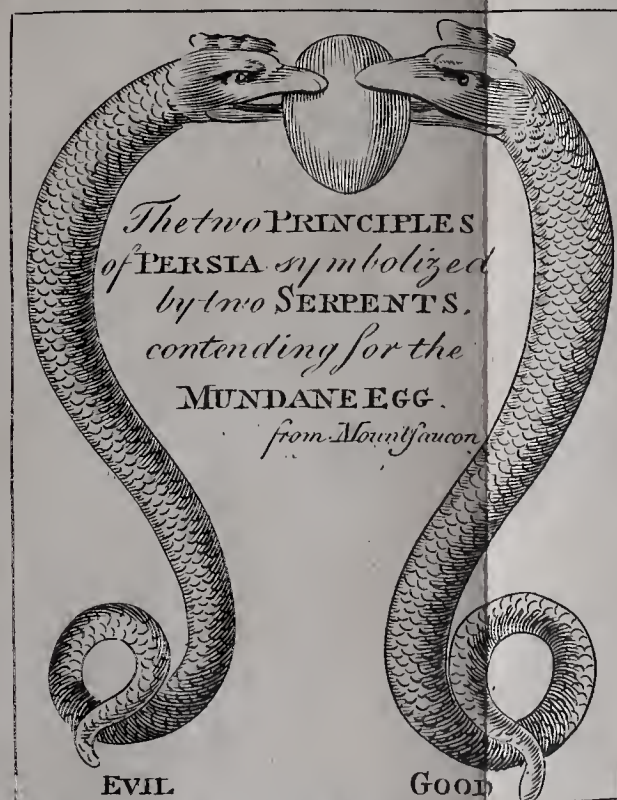
*SOL oriens in dorso LEONIS.*



*SOL oriens in Dorso TAURI, ex mummis Mogulensibus. from Hyde*



*The APIS or SACRED BULL of EGYPT, with priests offering sacrifice. from the MENSA ISIACA.*



*SOLIS AQUILA GESTANS SOLEM from Hyde*

# INDIAN ANTIQUITIES :

OR,

## DISSERTATIONS,

RELATIVE TO

THE ANCIENT GEOGRAPHICAL DIVISIONS,  
THE PURE SYSTEM OF PRIMEVAL THEOLOGY,  
THE GRAND CODE OF CIVIL LAWS,  
THE ORIGINAL FORM OF GOVERNMENT,  
THE WIDELY-EXTENDED COMMERCE, AND  
THE VARIOUS AND PROFOUND LITERATURE,  
OF HINDOSTAN :

COMPARED, THROUGHOUT, WITH THE  
RELIGION, LAWS, GOVERNMENT, and LITERATURE,  
OF  
PERSIA, EGYPT, AND GREECE.

THE WHOLE

Intended as Introductory to, and Illustrative of,  
THE HISTORY OF HINDOSTAN,  
UPON A COMPREHENSIVE SCALE.

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V O L. IV.

In which the HEBREW TRINITY and the ORIENTAL  
TRIADS OF DEITY are extensively investigated.

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L O N D O N :

*Printed, for the Author, by H. L. Galabin, Ingram-Court,*

AND SOLD BY

R. FAULDER, NEW BOND-STREET.

—  
M.DCCC.





TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE  
*ALEXANDER,*  
LORD LOUGHBOROUGH,  
*LORD HIGH CHANCELLOR*  
*OF ENGLAND,*  
THE VIGILANT GUARDIAN AND STRENUOUS DE-  
FENDER OF HER RIGHTS, ECCLESIASTICAL AND  
CIVIL, IN TIMES, BEYOND ALL PRECEDENT,  
CRITICAL AND DANGEROUS,  
THE  
FOURTH AND FIFTH VOLUMES  
OF  
*Indian Antiquities*  
ARE,  
IN GRATEFUL REMEMBRANCE  
OF BENEFITS OBTAINED IN EARLY LIFE,  
BY THE EXERTION OF HIS  
LORDSHIP'S SUPERIOR TALENTS AND ELOQUENCE,  
RESPECTFULLY  
INSCRIBED BY  
THOMAS MAURICE.

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## PREFACE.

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**I**N the portions of the Indian Antiquities already published, the religious rites anciently celebrated in consecrated groves and caverns, and in temples formed after the model of those groves and caverns, have been successfully investigated. The physical theology of India, and not of India only, but of Egypt, Persia, and Greece, has been also in a great measure developed. To unfold the purer and more arcane principles of devotion prevailing in those respective nations, principles, for the most part, locked up in the bosom of

the priest and the philosopher, is the object of this particular volume, in which the ORIENTAL TRIADS OF DEITY are extensively discussed, and referred to what I cannot but conceive to have been the true source of them all, to certain mutilated traditions of a nobler doctrine, revealed to man in a state of innocence. As we advance still farther in these Indian Researches, we shall find many other important points of religious belief surprisingly elucidated; and thus the Mosaic records and Christianity, so far from being subverted by the *pretended antiquity* of the Brahmins, will derive a proud trophy from the corroborative testimony of their *genuine* annals and the congenial sentiments of their *primeval creed*.

On the vaunting claims to unfathomable antiquity of that race, whose astronomical calculations, and the mythology interwoven with it, have been mistaken for *true histories*, Voltaire first, and afterwards Bailly and Volney, have principally founded those false and impious systems which have plunged a great  
nation

nation into the abyss of atheism, and all its consequent excesses and miseries.

The subject coming immediately before me at the very commencement of this undertaking, and the circumstances of the times demanding it, I have entered more extensively into the vast field of Eastern theology than I originally intended, perhaps to the total ruin of those just hopes of profit which I was taught to expect from so laborious an undertaking. When, however, the reader is informed, that the creation of the world, according to the Hindoo cosmogony, was effected by *an incumbent spirit, the emanation of Deity, impregnating with life the primordial waters of chaos*; that *the fall of man from a state of primeval purity and innocence in the Satya Yug, or perfect age*, forms the basis of the Indian Metempsychosis; that the Indians believe in a *future state of rewards and punishments*; that the first history of which they can boast has, for its subject, the destruction of the human race, for their multiplied enormities, in

in a certain great deluge, from which only eight persons were saved in an ark fabricated by the immediate command of *Vecshnu*; that, in their principal Deity, a plain Trinity of divine persons is discovered, since that Deity is symbolically designated by an image with three heads affixed to one body, and that the second person in that Trinity is, in their mythology, invested with the office of a *preserver* and *mediator*, and in both those characters incarnate; finally, to omit other interesting particulars, that the duration of the *CALI YUG*, or age immediately succeeding the great deluge, according to their own calculation, does not, but by a few centuries, exceed the period asserted by Christian chronologers to have elapsed since the *deluge of Noah*; and that the existing world is to be consumed by a *general conflagration*: when all these circumstances, to be accounted for by no immediate connection or intercourse whatever with the Hebrew nation, in any period of their empire, are calmly considered by an impartial and unprejudiced mind, the result, I am persuaded, must be an increased confidence

confidence in the great truths of revelation; and thus the Indian Antiquities cannot fail of being considered of national benefit, at an æra when it is more than ever apparent, that a liberal system of government and a sound code of theology naturally and mutually support each other.

With respect to the particular subject which engrosses so ample a portion of this volume, in vindication of myself, for having entered into it at such length, I have this substantial, and I hope satisfactory, argument to urge. It was in vain to insist that this doctrine of a Trinity was not brought from the school of Plato by Justin Martyr, in the second century, into the Christian church, if room were left to conjecture that it might possibly have derived its first origin from the school of the Brahmins; for, this and many other positions, injurious to Christianity, have been urged by those whose creed leads them to represent India, and not Chaldæa, as the cradle of the human race, and its venerable sages as the  
parents

parents of all religion, in direct opposition to that authentic book, which fixes the first residence of the patriarchs in Chaldæa, and traces religion itself to a higher and nobler source. It became absolutely necessary to examine the Hebrew Scriptures as well as the Jewish cabala; and to prove, not only that this distinction in the divine nature formed a part of the Rabbinical creed, but was promulgated to the Jewish nation at large, AS FAR AS A PEOPLE, FOR EVER RELAPSING INTO POLYTHEISM, COULD BEAR THE REVELATION OF SO IMPORTANT AND MYSTERIOUS A TRUTH. *That* is the particular point for which I would be understood principally to contend; and I trust that, to unbiassed minds, *that point* is proved.

In discoursing upon the PAGAN TRIADS of DEITY, it was scarcely possible to avoid again treading over much of the ground of their physical theology, in part discussed before; so much did physics infect every portion of the religion of the ancient world! Some points of doctrine in that curious devotion, however, are here



here placed in a new light, and none, I hope, are recapitulated to disgust.

It may, perhaps, startle the timid Christian to find a few of the symbols of his own religion immemorially used amidst the idolatries of Asia; and M. Volney, therefore, has not failed, in his "Ruins," to take advantage of this circumstance, to derive all the symbols of both Pagan and Christian devotion from one common origin, the MITHRIAC MYSTERIES. Previously to the appearance of his volume, I had myself asserted that a species of BAPTISM was performed in those mysteries, and had quoted even Tertullian in proof that, *per lavacrum Mithra SIGNAT in frontibus milites suos.\** He is right, indeed, in saying that the Mithriac baptism had entirely an astronomical allusion, and respects the passage of the soul, in the sidereal Metempsychosis, through the gate of Capricorn, or celestial flood-gate, that is, the winter-solstice; the meaning of which has been partly unfolded in

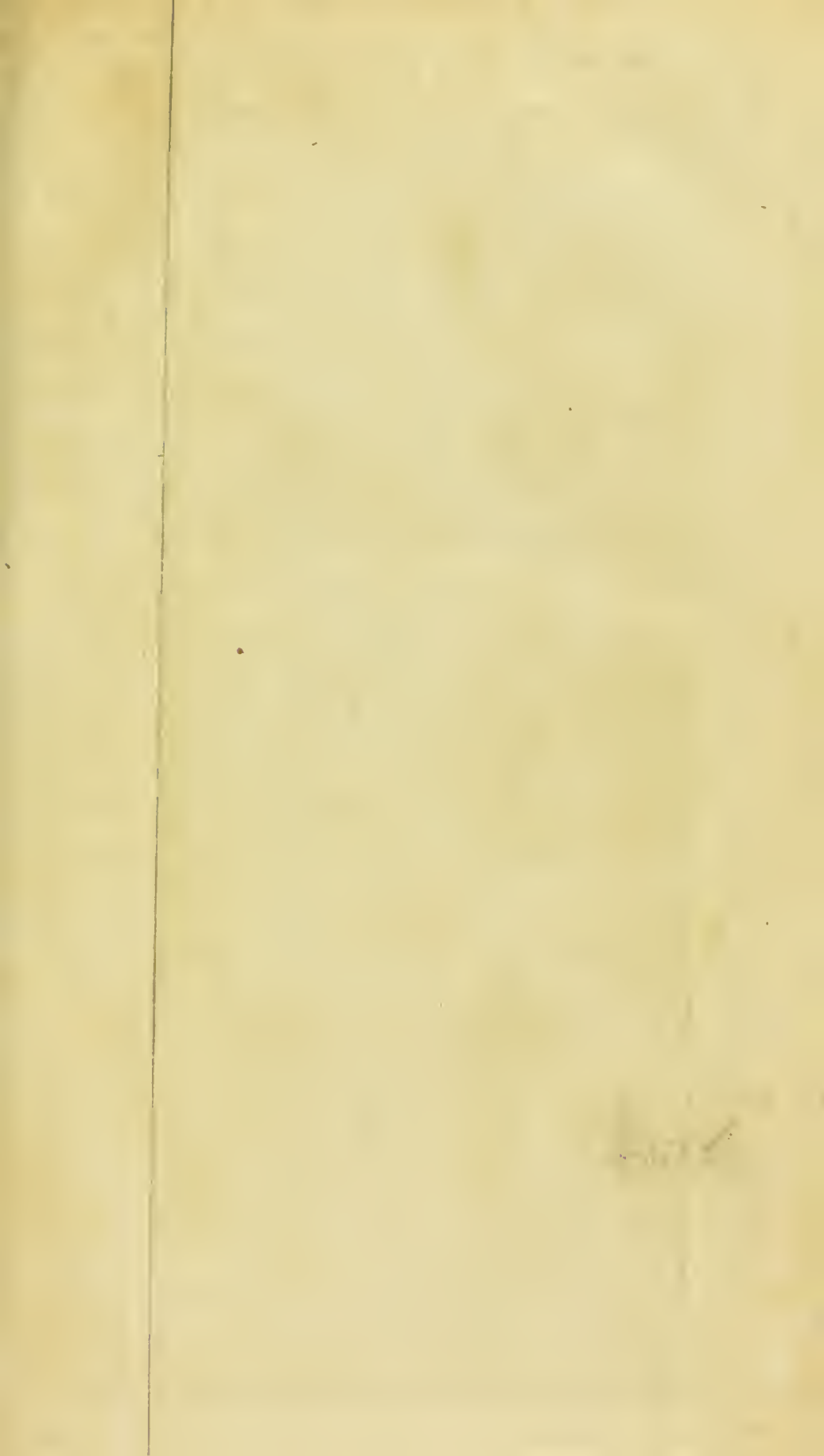
\* Vide Tertullian de Baptismo, lib. i. cap. 5, opera.

in an extract from Porphyry, *de Antro Nympharum*, who expressly says, “ that the soul in its peregrination through the purifying spheres, reviving in that sign, which is the *gate of immortals*, according to the words cited from Homer, is there divested of its material garment, and returns through it to the fountain of life, from which it emanated.”\* But what religion has not used *water* as a symbol of purity? and what solid argument can be brought against the adoption of *water* as a symbol, or indeed of *fire* either, when not honoured with the superstitious veneration which the ancients paid to it, who erred only in exalting a *secondary* to the dignity of a *first* effective cause? The Jews we know, by the divine permission, used both in their sacred ceremonial rites. By this circumstance, therefore; by that of a demiurgic spirit, hovering over primordial waters; of a sacred triad; of a mediator; of a divine incarnation; and many similar doctrines and rites, existing in both systems

\* Vide preceding Indian Theology, chap. i. p. 324, and Porphyry de Ant. Nymph. p. 235.

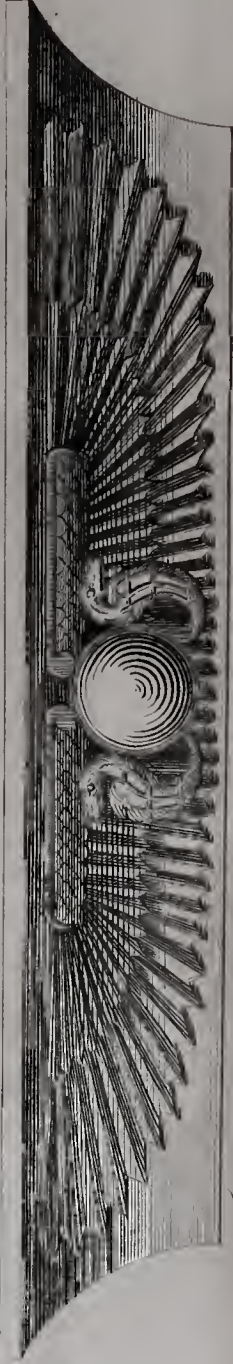
systems of devotion ; though the timid Christian may at first be somewhat surprised, yet a little reflection will soon convince him of the truth of what I have all along asserted to be the genuine fact, and what properly forms the basis of the present Dissertation, that, in the pure and primitive theology, derived from the venerable patriarchs, there were certain grand and mysterious truths, the object of their fixed belief, which all the depravations, brought into it by succeeding superstition, were never able entirely to efface from the human mind. These truths, together with many of the symbols of that pure theology, were propagated and diffused by them in their various peregrinations through the Higher Asia, where they have immemorially flourished ; affording a most sublime and honourable testimony of such a refined and patriarchal religion having *actually* existed in the earliest ages of the world.



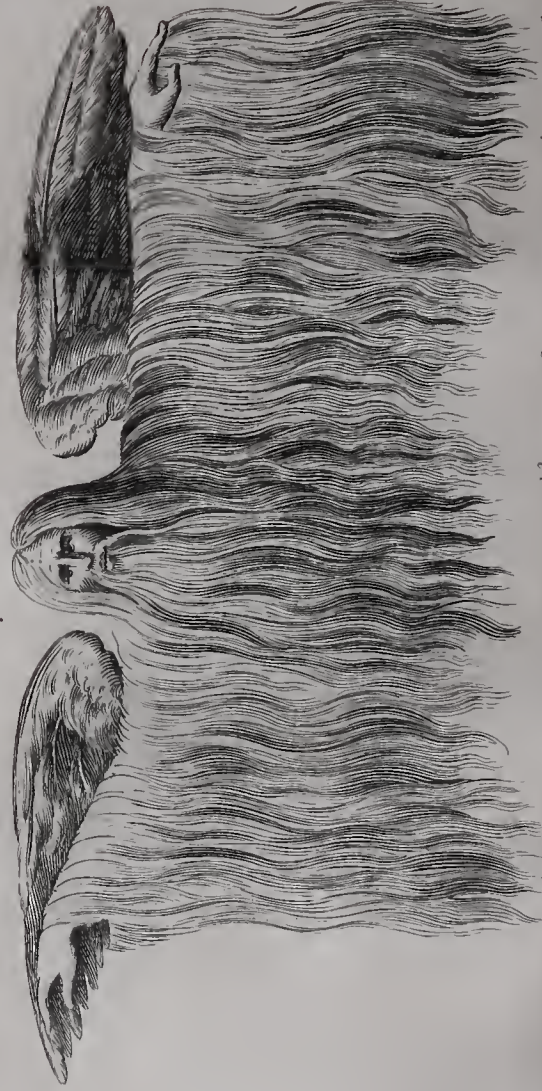




THE HEBREW SHECHINAH with the CHERUBIM overshadowing the  
MERCY SEAT the latter ascribed by PHILO to be Symbols of the TWO POWERS of GOD.  
*From Catmol.*



The WING, the GLOBE, & the SERPENT; constituting the EGYPTIAN  
TRINITY. Copied by NORDEN from the front of the ruins of the superb  
Temple of LUXORE in UPPER EGYPT.



ZETES OMBRIOS, or JUPITER PLUVIUS; ascribed, by STRABO, to be one of the Deities  
adored by the Indians; by which he must have meant EFENDRA, the HINDOO GOD of the  
FIRMAMENT, descending in torrents during the annual rains From Mountjauven.

## DISSERTATION, &amp;c.

## CHAPTER I.

*The TRINITY, a Doctrin revealed to Man in Innocence. — On his Fall, Polytheism erected itself on the Misapprehension of that Doctrin. — The Indians divided into Four great Tribes, and various inferior Casts, but all unite in the Adoration of One grand TRIAD, Brabma, Veesnu, and Seeva. — Hence the Necessity of thoroughly investigating the Subject, and inquiring whence they derived a Tenet so congenial with a fundamental Doctrin of Christianity. — The Difficulty stated of penetrating into the more hidden Mysteries of their Theology. — The successful Attempt of Akber, and the affecting Story of Feizi and his Brabmin-Preceptor,*

ceptor. — Feizi, the first Foreigner ever admitted to an intimate Acquaintance with the Arcana of their Religion and the sacred Sanscreeet Language. — Some cursory Remarks on that Language. — The Three mythologic Personages of the Indian TRINITY are Copies of the true; the Office of Brabma being to create, of Veeshnu to preserve and mediate, and of Seeva to quicken and regenerate. — It consequently descended to them from their Ancestors, the Patriarchs, who settled in that Region of Asia. — But, Doubts having been entertained whether the Patriarchs themselves believed it, and, in short, whether such a Doctrinè existed in the Hebrew Scriptures, the Author commences an extended Discussion of that interesting Question. — A general View is now taken of what is meant by the scriptural Doctrinè of the TRINITY. — Not likely to have originated in human Invention or in the School of Plato. — Christianity only the Completion of the Jewish Theological Code; therefore, this Doctrinè to be looked for with Confidence in the Old Testament, and there it is indisputably, though obscurely, revealed. — The true Origin of that Contempt and Rancour, with which the Jews are enflamed against the Messiah, unfolded. — Hence the Rejection of the Doctrinè of the TRINITY by  
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*the modern Hebrews, though believed by their Ancestors. — Some physical Objections, urged against that Doctrine by Unbelievers, answered.*

**A**MONG the philosophers of the Pagan world, not infected with atheistical principles, there were some who entertained such degrading conceptions concerning the Deity, as to imagine him to be a severe, un-social, inaccessible, being, existing, through eternal ages, in the centre of barren and boundless solitude. This unworthy conception of the divine nature in a more particular manner influenced, as we shall hereafter have repeated opportunities of demonstrating, the theology of the ancient Egyptians, who represented the throne of God as seated in an abyss of darkness, and himself as ἀφανής και κερυμμενος, *invisible and occult*.\* The more enlightened, however, of the Gentile philosophers considered the Deity as a prolific and inexhaustible FOUNTAIN, whence the brightest and purest emanations have successively flowed; and this juster notion of his nature doubtless originated from traditions delivered down, during a long revolution of ages, from

\* Plutarch de Iside et Osiride, p. 354.

the ancient patriarchs, dispersed in the earliest periods through the various empires of Asia. That those venerable patriarchs *were* admitted, by the divine favour, to a nearer contemplation of the mysterious arcana of the celestial world than their fellow-mortals, we have the evidence of Scripture to support our asserting; and that the great progenitor of mankind himself might, in his state of innocence, be indulged in still higher privileges, even so far as to have been allowed an intimate knowledge of the nature of that awful Being, in whose august image he is said to have been formed, is a supposition at which neither piety nor reason will revolt. The supposition will possibly be still more readily acquiesced in when what I have elsewhere remarked shall have been fully considered, that, in that pure primeval condition of man, his faculties were better calculated than those of his fallen posterity to bear the influx of great celestial truths, and that profound meditation on the divine perfections at once formed his constant employment and constituted his sublimest delight.

It is an hypothesis in the highest degree probable, an hypothesis which has ever staggered the sceptic, that, from certain traditional precepts, descending down, however in their  
 descent

descent corrupted and mutilated, from that prime progenitor, relative to a certain PLURALITY subsisting, after a method incomprehensible to human beings, in the UNITY of the divine essence, the greatest part of the multifarious polytheism of the Pagan world originated. Hence we may not unreasonably suppose the Sabian superstition, or worship of the stars and planets, concerning which so much has been said in the early part of the Indian theology, took its rise; hence angels and other ætherial beings first began to receive adoration; hence the attributes of God, and even the virtues of men, personified, came to be exalted into divinities; and heaven and earth became gradually filled with deities of various supposed rank, functions, and authority.

The preceding reflections must serve as a basis for the ample disquisition which is to follow, in this volume, upon the HEBREW TRINITY and the PAGAN TRIADS of DEITY. It is through the imagined ANTIQUITY of INDIA, and its sciences, that the Mosaic and Christian systems of theology have been principally attacked; and, therefore, it shall be one main object of our IN-

DIAN ANTIQUITIES to defend and illustrate those systems.

After having, with daring, but no sacrilegious step, penetrated into the inmost recesses of the caverns and groves of India, and taken a glance at some of the most ancient religious rites practised in them by the Brahmins; in particular, the Sabian superstition, the worship of fire, and initiation into certain deep theological mysteries, nearly resembling those celebrated in Egypt and Greece; after having, likewise, so extensively surveyed those grand external fabrics of national devotion, erected when cavern-worship began to be neglected, the pagodas, abounding in every quarter of this extensive region of the greater Asia; let us, through yonder solitary door, enter the illumined shrine, and, with that profound reverence which is due to all systems of religion, that profess, by whatever mode and under whatever name, to worship one grand presiding Deity, let us approach the awful high-raised sanctuary itself, glittering with jewels and loaded with oblations. Though, in these numerous surrounding symbols, degraded by human, and even by bestial, representation, still the acknowledged object of their worship is  
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the GREAT FATHER OF ALL, adored with an endless variety of rites, in every age and region of the world, by “the faint, the savage, and the sage.” Let us, from that sanctuary, survey the various TRIBES of Hindoos perform their respective devotions, and, while the fervent flame of piety kindles and spreads around us, in this and the following chapter let us examine in order those other grand points of the comprehensive system of the Brahmin religion, which still remain to be investigated.

Having used the word TRIBES, it becomes necessary for me, in this place, to state, in a cursory manner, what will be more particularly unfolded in the ensuing history, that the Hindoos have, from the remotest periods of antiquity, been divided into four great TRIBES, each of which comprehends a variety of inferior classes, or CASTS. By the inviolable laws of Brahma, these tribes never intermingle in marriage, at entertainments, or, in any intimate manner, associate one with another, except, say more modern accounts, when they worship at the great temple of JAGGERNAUT, in Orissa, where it is esteemed a crime to make any distinction.

JAGGERNAUT signifies *Lord of the Creation* ;

and this injunction seems to imply, that, however the policy of their great law-giver might think it necessary to keep them at other times separated, all ideas of superiority should be annihilated in the presence of that Being who is the common parent of all ranks and classes of mankind. The BRAHMINS, noble by their descent and venerable by their sacerdotal office, form the first tribe. The second tribe is that of the KETHRI, or RAJAS; celebrated for their valour as the former for their sanctity. The Banians, or Merchants, compose the tribe of BICE. The fourth and most numerous tribe is that of SOODER. To these four respective tribes are appointed different degrees of spiritual labour, different modes of performing the pooJA, or worship, and different elevations of attainable excellence and holiness. The tribe of Brahmins, however, is alone allowed to read the VEDAS; and they explain them as they please to the other three tribes, who receive implicitly the interpretation of their priests. What an unbounded latitude this must open to imposition, in religious concerns, must be evident to every reader of reflection. It has arisen from this circumstance chiefly, that the pure and sublime theology of Brahma has been so debased and mutilated,

tilated, especially on the coast of the peninsula, by the policy of a venal priesthood, that few of its original features are to be traced in the devotion of the common people, who are strangers to its genuine doctrines, and are enslaved by an everlasting round of ceremonies, not less painful than perplexing. The indefatigable exertions, indeed, of our own countrymen, have, of late years, burst asunder the veil that formerly obscured their religion, and the sacred language in the inscrutable recesses of which it was so long buried. How difficult it was, even in the time of the Emperor AKBER, to penetrate behind that veil, will be evinced by the following interesting narrative.

That prince, though bred in all the strictness of the Mohammedan faith, possessed a mind too liberal and enlarged to be holden in chains by any superstition whatsoever. With a design to choose his own religion, or perhaps from mere curiosity, he made minute inquiries concerning the several systems of divinity that prevailed among mankind. The letter, of which Mr. Frazer has given to the world a translated copy,\* in which he solicits  
the

\* See Frazer's Nadir Shah, p. 12, where that letter is given at length.

the king of Portugal that missionaries might be sent to instruct him and his people in the doctrines of Christianity, is a singular instance of deviation, from the strong original bias to his own religion, in the mind of a Mohammedan. Akber was successful in his researches among all classes of religious votaries, except the Hindoos: from a knowledge of their sacred mysteries he found himself excluded by a line which it was impossible to pass. Diametrically opposite to the Mohammedan and other systems of faith, which eagerly embrace proselytes of every description. The Brahmin superstition rejected all converts, and consequently defied all investigation. Not all his authority nor promises could induce the priests of that order to reveal the principles of their faith: at length, artifice succeeded where power failed, and in FEIZI, the brother of his minister and confidant, Abul Fazil, a proper instrument seemed to be found to accomplish the desired object.

FEIZI was, at that time, but of tender years, but sufficiently advanced to receive instruction for the part he was to act. Under the character of a poor orphan of the sacerdotal tribe he was received into the house, and under the protection, of a learned Brahmin at  
Benares;



Benares; and, in the course of ten years, not only became master of the Sanscreeet language, but of all the various branches of science taught at that celebrated university. The time approached for his return to the court of Akber, and measures for his safe and unsuspected departure from his patron and the city where he had so long resided were accordingly taken by the anxious monarch. An ardent passion conceived by the youth for the beautiful daughter of the Brahmin, and the impulse of gratitude strongly acting upon a generous mind, induced him, in a moment when virtuous principles predominated over the suggestions of vanity and ambition, to prostrate himself at the feet of his injured preceptor, to confess the intended fraud, and, amidst a flood of tears, to solicit his forgiveness.

The venerable priest, petrified with horror at the tidings, remained for some minutes in agonizing suspense and profound silence. At length, starting from his reverie, without descending to the bitterness of invective, he seized a poniard which hung at his girdle, and was just going to bury its point in his own bosom. The unhappy youth, arresting his uplifted arm, conjured him to attempt nothing

thing against so sacred a life, and promised cheerfully to submit to any severities that might expiate his offence. The Brahmin, who revered the uncommon genius and erudition of his pupil, now burst into tears, and declared his readiness to forgive him, as well as to continue in life, if he would grant him *two requests*. Feizi with transport consented, and solemnly swore to hold his injunctions inviolably sacred. Those injunctions were, that he should never translate the VEDAS, nor reveal, to any person whatever, the mysterious symbol of the Brahmin creed. Feizi kept the solemn promise he had made, as long as the Brahmin lived, but considered himself released from the obligation at the moment of his death. He then imparted to the secretary of Akber the leading principles of the Brahmin faith; which that writer detailed in the Ayeen Akbery; the first, though not the most ample, source of all the real knowledge we have obtained concerning the theology and literature of Hindostan.

This, therefore, may seem to be no improper place for introducing an account of the SANSKRIT language, and entering into a more particular examination of the doctrines contained in the four VEDAS. Materials, however,

however, for a full investigation of that abstruse subject, have not yet come to my hands; although I am not without expectation of possessing those materials in a very ample degree before my dissertation on the Hindoo literature, and comparison of the principles of the Brahmin and Grecian schools, shall make their appearance. The reader will be pleased, for the present, to rest content with the following concise and cursory remarks upon that sacred and ancient language, which are collected from the Sanscreeet Grammar of Mr. Halhed and the Dissertations of Sir William Jones. By the former of these gentlemen we are acquainted that the Sanscreeet alphabet consists of FIFTY letters, thirty-four of which are consonants; and that nearly half of them carry combined sounds; that the mode of writing Sanscreeet is not as the Hebrew, the Persian, and the Arabic, are written, from the right hand to the left, but, in the European manner, from left to right; and that it has this remarkable singularity, that the consonants in its alphabet are composed with a kind of regularity approaching to metrical exactness, which renders them peculiarly easy to be retained in  
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the memory.\* He asserts it to be a language of the most valuable and unfathomable antiquity; the grand source as well as sacred repository of Indian literature, and the parent of almost every dialect, from the Persian Gulph to the China Sea. He is even of opinion, that the Sanscreet was, in ancient periods, current not only over ALL INDIA, considered in its largest extent, but over ALL THE ORIENTAL WORLD, and that traces of its original and general diffusion may still be discovered in almost every region of Asia. In the course of Mr. Halhed's various reading, he was astonished to find the similitude which it in many instances bore to the Persian and Arabic. He discovered the visible traces of its character, that character which he describes to be so curious in its structure and so wonderful in its combination, on the most ancient medals and imperial signets of Eastern kingdoms;† and he seems to hint that it was the original language of the earth. Here, then, a stupendous subject unfolds itself for future and profound investigation, involving points of

\* See Mr. Halhed's Grammar of the Bengal Language, p. 8.

† See the very elegant and learned preface to that Grammar, P. 5.

of the utmost importance both to religion and literature.

To Mr. Halhed's observations on the Sanscreeet *language* might here be added many judicious reflections made by Sir William Jones on Sanscreeet *compositions*; but, as those reflections will be my most certain guide hereafter, it is not my intention to anticipate, in this place, remarks which will more forcibly arrest attention in the Dissertation on the Literature of India. It will be sufficient for the reader to be informed, in general, that Sir William strenuously asserts the *remote*, but not *unfathomable*, antiquity of the Sanscreeet language. The Sanscreeet prose he describes as easy and beautiful, and its poetry as sublime and energetic. He observes, that the learned will find in it almost all the measures of the Greeks; and that the particular language of the Brahmins, or the Devanagari, a word explained before, runs very naturally into Sapphics, Alcaics, and Iambics. Sir William represents it as even more perfect than the Greek, more copious than the Latin, and more exquisitely refined than either, yet bearing to both so strong an affinity as to induce a conviction, in the mind of a philologer, that they all must have sprung from some common source; a  
 source

source which, perhaps, no longer exists. It is in the Devanagari language (a language believed to have been taught by the Divinity, who prescribed the artificial order of the characters that constitute it in a voice from heaven) that the sacred VEDAS are written, in a kind of measured prose. Let me not mutilate, by abridging the passage, the following most important information given us by this indefatigable Oriental scholar, with which, for the present, I shall conclude the subject. “ These letters, with no greater variation in their form, by the change of straight lines to curves, or conversely, than the Cusic alphabet has received in its way to India, are still adopted in more than twenty kingdoms and states, from the borders of CASHGUR and KHOTEN to RAMA’S BRIDGE, and from the SEENDHU to the river of SIAM. Nor can I help believing, although the polished and elegant Devanagari may not be so ancient as the monumental characters in the caverns of JARASANDHA, that the square CHALDAIC letters, in which most Hebrew books are copied, were originally the same, or derived from the same prototype, both with the Indian and Arabian characters: that the PHŒNICIAN, from which the Greek and Roman alphabets were formed,

by

by various changes and inversions, had a similar origin, there can be little doubt, while the inscriptions of Canarah seem to be compounded of NAGARI and ÆTHIOPIC letters, which bear a close relation to each other, both in the mode of writing from the left hand, and in the singular manner of connecting the vowels with the consonants. These remarks may favour an opinion, entertained by many, that all the *symbols of sound*, which, at first, probably, were only rude outlines of the different organs of speech, had a common origin: the *symbols of ideas*, now used in China and Japan, and formerly, perhaps, in Egypt and Mexico, are quite of a distinct nature; but it is very remarkable, that the order of sounds in the Chinese Grammar corresponds nearly with that observed in Tibet, and hardly differs from that which the Hindoos consider AS THE INVENTION OF THEIR GODS."\*

It has been remarked, that, wheresoever we direct our attention to Hindoo literature, the notion of *infinity* presents itself. I am of opinion, that the same remark may, with

\* Asiatic Researches, vol. i. p. 424, ubi supra.

with still greater propriety, be applied to a more important subject, their THEOLOGY. That theology comprehends so many momentous and interesting points, and, in the examination of it, such an extensive field is opened for speculation, that no author, determined fully to investigate it, can observe order entirely unviolated. I shall proceed in that investigation with as much regularity of arrangement as the subject will allow, and leave the rest to the candour of my readers.

One of the most prominent features in the Indian theology is the doctrine of a Divine Triad governing all things; a subject by no means to be passed over in silence, but at the same time connected with the abstrusest speculations of ancient philosophy. It has been repeatedly observed, that the mythologic personages, BRAHMA, VEESHNU, and SEEVA, constitute this grand Hindoo TRIAD. By Brahma, it is universally acknowledged, the Indians mean *God the Creator*; and possibly the Sanscreeet root may have some affinity to the Hebrew בָּרָא, BRA OF BARA, *created*. VEESHNU, in Sanscreeet, literally signifies a *cherisher*, a *preserver*, a *comforter*; and SEEVA, a *destroyer* and *avenger*.



ger. To these three personages, different functions are assigned, in the Hindoo system of mythologic superstition, correspondent to the different signification of their names. They are distinguished, likewise, besides these general titles, in the various sastras and puranas, by an infinite variety of appellations descriptive of their office, which has been the occasion of as infinite errors in the works of European travellers.

That nearly all the pagan nations of antiquity, in their various theological systems, acknowledged a kind of Trinity in the divine nature, has been the occasion of much needless alarm and unfounded apprehension, especially to those professors of Christianity, whose religious principles rest upon so slender a basis that *they waver with every wind of doctrine*. The very circumstance which has given rise to these apprehensions, the universal prevalence of this doctrine in the Gentile kingdoms, is, in my opinion, so far from invalidating the divine authenticity of it, that it appears to be an irrefragable argument in its favour. It ought to confirm the piety of the wavering Christian, and build up the tottering fabric of

his faith. The doctrine itself bears such striking internal marks of a divine original, and is so very unlikely to have been the invention of mere human reason, that there is no way of accounting for the general adoption of so singular a belief by most ancient nations, than by supposing what I have, in pretty strong terms, intimated at the commencement of this chapter, and what I hope most of those, who honour these pages with a perusal, will finally unite with me in concluding to be *the genuine fact*, that this doctrine was neither the invention of Pythagoras, nor Plato, nor any other philosopher in the ancient world, but a **SUBLIME MYSTERIOUS TRUTH**, one of those stupendous arcana of the invisible world, which, through the condescending goodness of divine Providence, was revealed to the ancient patriarchs of the faithful line of **SHEM**; by them propagated to their Hebrew posterity; and, through that posterity, during their various migrations and dispersion over the East, diffused through the Gentile nations among which they sojourned.

I must again take permission to assert it as my solemn belief, a belief founded upon long  
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and elaborate investigation of this important subject, that the Indian as well as all other triads of Deity, so universally adored throughout the whole Asiatic world, and under every denomination, whether they consist of PERSONS, PRINCIPLES, OR ATTRIBUTES, DEIFIED, are only corruptions of the Christian doctrine of the TRINITY. Physics and false philosophy have, in every age, combined to darken this great truth; but they have not availed wholly to extirpate it from the mind of man. With respect, however, to drawing any immediate parallel between the Christian and Hindoo Trinity, as the Hindoo Trinity is now conceived of by the Brahmins, it might border on absolute blasphemy, principally on account of the licentious rites and gross physical character of Seeva; a character which I cannot but consider as greatly misrepresented by them. In the *Creator* and *Preserver* of India, however, this sublime truth beams forth with a lustre which no physics have been able to obscure. Possibly hereafter, too, it may appear, that, as their system of philosophy allows not of the absolute *destruction of any object in nature*, but asserts, that only a *change of being* takes place, the character of Seeva, as a destroyer, may be found inconfi-

tent with their principles; and that, however misconceived in their present corrupted system of devotion, and however degraded by symbols equally hostile to all religion and all morality, their third hypostasis was originally intended only to symbolize the *quickenings and regenerative power* of God. This hypothesis is rendered exceedingly probable by the circumstance of FIRE, the emblem of life, being the true and ancient symbol of Seeva, whence the oldest pagodas, erected in honour of him, are invariably pyramidal. It is not, however, alone the expressive emblem of fire which marks the character of Seeva to have originally shadowed out the *quickenings*, rather than the *destroying*, power of God, or rather the God himself of *life* and *death*; for, in the Hindoo cosmogony, all the three persons in this Indian triad are represented as being present during that solemn act; and thus are they depicted on Mr. Holwell's first plate illustrative of that event. Now, as a destroyer, what employment could there be for Seeva during the creation of the world? although, in the exertion of the *vivific energy*, there is obvious occasion for the presence of a being whose peculiar function it is to sow the seeds of embryo life, and give form and motion to  
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inert and shapeless matter. In this investigation I am deeply sensible of the dangerous ground upon which I have to tread; and, though it may not be in my power, nor do I pretend, to obviate every difficulty, yet, in the course of it, I am confident that I shall be able firmly to establish the general position, that the Indian, not less than the other, triads of Asia, are but perversions of one grand primæval doctrine. My humble but earnest efforts shall be exerted to explore, and trace back to its remotest source, this mysterious doctrine, which is to be sought for in a very different country from Greece. In fact, that source must be explored, and can alone be found, in the first-known revelations of the Deity to the human race, and in the most ancient traditions and hieroglyphics of his highly-favoured people, **THE JEWS.**

The understanding of man can never be more grossly insulted than when infidelity labours to persuade us, that a truth, so awfully sublime as that at present under consideration, could ever be the offspring of human invention; nor can history be more violated than when it fixes the origin of this doctrine to the schools of Greece. Equally above the

boldest flight of human genius to invent, as beyond the most extended limit of human intellect fully to comprehend, is the profound mystery of the ever-blessed Trinity. Through successive ages it has remained impregnable to all the shafts of impious ridicule, and unshaken by the bolder artillery of blasphemous invective. It is ever in vain that man essays to pierce the unfathomable arcana of the skies. By his limited faculties and superficial ken, the deep things of eternity are not to be scanned. Even among Christians the sacred Trinity is more properly a subject of belief than of investigation, and every attempt to penetrate into it, farther than God in his holy word has expressly revealed, is at best an injudicious, and often a dangerous, effort of mistaken piety. If we extend our eye through the remote region of antiquity, we shall find this very doctrine, which the primitive Christians are said to have borrowed from the Platonic school, universally and immemorially flourishing in all those eastern countries where history and tradition have united to fix those virtuous ancestors of the human race, who, for their distinguished attainments in piety, were admitted to a familiar intercourse with **JEHOVAH**, and the angels  
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the divine heralds of his commands: some conversing with the Deity, *face to face*, upon earth; and others, after beholding the divine aspect in the veil of mortality, caught up into heaven, without tasting of death, its appointed doom, to contemplate, with nearer view, and with more intense fervour, the beatific glory. To Adam, in the state of innocence, many parts of the mysterious economy of the eternal regions were, by the divine permission, unfolded; nor did his mind, at the fall, lose all impression of those wonderful revelations which had been gradually imparted to him; for, the remembrance of his past enjoyment and forfeited privileges, doubtless, formed one afflicting part of his punishment. It was in that happy state, when man's more refined and perfect nature could better bear the influx of great celestial truths, that the awful mystery was revealed to him, and it came immediately from the lips of that DIVINE BEING, the mighty *ΑΥΤΟΘΕΟΣ*, or SELF-EXISTENT, who, by his HOLY WORD, created all things, and animated all things which he had created by that energetic and pervading SPIRIT which *emanated* from himself. It was at that remote period that this holy doctrine was *first* propagated and most vigorously flourished;

flourished ; not in the school of PLATO, not in the academic groves of Greece, but in the sacred bowers of Eden, and in the awful school of universal nature, where JEHOVAH himself was the instructor, and Adam the heaven-taught pupil. With the holy personages that compose the Trinity he is represented as freely conversing, during all the period that he remained in a state of innocence, while the refulgent glory of the divine SHECHINAH, darting upon him its direct, but tempered, rays, encircled, with a flood of light, the enraptured protoplast, formed in the image and similitude of his Maker. But, as he saw the radiance of the divine Triad in innocence with inexpressible joy, so, when fallen from that state of primæval rectitude, he beheld it with unutterable terror ; especially at that awful moment when the same luminous appearance of Deity, but arrayed in terrible majesty, and darting forth severer beams, sought the flying apostate, who heard, with new and agonizing sensations, the majestic voice of JEHOVAH ELOHIM, literally the LORD GODS, *walking in the garden in the cool of the day.*

For the history of the Christian Trinity itself, the various doctrines propagated relative



lative to it in the early ages after Christ, and the contests which ever since have not ceased to agitate the church from the third century to the present day, the reader will consult Bishop Bull, Mosheim, and its most successful modern defender, Bishop Horsley. My observations will be confined as much as possible to the most early JEWISH notions of this holy mystery, and the degradation and prostitution of it, either in doctrine or by symbols, among the GENTILES.

It has been observed by Grotius, that Christianity is only *the completion of the Jewish law*;\* we may, therefore, with the greatest reason, expect to find so predominant a feature in the Christian, decisively marked in the Hebrew, system of theology. In reality, the diligent investigator of the Old Testament will find it to be sufficiently marked for the exercise and edification of his faith. It would probably have been, in more decisive language, insisted on in the writings of Moses, and in the venerable prophets who succeeded him, but for a reason very forcible, although not generally attended

\* Vide Grotius de Veritate, lib. i. sect. 14.

tended to. So unhappily prone were the great body of the Hebrew nation to run into the gross and boundless polytheism in which their pagan neighbours were immersed, that the greatest caution and delicacy were necessary to be observed in inculcating a doctrine which might possibly be perverted to perpetuate and to sanction those errors. Continually violating the two grand injunctions which stand foremost in the Decalogue, the vulgar Jews were incapable of comprehending so exalted and mysterious a truth. Even amidst the awful and terrifying scenes that were transacting on the illumined summit of Sinai, though *they saw the glory and heard the voice*, yet could not all this stupendous display of Almighty power restrain the madness of their idolatry. From age to age, however, through all the periods of their empire, dispersed as they were through every clime, and languishing under every vicissitude of fortune, this threefold distinction in the Deity was confessed by the rabbies in a variety of writings and by a multitude of emblems.

In fact, this sublime doctrine is far from being only obscurely glanced at in the Old Testament. The intelligent and learned Jew  
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well knows this, and would acknowledge it, were he not bound down in the fetters of national bigotry, and were he not inspired from his very infancy with sentiments of the bitterest rancour against the despised Messiah of the Christians. But whence originated this rooted contempt and aversion to the meek, the amiable, the beneficent, Messiah? The perverted imaginations of their ambitious forefathers had invested *the Messiah whom they expected* with all the gorgeous trappings of temporal grandeur. Instead of the benevolent Jesus, the Prince of peace, they expected a daring and irresistible conqueror, who, armed with greater power than Cæsar, was to come upon earth to rend the fetters in which their hapless nation had so long groaned, to avenge them upon their haughty oppressors, and to re-establish the kingdom of Judah upon the ruin of all other kingdoms. The SHILOH, for whose coming the breast of the impatient Israelite of old panted, would not, they conceived, appear in less regal splendour than the magnificent Solomon, nor with less military array than the triumphant Joshua. They believed, that, immediately on his advent, he was to elevate his immortal standard upon the sacred hill, and  
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that his victorious legions were to march against and exterminate all opposers of his claim to universal sovereignty. Thus an empire, which Jehovah had declared should be founded in benevolence and equity, was, by the infatuated Jews, considered as about to be established by a wanton profusion of human blood, and supported by the most flagrant despotism. Happily for mankind, the Almighty Mind was inflamed with no such sanguinary and vindictive sentiments against his rebel subjects. Instead of the crimson banner of deserved wrath, the white flag of conciliation and pardon was displayed on the sacred heights of Salem. The Gentiles, obeying the summons, joyfully enlisted beneath that banner, and are gathered into the garner of their heavenly Father; while the obstinate Jews, still spurning the divine proffer, are scattered over the earth, and view, with mingled rage and indignation, the elevation and prosperity of the despised sect of the Nazarene. Animated by this spirit of rancour against Christianity, they have, with unparalled audacity, proceeded to mutilate their most venerated records, and involve whatever evidence could be brought, in favour and support of its leading doctrines

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from their early opinions, traditions, and writings, in a labyrinth of inextricable confusion, or entirely to bury that evidence in an abyss of impenetrable darkness. They have even dared to pronounce that the true sense of the sacred volumes themselves can only be found in the degrading comments and base forgeries of their interpreting rabbies, who lived in the early ages *after Christ*.

With the elaborate productions of my learned predecessors on this disputed ground I have not the presumption to attempt an idle competition; but, as this book will probably go to a region of the earth where those excellent authors cannot be obtained, I shall endeavour to state, in the clearest and most concise manner possible, what are the genuine and avowed sentiments of the Christian church, and of all its sincere adherents, relative to this doctrine, which, as I observed before, is a mystery to be believed, rather than a speculative doctrine to be agitated in warm and embittered controversy.

The Christian religion inculcates the belief of ONE GOD, ETERNAL, INFINITE, OMNIPOTENT, without the least shadow of imperfection

perfection in his nature, and without the remotest possibility of vicissitude. The sacred Scriptures, however express upon the subject of the UNITY of the Godhead, as decidedly assert that there are, in the divine nature, *three distinct hypostases, or persons*, whom they denominate the FATHER, the SON, or WORD of GOD, and the HOLY SPIRIT. To each of these sacred persons, individually, all the essential attributes and all the peculiar operations of Deity are asserted to belong. The Father is the great FOUNTAIN of the Divinity. The Son and the HOLY SPIRIT are emanations from that fountain: not divisible from their source, but eternally existing in it, and inseparably united to it. To maintain that the three persons in the sacred Trinity are of a different nature, that they can by any possible means be separated, or that there exists more than one Fountain or Principle in the Divinity, is, as Bishop Bull has observed on this profound subject, gross TRITHEISM;\* a doctrine utterly repugnant to that system of religion, of which the Unity of the Godhead forms the predominant

\* See Bishop Bull's Defens. Nic. Fid. passim, but particularly his Discourse on the Trinity, in his Sermons, vol. iii. p. 829, edit. oct. 1713.

predominant feature. The Christian Trinity, therefore, is not a Trinity of principles, like that of the Persian philosophers; it does not consist of mere logical notions and inadequate conceptions of Deity, like that of Plato; but it is a Trinity of subsistences, or persons, joined by an indissoluble union. As it is against the divinity of the second and third persons in this holy Triad that inveterate scepticism principally points its rash invective, let us take a cursory review of the qualities and offices ascribed to them in the sacred writings.

It is necessary ever to be remembered, that, when those writings denominate one person, in the Trinity, the *first*, another the *second*, and another the *third*, they must not be understood as if speaking of a priority of time or of nature, which would imply some sort of dependence, but only of a *priority of emanation*. The second person, indeed, is said to have proceeded from the first, and the third from the first and second: yet from this expression it by no means follows that they were created beings, for, in that case, to pay them any adoration would do but less be to substantiate the charge which our opponents bring against those who worship the Trinity, and involve us in all the guilt of complicated idolatry. It cannot be said of

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them, as of created agents, *erat quando non erant*; or that they once were not; since their *going forth is said to have been from all eternity*. They were, consequently, eternal and necessary emanations, co-eval and co-essential with the sublime Being from whom they emanated: not circumscribed in their powers, not limited in their duration, which is the proper description and characteristic of created intelligences; but unlimited as the boundless universe which they animate and direct, indefinable in the extent of their operations; and, since they never were created, so it is impossible that they should ever be annihilated.

To prove what is thus asserted, texts need not be multiplied. St. John, who seems to have composed the particular Gospel which bears his name, on purpose to obviate some rising heresies in the church relative to our Saviour's incarnation, expressly says, *In the beginning was the WORD, (or LOGOS,) and the WORD was with GOD, and the WORD was GOD*. And, since it is in the power of no created being to *create* other beings; as the strongest proof of his divinity that could be given, he immediately adds, *All things were MADE by him, and without him was not any thing MADE that was MADE.\**

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\* Johni. 1, 2, 3.



He sums up the whole of this decisive evidence, in proof of the declared divinity of the LOGOS, by this solemn declaration: *the WORD was MADE FLESH, and dwelt among us, AND WE BEHELD HIS GLORY.\** This is the attestation of one of that highly-favoured number of holy persons who, having been on earth the constant companions of Him, *in whom dwelt all the FULNESS OF THE GODHEAD bodily, †* beheld that glory break forth in unspeakable splendor, when, after his resurrection, he ascended into the skies whence he came, and resumed his seat upon the eternal throne. Of his unity with the Father, what terms can possibly be more pointed and express on the subject than those made use of by the incarnate LOGOS himself, by him who came to be a pattern of humility to men, and with whose assumed character every species of improper boasting was totally incompatible? Yet, upon an occasion that seemed to demand the unqualified avowal of his immortal rights and dignity did the meek Messiah, in this emphatic and unequivocal language, assert his high rank in that universe which he had made: *I AND MY FATHER ARE ONE. ‡* The Holy Spirit is called the *spirit of*  
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• John i. 14. † Coloss. ii. 9. ‡ John x. 30.

*truth*, WHO PROCEEDETH FROM THE FATHER.\* The divinity and rank of this important personage of the Trinity are repeatedly declared in holy writ; and his character and attributes are sanctioned in the most awful manner. *To lie to the HOLY GHOST is expressly said to lie unto God,†* and all manner of blasphemy *but that against the HOLY-GHOST shall be forgiven.* He was likewise present and actively assisting in the great and godlike work of creation; *for, the SPIRIT OF GOD moved upon the face of the waters.‡* *As by the WORD of the Lord the heavens were made, so were all the host of them by the BREATH (in Hebrew the SPIRIT) of his mouth.§*

Equally rapid and energetic in his operations, the HOLY SPIRIT is the more immediate agent between the divine mind and that portion of it which animates the human form. He is the munificent dispenser to mortals of all the more splendid excellences and amiable endowments that adorn and illustrate our nature. He is represented as an *excellent Spirit*, the *Spirit of grace*, the *Spirit of wisdom*, the *Spirit of burning*. It was this blessed Spirit that issued from the opening heavens

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\* John xv. 26.

† Acts v. 3, 4.

‡ Genesis i. 2.

§ Psalms xxxiii. 6.

in the form of the spotless dove, and, alighting in beams of glory upon the head of our Saviour, corroborated the solemn and public attestation of Jehovah, that He was *his beloved Son*. It was this Spirit that diffused the radiance of the SHECHINAH round the same dignified Messiah when he was transfigured in the high and remote mountain, and when the astonished disciples, who accompanied him, beheld his altered visage *shining like the sun, and his raiment white as light*. He was the *rushing mighty wind*, that descended from heaven, and filled all the house in which the apostles were assembled. He was the *luminous splendor* that sat upon each of them, and, while it imparted a ray of ætherial fire to their bosoms, caused their loosened tongues to pour forth a spontaneous flood of heaven-taught eloquence.

The sceptic affirms, that this doctrine of a Trinity in Unity is contrary to reason, and he cannot give his assent to a manifest contradiction. But, in answer to this, it has been repeatedly and forcibly urged, that a doctrine, which, as I have just remarked, soars far *above* the limited powers of our weak reason to comprehend, may yet by no means be *contradictory* to that reason of which we so arrogantly boast. Mankind, in this point, demand more

rigid proofs than on any speculative points whatever, concerning which the ingenuity of the human mind may choose to debate, can possibly be obtained. The question is, whether the subject ought to be brought to this standard, and whether it is possible to be fathomed by that reason. If divines asserted that there are three Gods, that would indeed be a direct and palpable contradiction; but we may surely, without violating reason, maintain that there are, in the divine essence, three distinct hypostases. The doctrine of the ANTIPODES was denied, till a better acquaintance with the true form of the earth and the principles of gravitation and attraction evinced the certainty of it. To a man, ignorant of the principles and rules of geometry, it must appear impossible to measure the diameter of the earth; for, he would naturally inquire where was the vast line that should be drawn over the surface of so bulky a sphere. It must appear still less practicable to extend through the regions of space the line of mensuration, accurately to compute the distances, and correctly to describe the magnitudes, of the shining orbs that revolve through them; yet has the former been done without the immediate aid of the line and the rule, and the latter by means of the same

science

science applied to astronomy. The Laplander cannot conceive that life can possibly be sustained under the direct fervours of an equinoctial sun; nor can the scorched inhabitant of the Tropic at all comprehend how water should be bound in icy fetters. The latter would probably deem it the height of madness to assert, that, clothed in fur, the hardy progeny of Ruffia and Lapland drive the rapid sledge, drawn by rein-deer, over mountains of stagnant water; or that so opposite an element as fire, for whole nights, should glow with unabated vigour upon the surface of those icy fields, the surest defence of the traveller against the fierce and predatory beasts of the desert. The circumstances thus enumerated may exhibit to superficial inquiry an apparent contradiction; but, thence, the absolute impossibility of some, and the utter impracticability of others, are by no means to be inferred.\*

In the vast field of NATURE, and in the wide circle of SCIENCE, a thousand perplexing phænomena daily occur; of which, though our reason cannot resolve the mystery, we do not deny the existence. Both nature and science,

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however,

\* See this matter set in a clear point of view in Dr. Bedford's Sermons in the Defence of the Trinity, preached at Lady Moyer's Lectures, p. 27, et seq.

however, exhibit objects which may assist weak human intellect in its endeavour to form some faint conception of this important truth. From the latter, a striking instance has been repeatedly adduced in the geometrical figure, the equilateral triangle, of which the three sides are equal in quantity, and, when united, exhibit one of the most perfect figures in the power of art to form. Upon this very account, we are informed by Kircher, the Egyptians actually made use of the triangle as a symbol to describe the “*numen τριμορφον*,” THE DEITY IN HIS THREE-FOLD CAPACITY.\* The former holds out to us the solar orb, in which, the three qualities of FLAME, LIGHT, and HEAT, inseparably blended, afford a noble symbol of a higher union. Of created objects, since there is none more noble in the universe than the SUN, I shall possibly be excused for referring also to that object for an elucidation of another magnified difficulty, started by Arianism against this mystery: that God the Son cannot be co-eval with God the Father; because the existence of any being, who proceeds from another, must necessarily commence later than that of the source whence he proceeds, and that such very procession evidently

\* See Kircher, in *Œdip. Ægypt.* vol. ii. p. 24.

dently implies inferiority. Let the sceptic then erect his eye towards that heaven, against which he aims the artillery of his weak wit or his futile logic, and survey the SUN diffusing through our system his genial beam. Let his imagination, warmed by the survey, travel back to that remote period, probably long antecedent to the formation of this globe, in which that orb, launched from the arm of the Creator, began to fill his lofty station in the skies. Whensoever that period commenced, co-eval with its existence, at the very instant of its formation, emanated the VIVIFYING RAY that pervades and invigorates our whole system. Indeed, were it possible for us to forget our own noble code of religion, so far as to join with the enthusiastic adorers of that orb in ancient times, and believe it to be ETERNAL, we must own its RAY to have been ETERNAL also.





## CHAPTER II.

*In this Chapter is unfolded the Origin of that rooted Rancour and Contempt with which the Jews are inflamed against the MESSIAH. — That infatuated People pay less Deference to the WRITTEN than to the ORAL LAW, which they assert to have been delivered to Moses on Sinai. — An historical Account of the celebrated Code of Jewish Traditions collected by Rabbi JUDAH THE HOLY, and called THE MISNA. — Of the two TALMUDS of JERUSALEM and BABYLON, and of the two TARGUMS of ONKELOS and JONATHAN. — The former TARGUM the most concise and pure Paraphrase, the latter more diffuse, and supposed to have been interpolated. — A progressive View taken of the Passages in the Old Testament, establishing some a PLURALITY, and others so express upon the AGENCY and DIVINE ATTRIBUTES, of the MIMRA, or LOGOS, and the RUAH HAKODESH, or HOLY SPIRIT, as plainly to evince that a TRINITY of Divine HYPOSTASES, subsisting*

*subsisting in the Godhead, must have been the Belief of the ancient Jews.*

**I**N the preceding chapter I have asserted that the learned of the Jewish nation, in every period of their empire, knew and acknowledged the great truth which we are considering; that they applied, to the Messiah whom *they* expected, most of the texts and prophecies in the Old Testament, which we consider as pointedly allusive to Jesus Christ; but that, to elude the force of the application of those texts to Him and their completion of those prophecies in his Person, they have mutilated their most venerated records; that they have even declared that the true sense of their Scriptures is only to be found in the commentaries of their celebrated doctors, and that, in fact, they hold the Talmuds composed by them in higher veneration than the original. I have also hinted, that, if a doctrine so important as this in the *Christian* system, a system which in a great measure is founded upon that of the *Hebrews*, cannot be discovered in those Scriptures *in as great a degree as a nation, for ever relapsing into polytheism, would bear the revelation of it*; that its being a genuine doctrine of Christianity will be liable to be suspected

pected by those who consider the one as inseparably connected with the other. A patient and candid examination of the whole question will enable us to solve every difficulty and annihilate every doubt.

It is necessary to acquaint the reader, that from that remote and memorable period in which the divine Legislator appeared to Moses on Sinai, the Jews have regarded, in the most sacred light, a code of traditional laws, which they denominate *oral*, in order to distinguish them from those which are called *written laws*. They believe, that, when Moses received the law from the Almighty, he also received certain CABALA, or mysterious explanations of that law, which he did not think proper to commit to writing, but delivered orally to Aaron, to the priests the sons of Aaron, and the assembled Sanhedrim. While the former was faithfully delivered to posterity in the books of Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers, the latter, imprinted by frequent repetition on the memory of those to whom they were thus orally intrusted, were as faithfully delivered down by tradition, from father to son, and from age to age, till about the year after Christ 180, when a celebrated rabbi, named Judah the Holy, collected together these various

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ous traditions, and, committing them to writing, formed out of them the voluminous compilation, holden in such profound veneration among the Jews, called the MISNA, a Hebrew word signifying *repetition*. This holy doctor was the chief of the miserable remnant of that nation, who remained after their final dispersion, and after the total destruction of Jerusalem and the temple. Judah was induced to this act by the just apprehension, that, in their various dispersion and migrations through so many provinces, and during the interruption of the public schools, the traditions of their fathers and the rites of their religion should be obliterated from their memory. It was against the rigid adherence of the Jews to the institutions prescribed by these traditions, preserved with such anxious care and honoured with such profound veneration, to the great neglect of the precepts of the written law, that our Saviour repeatedly directed his animated censures: *Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own traditions*. He ridicules their blind superstition in that respect; and, while he does not discourage a decent attention to the wise maxims of their forefathers, he, in very decisive language, stigmatizes the infatuated  
zeal

zeal that wearied itself in a round of ceremonious observances of human institution, yet neglected the weightier matters of the law of God. From this cause principally arose the implacable malice with which the scribes and pharisees pursued even to the cross the dauntless upbraider of their hypocrisy, who, to the crime of being *humbly born*, added the aggravating offence of manly truth and inflexible integrity.

About a hundred years after Rabbi Judah had thus consolidated into one body all the traditions in his power to collect, under the title of MISNA, which the Jews to this day honour with the appellation of the Second Law, and which in fact they hold in higher veneration than the First, another celebrated rabbi, of the name of Johanan, compiled a treatise called the GEMARA. Gemara is a Hebrew term signifying *perficere, consummare*; that is to say, this learned doctor, by collecting all the remaining traditions of the Jews, as well as all the legal decisions of the Jewish doctors on certain great points of controversy relative either to their ecclesiastical or civil policy, and by adding an ample comment of his own upon the Misna, completed the grand undertaking which Judah had begun. “They therefore

therefore (says Calmet) call this work *Completion, Perfection*, because they consider it as an explanation of the whole law, to which there can be no farther additions made, and after which nothing more can be desired.\* The Misna and the Gemara, joined together, compose the TALMUD, (that is, *doctrinale*,) the grand code of Jewish traditional divinity. Of these Talmuds there are two; that of Jerusalem, so called from being compiled in that city, and the other, that of Babylon, because the production of the Babylonian school. The former consists of the Misna of the Rabbi Judah and the Gemara of Johanan; the latter of the same Misna, but united with the Gemara, or completion of Rabbi ASA, who flourished at Babylon about a century after Rabbi Johanan. The former Talmud is more concise and obscure in its style than the latter, which is, therefore, more in request among the Jews, whose partiality to it may possibly be increased by the numerous legends and romantic tales with which it abounds. Now, in what superior esteem, even to the sacred volumes themselves, these Talmuds are holden by the Jews is evident from the following adage

\* See Calmet's great Historical, Critical, and Etymological, Dictionary, under the article Gemara, vol. i. p. 598.

adage recorded by Calmet, who says, they compare “the Bible to *water*, the Misna to *wine*, and the Gemara to *hypocras*.” Hypocras (or Hippocras, as it should rather be written, since the word is derived from its supposed inventor Hippocrates) is a kind of medicated wine, used in foreign countries, and enriched with the most fragrant aromatics and the strongest spices. This proverbial saying is amply illustrative of their real opinions on the score of these traditions, and decisively corroborative of the propriety of my former remarks. However high in the opinion of the Jews the two Talmuds of Jerusalem and Babylon may rank; and however strong may be the proof, thus exhibited, that they have transferred to the *oral law* a great part of that veneration which their ancestors entertained for the *written law*; yet there are other productions of Hebrew piety and erudition deserving still more distinguished notice, and far more venerable in point of antiquity than these. From the Talmuds, involved as they are in a veil of fable and superstition, though, doubtless, with some sublime theological and moral truths intermixed, no substantial evidence can possibly be adduced of their early opinions on the grand point of theology under discussion;

or, if any should appear, it must be principally in the Misna of Judah. The real sentiments of the more ancient Jews are only to be found in those two celebrated paraphrases on the Hebrew text, called the Targums, the more ancient one bearing the name of JONATHAN, and that less ancient, but not materially so, the name of ONKELOS. The Targum composed by Jonathan is a diffuse commentary on the greater and less prophets; and was written, according to Calmet, about thirty years *before* the time of our Saviour. The Targum of Onkelos is entirely upon the Pentateuch, or five books of Moses, and, both in its style and mode of explication, is more concise than the former. They are both written in tolerably pure Chaldee, although that of Onkelos is reckoned more pure and is in most esteem among the learned. That of Jonathan, however, is most in request among the Jews in general; and is strongly suspected to have had additions made to it by the Jewish doctors, who lived many centuries after Christ. These Targumim, therefore, but more particularly the former, must be our only sure guide in investigating the unadulterated sense of the Old Testament, and in exploring the genuine sentiments of the Jews.



The learned critic and Hebraist, Dr. Wotton, has remarked that it is but fair to let the Jewish doctors explain their own Scriptures, and to receive their comments as the truest expositions of them, when there is no reason to suspect any latent ill intention or improper bias swaying the judgement of the commentator.\* Undoubtedly a diligent attention to the vast treasure of Hebrew traditional knowledge, which the Misna of Judah contains, has been of infinite service to Christian divines in explaining many difficult passages of the New Testament, and, in particular, those parts of our Lord's discourses and St. Paul's Epistles which are so directly allusive to their ancient customs and traditions. Whatever objections, therefore, may be brought against more recent expositors, nothing of this kind can be urged against the paraphrases either of Jonathan or Onkelos; and if, as was before hinted, the text of Jonathan has been corrupted, we may depend upon it that nothing favourable to the doctrine of the Trinity has been added to it; and, if any arguments can be found there to support that doctrine, they

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ought,

\* See the preface to Dr. Wotton's Discourses on the Tradition of the Jews, vol. i. p. 8, edit. oct. Lond. 1728.

ought, on that very account, to carry with them a double weight of evidence.

For my own part, I own that I have ever considered the two first verses of the Old Testament as containing very strong, if not decisive, evidence in support of the truth of this doctrine. ELOHIM, a noun substantive of the *plural* number, by which the Creator is expressed, appears as evidently to point towards a plurality of persons in the divine nature as the verb in the *singular*, with which it is joined, does to the unity of that nature. *In principio creavit Deus.* With strict attention to grammatical propriety, the passage should be rendered, *In principio creavit Dii*; but our belief in the unity of God forbids us thus to translate the word ELOHIM. Since, therefore, Elohim is plural, and no plural can consist of less than *two* in number, and since Creation can alone be the work of DEITY, we are to understand by this term, so particularly used in this place, God the Father, and the eternal Logos, or Word of God, that Logos, whom St. John, supplying us with an excellent comment upon this passage, says, was in the beginning with God, and who also was God.

As the Father and the Son are so expressly pointed out in the first verse of this chapter;  
so

so is the third person in the blessed Trinity not less decisively revealed to us in the second.

*And the SPIRIT OF GOD moved upon the face of the waters.* Calasio renders this passage, *Spiritus Dei motabat*, &c.; but, as Dr. Patrick has rightly observed, this is not the exact meaning of the text; for, the original verb, translated *moved*, should be rendered *brooded*, upon the water: *incubavit*, as a hen broods over her eggs.\* Thus, we see, the Spirit ex-

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erted

\* It is translated by this very word in the Syriac version of the Hebrew text, as I find it in Walton's Polyglot. In the interlineary version of Pagninus, however, the verb "motabat" is used. It is remarkable how variously both the verb itself and the preceding noun are rendered in the several Eastern translations inserted in that elaborate work; and this variety has probably given rise to all the mistaken ideas of the Gentiles on the subject. Thus, in the Samaritan version, it is rendered, "Spiritus Dei ferrebat super aquas;" in which it agrees with the Septuagint and the vulgate Latin. From some perverted notion of this kind, delivered traditionally down to the Indians, it has most likely arisen, that, in all the engravings descriptive of the Indian cosmogony, BRAHMA is represented floating on the abyss upon the leaf of the sacred LOTOS. Thus, in that spirited and beautiful ode of Sir William Jones to NARAYENA, which, literally translated, he observes, means *the Spirit moving on the water*, we find the following remarkable stanza, in which is combined the idea both of the *mundane egg* and the *Spiritus incubans*. It will be remembered that Sir William, in this passage, professes to give the principles of the Indian cosmogony, as he found them displayed in the two most venerable Sanserect productions of India, so often mentioned

erted upon this occasion an active effectual energy; by that energy, agitating the vast abyss, and

mentioned hereafter, the *MENUMSRITI*, or Institutes of Menu, and the *SREÈ BHAGAVAT*.

First, an all-potent all-pervading sound  
 Bade flow the waters, and the waters flow'd,  
 Exulting in their measureless abode,  
 Diffusive, multitudinous, profound.  
 Then, o'er the vast expanse, *primordial wind*  
 Breath'd gently till a lucid bubble rose,  
 Which grew in perfect shape an *EGG* refin'd,  
 Created substance no such beauty shews.  
 Above the warring waves it danc'd elate,  
 Till from its bursting shell, with lovely state,  
 A *form cœrulean* flutter'd o'er the deep,  
 Brightest of beings, greatest of the great;  
 Who, not as mortals sleep  
 Their eyes in dewy sleep,  
 But, heav'nly pensive, on the *LOTOS* lay,  
 That blossom'd at his touch, and shed a golden ray.

See the whole of this Hymn in the Asiatic  
 Miscellany, p. 24. Calcutta printed.

*MENU*, I have frequently observed, is the Indian *NOAH*, and therefore the institutes, remembered from Menu, may be of an antiquity little inferior to the great patriarch himself. I have gone deeply, at the commencement of my history, into all the Oriental cosmogonies, but particularly into that of India. The result, I trust, will be a proud addition of strength and glory to the *Mosaic* system. Whether I shall obtain readers for that portion of my work, or indeed any part of it, is yet doubtful with me; but, to prevent its being dull or tedious, I have endeavoured to inspirit that particular part with all the energy and animation that language can afford to dignify the loftiest subject possible to be

and infusing into it a powerful vital principle. I shall, hereafter, shew at large how generally throughout all the Oriental nations, but especially in Hindostan, this notion of the *Spiritus incubans* was adopted; and whence, except from this primitive source, can we deduce the doctrine of the *ων πρωτογονου*, or *the primogenial egg*, so particularly noticed in the hymns attributed to the Grecian Orpheus?

I have asserted, that, to each of the sacred persons in the Trinity, such names are applied, and such offences allotted, as are alone applicable to Deity. Of divine inherent power, *creation* itself is certainly one grand proof,

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and

be discussed, THE BIRTH OF NATURE AND OF MAN. I have traced the Orphean egg to its genuine source, and I have shewn that the primitive *cærulean form* of India (for so NARAYEN is painted) is no other than the great Egyptian Deity, CNEPH, who was represented, in their symbols, as a being *of a dark blue complexion, and thrusting from its mouth the primæval egg*, whence the world was generated. But, to proceed in reviewing the remaining variations in the Oriental versions of the second verse of the first chapter of Genesis. The Targum of Onkelos renders the words “*Spiritus insufflabat,*” and the Arabic has “*Venti Dei flabant,*” all which very much resembles what we read in Sanchoniatho’s Phœnician Cosmogony, of the dark and turbid air agitating the gloomy chaos and the impregnating wind Colpia, a word which Bochart very justly supposes to be only a corruption of the Hebrew word Col-pi-jah, or *the voice of God*. Compare Walton’s Polyglotta, tom. i. p. 2, edit. Lond. 1060, Cumberland’s Sanchoniatho, p. 14, and Bochart’s Sacra Geog. lib. ii. c. 2, quarto edit. 1681.

and the *confounding of languages*, which as certainly can only be the work of a Deity, is another. To these proofs it may be added, that *prayer* is expressly commanded in various parts of Scripture to be offered to *each*, and to *each* is separately assigned the stupendous attribute of *forgiveness of sins*. ELOHIM, it has been remarked, seems to be the general appellation by which the triune Godhead is collectively distinguished in Scripture; and, though the august name of JEHOVAH in a more peculiar manner belongs to God the Father, yet is that name, in various parts of Scripture, applied to each person in the holy Trinity. The Hebrews considered this name in such a sacred light that they never pronounced it, and used the word ADONAI instead of it.\* It was, indeed, a name that ranked first among their profoundest cabala; a mystery sublime, ineffable, incommunicable! — It was called TETRAGRAMMATON, or the name of four letters, and those letters are Jod, He, Vau, He, the proper pronounciation of which, from long disuse, is said to be no longer known to  
the

\* Their making use of this particular word ADONAI, which is the plural of ADONI, and signifies MY LORDS, is a circumstance not to be passed over unnoticed, as it seems manifestly allusive to a plurality in Deity.

the Jews themselves. This awful name was first revealed by God to Moses from the centre of the burning bush; and Josephus, who, as well as Scripture, relates this circumstance, evinces his veneration for it, by calling it the “name which his religion did not permit him to mention.”\* From this word, the pagan title of JAO and JOVE is, with the greatest probability, supposed to have been originally formed; and, in the golden verses of Pythagoras, there is an oath still extant to this purpose, “By him who has the FOUR LETTERS.”† The Jews, unable to overthrow the evidence of our Saviour’s miracles, with unparalleled audacity assert, that, when he was in the temple, he found out and stole this ineffable Tetragrammaton, deposited in its sacred recesses, which he inserted into his thigh, between the skin and the flesh, and, by virtue of this talisman, performed all the miracles which he wrought. As the name JEHOVAH, however in some instances applied to the Son and Holy Spirit, was the proper name of God the Father; so is LOGOS, in as peculiar a manner, the appropriated name of God the Son. The Chaldee paraphrasts translate

\* Antiq. Judaic. lib. ii. cap. 5, p. 61.

† ΤΕΤΡΑΓΡΑΜΜΑΤΟΝ. Vide Selden de Diis Syriis, Syntag. ii. c. 1.

late the original Hebrew text by MIMRA DA JEHOVAH, literally the WORD OF JEHOVAH; a term totally different, as Bishop Kidder has incontestably proved, in its signification and in its general application among the Jews, from the Hebrew *dabar*, which simply means a *discourse* or *decree*, and is properly rendered by *pitbgam*.\* In the septuagint translation of the Bible, a work supposed by the Jews to be undertaken by men immediately inspired from above, the former term is universally rendered Λογος, and it will presently be evinced, that it is so rendered and so understood by Philo and all the more ancient Rabbins. The name of the Third Person in the ever-blessed Trinity has descended unaltered from the days of Moses to our own time; for, as well in the sacred writings as by the Targumists, and by the modern doctors of the Jewish church, he is styled RUACH HAK-KODESH, the Holy Spirit. He is sometimes, however, in the rabbinical books, denominated the SHECHINAH, or Glory of Jehovah. In some places he is called SEPHIRA, or Wisdom; and, in others, the BINAH, or Understanding.†

From

\* Demonstration of the Messiah, part iii. pages 108, 109.

† Dr. Allix's Judgement, p. 168, ubi supra.



From the enumeration of these circumstances, it must be sufficiently evident to the mind which unites piety and reflection, that, so far from being silent upon the subject, the ancient Scriptures commence with an avowal of this doctrine, and that in fact the Creation was the result of the joint operations of the Trinity. I must again remark, that any direct parallel between the Hindoo and Hebraic triad of Deity cannot be made without profaneness; yet it is worthy of notice, that Brahma, Veeshnu, and Seeva, in Mr. Holwell's plate illustrative of the creation, are all three represented, if not as coadjutors, at least as present, in that stupendous work; and the reader will possibly agree with me in opinion, that the whole relation, which it will be my province to give at large hereafter, is, I do not say a mutilation of the Scripture of Moses, which *possibly* the Brahmins never have seen, but, certainly, a corruption of some primæval tradition of the creation of man, propagated by that descendant of Seth, who first settled in a country emphatically called by Persian writers "the paradisaical regions of Hindostan." But of this as well as many other striking circumstances of similitude between the Hebrew, the Hindoo,

doo, and other Oriental, systems of the cosmogony, I shall have occasion to treat amply in the first volume of my history.

If the argument above-offered should still appear to be inconclusive, the twenty-sixth verse of this chapter contains so pointed an attestation to the truth of it, that, in my opinion, when duly considered, it must stagger the most hardened sceptic: for, in that text, not only the plurality is unequivocally expressed, but the act, which, I have before observed, is the peculiar prerogative of Deity, is mentioned together with that plurality, the one circumstance illustrating the other, and both being highly elucidatory of this doctrine. *And GOD (ELOHIM) said, LET US MAKE man in OUR image, after OUR likeness.* Why the Deity should speak of himself in the plural number, unless that Deity consisted of more than one person, it is difficult to conceive; for, the answer given by the Jews, that this is only a figurative mode of expression implying the high dignity of the speaker, and that it is usual for earthly sovereigns to use this language by way of distinction, is futile, for two reasons. In the first place, it is highly degrading to the Supreme Majesty to suppose HE would take HIS model of speaking

speaking and thinking from *man*, though it is highly consistent with the vanity of man to arrogate to himself (as doubtless was the case in the licentiousness of succeeding ages) the style and imagined conceptions of Deity; and it will be remembered, that these solemn words were spoken before the creation of that being, whose false notions of greatness and sublimity the Almighty is thus, impiously, supposed to adopt. In truth, there does not seem to be any real dignity in an expression, which, when used by a human sovereign in relation to himself, approaches very near to absurdity. The genuine fact, however, appears to be this. When the tyrants of the East first began to assume divine honours, they likewise assumed the majestic language appropriated to and highly becoming the Deity; but totally inapplicable to man. The error was propagated, from age to age, through a long succession of despots; and, at length, Judaic apostacy arrived to such a pitch of prophane absurdity as to affirm that very phraseology to be borrowed from man which was the original and peculiar language of the Divinity. It was, indeed, remarkably pertinent when applied to Deity; for, in a succeeding chapter, we have still more express authority

authority for what is thus asserted, where the Lord God himself says, *Behold! the man is become as ONE OF US*: a very singular expression, which some Jewish commentators, with equal effrontery, contend was spoken by the Deity to the council of angels that, according to their assertions, attended him at the creation. From the name of the LORD GOD being used in so emphatical a manner, it evidently appears to be addressed to those sacred persons to whom it was before said, *Let us make man*; for, would indeed the omnipotent Jehovah, presiding in a less dignified council, use words that have such an evident tendency to place the Deity on a level with created beings? — Besides, if the authorities adduced by Allix, in support of the assertion which he makes in page 78 of his Judgement, and those brought by Calmet under the article Angels, be at all valid, angels, in the opinion of the Talmudical Jews, were not created till the fifth day, immediately preceding the formation of man; and thus a non-entity will be found to have been consulted. A still more complete answer, however, to this objection, may, in my opinion, be found in the words of the great apostle to the Hebrews, quoting the inspired Psalmist: *To which of the*  
*angels*

*angels said he at any time, SIT THOU ON MY RIGHT HAND?* And there is, in the same chapter, a wonderful attestation of the divinity of the LOGOS, which, in this place, ought by no means to be omitted. Though Jehovah conferred not that honour on angels, yet to the Son he said, *THY THRONE, O GOD, IS FOR EVER and EVER !\**

It is now necessary to descend to some particulars, for pointing out which I am principally obliged to the indefatigable exertion and laboured scrutiny of the author cited above. These will incontrovertibly prove, that the word ELOHIM was exactly thus understood by Moses himself and the ancient Hebrews, however their modern descendants may deny the allusion; that their own paraphrases apply the term LOGOS, in the very same manner as we do, to the second, as well as that of HOLY SPIRIT to the third, person in the blessed Trinity; and that, in fact, they had the fullest belief in that Trinity, expressed in the most emphatical language, and explained by the most significant symbols.

Dr. Allix has, with great energy both of language and sentiment, remarked, that, although the principal aim of Moses, in his writings,

\* Hebrews xii. 7.

writings, was evidently to root out of the minds of men the prevailing notion of polytheism, yet that he constantly describes the creation of the world in words that directly intimate a plurality in the Godhead. Instead of distinguishing the Creator by the appellation Jehovah, that awful appellation by which the Deity first made himself known to Moses in the burning bush, and by him to his people, and writing JEHOVAH BARA, *Jehovah created*, he uses these remarkable expressions, BARA ELOHIM, *the GODS created*; and, in the concise history of the creation only, uses it above thirty times. The combining this plural noun with a verb in the singular, as has been before-noticed he had done, would not appear so remarkable if he had uniformly adhered to that mode of expression; for, then it would be evident he adopted the mode used by the Gentiles in speaking of their false gods in the plural number; but, by joining with it a singular verb or adjective, rectified a phrase that might appear to give a direct sanction to the error of polytheism. But, in reality, the reverse is the fact; for, in Deuteronomy xxxii. 15, 17, and other places, he uses the singular number of this very noun to express the Deity, though not employed in  
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the august work of creation: *dereliquit Eloah; sacrificaverunt dæmoniis, non Eloah.\** He likewise distinguishes the Deity in various other passages by other names, in the singular number; and, consequently, adds our author, “any of these names would have been, with more propriety and effect, applied to root out polytheism.” But, farther, Moses himself uses this very word Elohim with verbs and adjectives in the plural. Of this usage, Dr. Allix enumerates two, among many other glaring instances, that might be brought from the Pentateuch; the former in Genesis xx. 13, *Quando errare fecerunt me Deus*; the latter in Genesis xxxv. 7, *Quia ibi revelati sunt ad eum Deus*; and by other inspired writers in various parts of the Old Testament. But particularly he brings in evidence the following texts, which the reader will excuse my citing at length, viz. Job xxxv. 10; Jos. xxiv. 19; Psalm cxix. 1; Eccles. xii. 3; 1 Sam. vii. 23; all which, he observes, “shews the *impudence* of Abarbanel on the Pentateuch, (fol. 6, col. 3,) who, to elude the force of this argument, maintains, that the word Elohim is singular.” In this audacious assertion, however, impu-  

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\* The reader will please to take notice, that I continue to cite, throughout, the Latin translation of Mario del Calasio.

dent as it is, Abarbanel has been since supported by the synagogues and most of the modern Hebrew commentators upon the subject; but how absurdly, and with what barefaced contradiction to the direct and avowed opinions of their ancestors, will, as we advance farther in the subject, be made decisively evident. For the present, it may be sufficient to observe, that the repeated address of the divine Being to certain persons, his co-adjutors in the work of creation, before men, or even angels, according to the Jewish belief, began to exist, as well as the express words noticed in a preceding page, *LET US make man, and in OUR image*; and afterwards, *LET US go down, and LET US there confound their language*; are pointedly allusive to a plurality, and, as our author observes, “very lively characters of this doctrine.”

If it should be denied that Moses composed his history under the immediate influence of divine inspiration, it surely will be allowed, that he understood the language in which he wrote, and that he could not possibly be ignorant of the purport of those laws which he promulgated. It must, therefore, to every reader of reflection, appear exceedingly singular,



lar, that, when he was endeavouring to establish a theological system, of which the Unity of the Godhead was the leading principle, and in which it differed from all other systems, he should make use of terms directly implicative of a plurality in it. Yet so deeply was the awful truth under consideration impressed upon the mind of the Hebrew legislator that this is constantly done by him; and, indeed, as Allix has observed, there is scarcely any method of speaking, from which a plurality in Deity may be inferred, that is not used either by himself in the Pentateuch, or by the other inspired writers in various parts of the Old Testament. A plural is joined with a verb singular, as in that passage cited before from Gen. i. 1: a plural is joined with a verb plural, as in Gen. xxxv. 7; *And Jacob called the name of the place Bethel; because, the GODS there APPEARED to him.* A plural is joined with an adjective plural; Josh. xxxv. 19; *You cannot serve the Lord; for, he is the HOLY GODS.* To these passages if we add that remarkable one adduced before from Ecclesiastes, *Remember thy CREATORS in the days of thy youth;* and the predominant use of the words *Jehovah ELOHIM, or the Lord THY GODS,*

which occur a hundred times in the law (the word *Jehovah* implying the unity of the essence, and *Elohim* a plurality in that unity); we must allow that nothing can be more plainly marked than this doctrine in the ancient Scriptures.

If Philo may be permitted to explain the national scriptures, we shall find him expressly saying what is here affirmed, "that the chief purpose of Moses was to overthrow the reigning polytheism; however, that, although *God is ONE*, this must be understood with respect to *nature* rather than *number*; that his nature is incomprehensible to man, because, he has nothing in common with mortals, nor is there any thing in the circle of existence to which we may possibly liken, or by which we can properly compare or judge of, that nature."\* Indeed, Philo's mind was so engrossed with this idea of a plurality, and throughout his work he is so express upon the subject of the Logos, not considered as an *attribute* in the Platonic, but as a *person* in the Jewish, sense of the word, that to cite all the passages relative

\* Philonis Judæi de Sacræ Legis Allegoriâ, lib. iii. p. 841, et seq. edit. 1613.

lative to it would be to transcribe the whole work.\*

I shall now proceed to consider certain objections which have been urged against the word Elohim being considered as allusive to the doctrine of a plurality in the Godhead. To the argument, that this word is sometimes in Scripture applied to angels, princes, judges, and even to false gods, it may be replied, that Elohim, being the word more *particularly appropriated* to denote supreme majesty and eminent dignity, and likewise the *strongest word* in the Hebrew language that could be found to express them, was one reason which induced Moses to make use of it; the other was, its having a plural sense: and his using this word, in preference to Eloah or Jehovah, near thirty times in the short account of the creation, seems to demonstrate, that he meant it should impress the mind of the reader with the persuasion that the creation was the work of *more than one*. But it may be urged, there is reason to think, that the Hebrew and Canaanitish lan-

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\* There is scarcely a page in the book of Philo, de Mundi Opificio, which does not expressly mention the Logos as a person: but consult, in particular, pages 3, G. and 4, C. D. of that book, and of the above-cited edition.

languages were, originally, the same; it is, therefore, the language of polytheists; and a plural title of Deity was naturally to be expected from polytheists. That the Canaanites were polytheists there is no doubt; but it is certain, that the patriarchs, their ancestors and the original possessors of the country, were not infected with polytheism, and it is, therefore, more than probable that Elohim, however afterwards degraded, by being applied to false deities, was, in the first ages, the sublime, appropriate, exclusive, appellation of the triune God. Dr. Allix informs us, that the Jewish cabalists constantly added to the word Elohim the letter Jod, being the first letter of the name of Jehovah, *for the sake of a mystery*, as well as, according to one of their most respectable commentators on the Pentateuch, the Rabbi Bechai,\* to shew that *there is a divinity in each person included in the Word.*

The author of the book of Zohar, as quoted by Allix on this subject, thus exclaims: "Come, and see the mystery in the word ELOHIM! There are THREE DEGREES, and every degree is distinct by HIMSELF; yet, notwithstanding, they are all ONE, and bound together

\* R. Bechai, in Gen. i. 10, cited by Allix.

together in ONE, nor can they be separated each from the other!"\* These Madragoth, or DEGREES, are the same with what, in the Sephir Jetzirah, there cited, are called by the cabalistic doctors the Panim, or FACES, the Havioth, or SUBSISTENCES, and the Profopin, or PERSONS, in the divine essence. — But, not to wander from the subject more immediately under discussion, it is evident that the term ELOHIM, with the JOD, for Jehovah, added to it, contains some latent mystery, which, since the appearance of Christ, the Hebrew doctors seem by no means willing to divulge. Indeed, the Rabbi IBBA expressly says that it does; and adds, "This mystery is not to be revealed till the coming of the Messiah." A remarkable attestation of this is given in a note to the Universal History, † from which I have extracted IBBA's strong testimony, and in which the learned authors inform us, that a certain rabbi, who, from the contracted state of his circumstances, was obliged to get his livelihood by teaching Hebrew at Rome, when severely charged with having betrayed the mysteries of his religion, in vindicating himself, among other things, protest-

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\* Allix's Judgement, p. 170, et. Synopsis Poli, p. 2.

† See Universal History, vol. iii. p. 12, first oct. edit. 1760.

ed, that he had never so much as explained *the first verse of Genesis*. Those gentlemen have given their authority at the bottom of the page for this piece of intelligence, which the reader may, if he pleases, consult. In the same page, there is a very clear and convincing evidence adduced in proof both of a plurality and of a Trinity having been doctrines, though not openly taught, yet acknowledged in the ancient synagogue. It is taken from the celebrated book of Zohar above-mentioned; and it is of such importance that I shall presently cite it at length.

A formidable objection may be thought to arise from the Seventy (who ought to have known the true meaning of their own scriptures) having translated Elohim by the word *Θεος* in the singular. Formidable, however, as it may appear, it has been answered by their own Talmudists in the Rabboth, who report that they thus translated it, lest Ptolemy Philadelphus (at whose command the version was made) should imagine the Jews to be polytheists like the idolatrous nation over which he ruled. St. Jerome, likewise, doubtless from good authority, in the most early periods of the Christian church, averred, that

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the Seventy concealed the doctrine of the Trinity, for fear of offending Ptolemy, who was a worshipper of ONE GOD, and that they had an additional incentive to do so from the general prevalence, in that age, of the principles of the Platonic philosophy. We have seen that Abarbanel, to get rid of the difficulty altogether, denies ELOHIM to be plural; but the instance we have given, of its being united with verbs in the plural, affords a most ample refutation of so unfounded an assertion. If this were in reality the case, why should the vulgar Jews be forbidden, as Maimonides says they are,\* to read the history of the creation, lest, understanding it literally, it should lead them into heresy? I must, in this place, entreat permission to remind the reader of the remarkable circumstance of the Hebrew nation's constantly using the plural noun ADONAI, signifying MY LORDS, instead of the ineffable name of Jehovah; and, to conclude this account of the word Elohim, I shall subjoin, that nothing can afford stronger evidence of the general doctrine here laid down, than a remark which our author says is common among the Jews, *viz.* that Elohim is as  
if

\* Maimonides, cited by Allix, p. 132.

if one should read EL HEM, that is, THEY ARE GOD.

Independently, however, of the word Elohim, there wants not the most positive evidence, in various parts of Scripture, to prove that plurality for which we contend. Of these, many have been already given; and a few, still more striking, shall be now enumerated. It is surely impossible to read the following passage, in the apocryphal book of Wisdom, without acknowledging the personality of the Logos. *Thine ALMIGHTY WORD leapt down from heaven, out of the royal throne, as a fierce MAN OF WAR into the midst of a land of destruction.\** An illustrious comment upon the last-cited passage may be found in another part of sacred writ, where it is said, *the Lord is a MAN OF WAR, the Lord of Hosts is his name.* It is forcibly observed by Allix, on the foregoing passage, how evident it is, hence, “that the LOGOS must be a person, and a person equal to the Father, since he is said to sit upon the same royal throne.”† Jehovah, we have seen, is the peculiar name of God, incommunicable to any other; yet, upon the devoted cities contaminated by the  
horrible

\* Wisdom xviii. 15, 16, 17.

† Allix's Judgement, p. 107.



horrible enormities of unnatural lust, it is said *that* JEHOVAH RAINED FROM JEHOVAH *brimstone and fire out of heaven.*\* The Jews interpret the former by the angel of the Lord; but the applying to that personage the *incommunicable name* forbids such an interpretation: and Dr. Bedford properly remarks upon the passage, that, if a plurality were not intended, these words, *from the Lord*, would have been omitted, or it might have been said, *from himself.*† To the remarkable expression cited above, *Remember thy Creators*, may be added that in Isaiah, *Thus saith the Lord THY REDEEMERS,*‡ and, in the same book, *THY MAKERS are thy husbands, the Lord of Hosts is his name.*|| A similar instance occurs in Psalm cxlix. 2, where the words, translated, *Let Israel rejoice in him that made him*, stand, in the Hebrew text, *Rejoice in his MAKERS.* And these collective instances give a noble and decided support to the preceding assertions relative to the great creative Triad in the first chapter of Genesis. In Psalm cx. 1, we read, *THE LORD said unto MY LORD, Sit thou on my*  
*right*

\* Genesis xix. 24.

† Dr. Bedford's Sermons at Lady Moyer's lectures, p. 45.

‡ Isaiah xlv. 24.

|| Ibid. liv. 5.

*right hand, until I make thine enemies thy foot-stool*; which has always been considered as pointing to the Messiah, and indicative of the plurality contended for. As if the great apostle of the Gentiles forefaw, that the degenerate progeny of the Hebrews, to whom he wrote, would, in succeeding ages, endeavour to degrade our Saviour to a created angel, and wished to annihilate at once the base hypothesis; he exclaims, *To which of the ANGELS said he, at any time, THOU art my Son, this day have I begotten THEE?* Dr. Wallis, one of the most able defenders of the Trinity in the last century, well observes, on this passage, that there is wide difference between a *created*, and an *only-begotten, being*; since the *begotten* must be of the same nature with the *parent*, and, consequently, *GOD*.\* It was therefore no blasphemy, whatever the Jews might think, when Jesus, apprised of his high dignity, *made himself EQUAL WITH GOD*. In the note alluded to above, the authors of the Universal History contend, that the writers of the Talmud believed in a plurality, on account of the following answer given

\* See particularly a Sermon, on this subject, of Professor Wallis, preached before the university of Oxford, and inserted in his Theological Tracts, quarto, 1690.

given in that book to the question, why *the throne of God*, in Daniel's vision, is in the plural number. *I beheld the THRONES exalted on which the Ancient of Days did sit, whose garment was white as snow.* — After several trifling answers, which are there given as the solution of various learned rabbies, one of whom contends, that the plural implies the throne of God and David, the last and concluding answer is to the following purpose: "That it is blasphemy to set the creature on the throne of the Creator, blessed for ever!" And the extract concludes with these notable words: "*If any one can solve this difficulty, let him do it; if not, let him go his way, and not attempt it.*" The meaning, say these authors, is too obvious to need explaining. I shall conclude these more general observations, on the plurality asserted, in the solemn, the dignified, and decided, language of the Logos in Isaiah, xiv. 6. *Thus saith JEHOVAH, THE REDEEMER, THE LORD OF HOSTS, I AM THE FIRST, AND I AM THE LAST; AND, BESIDE ME, THERE IS NO GOD!*

The numerous instances cited above are sufficient to demonstrate, to the mind not blinded by vanity nor darkened by prejudice, that a plurality in the Deity is expressly asserted in  
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the text of the Old Testament. It remains to be proved, that the authors of the Targumim, from which books alone the sense of the ancient synagogue can be collected, understood the ancient Scriptures in the same light.

In the first place, it is remarkable that the Hebrew text, *In the beginning God created*, is rendered, in the Jerusalem Targum, by these words, *By his WISDOM God created*; an early evidence of the author's real opinion, and a decisive attestation in favour of this doctrine. Onkelos is not less decisive upon the personality of the Logos.\* He does not, indeed, in the beginning of his paraphrase, which I observed is more close and literal than the others, use the term *Mimra*, which, in Chaldee, answers

\* I possess the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan, and all the Eastern versions of the Bible, inserted in Walton's Polyglot, which I purchased at its usual high price, (nine guineas,) for the purpose of accurate comparison and reference. The reader, however, will be candid enough to reflect, that this stupendous subject of the Trinity comes before me *collaterally*, among many other intricate subjects, and that I have not entered upon it by choice so much as from necessity. I therefore occasionally cite Dr. Allix, whose depth of argument and extensive Hebrew learning are indisputable. On this point, of *the beginning* being translated *the Wisdom*, (combining evidence at once so wonderful and forcible,) I beg leave to refer for fuller information to his book, pages 161, 172.

swers to the word *Λογος*; but he all along literally translates the text by the verb *amar*, whence comes the noun *mimra*; and the difference, subsisting between that word and *dabar*, has been before noticed: “the former (to use the language of Allix) having a natural and necessary relation to the personified Logos; the latter signifying no more than the speech of God or of any human being.”

If the reader should be curious to know why Onkelos has not translated the word *bereschit* by *kadmita*, which signifies the beginning of time, but by *bekadmin*, which signifies THE ANCIENT OR THE FIRST,\* Dr. Allix will inform him, from the book Zohar, the Rabboth, and other commentators, that, by this term, the Jewish doctors understand the WISDOM, whom they called COCHMA, or the SECOND NUMBER, in the divine essence; which emanated from the first as from its spring, and by whose more immediate agency all that has being was formed.† To the third number, that is, the Holy Spirit, they give the

\* To this may be added the corroborative evidence of Philo, who, in one place, distinguishes the Logos by the appellative of *Αγνη*. Consult Philo. de Confus. Ling. p. 267. B.

† Allix's Judgement, p. 161, ubi supra.

the denomination of BINAH, OR UNDERSTANDING. All this immediately accords with those remarkable words of Solomon, than which it is impossible for any thing to be more clear or more pertinent: *Jehovah, by WISDOM, (that is, the COCHMA,) hath founded the earth; by UNDERSTANDING (that is, the BINAH) hath he established the heavens.\** There are two other passages, in the book of Wisdom, equally remarkable and equally consonant with this idea of the Jewish paraphrast, where the inspired writer exclaims, *Give me WISDOM, that sitteth by thy throne;†* and again, in the 17th verse of the same chapter, *Thy council who hath known, except thou give WISDOM, and send thy HOLY SPIRIT from above?* — Their rabbins explain the sense they entertained both of the union and operations of Deity, by affirming, that God acts by these holy personages as the soul acts by her body, and they emphatically denominate them THE TWO HANDS OF GOD.‡ To one or other of these holy personages, under the name of Mimra or Shechinah, the WORD or the GLORY, but more particularly to the former, they ascribe all

\* Proverbs iii. 19.

† Wisdom ix. 4.

‡ Rabbi Bechai, on the Pentateuch, apud Allix, p. 162.

all the mighty wonders performed for the deliverance of their nation, and all the splendid celestial appearances which were alternately to them the objects of exulting transport or of agonizing terror, as they obeyed or violated the precepts of Jehovah. Wheresoever, says Allix, Jehovah and Elohim are read in the Hebrew, there Onkelos commonly renders it, in his Chaldee paraphrase, the WORD OF THE LORD: the other Targums more commonly describe the same person under the title of SHECHINAH, which signifies the divine habitation. The Holy Spirit, he adds, in a few places be excepted, is generally distinguished by his proper Hebrew appellation, RUAH HAKKODESH. A few of the most illustrious of those divine appearances mentioned above demand attentive consideration, since an opportunity will, by that means, be afforded of not only displaying more complete evidence of this doctrine absolutely existing in the ancient Scripture, but additional testimony of the entire belief in it of the ancient Hebrew commentators.

The distinction between the words *mimra* and *dabar* has been already noticed; to which it may be added, that there are so many ACTIVE PERSONAL properties, such as those of

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commanding, answering, giving laws, issuing forth of decrees, receiving of prayers, &c. assigned to the Mimra, that to conceive of the WORD alluded to in any other light than as a *person* would be the height of absurdity. The question is, whether the WORD, that thus appears, is the divine Being whom we assert him to be. One of the most early and remarkable of these divine appearances is that of the ANGEL OF THE LORD, as it is there called, in a flame of fire, out of the midst of a bush, to Moses, as he was tending the flocks of Jethro, his father-in-law. An unknown voice thus addressed the astonished shepherd: *I am the GOD of thy fathers, the GOD of Abraham, the GOD of Isaac, and the GOD of Jacob*; and Moses, we are told, *hid his face*; for, HE WAS AFRAID TO LOOK UPON GOD.\* This passage, thus far cited, is surely as decisive on the subject as language can make it; but what follows seems to be unanswerable. In consequence of the ground being made holy by the awful presence of Jehovah, Moses is desired to put off his shoes from his feet, and not to approach too near the consuming SHECHINAH of flame in which sat enthroned the Majesty of God. Through all the East this custom

\* Exod. iii. 6, et seq.



custom has immemorially prevailed, of entering the temple of God, divested of their sandals, lest any pollution adhering should defile the pure abode of Deity; and it is practised by the Mohammedans at this very day. The spot, therefore, was to Moses as the temple of God, and thence derived a peculiar sanctity, which it could not have in consequence of the presence of any created being whomsoever. The Deity now proceeds to reveal himself by the august appellative of ΕΗ ΙΕΗ, or I AM, which is of the same import with the incommunicable name of Jehovah. As we have before noticed the derivation of Jove from Jehovah, so we may here remark, that the word ΕΙ, inscribed, according to Plutarch, on the front of the Delphic temple, and signifying *thou art*, or possibly only the contraction of ΕΙ ΜΙ, I AM, was most probably derived from this Hebrew title of God. By this appellation, Moses was commanded to announce, to the desponding Hebrew race, their eternal Deliverer from the bondage of Egypt; and, when he himself seemed doubtful as to the real dignity of the person with whom he conversed, the Supreme Being manifested his power by two awful miracles, the turning of his pastoral staff into a serpent, and the smiting of his

withered hand with leprosy. That the divine appearance in this place is called the Angel of the Lord, is an objection of no validity, since the Logos was frequently thus denominated by the Jews, especially upon the solemn occasion of their *exodus* from Egypt, when the Angel of the Lord went before their camp, attended during the day by a column of obscuring clouds, and during the night by a pillar of illuminating fire. The ancient Jews applied that term not to the *person*, but to the *office* which, according to the economy of the three persons of the blessed Trinity, he condescended to assume; and that they thought he did condescend, occasionally, to assume the form of an angel, is evident from a passage in Philo de Somniis; where he expressly asserts, that the supreme ENS, ὁ ἄν, whom he had just before termed Λογος, sometimes put on the appearance of an angel to mankind, but that his divine nature remained ever unchangeable.\* Philo, in various other places, expressly calls the Λογος God, Θεος; and, it may be observed, in one instance uses that remarkable expression, which he could never have written under other impressions than those of the plurality contended for,

\* Rev. xxii. 8, 9.

for, ΔΕΥΤΕΡΟΣ ΘΕΟΣ, the SECOND God.\* The Targum of Jonathan is express, in affirming that it was the LOGOS who spake to Moses; and he adds, the very same LOGOS WHO SPAKE, AND THE WORLD WAS MADE.† But there is less occasion, on this subject, to go for evidence to Hebrew theologians and paraphrasts, since it is notorious that the whole Jewish nation unanimately affirm that God revealed himself,

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\* Philonis Judæi, apud Euseb. p. 190. I forbear to crowd these passages by citing the original text at length, as I am already, I fear, transgressing all bounds on this subject, and my object is not to display erudition, but to enforce truth.

† It is evident, from this passage in Jonathan, that the Targumists considered the Λογος, and the WISDOM as the same sacred personage. The Jerusalem Targum had said, “In SAPIENTIA creavit Deus;” or, God by his WISDOM created all things. Jonathan refers this act to the MEMRA DA JEHOVAH: but both mean the MESSIAH. There is in the passage cited in the text, between the Targums of Jerusalem and Jonathan, so great a coincidence of sentiment and expression as must excite strong suspicions in the mind of the reader, that either the one has copied from the other, or, what is more probable, that both are, in a great measure, copies from some still more ancient paraphrase. Jonathan says, “Et dixit Dominus Mosi; Is QUI DIXIT, ET FUIT MUNDUS; DIXIT, ET EXTITERUNT OMNIA; Sic dices filiis Israel.” In the Jerusalem Targum we find, “Et dixit SERMO Domini Mosi; Is QUI DIXIT MUNDO, ESTO, ET FUIT; ET QUI DICTURUS EST ILLI, ESTO, ET ERIT; Sic dices filiis Israel.” Here we see plainly that the MIMRA, or SERMO, speaks; and therefore the WORD must mean a person, even “Is QUI DIXIT, ET FUIT.” Vide Targ. Jonathan et Hierosol. apud Waltoni Polyglotta, tom. iv. p. 107.

to Moses *face to face*, which could not be true of a mere angel; and since the Deity, when he promulgated the decalogue, with his own voice declared, I AM THE LORD THY GOD, *who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, and out of the house of bondage.*

The next divine appearance universally ascribed to the Logos, or, as he is sometimes called, the Shechinah, both by the paraphrasts and by Philo, is that most awful one when the law was delivered to Moses on Mount Sinai, that is to say, on the same consecrated mountain first called HOREB, from its dryness and barrenness, and afterwards Sinai, from the miracle of the *burning bush*.\* Stupendous as was the divine code of legal institutions there delivered to Moses, not less stupendous and astonishing were the circumstances under which it was unfolded. Allusive to this solemn occasion, that remarkable expression is used by Moses, that Jehovah there *talked with Israel face to face*, *προσωπον κατα προσωπον*, that is, person to person, as it is translated by the Septuagint, † and as the Hebrew term, signifying  
*face,*

\* From the Arabic *SINE*, a bush or thorn. See Patrick on the passage.

† Consult the text of Grabe's Septuagint, Deut. v. 4; tom. i. edit. fol. Oxonii, 1707.

*face*, is always translated by them. This is a very sufficient answer to those, who, for themselves and for the Jews, deny that the Logos is mentioned as a *person*, notwithstanding he is represented in our own Scriptures to be the express image of his *Father's person*, and that St. Paul to the Corinthians says, God forgave offences in the *person* of Christ. The majesty and grandeur of the Logos in this appearance are beyond description; and evidently announce the descent of Deity itself. Indeed it is equally expressly and sublimely said, that JEHOVAH descended in fire upon Sinai; and, while the voice of the trumpet sounded long, and waxed louder and louder, that HE answered Moses by an audible voice, which struck terror through all the camp of the astounded Israelites. It was on Sinai, that the future MESSIAH manifested himself in all the radiance of his proper unapproachable glory. The mountain tottering on its base, and convulsed to the very centre; the tremendous and incessant thunders that rent the air in peals louder than ever before or since that day have vibrated on the human ear; and the glare of those impetuous lightnings, at once magnificent and terrible, that darted every way from the incumbent Shechinah; all evinced the presence of the second person of the glo-

rious Trinity. The Jews *felt*, and through all their generations have, with one voice, *acknowledged*, the awful truth. The commentators are decided that this was the Logos. Onkelos, on Exod. xix. 3, expressly says, that Moses “went up to meet THE WORD OF THE LORD;”\* and, again, on Exod. xix. 17, “Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet the THE WORD OF THE LORD.”† Jonathan is equally express; for, on Deut. v. 5, he says, “Moses stood between them and THE WORD OF THE LORD;”‡ but, on the 23d verse of this chapter, he is gloriously elucidatory of the national opinion as to this point. “After ye had heard the VOICE OF THE WORD§ out of the midst of the darkness on the mount burning with fire, all the chiefs of you came to me and said, Behold, the WORD OF THE LORD our God has shewed us the DIVINE MAJESTY OF HIS GLORY, AND THE EXCELLENCE OF HIS MAGNIFICENCE; AND WE HAVE HEARD THE VOICE OF HIS

\* See the Targum of Onkelos in Walton's Polyglotta, tom. i. p. 307.

† Ibid. p. 309, IN OCCURSUM VERBI DEI.

‡ “Ego stabam inter VERBUM Domini et vos.” Targum of Jonathan, ibid. tom. iv. p. 327.

§ Vocem SERMONIS Dei. This plainly evinces that the WORD must here also be understood in a personal sense.

HIS WORD OUT OF THE MIDST OF THE FIRE."\*

What other evidence is necessary to establish this as an appearance of the Logos? Yet very ample additional attestation of it may be found in almost every page of Philo; but particularly in his Treatise *de Vitâ Mosis*.

The Jews invariably considered the Logos as the peculiar Guardian of their nation, as the celestial Sovereign of their theocracy, and the almighty Captain of the armies of Israel. There is a very remarkable passage in the book of Joshua, in which he manifests himself under this latter military character. *And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lift up his eyes, and looked; and, behold! there stood a man over against him with HIS SWORD DRAWN IN HIS HAND: and Joshua went unto him, and said unto him, Art thou for us or for our adversaries? And HE said, Nay, but as CAPTAIN OF THE HOST OF THE LORD am I now come, &c.†* The words, *captain of the Lord's host*, are, by Usher in his Annals, with less propriety, affirmed to mean, PRINCE OF  
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\* "Ecce, ostendit vobis SERMO Domini Dei nostri divinam majestatem gloriæ suæ, et excellentiam magnificentiæ suæ, et vocem SERMONIS ejus audivimus è medio ignis." Targum Jonathan apud Walton. tom. iv. p. 329.

† Josh. v. 13, 14.

THE ANGELIC BANDS. The divine appearance; on this occasion, is recorded to have announced, what a GOD only could foresee, and what a GOD alone could accomplish, the miraculous overthrow of the walls of Jericho before a very indifferent army, and without any provision for a siege. The period was now arrived when that highly-favoured nation, which the Lord himself, attended by the pillar of alternate darkness and flame, with a mighty hand and a stretched-out arm, had so wonderfully brought out of Egypt, and led through the deserts, was to take possession of the promised land of Canaan. His appearing, therefore, in military array, to the commander of an army, engaged in actual war, was peculiarly proper, and his being afterwards called the "Angel of the LORD," as he was in the former appearance to Moses from the bush, when the promise of Canaan was first holden out, is also a remarkable circumstance. But the circumstance, most of all deserving notice, is, that the very same expression is used by this celestial messenger as in that appearance; *for, he said unto Joshua, loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for, the place whereon thou standest is holy: and Joshua fell upon his face to the earth, and DID WORSHIP HIM.*

Now



Now it is a solemn truth in theology, a truth acknowledged by the whole nation of the Jews, and a leading principle of Christianity, that the Supreme Being can *alone* be the object of human adoration. However, therefore, the ancient Jewish rabbins may have sometimes denominated the Logos the Angel of the Lord; of which circumstance an advantage has been taken, by their modern descendants, to degrade the Son of God to the rank of a created angel; it is evident that this appearance must be that of the second person in the Trinity, because he *received* the adoration of Joshua. He did not say, with the real, the created, angel that appeared to St. John, in the Revelation, *See thou do it not; for, I am thy fellow-servant: WORSHIP GOD!*\* No: he *did* receive the adoration of Joshua, and thus gave infallible proof of his being not a created being, but a Divinity; that very Divinity of whom it is said, *Let all the angels of God worship him!* Had this celestial Form been of inferior rank, the worship thus offered to be paid by Joshua was so directly in contradiction to the first law afterwards given to Moses, *Thou shalt have no other gods but me*, that it never could have been permitted.

There

\* Rev. xix. 10.

There is another most stupendous manifestation of the glory both of the FATHER and of the LOGOS in the Old Testament which remarkably claims our attention. It is that vouchsafed to Daniel in a vision, in which are displayed the awful mysteries of that day, when the great Judge of quick and dead shall decide the eternal doom of mankind. In the whole extent of human language there is no description so sublime and magnificent. *I beheld till the thrones were fixed, and the ANCIENT OF DAYS did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels like burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgement was set, and the books were opened.* As in the preceding passage the FIRST person in the holy Trinity is so expressly pointed out, so is the SECOND not less plainly described in that which follows. Indeed it is deserving of notice that he is particularized by that very name, the SON OF MAN, which our Saviour so often assumed during his incarnation, and which the Jews so universally applied to the Messiah. *And, behold, one like the SON OF MAN came with the CLOUDS OF*

HEAVEN,

HEAVEN, and came to the ANCIENT OF DAYS: and there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom; that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed! Dan. viii. 9, 13, 14. Upon this passage it is observed, by Dr. Lowth, that ANANI, or the CLOUDS, was a known name of the Messiah among the Jewish writers, and there cannot be brought a more decided attestation that the SON OF MAN, thus described as coming *in the clouds of heaven*, was intended as a description of the LOGOS, than that which his own lips afterwards gave, when, in answer to the Jewish high priest, who had interrogated him, *Art thou the CHRIST, THE SON OF GOD?* he not only directly applied this passage to himself, but adopted the very language of the prophet, *Hereafter shall ye see the SON OF MAN sitting on the right hand of power, and coming IN THE CLOUDS OF HEAVEN.* The high priest was perfectly acquainted with these ancient notions of his synagogue concerning the ANANI and the SON OF MAN; for, we are told, he immediately *rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy!* and the assembled elders, being asked their opinion, immediately declared,

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*He is guilty of death.* Matth. xxvi. 66, and preceding verses.

And now, READER, having, from various passages of the Old Testament, proved the PERSONAL AGENCY of both the LOGOS and the HOLY SPIRIT, and having endeavoured to demonstrate, by correct quotations from the two TARGUMS, the one that of JONATHAN, written thirty years before the birth of Christ, and believed by many commentators to have been cited by our Saviour himself;\* the other that of ONKELOS, written in the first century, before those violent contests, which afterwards agitated the church on this subject, broke out, that the ancient rabbies *really*, though *secretly*, acknowledged the truth of the doctrine, which maintains that there are three distinct hypostases in the divine essence, to whom the august and incommunicable name of Jehovah is expressly applied; I might leave the whole of what has been thus offered to thy candid consideration,

\* The particular passage in which the Chaldee paraphrase of Jonathan is supposed to be cited by our Saviour, for this reason, *because the Jews were better acquainted with it than with their original Scriptures*, is that in Luke iv. 18, where he quotes Isaiah lxi. 1, relative to himself. Whoever will take the trouble of comparing the text of Isaiah with Jonathan's paraphrase, in Walton, will find that what is cited in Luke agrees much better with the *latter* than the *former*.

consideration, and, in this place, close a digression which may have long since appeared impertinent and tedious. Having, however, thus extensively entered into the subject; and, some additional circumstances of great weight, never before publicly noticed, in the course of investigating the pagan Trinities, particularly that of India, having forced themselves upon my notice; I cannot refrain from launching out still farther into the ocean of Hebrew theology, and stating those circumstances. In doing this, I may possibly subject myself to much censure, as I certainly shall incur great additional expense, which might otherwise have been avoided, in regard to the bulk of this volume, and the symbols illustrative of my assertions: These, however, are to me considerations of very inferior moment, if I shall be thought to have contributed any thing towards the elucidation of an important doctrine in Christianity. I must again repeat that I did not seek out the subject, but, from a consciousness of abilities inadequate to the full discussion of it, would gladly have altogether avoided it; but the operations of Brahma, Veeshnu, and Seeva, the great Indian Triad of Deity, occurring in almost every page of the ancient Indian History, rendered it indispensable:

dispensable: for, to bring the matter to one short point, this doctrine came either from the HEBREWS to the GENTILES, or from the GENTILES to the HEBREWS; and both conviction and profession induce me to adopt and to defend the former hypothesis.

CHAPTER

## CHAPTER III.

*The Investigation continued, and the Statements in the preceding Chapter corroborated by a Multitude of corresponding Passages in the New Testament.—The State of the Jewish Nation at the Period of the Messiah's Advent.—The principal Cause of their Rejection of him stated to be their altered Sentiments concerning his Character, in Consequence of their Corruption by the splendid Court and luxurious Manners of the Roman Governors, resident among them.—Christ, however, directly appropriated to himself many of the most striking Allusions to the Messiah in the Old Testament; and, by their own Confession, made himself equal with God.—The Influence and Operations of the Third Person in the Holy Trinity being more frequently and particularly insisted on in the New Testament, the Discussion on the Character of the Paraclete resumed, and the sceptical Argument that a mere Quality, or Principle, is meant by the το Πνευμα Αγιον is confuted: Each Hypostasis, therefore, being proved separately to possess*

*all the sublime Functions that stamp Divinity on the Possessor, each was truly God.*

THE light of revelation beamed not upon mankind with an instantaneous effulgence. The sacred truth which dawned in those words, pronounced by a benignant God, after the fall; *the seed of the woman shall bruise the head of the serpent*; which was, afterwards, more clearly revealed in the promise to Abraham, that *in HIS SEED all the nations of the earth should be blessed*; which shone with highly-increased lustre in the picturesque and fervid eloquence of Isaiah, and which broke forth with meridian splendour in the rapturous strains of the later prophets, who immediately preceded the appearance of the Messiah, was of too awful and too sublime a nature to be at once unfolded, and too mysterious to be immediately or fully comprehended. The characters, however, of the Messiah; of him, whose name was to be called, **WONDERFUL, COUNSELLOR, THE MIGHTY GOD, THE EVERLASTING KING**; were strongly marked, and the important functions he was to discharge were too accurately defined to be either mistaken or misapplied. Those characters were confirmed by the stamp of tradi-  
tional



tional authority; they were illustrated in the allegorical way, common among the Jewish doctors, by a variety of expressive symbols and figures, which, however afterwards borrowed by the Pagans, to elucidate and to adorn less pure systems of theology, could not originally have entered into the conception of any one but a Hebrew, because they arose from particular modes of interpreting their own writings. Some instances of this kind have been already adduced, and more will be exhibited hereafter. As our Saviour himself and his apostles were Hebrews, and consequently must have been acquainted with the gradual manner in which that revelation was made, as well as all the figurative allusions by which the future Messiah was shadowed out, either in the sacred writings, or in their traditional code, it might be expected that they would adopt both the same progressive method of unfolding celestial truths, as well as endeavour to render themselves more intelligible to their audience, by occasionally addressing them in the same allegorical manner in which the sacred precepts of religion had been constantly enforced. In fact, they did so; and that in a far more extensive degree than is generally understood. I have before noticed the very judicious ob-

fervation of Dr. Wotton, how much a diligent perusal of the MISNA, and other rabbinical compilations, may assist in discovering the true sense of our Lord's discourses and St. Paul's epistles, in which those compositions are so constantly referred to. Indeed there are many passages in both that are utterly unintelligible without that kind of knowledge; and all, without the light reflected from it, lose a great portion of their force and beauty. I shall presently exemplify what is thus affirmed by a few out of a very great number of striking facts, which I have neither room nor leisure to recite. One of the grand objections, urged against the eternal Divinity of the LOGOS, is that, if this doctrine formed a necessary part of a Christian's creed, so important a truth would have been decisively revealed, and in express terms, by our Saviour himself. In reality, both this solemn truth and that of a Trinity are throughout his discourses sufficiently evident for the conviction of any, but the voluntary sceptic. Any more luminous or extensive display, than what we find in the New Testament, of the mysterious arcana, to be completely unfolded in the vast periods of eternity, and, in the gradual unfolding of which, a great portion of the happiness promised

mised us in another life will probably consist, would have been contrary to the whole scheme of Almighty Wisdom, which adapts its operations to the expanding capacity of his creatures; that Wisdom which distributes benefits in proportion to our merits, and has destined superior attainments to be the sole reward of superior virtue. Jesus Christ and his apostles regulated their conduct by the rule established in the eternal economy. The first promulgation of the Gospel, let it be remembered, was to JEWS, in Palestine, not to GENTILES, at Rome. They trod in the steps of the prophets that preceded them, and discoursed with as much conformity as possible to the dogmas of the Sanhedrim, and the notions of the ancient synagogue. I proceed to recapitulate the proofs of these respective assertions.

An extended period had elapsed since Malachi had sounded in Judah the prophetic trumpet. Impatient piety glowed with intense fervour, and expectation was on the wing to meet the promised Messiah. At length, the long wished-for period of his advent arrived; nor was the awful event, in which were involved the eternal interests of the human race, ushered in amidst darkness and silence: an angel, purposely descending from

heaven, announced the incarnation, not of another angel, (for that surely were unnecessary,) but of the *Son of the Highest, of whose kingdom there should be no end*, and pointed out the manner of his conception, by the overshadowing of that SHECHINAH, who, according to the Talmudic Jews, had equally the *key of the womb and of the grave*. At the period of his birth, a bright chorus of angels welcomed that birth in expressive hallelujahs; and, guided by the refulgent constellation that now first illumined the Eastern hemisphere, the Chaldean magi with reverence hastened to pay homage to that Messias to whom, it is said, *the kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents, and the kings of Sheba and Seba should offer gifts*. Psalm lxxii. 10. Arrayed in the venerable garb of the ancient prophets, and adhering to the same austere diet, which should have roused the attention of the JEWS, the messenger JOHN appeared, his august HERALD; and a solemn voice was heard amidst the recesses of the desert, *Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert an highway for OUR GOD*. He was initiated by the baptizing hand of that celestial messenger into the sacred office which he condescended to assume, and received the most solemn and  
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public attestation possible of his divine emanation from the eternal fountain, as well in the audible voice of Jehovah giving the everlasting benediction to his *beloved Son*, as in the Holy Spirit visibly descending in the form of that auspicious bird which brought to Noah the first tidings of Almighty wrath appeased. The Jews, had not their eyes been totally blinded during the ceremony of this divine unction, might there have seen two notable texts relative to the Logos in their national Scriptures strikingly fulfilled: O GOD, THY GOD *hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.* Psalm xlv. 7. And that, in Isaiah xi. 2: *And the SPIRIT OF THE LORD shall rest upon him.* It was then that the Baptist not only saw, but bore public record, that HE WAS the SON OF GOD, and on this occasion I cannot refrain from citing the words of Dr. Allix: “The three persons in the Godhead did there so conspicuously manifest themselves, that the ancients took thence occasion to tell the Arians, *Go to the river Jordan, and there you shall see THE TRINITY.*”\* Among the acknowledged appearances of the divine Logos, in the ancient Scripture, a very early and important one ought to have been particularly

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specified

\* Judgement of the Jewish Church, p. 297.

specified in a preceding page; because, at his very entrance upon his mediatorial office, the Messiah himself refers to that appearance as a proof of his divinity. It is that to the patriarch Jacob, on his journey towards Haran, when, in a prophetic dream, *he beheld a ladder set upon the earth, the top of which reached to heaven, and the ANGELS OF GOD ASCENDING and DESCENDING ON IT; and, behold, the LORD stood above it, and said,\* I am JEHOVAH, the GOD of Abraham, thy father, and the GOD of Isaac.* Gen. xxviii. 12, 13. As the angels of God are in this place thus particularly mentioned, even the effrontery of modern Judaism has not dared to degrade the Jehovah, who thus appeared, to the rank of those beings; and it is probable that Jacob saw the divine Being, as the Targum of Onkelos explains it, in all the GLORY of the SHECHINAH; for, when he awoke, we are told, *he was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place! this is none other but the HOUSE OF GOD, and this is the GATE OF HEAVEN!* Ibid. 27. The passage, in which the incarnate Logos so evidently alludes to this previous manifestation of his glory under the ancient Mosaic dispensation,

\* “Et ecce, GLORIA DOMINI STABAT super eâ, et ait —” Targ. Onk. apud Walton, tom i. p. 121.

fation, is that recorded in John i. 51; in which; Jesus, after bringing to the remembrance of Nathanael a notable circumstance in his life, which, he was convinced, could only be known to his Maker and himself, compelled the guileless Israelite to exclaim, RABBI, THOU ART THE SON OF GOD, THOU ART THE KING OF ISRAEL! *appellations appropriated by the Sanhedrim to the Messiah.* To this Jesus returns the following answer: *Because I said unto thee, I SAW THEE UNDER THE FIG-TREE, believest thou? Thou shalt see greater things than these!* And he immediately and emphatically adds; VERILY, VERILY, *I say unto you, hereafter you shall see HEAVEN OPEN, AND THE ANGELS OF GOD ASCENDING AND DESCENDING UPON THE SON OF MAN.*

When Christ assumed to himself the title of *Bridegroom of his church*, according to that expression in Hosea ii. 19, where God, addressing Israel, says, *I will BETROTH THEE unto me in righteousness for ever*, he well knew that the Messiah was, in the writings of the synagogue, considered in that capacity, and seeks *Israel as his BRIDE*. Expressions consonant to this occur in various parts of the Canticles, as where it is said, *Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth; for, thy love is sweeter*

*sweeter than wine*; and St. John, doubtless, alludes to this notion, where, speaking of Christ, he says, *He that bath the BRIDE is the BRIDEGROOM*. When, again, Jesus affirms, upon entering the temple, *MY house shall be called a house of prayer*, he was well acquainted with the opinion which so universally prevailed among them, that the temple was dedicated to God, and that SHECHINAH personified by himself. The circumstance which I shall next proceed to point out is, in my humble opinion, so manifest a declaration of the eternity of the Logos, that, if properly considered, it ought to remove every objection, and annihilate every doubt. When our Saviour affirmed that Abraham *had seen HIS DAY, and was glad*, the Jews objected to him, that he made himself greater than that venerable father of their nation, and that it was impossible for Abraham, who had been dead so many hundred years, to have seen the day of a person who was not yet fifty years old. Jesus, then, for the first time, assumed the name that belonged to his more elevated nature that ineffable name of ΕΗ ΙΗΗ, by which he had first made himself known to their nation; and, as was customary with him upon any more important occasion, again replied  
with



with this nervous and reiterated asseveration ; VERILY, VERILY, *I say unto you, before Abraham was, I AM.* John viii. 58. The Jews, however reluctant to admit the fact, were perfectly acquainted with his meaning ; for, they immediately *took up stones to cast at him,* as at a bold and impious blasphemer who arrogated to himself the immediate title of Jehovah. Equally pertinent and forcible, on the point of his divinity, is the following passage in Luke v. 20 ; where, to a man sick of the palsy, that Logos, who, in Jeremiah xxxi. 34, is represented as declaring, *I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more,* authoritatively speaks, MAN, THY SINS ARE FORGIVEN THEE. When the Pharisees again accused him of downright blasphemy, in arrogating to himself that sublime property of forgiving sins, which they so truly deemed to belong *to God alone,* the great physician, whom Malachi declared to be *the sun of righteousness about to rise with healing in his wings,* to prove that he WAS GOD, in a similar tone of authority said to the sick of the palsy, *Arise, take up thy couch, and go to thine house.* These repeated proofs of his divinity had their due effect ; for, at the sight of the sick object suddenly rising in the full vigour

vigour of health, *they were all amazed, and glorified God, and were filled with fear, saying, we have seen strange things to-day!* In another place, he thus pathetically exclaims: *O Jerusalem! Jerusalem! how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!* Matth. xxiii. 37. Taken in any sense, this address is animated and beautiful; but it derives great additional animation and beauty from the consideration that the whole nation of the Jews is represented in the rabbinical writings as under the expanded wings of the guardian SHECHINAH. Again Jesus calls himself THE BREAD OF LIFE, and the MANNA *that came down from heaven*; but both Philo and the Rabbi Menachem, cited by Alix, expressly assert, that the SHECHINAH'S being the CELESTIAL MANNA, and that HE should come down from heaven as the MANNA did, was an established doctrine among the ancient Jews.

The state of the Jews at this particular period, and the strange perversion that had previously taken place in their theological principles, deserve consideration.

Corrupted by their increasing intercourse with that world, amidst whose crowded scenes the

the select people of God were, by a fundamental article of their religion, forbidden to mingle; dazzled by the splendour displayed in the luxurious courts and military establishments of the Roman viceroys resident among them; the higher orders of the Jews were gradually seduced from their just and primitive conceptions of the Messiah, and, in time, expected not so much a spiritual and eternal, as a temporal and earth-born, sovereign and deliverer. These perverted sentiments, however, had by no means engrossed, in so extensive a degree, either the great body of the people, or that distinguished class of Hebrews among whom flourished the slender remains of their ancient learning, and the uncorrupted principles of the patriarchal devotion. It was necessary that these mistaken sentiments should be early, vigorously, and effectually, combated. It was, therefore, the invariable aim, both of our Saviour himself during his life, and, afterwards, of his apostles in all their discourses to the Jews, to rectify those notions, which the chief men among them indulged and propagated, relative to the Messiah's appearance upon earth as a great temporal prince. There cannot, indeed, be adduced a more unequivocal proof, that the great body

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of the Jewish nation at that period understood these passages in the Old Testament exactly as by Christian interpreters they are explained above, than that they were thus publicly and patiently permitted to apply them to the Messiah. For, as Dr. Allix in his preface has observed, although they knew, that, in their sacred books, only one God was acknowledged under the name of **JEHOVAH**, which denotes his essence, and therefore is incommunicable to any other, yet they also knew, that not only this very name is given to the Messiah, but also that all the works, attributes, and characters, peculiar to Jehovah, the God of Israel, and the only true God, are, in various places, applied to him.\* Or, as he has in another place of the same preface remarked, they knew that God had taught them the unity of his *essence*, but in such a manner as to establish, at the same time, a distinction in his *nature*, which, guided by the notion he himself gives of it, we call *Trinity of persons*; and that, when he promised that the Messiah to come was to be man, at the very same time he expressly told the Jews, that he was withal to be **GOD BLESSED FOR EVER**. It was not, it will be recollected, against that mode of application

\* Allix's Preface to his Judgement, pp. 2 and 6.

plication to the Messiah that the sense of the audience revolted, but solely against the asserted completion of those prophecies in the lowly Nazarene. Yet the despised Nazarene, even when the enraged multitude were going to stone him for those expressions of supposed blasphemy *which made himself equal with God*, undauntedly persisted to appropriate to himself the prophecies usually applied to the Messiah; and, with an authoritative voice, in the face of impending death, commanded them to *search the Scriptures; for, they testified of him.\** He applied to himself all the texts invariably considered as pointing to that sacred personage. He told them, that he had that power, which can alone belong to DEITY, TO LAY DOWN, and then to RESUME, LIFE; and that he *was* the SON OF GOD, in that peculiar sense in which they themselves understood the word. Not to multiply texts, however, on a point that must now appear so clearly demonstrated, let us close this review of the evidence in both the Old and New Testament for the di-  
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\* John v. 39. There are, in this chapter, such solemn attestations of our Saviour's divinity, from his own lips, as, I think, must stagger the Socinian. What can be more decisive on the subject than the 21st verse: *For, as the FATHER raiseth up the dead (that peculiar privilege of Deity) and quickeneth them, even so the SON quickeneth whom he will?*

vine rank and attributes of the Logos with observing in how remarkable a manner that most ample and most express testimony of Jeremiah, in which, speaking of the future Messiah, he declares, *This is the name whereby he shall be called*; JEHOVAH, OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS, (Jer. xxiii. 6,) that is to say, he shall be called by the incommunicable name of GOD, was afterwards fulfilled. Could it be more so, than when the unbelieving Thomas, after our Lord had indulged him in the unreasonable proofs he had demanded of his being in reality risen again, pathetically exclaimed, MY LORD AND MY GOD! John xx. 28. Is it possible for any attestation to be more decided than what St. Paul offers to the Romans, when he says, *Of whom as concerning the flesh CHRIST came, who is over all, GOD BLESSED FOR EVER?* Rom. ix. 5. Or that of St. Peter, *Through the righteousness of our GOD and SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST?* Or, finally, that of the beloved disciple St. John; *We are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ: this is the TRUE GOD AND ETERNAL LIFE?* 1 John, v. 20.

Very pointed and express evidence has been adduced, in the former part of this digression on the Christian Trinity, that there is also another

other sacred hypostasis in the divine essence, whom the Jews call ROUACH, or, as it is more generally written, RUAH HAKKODESH. More numerous and more *apparently* solid objections are raised against the divinity and personality of this third hypostasis than the preceding; for, even those, who are willing to admit the eternity and co-equality of the SON, very reluctantly allow the same honour to the SPIRIT. On examination, however, we shall find, that his divine character and attributes are decisively marked both under the old and the new dispensation, and that to the RUAH all the properties and offices of Deity are as expressly and distinctly assigned as to the MIMRA himself. In addition to the decided testimony of his immediate personal agency and divinity, advanced from holy writ, in various preceding pages, relative to his possessing, equally with the AUTOTHEOS and the LOGOS, those stupendous attributes which unequivocally stamp Divinity on the possessor, viz. the power to *create*, to *confound languages*, to *receive prayer*, and to *forgive sins*, I shall, in this place, produce a few corroborative texts, which, I am of opinion, cannot fail of making a very deep impression upon the mind

of the reader who shall attentively weigh them.

The RUAH JEHOVAH (for, the latter name is, in sacred writ, repeatedly applied to the Holy Spirit) is expressly manifested, as, indeed, is each person in the blessed Trinity, in the following solemn declaration of the Logos in Isaiah: *And now the LORD GOD and HIS SPIRIT hath sent ME*; upon which words, the converted Jew, Xeres, cited before, who well knew what idioms existed in the Hebrew language, observes: "The divine action in this place is *sending*, and is attributed to JEHOVAH, and to his SPIRIT. Now, it cannot be supposed, as some among you (Jews) do, that, by the Spirit, here is only meant *a virtue*; as justice, mercy, goodness, and the like, are said to be in God. For, where is ever any thing like this, of *sending a prophet*, recorded of mercy, or justice, or any other divine attribute? Besides, could some Divine Virtue be supposed to be implied by THE SPIRIT, then that speech would be an empty tautology; for, who, at any time, ever said, He, and his Understanding, perceives such a thing; God and his Omnipotence, or his Mercy, did such and such a thing?"\* I have literally transcribed

\* See the Address to the Jews by JOHN XERES, p. 75.



transcribed this comment of a Hebrew upon his native Scriptures, because, from his being so well acquainted, as in the preface to the book he is certified, by the merchants attesting his character, to have been, “with the Hebrew, Arabic, and Chaldee, tongues,” this learned Jew’s critical sagacity would have enabled him to distinguish between a mere idiomatic phrase (as expressions of this nature, occurring in the Old Testament, are called by our antagonists) and an assertion, so solemnly corroborated as this is, of the immediate personal agency of the Holy Spirit.

When Balaam, contrary to the original suggestions of his base and venal mind, was compelled to predict the future glory of Israel, the SPIRIT OF GOD is said to have come upon him. Numb. xxiv. 2. Where the vulgate Latin reads “irruit in se,” that is, rushed upon him in all the resistless energy of the Divinity. Concerning the same powerful demiurgic Spirit that brooded over the abyss, the devout Job gratefully acknowledges; *The SPIRIT OF GOD hath MADE ME, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life.* Job xxxiii. 4. It is extremely remarkable, that the author of the Chaldee Targum on this passage

has, without the least authority from the original, brought into his text the *second* as well as the *third* hypostasis. His words are, "SPIRITUS DEI fecit me, et VERBUM OMNIPOTENTIS sustentavit me."\*

From the apocryphal books, in the course of this survey of the Trinity, I have not brought so many proofs as I might have insisted upon; because, I thought more solid evidence would arise from citing the sacred pages that are *not* apocryphal. In those books, however, the genuine sentiments of the ancient Jewish church may be considered as delineated with fidelity; and the traditions, delivered down from their fathers, as accurately exhibited. Judith, in her Song of Thanksgiving to God, gives her additional testimony to that of Job, and plainly reveals to us the HOLY SPIRIT: *O God, let all creatures serve thee; for, thou spakest, and they were made; thou didst send forth THY SPIRIT, AND IT CREATED THEM.* Judith xvi. 14. In this text, surely, the third creative hypostasis is as expressly manifested as the two former are in the following passage of another of these apocryphal writers: *I called upon THE LORD, THE FATHER OF MY LORD, that*  
*be*

\* Targum apud Waltoni Polyglot. tom. iii. p. 66.

*he would not leave me in the days of my trouble.* Ecclef. ii. 10. There is a remarkable similarity between this text and that cited before from Genesis, of THE LORD *raining FROM THE LORD out of Heaven*, as well as that other from the Psalmist, THE LORD *said unto MY LORD, sit thou on my right hand*. But who, sublimely exclaims the wisest of men and greatest of kings that ever sat on the throne of Judah, *Who hath ascended up into Heaven, or descended? Who hath gathered the winds into his grasp? Who hath bound the waters in a garment? Who hath established all the ends of the earth?* WHAT IS HIS NAME, OR WHAT IS HIS SON'S NAME? Prov. xxx. 4. To this solemn interrogative of Solomon we may, with humble confidence, in the language of Palestine, reply, that the former is the supreme EN SAPH, or infinite; the latter, the eternal MIMRA: the same who spake, and the world was made. From various parts of Scripture, which demonstrate his equal authority, we apply to THIS SON, alike with THAT FATHER, the incommunicable name of Jehovah. Indeed, the Father *himself* directly announced the eternal divinity of his Son, when, in Exod. xxiii. 21, he declared of that mighty Angel of

the Covenant,\* who led the children of Israel out of EGYPT, BEHOLD, MY NAME IS  
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\* In this place, also, the particular term, angel, (*αγγελος*) must be understood rather of the office than of the PERSON who condescended to accept that office. Rabbi Menahem, cited by Poole on this passage, asserts, out of the old rabbinical writers, “hunc angelum esse ANGELUM REDEMPTOREM.” See Poole’s Synopsis, tom. i. p. 438. Indeed, it is sufficiently evident by the following Hebraism; my NAME, that is, my ESSENCE, is in him. The Syriac version renders the passage, “nomen meum est SUPER IPSUM;” the Samaritan, “nomen meum est IN MEDIO EJUS.” See Walton’s Polyglot, tom. i. p. 327. I have had frequent occasion, during this digression, to remark, how greatly a knowledge of ancient Jewish manners and opinions tends to elucidate the sacred volumes. Nothing can more conduce to that end than the consideration of the profound reverence which the ancient Jews possessed for the TETRAGRAMMATON. By that awful name, according to their rabbies, the most awful prodigies could be performed; and it was affirmed to be guarded by lions in the inmost recesses of the temple. See Basnage’s History of the Jews, p. 194.

“THE NAME OF GOD (says Calmet) includes all things: he who pronounces it shakes heaven and earth, and inspires the very angels with astonishment and terror. There is a sovereign authority in this name: it governs the world by its power. The other names and surnames of the Deity are ranged about it, like officers and soldiers about their sovereigns and generals; from this KING-NAME they receive their orders, and obey.” So far Calmet, citing those rabbies, Historic. Dict. vol. i. p. 750. Concerning the mysterious manner in which the cabalistic doctors combined the letters that compose this ineffable name, and the mysteries which they discovered in it, something will hereafter occur in the text. For the present, it will be useful to consider what that most famous and venerable rabbi, Judah the Holy, who compiled the celebrated  
book

IN HIM! an ancient Hebrew synonym for God. Wherefore it is said, *Beware of HIM, and obey HIS voice; provoke him not, for, he will NOT PARDON your transgressions; for, MY NAME is*

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book called the MISNA, has said relative to a passage in Psalm xci. which the whole race of Hebrew, as well as Christian, commentators have united to consider as allusive to the Messiah. In the 14th verse of that Psalm it is said, *I will set him on high, because he hath known MY NAME.* Upon which Rabbi Judah makes the following comment. The original Hebrew is in Kircher, and I give it in that father's Latinity, and with his subsequent remark. "Quare Israel in hoc mundo orat, et non exauditur? Propterea nimirum, quoniam nesciunt nomen HEMMIMPHORAS. Futurum autem est, ut Deus sanctus et benedictus doceat eos, juxta illud; tum sciet populus meus NOMEN MEUM, tunc verè orabunt, et exaudientur." Kircher subjoins; "Scilicet tempore MESSIÆ, veri et unigeniti Filii Dei, qui discipulos suos, in iisque ecclesiam, hoc sacrosanctum TRIADIS mysterium perfectè docuit, juxta illud: *Pater, manifestavi NOMEN TUUM hominibus, quos dedisti mihi.*" Oedipus Egyptiacus, tom i. p. 246, in Cabala Hebræorum. He, who, under the ancient dispensation, blasphemed the NAME OF GOD, was stoned to death; and he, who swore falsely, *portabat iniquitatem suam*, which is generally supposed to mean punishment not to be remitted. That solemn spot in the temple, which the Lord chose to place his name there, or, as is more strongly expressed in Ezra vi. 12, in which JEHOVAH CAUSED HIS NAME TO DWELL, was considered as a spot peculiarly august and inviolably sacred. Our Lord himself, indeed, in various parts of the New Testament, seems to allude to the miraculous TETRAGRAMMATON: but in a more particular manner, in the Gospel of St. Matthew, he affirms, that, in the day of Judgement, many shall come and say, *Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied IN THY NAME, and IN THY NAME cast out devils, and IN THY NAME done many wonderful things?* Matth. vii. 22.

in HIM ; that is, he is JEHOVAH : and a most indisputable proof of his being JEHOVAH was the circumstance here attributed to him, that he *had* the power to pardon the transgressions of mankind. But to proceed in our examination of the texts in a more particular manner allusive to, and illustrative of, the functions of the Holy Spirit.

Had not the name and operations of the Holy Ghost been well known among the Jews at the time of the Messiah's appearance, the herald John would have been utterly unintelligible when he informed the Jews that the same Messiah *should baptize them with the HOLY GHOST and with fire.* Matth. iii. 2. The angel who appeared to Mary, and predicted that the HOLY GHOST *should come upon her, and the Power of the Highest* (the Δυναμεις of Philo) *should overshadow her,* would have only filled the agitated mind of the holy Virgin with astonishment and terror. The inspired Peter in these words addresses the false Ananias : *Why hath Satan filled thy heart to lie to the HOLY GHOST ? Thou hast not lied unto MEN, but unto GOD ;* (Acts v. 4 ; ) which affords too decisive support to this argument to need any comment. That the Holy Spirit is not, in the *New*, any more than in the *Old*, Testament,

ment, represented in the light of a mere QUALITY, or PRINCIPLE, as our antagonists insist, is clearly demonstrated by a variety of texts, of which a few only are enumerated below. *The HOLY GHOST SAID, separate ME Barnabas and Saul, for the work whereunto I HAVE CALLED THEM. Acts xiii. 2. So they, being SENT FORTH by the HOLY GHOST. Ibid. 4. Nor in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the HOLY GHOST TEACHETH. I Cor. ii. 13. Now, the SPIRIT SPEAKETH EXPRESSLY, that, in the latter times, some shall depart from the faith. I Tim. iv. 1.* It will be allowed, that a naked *quality, or principle,* cannot be said *to speak, to call for, to send forth, or to teach*; and, therefore, THAT Spirit must in all these places be understood *personally*. Again, we read of "*divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost.*" A naked quality, or principle, cannot work miracles; for, that alone belongs to God: and here we find an additional proof of his divinity. Neither can it impart gifts; yet, in this place, the Holy Spirit is distinguished as the bestower of gifts, which evidently implies personality. But if, as the Socinians state the matter, he were only the Gift and not the Donor, in what sense could he be said to impart gifts?

It would be the grossest of all human absurdities to say that a *gift* could bestow *itself*.

As it was by the immediate and peculiar influence of the Holy Spirit that the prophets were inspired, he is, in general, by the authors of the Targums, denominated the SPIRIT OF PROPHECY. The most respectable of those paraphrasts (Onkelos) translates the second verse of Genesis, in his usual way, when speaking of his operations, “*Spiritus à conspectu Dei;*”\* but the SEVENTY have scrupulously adhered to the original term, and have rendered it Πνευμα Θεου, † the Spirit of God. The circumstance of his being thus expressly mentioned by Moses, at the very commencement of his history, is an evident proof how very early the Hebrews were acquainted with the distinction of persons in the divine nature; for, as Mr. Whitaker has judiciously remarked, “this third sharer of that nature must have been as familiarly known to the Jews of Moses’s days as the Godhead itself, or that legislator would have conveyed no ideas to them when he wrote the second verse of

\* See the Targum of Onkelos in Walton’s Polyglot, tom. i. p. 2.

† Vide Grabe’s Septuagint, tom. i. p. 1.



of Genesis."\* How early, likewise, the Jews knew the Spirit as a personal co-operative agent in the government of the world, and in the dispensations of a supreme all-ruling Providence, is evident from Genesis vi. 3, where it is said, MY SPIRIT *shall not always strive with man*: and it was the same Spirit who inspired the seventy elders; *for, it came to pass, that, when THE SPIRIT rested upon them, they prophesied, and did not cease.* Numb. xi. 25. *And the SPIRIT OF THE LORD* (in the original, Ruah Jehovah) *fell upon me*, says Ezekiel, *and SAID unto me; Speak, thus saith the Lord.* Ezek. xi. 5. Indeed, so well acquainted were the Chaldee paraphrasts with this Holy Spirit and his operations, that they have placed him where he ought not to be; for, whereas it is said, Gen. xlv. 27, *The Spirit of Jacob, their father, revived*; which simply means, as Bochart has well translated the passage, *pristino vigori restitutus est*; the Targum of Onkelos reads, *Et requievit SPIRITUS SANCTUS super Jacob, patrem suum.* That of Jonathan renders it, *Requievit SPIRITUS PROPHETICUS*, a mode of expression which is explained by the preceding remark. In the instance, also, of Balaam, cited before, Onkelos

\* See Mr. Whitaker's Origin of Arianism, p. 241.

kelos has it, *Quiavit super eum SPIRITUS PROPHETICUS à facie Domini*. It is equally singular, that, in Psalm civ. 13, where, in the original Hebrew, the word Spirit is alone expressed, the Chaldee Targum on the passage reads, "SANCTUS SPIRITUS TVUS." The same addition of "Holy" occurs again in Isaiah xlii. 1, where the words, *I will put my Spirit upon him*, are translated, in the Targum of Jonathan, *I will put my HOLY GHOST upon him*. Indeed, the verse of Isaiah, last cited, is highly remarkable on another account; for, though Christians universally regard the passage as a direct prophecy of Christ, yet the Jews ought to be abashed when they deny the allusion to that sacred personage, and yet can read, in their own Targum, the word MESSIAH, which does not occur in the original text, spontaneously inserted by Jonathan, their favourite paraphrast.\*

These alterations were undoubtedly intended more distinctly to mark out that sacred person, who, we have observed from high authority, is commonly known among the Jews by the title of Ruah Hakkodesh. It cannot be denied, however, that the Jews have, in a variety of instances which are pointed out by Rittangel,

\* Consult Walton's Polyglot, tom. iii. p. 110.

Rittangel, who published the famous Sephir Jetzirah, or Apocryphal Book of Abraham, as well as by Bishop Kidder who cites Elias Levita to prove it, applied the title of SHECHINAH likewise to the Holy Spirit; whence some confusion has arisen in authors who have discussed this subject. His more general designation among them, however, was by the title specified above; and by that title it has been sufficiently proved that he *was* known to the ancient Jews.\*

If we now turn to the page of Philo Judæus, we shall find that writer not less express in asserting his personality and describing his operations. He calls him, in one place, Θεῖον Πνεῦμα, † the Divine Spirit; and, in another, uses the very words of the Septuagint, Πνεῦμα Θεῶ, ‡ the Spirit of God: now, he is the Ἐνθεον Πνεῦμα, § the Spirit full of Deity; now, in the phraseology of the Targumists, he is the Θεῖος Προφήτης, or the Spirit of prophecy. || And, in one of the passages just cited, he remarkably corroborates

\* See Kidder's Demonstration of the Messiah, part iii. p. 243, edit. oct. Lond. 1700.

† Vide Philonis Judæi Opera, p. 167. G. de Plantatione Noæ.

‡ Ibid. de Plantatione Noæ, p. 172, A.

§ Ibid. de Specialibus Legibus, p. 592, F.

|| Ibid. de Vitâ Mosis, p. 527, B.

corroborates the testimony, exhibited before, of his being the demiurgic Spirit, by asserting, “ that man was MADE by the Spirit after the image of God,” ὁ μὲν γὰρ κατὰ τὴν εἰκόνα Θεῶν χαραχθεὶς Πνεύματι.\*

But it may still be objected that, however strong this evidence may be for a *plurality* of persons, it is scarcely sufficient of itself to establish a direct *Trinity* in the divine nature; that a plurality implies an indefinite number; and, when that doctrine is allowed of, it may be extended to whatever number of persons the wild inventive fancy of different commentators may conjecture to subsist in that essence.

It will undoubtedly be granted, that, where Jehovah speaks of Jehovah, there more than one person is of necessity to be understood. From such passages, an indisputable *plurality* is proved. Now, if a third person, clearly distinguished from the two preceding, be called by the same majestic name, it follows, that there are THREE distinct persons in the Godhead. But we have seen, that the term Jehovah is, in various texts, applied to the Holy Spirit: therefore, he, likewise, is very God; and

\* Vide Philonis Judæi Opera, p. 172, A. de Plantatione Noæ.

and thus a TRINITY OF HYPOSTASES, or subsistences, or by whatever other softened name human piety, fearful to offend, may choose to express these three separate divine agents, is demonstrated to subsist in the UNITY OF the Divine Essence. To denote the *plurality*, thus subsisting, no better term than Elohim, a plural noun, could be selected; nor, as the literal meaning of *Jehovah* is *the Being who necessarily exists*, could any more proper title be made use of than that, to point out the essential unity. The compound appellative, Jehovah-Elohim, implies both; and it is for that reason so universally adopted in the Old Testament.

But is there, in the ancient Scriptures, any more direct and particular sanction of the doctrine of a Trinity? Can any passages be adduced from them that expressly limit the number to *three* persons? for, after all, the Jews themselves, in their contests with Christians on theological points, are equally as decided against the doctrine of a Trinity as they are unanimous in asserting the Unity of the divine essence. I must again repeat, that, for the reasons above-assigned, this mysterious truth is not so clearly displayed in the Old Testament as presumptuous man imagines

gines he has a right to demand. When God proposes to his creatures any doctrine as an object of faith, it is not customary with him to destroy the possibility of the exertions of that faith by a full and immediate manifestation of it, which would convert BELIEF into absolute *conviction*: and, with respect to the obstinate opposition of the Jews on this point, I request permission to observe, that the grand error of that infatuated people (inexcusable in them because it is a voluntary error) is the following. Their rancour against Christianity will not allow them to examine, with coolness and impartiality, its genuine doctrines; and, though nothing can be more clear and express than our best and most esteemed writers are on the Unity of the Godhead, they pertinaciously insist upon it that Christians would destroy that Unity, and are the direct supporters of Tritheism. In fact, this doctrine, being originally a mystery, and the obscurity which ever must involve the great mysterious truths of religion, and ever conceal them from the improper and impertinent investigation of finite beings, being made deeper by the additional shade thrown around it by the cabalists, was never among the Jews the subject of universal belief; it

was

was wisely veiled by Providence from their view; for, that nation were so extremely gross in their conceptions, and, in general, so little acquainted with abstract speculations, that their progress, from the belief of a Trinity in the divine essence to that of a plurality of gods, would have been equally rapid and irresistible. Those, therefore, who thus artfully concealed it from vulgar inspection, when they found it applied by Christians to prove the divinity and attributes of the *true Messiah*, had it in their power, either by suppression or misrepresentation, in a great measure to prevent the full effect of inquiry. Much evidence of this kind has, doubtless, been suppressed, and much more would have been kept back, but for the indefatigable exertions of many celebrated Christian divines in minutely investigating the Hebrew rites, language, history, and traditions.

It remains, however, finally to be proved, that the Jewish rabbies themselves had as clear and distinct notions of a true Trinity as, it has been demonstrated, they had of a plurality of persons in the Unity of the divine essence; that the evidence for a Trinity in the divine essence, in the ancient Jewish scriptures, is as decisive as a nation, eternally re-

lapsing into polytheism, *could bear* the revelation of it; and that this doctrine was clearly displayed by various lively and significant symbols peculiar to the Hebrews. They expressly affix the number of THREE to that essence, denominating the three persons the three SEPHIROTH,\* a word signifying SPLENDOR; and distinguish, as Christians do, their personal characters and actions. I have observed, that, in the septuagint, the Greek word *προσωποι* is occasionally used to signify the persons in the Godhead in as direct a sense as they apply that term to the persons of Adam and Eve.† With Jehovah, the peculiar and appropriate name of God, they join that of COCHMA, or wisdom, and that of BINAH, or the understanding, according to those passages cited before from the book of Wisdom, ch. ix. 4, *Give me WISDOM that sitteth by thy throne*; and by Proverbs iii. 19, *By WISDOM hath he founded the earth; by UNDERSTANDING hath he established the heavens*. We have seen that the Jews thought those two sacred personages

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\* I shall hereafter treat more at large of the SEPHIROTH, and the symbol by which they were represented.

† Thus, also, according to our author, speaks of them the Rabbi Bechai, a famous commentator on the Pentateuch, in fol. 13, col. 2.



so essentially necessary and radically constituent parts of the divine essence, that they figuratively denominated them THE TWO HANDS OF GOD. This singular expression is particularly used both in Jonathan and the Jerusalem Targum on Exodus xv. 17.\* They say that God hath created the world by the second SEPHIRAH, or Wisdom, in the same manner as the SOUL acts by her BODY.† Of the third Sephirah, or Binah, there was a most ancient and memorable notion entertained by the Hebrew doctors; for, as they called the Logos the CREATOR, or FATHER; so they called the Binah the MOTHER of the world by the appellation IMMA. This fact is evinced by Allix in several quotations from ancient Jewish paraphrasts; but, in particular, from the book

K 2

Zohar

\* The deviation of these commentators from the text, to express this favourite rabbinical notion, is very remarkable. In the original, according to the accurate translation of Pagninus, the passage stands, “Sanctuarium tuum, Domine, quod firmaverunt MANUS TUÆ;” or, as in the English Bibles, *The sanctuary, O Lord, which THY HANDS have established.* But JONATHAN writes, “Domum sanctuarii tui, Domine, AMBÆ MANUS TUÆ fundaverunt;” and, in the JERUSALEM TARGUM, it is expressed, “Domo sanctuarii, Domine, quam AMBÆ MANUS TUÆ fundaverunt.” Consult these Targums in Walton’s Polyglot, tom. iv. p. 131.

† Zohar apud Allix, p. 162.

Zohar and the Rabbi Menachem.\* It is possible, that, from this ancient Hebrew similitude, the pagans might derive their first idea of the DEA MULTIMAMMA, the many-breasted parent of all things, who supports, with her nutritious and abundant milk, the whole creation. It is likewise *possible* that all those ideas, so common in the mystic writers of the pagan world, of a certain GENERATIVE FECUNDITY appertaining to the divine nature, or, in other words, that the Deity was both MALE and FEMALE, (ideas represented in the temples of India by a very usual, but a very degrading, symbol, too gross to be here particularized,) originated in a misconception of this Hebrew notion. The subject belongs rather to philosophy than theology, and will be considered, with many others equally curious, under the article of Hindoo Literature: for the present I shall content myself with observing to the reader, that there is a passage, in Isaiah lxvi. 9, which forcibly illustrates and corroborates the preceding conjecture. I give it in the Vulgate Latin, as I find it in Walton's Polyglot: *Numquid ego, qui alias PARERE facio, ipse non PARIAM? dicit Dominus. Si ego, qui GENERATIONEM ceteris tribuo, STERILIS*

\* Rabbi Menachem in Pentateuchum, fol. 114, col. 2.

LIS *ero?* ait *Dominus Deus tuus.* In the more correct interlineary version of Pagninus, the Hebrew verb, translated *pariam*, is rendered “*frangam matricem.*”\* which seems to allude to what JOHN XERES, a learned and upright Jew, converted to Christianity in the last century by the force of the arguments adduced in its favour by Dr. Allix, observes, in obviating the objections raised against the miraculous conception, that the Talmudists assert that the Almighty alone has possession of the *three keys*; by which they mean, *the key of the WOMB, the key of the RAIN, and the key of the GRAVE.*† Although the appellative of Jehovah be more particularly applied to the first Sephirah, or most ancient SPLENDOR; yet it is, in many parts of their writings, equally applied to the second and third Sephirah. They particularly specify the Christian doctrine of the *emanation* of the second or third person in the Trinity; and they even go so far in the book *Zohar*, as

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to

\* See Walton's Polyglot on Isaiah, tom. iii. p. 174.

† See an Address to the Jews, referred to before, by John Xeres, pp. 83 and 84. As this proselyte's character is attested by a number of merchants, who knew him in his native country of Saphia, on the coast of Barbary, and as the book is undoubtedly authentic, it cannot be too warmly recommended to the members both of the Christian and Jewish community.

to propose the manner in which EVE was TAKEN from ADAM as an image of the *manner* of the emanation of the Wisdom from the EN SAPH, or infinite source.\* As, in Egypt, the triangle was, in succeeding ages, considered as a just symbol of the “*numen triplex*;” so it is remarkable, that, in the same venerable book Zohar, the three branches of the Hebrew letter SCHIN are asserted to be a proper emblem of the three persons that compose the divine essence.† They sometimes call these three Sephiroth, SPIRITS; at other times, the three Δυνάμεις, OR POWERS; and, at other times, the three LIGHTS.‡ Thus we see that language was ransacked for words, and nature explored for objects, to display and to illustrate those conceptions which they are by modern Jews and

\* Rabbi Menachem in Zohar, fol. 105, col. 3.; and Allix, p. 169.

† Allix, p. 170, citing the Zohar, fol. 54, col. 2.

‡ “Rabbi H. Hagaon, who lived seven hundred years ago, said, there are THREE LIGHTS in God; the ANCIENT LIGHT, or Kadmon; the PURE LIGHT; and the PURIFIED LIGHT; and that these THREE make but ONE GOD.” Allix’s Judgement, p. 170. The same Rabbi Hagaon affirmed, “HI TRES, qui sunt UNUM, inter se proportionem habent, ut UNUM, UNIENS, et UNITUM.” He had, in a preceding page, observed, “Sunt PRINCIPIUM, et MEDIUM, et FINIS; et hæc sunt UNUS PUNCTUS; et est Dominus universi.” Ibid.

and modern sceptics audaciously denied ever to have entertained upon the subject.

If the mystery of the Trinity cannot be found in the two first verses of the first chapter of Genesis, it is in vain to look for any clearer display of it in any other page of the Old Testament. The ANCIENT OF DAYS of Daniel, the CREATIVE LOGOS of St. John, and the INCUMBENT SPIRIT of the paraphrasts, shine forth in that page with distinguished lustre; with rays intimately blended, but not confounded. If the reluctant Christian will not discover it there, the ancient Hebrew, when, as yet, there existed no cause for dissembling, could; since not only the author of the Jerusalem Targum translates the word *bereschit* by *haçacamma*, SAPIENTIA; but the rabbinical doctors, to express their notion of the THREEFOLD POWER that made the world, in their cabalistic way, in addition to that transmutation of words, asserted, that *Bara* denotes GOODNESS, and *Helohim* POWER. Thus the world was created by the union of Almighty WISDOM, GOODNESS, and POWER. Others found a Trinity in the three Hebrew letters which form the word *ברא*, *created*; for *א*, or Aleph, being the initial letter of the Hebrew alphabet, is a known symbol of the

Father; ב, or Beth, imports the Son; and ר signifies Ruah, the Spirit. The reader, who has the curiosity to see very considerable and express testimony of this nature, demonstrating that the ancient rabbies, in their interpretation of Scripture, were not in reality uninfluenced by similar ideas to those which Christians entertain concerning these verses, may find, in Kircher,\* abundance of proofs, and particularly in that father's extracts from the author Rabbi Hakadosch, from whom the above quotation is taken, a rabbi so highly celebrated for his piety as to have the title of *Holy* conferred on him by his nation. When I mention the word TRINITY, a word generally denied to be known to the Jews, I do it not only on the authority of Calmet, who asserts, from Raymond Martin and Galatine, that the Chaldee paraphrasts and ancient rabbies make express mention of the TRINITY in the term שלישי, Shalishith, or Trinitas; and of the THREE HYPOSTASES that compose it in the words שלשה באחד, *Tres in Uno*; and in אחד בשלשת, *Unus in Tribus*:† but I shall add out of Kircher an entire sentence of the same

\* See *Œdipus Ægyptiacus*, tom. i. p. 542.

† Consult Calmet's Dictionary on the word Trinity.

same Hakadosch, in which all the persons in the Trinity are expressly mentioned. It is exceedingly remarkable that, in this very Hebrew sentence, are comprised the mysterious forty-two letters, which, according to the cabalists, form another of the names of God.

אב אלהים בן אלהים רוח הקודש אלהים שלשה  
באחד אחר בשלשה\*:

*Pater Deus, Filius Deus, Spiritus Sanctus Deus, Trinus in Unitate et Unus in Trinitate.*

The following passage, which I shall give from sacred writ, unabridged, has, with great propriety, been considered by most commentators as directly allusive to the three persons in the Holy Trinity: *And the Lord appeared unto him, (Abraham,) in the plains of Mamre, as he sat in the tent-door in the heat of the day. And he lift up his eyes and looked, and, lo! THREE MEN stood by him; and, when he saw them, he ran to meet them from the tent-door, and bowed himself toward the ground, and said, MY LORD!†* Dr. Bedford has remarked on this passage, that the vowels are added, to make it in the plural number, but that Abraham speaks afterwards to them in the singular: *If I have found*

\* R. Hakadosch, apud Kircher, *Œdip. Ægypt.* tom. ii. p. 246.

† Gen. xviii. 1, 2, 3.

*found favour in THY sight*; and that he prays to them as to the ONE JEHOVAH.\* There is also an observation of Philo on this text, which very much corroborates the sense affixed to it by Christian divines. He says the whole passage contains a latent *mystical meaning*, not to be communicated to every one; and that, according to this mystical sense, he was denoted  $\delta\ \omega\nu$ , the great Jehovah, with his two  $\Delta\upsilon\upsilon\alpha\mu\epsilon\iota\varsigma$ , of which one is called  $\Theta\epsilon\omicron\varsigma$  and the other  $\text{Κυριος}$ .†

It would be sacrificing the cause for which I contend, were I not, among these evidences of a Trinity, in the Old Testament, to enumerate the text which the Jews every morning and evening constantly recite, and call THE SHEMA: *Hear, O Israel, the LORD, our God, is one LORD.* Deut. vi. 4. *They*, indeed, urge this as an unanswerable argument against the Trinity, but with what justice will be fully considered hereafter.

The following form, in which the high priest was commanded solemnly to bless the assembled people, has likewise been justly considered as indicative of the three persons in  
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\* Sermons at Lady M<sup>rs</sup>oyer's Lectures, p. 49.

† Philo Jud. de Sacrificiis Abelis et Caini, p. 108, D.



the Godhead, as well as in some degree descriptive of the several characters of the great FATHER and PRESERVER of all things, of the radiant and benevolent LOGOS, and of that SPIRIT who is emphatically called the Comforter and Giver of *peace*: *The LORD bless thee and keep thee! The LORD make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee! The LORD lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace!*\* This triple repetition of the awful name of Jehovah, incommunicable to any being under the rank of Deity, and the triple benediction accompanying it, pronounced, according to Rabbi Menachem, cited both by Poole and Patrick on this passage, *each time in a different accent*, is the more remarkable, because, at the period of pronouncing it, the high priest, in the elevation of his hands, constantly “*sic digitos composuit, ut TRIADA exprimeret;*” disposed his fingers in such a manner as to express a TRINITY.† But of this mode of symbolizing the triune Deity, I shall hereafter have something additional, and not less curious, to report from Kircher. To the peculiarly-strong collateral evidence thus adduced,

\* Numb. vi. 24, 25, 26.

† Vide RAMBAM, et SALOMON BEN JARRHI, apud Kircher.

adduced, I shall add a few other passages from sacred writ, which to me appear conclusive on the point under consideration.

In the following most sublime language, the great inspired prophet Isaiah describes a vision which he was permitted to have of the eternal glory: *I saw the LORD sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the Seraphim, each with six wings; and one cried to another, and said; HOLY, HOLY, HOLY, IS THE LORD OF HOSTS; the whole earth is full of his glory!* That this repetition was not merely the effect of profound veneration in the Seraphim, but that, by it, a Trinity was really adored, appears equally evident from what almost immediately follows, which, if I mistake not, proves still more — something greatly resembling that very TRINITY IN UNITY, for which we have all along contended. *Also I heard the voice of the LORD, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?\** In the Revelations, it is said that the four sacred animals, which compose the Cherubim that support the everlasting throne, *rest not day and night, saying, HOLY, HOLY, HOLY, LORD GOD ALMIGHTY, which was, and is, and is to come!†*

It

\* Isaiah vi. 3, 8.

† Rev. iv. 8.

It is not, however, alone in solemn acts of BENEDICTION and THANKSGIVING that the number THREE is repeated; a sacred Triad is, in the following passage, the immediate object of PRAYER, the prayer of the pious Daniel; and we may rest assured, that, in making it, the prophet used *no vain repetition*: O LORD, *bear*; O LORD, *forgive*; O LORD, *bearken, and do*; *defer not for thine own sake*, O MY GOD! Dan. ix. 19. In this passage the TRINITY appears to be as plainly intimated, by the invocation of the three persons who compose it in the former part of the sentence, as the UNITY is by the address to the collective Godhead in the latter portion of the sentence. A similar passage and a kindred mode of phraseology occur in Isaiah: THE LORD *is our judge*, THE LORD *is our law-giver*, THE LORD *is our king*: HE *will save us*. Isaiah xxxiii. 22. In the very same evangelical prophet, the Immortal Being, who, at verse 12 of chap. xlvi. had denominated himself PRIMUS *et* NOVISSIMUS, THE FIRST AND THE LAST; and who, consequently, was the Redeemer of Israel; in the 16th verse of that chapter, declares, *And now the LORD GOD and his SPIRIT bath sent ME*. In this verse, either each person in the Trinity is expressly particularised, or

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we must allow the *idiom* to be very singular indeed ; for, it is an *idiom* unprecedented before in any known language of the earth. The passages cited above are sufficient to prove that this doctrine, if not revealed, for a reason given before, in so many express terms, is at least very forcibly intimated in the Old Testament ; and, on an impartial examination, we shall find it plainly inculcated, where no such reason for shading it under a mysterious veil subsisted, viz. in the *New Testament*.

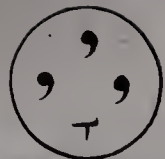
The three persons in the Holy Trinity are there clearly brought before our view in the following promise of the Messiah to his inquiring disciples : *The COMFORTER, which is the HOLY GHOST, whom THE FATHER will send in MY NAME, HE shall teach you all things.* John xiv. 26. It was here necessary to explain to them who was the promised Comforter, but not who was the Holy Ghost ; nor yet that the Holy Ghost was a person, and not a quality or attribute ; for, it was HE who was to TEACH them all things. The same august personage, in another place, declares, *When THE COMFORTER is come, whom I will send unto you from THE FATHER, even the SPIRIT OF TRUTH, who proceedeth from the FATHER, HE shall testify of me.* John xv. 26.

A celebrated Greek scholar having urged the possible spuriouſneſs of the text alluſive to the *three heavenly witneſſes*, I ſhall not here cite it, becauſe the laying any ſtreſs upon evidence in the leaſt degree diſputable would be injudicious. In fact, this doctrine needs not the ſupport of any dubious text whatſoever, when there are ſo many others corroborative of it in the New Teſtament, full as pointed as that omitted, and of authority that cannot be diſputed. The beſt evidence, it will be ſtill allowed, that can poſſibly be brought upon this ſubject, is that of our bleſſed Saviour himſelf, and his expreſs teſtimony has been already produced; but his language is even ſtill more decided in the following paſſage, where he ſolemnly commands his diſciples *to go and teach all nations; baptizing them in the name of the FATHER, and of the SON, and of the HOLY GHOST.* Matt. xxviii. 19. There is a very remarkable paſſage, not I think ſufficiently attended to, in St. Paul to the Corinthians, in which not only the perſons, but the operations more peculiarly appropriate to each of thoſe perſons, ſeem to be diſtinctly ſpecified: *Now there are diverſities of GIFTS, but the SAME SPIRIT; and there are diverſities of ADMINISTRATION, but the SAME LORD: and there are di-*

*verſities*

*versities of OPERATIONS; but it is the SAME GOD, who worketh all in all.* 1 Cor. xii. It is unnecessary to swell this increasing volume with an enumeration of all the various texts upon a point so obviously manifest in the New Testament; and, therefore, I shall close this part of the evidence by an insertion of another passage of the same inspired apostle in this epistle, which, indeed, may well serve in the place of a host of them. *The grace of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, and the love of GOD, and the communion of the HOLY GHOST, be with you all!* 2 Corinth. xiii. 14.





Hebrew



Symbols



allusive



to the Trinity.

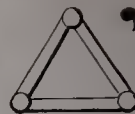
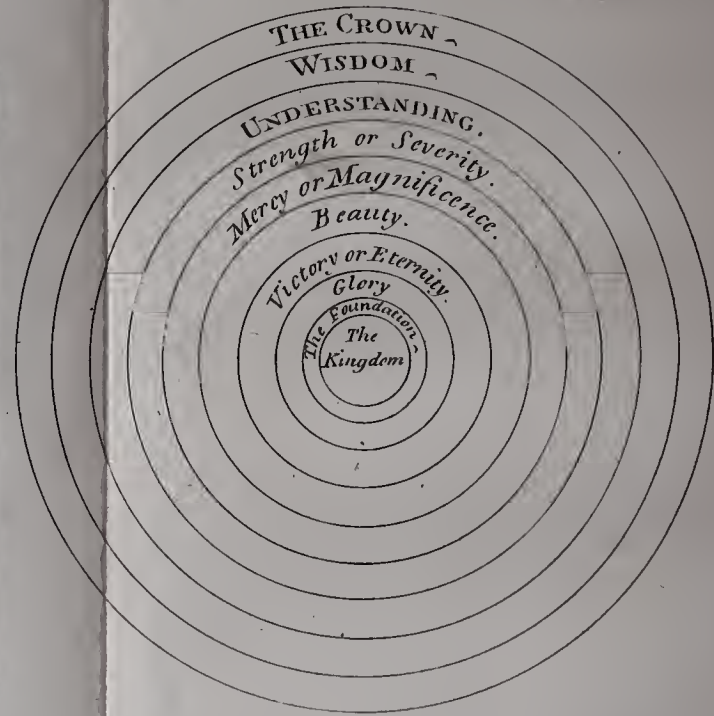


Table of the SEPHIROTHS in Circles.



ANCIENT SCULPTURE. on a ROCK representing TRIPLASIOS MITHRAS; the deity of the ancient PERSIANS, whence STANTIUS probably drew the following description:

... seu PERSEI sub rupibus ANTRI,  
Indignata sequi torquentem cornua MITHRAM.

From Hyde.

Of these SEPHIROTHS, or CELESTIAL SPLENDORS, the three SUPERIOUR denote the THREE HYPOSTASES in the DIVINE ESSENCE; and afford indubitable evidence that the ancient Hebrews had those notions of a TRINITY, which are denied, or forgotten, by their descendants.

from Basnage.



## CHAPTER IV.

*The remarkable Testimony of PHILO JUDÆUS. — The Sentiments of the ancient Jewish Rabbi, as given in the two famous Books, the SEPHIR JETZIRAH and the ZOHAR. — Decisions of other celebrated Rabbi on the Subject. — The hieroglyphic Symbols by which the Jews anciently designated the Mystery of the Trinity. — The first Symbol the SEPHIROTH, or Three Great Splendors. — Strictures on the ancient CABALA. — The ancient symbolical Method of writing the Name JEHOVAH, viz. by three JODS, enclosed in a CIRCLE. — In the ancient mystical Character, supposed, like the DEVINAGARI Character of India, to have been revealed by ANGELS, the JOD, the first initial Letter of that Name, accompanied with a TRIANGLE. — The three Persons in the DIVINE ESSENCE sometimes compared, by the Rabbies, to the three collateral Branches of the Hebrew Letter SCHIN. — The symbolical Manner in which the High Priest gave his solemn Benediction to the People, represented by an Engraving. — The most important and expressive*

*pressive Symbol, the Hebrew CHERUBIM. — Its Origin and Purport extensively investigated, and Philo Judæus and Josephus referred to for an Explanation of the National Sentiments on that Subject. — The Result of the whole preceding Disquisition is, that the Doctrine of the TRINITY WAS certainly, though obscurely, known to the ancient Jews.*

**A**FTER bringing before the view of the reader the preceding solid body of evidence, which, summed up together, amounts to little less than demonstration, especially when it shall be considered from what high authority no inconsiderable portion of that evidence is derived, I might stand excused from citing the testimony of Philo, were not that testimony too pertinent and too important to be entirely omitted. To the objection, that Philo's mind was deeply infected with the prevailing philosophy of the times, or, in other words, that he *Platonised*, it will be sufficient for the present to reply, that, if Philo *Platonised*, Plato, long before the age of Philo, *Judaised*, as will be amply evinced in a future page. His opinion of a certain plurality existing in the Deity has been noticed before; as well in that remarkable passage preserved to

us by Eusebius, (for, the original does not appear in any edition of Philo's works now extant,) relative to the δευτερον Θεον, or subordinate God, as in the quotations recently adduced to establish the divinity of the third Sefhirah. I shall now likewise add, that Philo is as express as words can enable him to be on the limitation of the number of those persons to THREE, as is evident in the following passages, well known, and frequently referred to, for the illustration of this subject. I have not room to insert them at length, (though the purport of them all is much elucidated by the sentences which immediately precede and follow,) but shall faithfully give the substance. In the first of the remarkable passages alluded to, which occurs in the tract on the Cherubim, speaking of the eternal ENS, or ο ων, he asserts, that, "in the ONE TRUE GOD there are two supreme and primary Δυναμεις, or POWERS, whom he denominates Αγαθοτητα και Εξουσιαν, that is, GOODNESS and AUTHORITY; and that there is a THIRD AND MEDIATORIAL POWER between the two former, who is the Λογος."\* In the second, which is that in his dissertation concerning the sacrifices of Abel and Cain,†

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Philo

\* Vide Philonis Judæi Dissert. de Cherubim, p. 86, F. G.

† Dissert. de Sacrificiis Abelis et Caini, p. 108. B.

Philo is still more explanatory; for, speaking of the same *ὁ ὢν* appearing to Abraham, he acquaints us, that “ HE came attended by his two most high and puissant powers, PRINCIPALITY and GOODNESS; *εις ὧν ὁ μεσσος τριτῆας φαντασίας ενεργαζέτο τη ορατικῆ ψυχῆ*; HIMSELF in the middle of those POWERS; and, though ONE, exhibiting to the discerning soul the appearance of THREE.” In a third passage he is still more decisive; for, he says, *Πατήρ μὲν τῶν ὅλων ὁ μεσσος*, “ the FATHER OF ALL is in the middle;” and, as if to prevent any possibility of those POWERS being mistaken for mere attributes, he assigns to each of them active personal properties, and denominates one the POWER CREATOR, and the other the POWER REGAL. He then adds, the POWER CREATOR is *Θεός*, God; the REGAL POWER is called *Κυρίος*, Lord.\*

I am now to demonstrate that the ancient Jewish rabbies absolutely, although not publicly, professed the doctrine of a Trinity, by a more particular examination of their various allegorical allusions on the subject, and the symbols by which they typified it. Those symbols, so far as objects in the animated world were concerned, must necessarily be very few

\* *Dissert. de Abrahamo*, p. 287, F.

few in number ; since, to form the image or similitude of a living creature, divine or human, they considered in some degree as an infraction of the second commandment. Their figures of the CHERUBIM, therefore, made by the command of the Deity himself, are the only emblems of that kind allusive to the plurality which, it will presently appear, they *did* believe to exist in the Godhead. But, in the moral and intellectual world, to what an extent the Jews, as well as all the other Orientals, carried their symbolical allusions, when the symbol did not tend to promote idolatry, is evident from a multitude of allegories and comparisons to be found in the rabbinical and talmudical books. The reader may form some judgement both of their proneness to symbolize, and their mode of symbolizing, from the following very curious passage in the MISCHNA.\* R. Akiba asks, “ Why do they tie a scarlet string upon the head of the scape-goat ? ” The answer returned is, “ Because it is said, *though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow.* ” Isaiah i. 18. Indeed, we need not descend so low down as to the period when the MISCHNA was written, since we find

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this

\* Vide MISCHNA, lib. Shabbath, tom. ii. cap. 9, p. 36, editore Surenhusio. Amsterdam, 1699.

this style of writing prevailing so early as the days of Solomon, whose book of PROVERBS is a remarkable proof of the predominancy of this symbolical mode of enforcing truth. The famous book Zohar, and the Sephir Jetzirah, are crowded with similies and hyperboles in the Oriental way; and the pages of Philo are so gaudily arrayed in this kind of decoration as very often to obscure, rather than to elucidate, his subject. Of the two former books, since, through the medium of Dr. Allix, I have had such frequent occasion to refer to them, and must so often cite them in the succeeding pages, the reader may possibly not be displeased with a short account of each from Mr. Basnage, the faithful historian of the latter Jews.

The mysteries of the CABALA were, according to the Jews, originally taught by the Almighty himself to Adam in the garden of Paradise. In them, they assert, are wrapt up the profoundest truths of religion, which, to be fully comprehended by finite beings, are obliged to be revealed through the medium of allegory and similitude; in the same manner as angels can only render themselves visible upon earth, and palpable to the senses of men, by assuming a subtle body of refined matter. All the patriarchs of the ancient world had their

their separate angels to instruct them in these mysterious arcana; and Moses himself was initiated into them by the illustrious spirit, METATRON. This cabalistic knowledge, or *knowledge traditionally received*, (for, that is the import of the original word KABBAL,) was, during a long revolution of ages, transmitted verbally down to all the great characters celebrated in Jewish antiquity; among whom, both David and Solomon were deeply conversant in its most hidden mysteries. Nobody, however, had ventured to commit any thing of this kind to paper, before SIMEON JOCHAIDES, a famous rabbi and martyr of the second century, by divine assistance, as the Jews affirm, composed the ZOHAR. I have not room to insert, from M. Basnage, any more particular account of the contents of this famous book, than that it abounds with mystical emblems, and a species of profound speculative divinity, unfathomable, for the most part, by those who are unacquainted with the peculiar customs, manners, and cabalistical theology, of the Hebrews.\* Amidst, however, a vast mass of matter, and a confused jargon of ideas, to be expected from a composition which combines the notions of

\* See Basnage's History of the Jews, p. 185.

so many various people and of such different periods, much solid information is to be gleaned; and, though both the age and credit of the book have been attempted to be shaken by some Christians of unitarian principles, yet, as Dr. Allix observes, its authenticity was never doubted by the Jews themselves. It is a treasure of the most ancient rabbinical opinions in theology; and, of its fidelity in detailing those opinions, the same author has advanced this remarkable proof, that the very same notions which prevail in the Zohar are to be found in the beginning of the RABBOTh, which books the Jews assert to be more ancient than even the Talmud.\* Thus, were the Zohar annihilated, sufficient evidence would not be wanting to establish the facts for which we contend.

THE SEPHIR JETZIRAH, or Book of the Creation, is the composition next in cabalistic fame to the Zohar; and though, without any foundation, ascribed to the Patriarch Abraham, yet it undoubtedly contains strong internal evidence of very remote antiquity. Rabbi AKIBA, one of the most renowned for learning among all the Jewish doctors, who flourished

\* Allix's Judgement of the ancient Jewish Church, p. 177.



flourished in the beginning of the second century, is supposed to have been the real author. Abraham Postellus, cited in a former page, first presented this famous book to the Christian world, with a Latin translation and a commentary, printed at Paris in 1552. Rittangelius, a converted Jew, published another Latin version of it, at Amsterdam, 1642, with large explanatory notes, both by himself and other learned men of that period. The rage and hatred of AKIBA against the Christians were so intense, that he is asserted by Father Pezron\* to have altered the Hebrew text to answer a particular objection urged by them against the Jews. If, therefore, any arguments in favour of the Trinity should be discovered in the Sefhir Jetzirah, they cannot fail of having additional effect upon the mind of the reader, when coming from so hostile a quarter. But there *are* such arguments in that book, and Rittangel has principally founded upon them a most elaborate defence of the Trinity. The reader will not be surpris'd at this apparent inconsistency

\* See the passage extracted from this father, in the article Akiba, in the General Dictionary; which article confirms the particulars here mentioned relative to that famous rabbi. It was written by SALE, who published the KORAN.

inconsistency in Akiba, when I inform him, that, though this furious zealot could act thus treacherously and malignantly against the adherents of Jesus Christ, yet there was a *Messiah* who appeared in his own time, *i. e.* about the year 136 after Christ, in whom he believed the ancient prophecies to be fulfilled. This was that famous impostor, named BAR-COCHEBAS, whose rapid success and sanguinary devastations through all Palestine and Syria filled Rome itself with alarm and astonishment. In this barbarian, so well calculated by his cruelty to be the Messiah, according to the perverted conceptions of the Jews, Akiba declared that prophecy of Balaam, *a star shall rise out of Jacob*, was accomplished. Hence the impostor took his title of BAR-COCHEBAS, or *son of the star*; and Akiba not only publicly anointed him KING OF THE JEWS, and placed an imperial diadem upon his head; but followed him to the field at the head of four-and-twenty thousand of his disciples, and acted in the capacity of master of his horse. To crush this dangerous insurrection, which happened in the reign of the Emperor Adrian, Julius Severus, prefect of Britain, one of the greatest commanders of the age, was recalled, and dispatched from  
Rome;

Rome; who re-took Jerusalem, burnt that metropolis to the ground, and sowed the ruins with salt. A destiny, more terrible than even that to which the mad enthusiasm of Akiba had been the occasion of dooming so many thousand Christians, now awaited the patron of the pretended Messiah; for, Adrian ordered his flesh to be torn off with iron combs, and the remains of his lacerated body to be afterwards consumed by a slow fire. Bar-Cochebas himself perished in the attack upon BETHUR, a strong city not far from Jerusalem, whither he had retired with an innumerable multitude of his followers; and the Jewish History, sufficiently bloody as it is in every page, records no fact more horrible than the promiscuous and undistinguished slaughter of those Jews.\*

Before I can proceed to the consideration of certain symbols peculiar to the Hebrews, from which it is evident their forefathers had, if not the most perfect, yet very strong, conceptions of such a plurality of persons existing in the divine essence, as Christians denominate

\* Consult, for what relates to the rabbinical accounts, Basnage's History of the Jews, p. 518, and the various authors cited by that historian; and, for what concerns the Romans, Taciti Annal. lib. iv. p. 126, edit. Variorum, 1673.

denominate a Trinity, it is necessary that the last and most formidable argument, which has been urged by modern Judaism to overthrow this grand tenet of the Christian church, should be attentively examined. In the first book, which is intituled BERACOTH, or  *blessings*, of that famous code of Hebraic traditional laws, the MISCHNA,\* it is enjoined, as an indispenfable duty, to every Jew, that, twice at least in each day, that is, at the time of rising in the morning, or, rather, at the  *rising of the sun*, and at the period of retiring to rest, or  *sun set*, he should solemnly recite what is there called the SHEMA, which consists of these words:  *Hear, O Israel! the Lord, our God, is one Lord*. This custom, which is as ancient as the days of our Saviour, if not as that remote period when the law was given from Sinai, they have founded upon the following passage in Deuteronomy:  *And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart; and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou fittest in thy house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou LIEST DOWN, and when thou RISEST UP*. Deut. vi. 7. Their  
daily

\* See MISCHNA, Title Beracoth, tom. i. p. 1, editore Surenhufio, 1698.

daily and undeviating custom of reciting the text preceding, in consequence of these words, is, as Bishop Patrick, on the passage, observes, “to take the precept in a very dilate sense.” The answer, however, of our Lord to the inquisitive lawyer, as it plainly alludes to this precept, so it apparently justifies the consequent usage. His question was, *Which was the first and great commandment of the law?* To which Jesus answers, in the words of the SHEMA: HEAR, O ISRAEL! THE LORD, OUR GOD, IS ONE LORD. Mark. xii. 29. From this answer of our Saviour, it has been supposed, by some learned commentators, that he not only adopted the custom himself, but farther complied with the attendant precept in the following verse, and also wore the phylactery. This prayer is called the SHEMA, because SHEMA is the initial word of the Hebrew sentence so repeated, and signifies *Hear*.

The JEWS, I have observed, urge the daily recitation of this text, so express upon the *Unity of God*, as an unanswerable argument against the doctrine of the Christian Trinity: but, while they do this, they have acknowledged that it is somewhat extraordinary and perplexing, that the name of God should be

thrice

thrice repeated ;\* and, as to the CHRISTIANS themselves, against whom it is urged as an argument so irrefragable, *they* are almost unanimous, that, in this very sentence, there is a plain indication of a Trinity. If the reader will turn to the original in the Hebrew Bible, he will there find, in the first and last words of this text, two letters of an uncommon magnitude, viz, the ך, Ain, and the ד, Daleth ; of which a similar instance does not occur in the whole volume of the ancient Scriptures. The remarkable distinction of these letters, the Jews themselves allow, was intended to denote a deep and latent mystery in the words. But since, in enforcing the Unity of God, a doctrine so plainly and expressly inculcated in this and various other passages, no *mystery* could be intended, their opponents, with great justice, apply it to mean the mystery of the Trinity in Unity. “ They insist, that it alludes to the *manner* in which GOD is ONE ; that the Unity of the divine Essence is an Unity that has nothing in  
common

\* See Bishop Patrick on the passage, who makes this remark ; and immediately adds : “ The Jews confess that here are meant three MIDOTH, or properties ; which they sometimes call three FACES, or EMANATIONS, or SANCTIFICATIONS, or NUMERATIONS ; though they will not call them three PERSONS.” Tom. v. p. 100, 4to, 1700. ’

common with that of other beings which fall under number; and that, as the Jews, in their book of Prayers, express it, God is *unus, non unicus*.\* The Hebrew text, literally translated, runs thus: *Hear, O Israel! JEHOVAH, OUR GOD, JEHOVAH, ONE*: and Dr. Bedford, a very excellent Hebrew scholar, observes, that this mode of rendering the passage perfectly agrees not only with the Hebrew text, but with the mode of accenting used by the ancient Jews; “for, the accent pesick, between the two last words, being a distinguishing accent, requires some pause or stop.”†

As a farther illustration of this text, I shall now, according to a prior promise, present the reader with a passage which the authors of the Universal History have extracted from a production which I have not been so fortunate as to procure: “Rabbi SIMEON BEN JOCHAI, in his Zohar, a book by the Jews acknowledged to have been written before the Talmud, if not before Christ, quotes the exposition of this text by Rabbi Ibbā to this purport; that the first of these  
sacred

\* Allix's Judgement, pp. 121, 268; in the latter of which pages the original Hebrew is quoted.

† Sermons at Lady Moyer's Lectures, p. 53, oct. 1741.

sacred appellatives of Jehovah, which is the incommunicable name of God, means THE FATHER; by Elohim is meant THE SON, who is the fountain of all knowledge; and by the second Jehovah is meant THE HOLY GHOST, proceeding from them, and he is called ACHAD, ONE, because GOD IS ONE. Ibba adds, that this mystery was not to be revealed till the coming of the Messiah. The author of the Zohar goes on, and applies the word HOLY, which is thrice repeated in the vision of I-faiah, to the THREE PERSONS in the Deity, whom he elsewhere calls THREE SUNS, OR LIGHTS; THREE SOVEREIGNS, WITHOUT BEGINNING AND WITHOUT END!\*" Although it by no means appears, that this daily and punctual recitation of the SHEMA is absolutely commanded the Jews in holy writ: yet it will readily be acknowledged, that the worship of *one God* was not only enforced by the first precept of the decalogue, but by the whole weight of the legislative authority of Moses, and by all the addresses to the Deity of the prophets who succeeded him. The reason of the Unity being so expressly insisted upon is evident.

Early

\* See the Ancient Universal History, vol. iii. p. 12, first oct. edition.



Early and universally as the ancient pagan world was immersed in the gross darkness of polytheism, the UNITY OF GOD was thus incessantly inculcated upon the chosen people of Jehovah, to preserve them unspotted from the idolatrous pollutions of their Asiatic neighbours. Jehovah, therefore, is called the ONE GOD in opposition to the multifarious deities, the innumerable idols of Assyria and Egypt, not in opposition to, or in degradation of, those two sacred personages, who, in various places of holy writ, are peculiarly distinguished by the same august title of Deity, and whose claims to divinity are therefore established upon that lasting basis. Jehovah is denominated the TRUE GOD in contra-distinction to the false BAALIM and the base CABARI, and not in disparagement or his co-equal and co-essential participators of the eternal throne: he is called the LIVING GOD in derision of the inanimate deities which were fabricated of wood and marble, of gold, silver, and meaner, metals; deities who had *eyes, yet saw not; ears, and heard not; mouths, and tasted not.*

JEHOVAH, then, indicates the unity of the essence; ELOHIM, as has been repeatedly

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observed,

observed, points out that, in this unity, there is a plurality existing, in a manner of which we can at present have no clear conception, no more than we have of other parts of the mysterious economy of the invisible world. In regard to the obstinate infidelity of the Jews, who persist in considering the latter word as singular, there still remains one unanswerable argument against them, mentioned by M. Bafnage; for, when hard pressed on this point, their ancestors constantly answered, that the plurality implied in it relates to the attributes of God, his goodness, his wisdom, and his power. Thus, also, when they are pressed in respect to the phrase, LET US MAKE, they obviate every idea of its being only a term expressive *merely* of the eminent dignity of the speaker, when they refer us for an explanation of it to his BETH DIN SHEL MAALA, or *house of counsel*. They likewise affirm, that Moses, to whom they are unanimous the Spirit of God dictated, even to the very words which he wrote, on a sudden withdrew his hand when he was about to write the words, *Let us make man after our own image*; representing to the Deity, that his Unity would be injured by so polytheistical an expression, and that it would be the means

means of establishing, upon his authority, the pernicious doctrine of TWO PRINCIPLES: but the Deity again and again assured him, that he must write as he had dictated, without perplexing himself with the consequences that might arise to those who were resolved to err.\*

The compound figures of the CHERUBIM, which are described in Ezekiel as attendant upon the eternal SHECHINAH, have been considered, by authors of high repute, not only as indicative of a plurality in the Godhead, but as strikingly emblematical of the peculiar attributes of the three august personages who compose it. As an extended consideration of this stupendous symbol will lead to an elucidation of many obscure points in the general theology of Asia, and will gradually lead us back to the subject more immediately before us, *the theological rites of Hindostan*, I shall easily obtain the pardon of my readers for going hereafter pretty much at large into a subject at once so curious and so profound. For the present, let us attend to that very celebrated symbol of Deity, its emanations and attributes, called by the cabalists the SEPHIROTH.

\* Bafnage's History of the Jews, p. 287.

To enter with any minuteness into the mysteries of the Sephiroth, in which are contained the profoundest arcana of their art, would be a task equally tedious and unprofitable. I shall principally confine myself to the consideration of what the most respectable of their rabbies have written concerning those *three superior Sephiroth* which have been generally esteemed by Christian divines, who have made the Jewish antiquities their study, as allusive to the Trinity. The plural term SEPHIROTH may be understood in a twofold acceptation: in its proper and primary sense it signifies ENUMERATIONS; but, by the cabalists, it is more generally used in the sense of SPLENDORS, from a Hebrew root signifying to shine with the purity and brightness of the SAPPHIRE-STONE, as the word is rendered in Exodus xxiv. 10. Understood in this latter sense, the expression is eminently illustrative of the meaning of the cabalists, since the Sephiroth are represented as issuing from the supreme En Saph, or infinite source, in the same manner as LIGHT issues from the SUN. The whole number of the Sephiroth is TEN; and they are represented in the writings of the cabalistic doctors by various symbols; sometimes by the figure of a tree with extended

tended branches; and, at other times, by ten different circles included one within the other and gradually lessening to the centre. The former symbol required too large a plate for the size of an octavo volume, but there is annexed an engraving of the latter from M. Bafnage. The tree of the Sephiroth is a very curious symbol, and very much resembles, says Calmet, what, in the schools, they call PORPHYRY'S TREE, to shew the different categories of ENS, or Being. Of this tree the Rabbi SCHABTE, in the book Jetzirah, writes as follows: "Arbori sunt radices, et de radice consurgit germen, et de germine prodeunt rami, et sunt TRES GRADUS, RADIX, GERMIN, RAMI; et totum hoc est ARBOR UNA: tantum hæc est differentia inter illas, absconditum et manifestum; quia radix, quæ est abscondita, patefacit influentiam suam in germine, et unit se germi; germen verò manifestat influentiam suam in ramis, et unit se ipsis ramis qui pullulant ex ipso, et in summa omnes adhærent, et uniunt se ipsi radici, quòd, nisi influentia radicis esset germen, rami omnes exficarentur: ita ut eam ob causam hæc arbor vocetur UNA."\* The substance of which passage is, that, as the tree is composed

\* Sephir Jetzirah, apud CEdip. Ægypt. tom. ii. p. 297.

of the root, the trunk, and the branches, and these are inseparable; so is the Supreme Being, who may be denominated the ROOT, inseparable from the other Sephiroth, who may be considered as the branches, and as receiving all their virtue and nourishment from that root.

M. Basnage, indeed, who has entered very extensively into the subject of the Sephiroth, has adopted on this subject the sentiments of the modern Jews whose history he writes, and is of opinion, that all the ten Sephiroths are alike to be considered as the attributes of God; and blames Christians for taking advantage of the rapturous expressions which the Jews make use of on that subject, to make them speak of the doctrine of a Trinity. To obviate the ill effects which may arise from the authority of that historian, it is necessary to demonstrate to the reader, that, whatever may be the sentiments of the *modern* Jews, their ancestors made a very considerable distinction in regard to the three superior Sephiroths whom they invariably regarded as PERSONALITIES; whereas the seven inferior were alone considered as *attributes*. The writer, last cited from the Sephir Jetzirah, is decisive upon this point; for, almost immediately after

after he adds: "CORONA SUMMA, quæ est mysterium centri, ipsa est radix abscondita; et TRES MENTES SUPERIORES sunt germen, quæ uniunt sese in centro, quod est radix earum; SEPTEM VERÒ NUMERATIONES, quæ sunt rami, uniunt se germini, quod refert mentes; et omnes se uniunt in centro, quod est radix in mysterio nominis radicalis et essentialis: quæ radix influit in omnes, et unit omnes influentiâ suâ." Hence they call the seven last MIDDOTH,\* or Measures, that is to say, the attributes and characters which are visible in the works of God; and this is confessed in plain words by the great cabalist, Rabbi Menachem de Rekanati: "Tres primariæ numerationes, quæ sunt INTELLECTUALES, non vocantur MENSURÆ."†

The first Sephirah, who is denominated KETHER, the crown; KADMON, the pure light; and EN SAPH, the infinite; is the omnipotent FATHER of the Universe; according to that spirited exclamation in Isaiah, xxviii. 5: *In that day shall the Jehovah of Hosts be for a CROWN OF GLORY and for a DIADEM OF BEAUTY unto the residue of his people.* 'The

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second

\* Sephir Jetzirah, apud Œdip. Ægypt. tom. ii. p. 297.

† Rabbi Menachem, cited by Rittangel in the notes to his edition of the Sephir Jetzirah, p. 193.

second is the COCHMA, whom we have sufficiently proved, both from sacred and rabbinical writings, to be the creative WISDOM. The third is the BINAH, or heavenly INTELLIGENCE, whence the Egyptians had their CNEPH, and Plato his *Νεϛ δημιουργος*. He is the HOLY SPIRIT who inspired the prophets; and who, although in a very different manner from that CNEPH and that *Νεϛ*, pervades, animates, and governs, the boundless universe. I have observed, in a note in a former page, that Rabbi Hagahon affirmed, that there were three lights in God, the ANCIENT LIGHT, the PURE LIGHT, and the PURIFIED LIGHT. By this expression, the rabbi undoubtedly meant the three first Sephiroth; and the idea of Hagahon may be very plainly traced both in the apocryphal and genuine books of Scripture. This rabbinical notion of the THREE LIGHTS discovers itself in the book of Wisdom, vii. 26. WISDOM (Cochma, the second Sephirah) *is the BRIGHTNESS of the EVERLASTING LIGHT, the UNSPOTTED MIRROR of the power of God, and the IMAGE of his goodness.* An expression also, remarkably similar, occurs in St. Paul himself; who, having been brought up at the feet of Gamaliel; was, we may well suppose, fully acquainted



acquainted with all the doctrines of the ancient synagogue; for, speaking of Christ, he calls him *the BRIGHTNESS of his Father's GLORY, and the EXPRESS IMAGE of his person.* Heb. i. 3. It is not improbable that, in allusion to this very ancient symbol of the Tree of the Sephiroth, in various parts of the Old Testament, the Logos himself is figuratively denominated **THE BRANCH.** We find, in Zechariah iii. 8, Jehovah, speaking of the Messiah, declares, *Behold, I will bring forth my servant, the BRANCH;* and, again, in the same prophet, vi. 12, the Messiah is called, *the Man whose name shall be THE BRANCH, and he shall GROW UP OUT of his place;* that is, (observes Lowth on the passage,) from the **STOCK** or family of David: *and he shall build the temple of the Lord.*

It is of these three superior Sephiroth, of these sublime and living Spirits, who, from all eternity, have dwelt together, "in the secret and profound abyss of the Divinity, in the centre of inaccessible light," that Rabbi Isaac, another famous commentator on the *Jetzirah*, speaks, when he rapturously calls them, "Numerationes altissimas, quæ possident thronum unum, in quo sedet

sedet SANCTUS, SANCTUS, SANCTUS DOMINUS, DEUS SABAOTH.”\* It is of these that Rabbi Akiba himself, as cited in the same Sefhir Jetzirah, sixteen hundred years ago said “ Unus est Spiritus Deorum viventium, Vox, et SPIRITUS, et VERBUM ; et hic est Spiritus Sanctitatis.”† It is of these that the often-cited rabbi, S. Hagahon, uses terms nearly similar: “ Unus est Spiritus Deorum viventium, Vox, SPIRITUS, et VERBUM, quæ UNUM sunt.” And, finally, it is of these that the great Rambam, (that is, Maimonides,) the most illustrious of all their rabbies, bears this solemn testimony: “ CORONA SUMMA primordialis est Spiritus Deorum viventium, et SAPIENTIA ejus est Spiritus de Spiritu, et INTELLIGENTIÆ, aquæ ex Spiritu. Et tametsi res horum mysteriorum distinguantur in SAPIENTIA, INTELLIGENTIA, et SCIENTIA, nulla tamen inter eas distinctio quoad essentiam est, quia FINIS ejus annexus est PRINCIPIO ejus, et PRINCIPIUM FINI ejus, et MEDIUM comprehenditur ab eis.”‡ More pointed attestation than the above, and under their own hand,

\* Jetzirah, apud Kircher, tom. ii. p. 292.

† Jetzirah cum notis Rittangel, cap. i. sec. 9.

‡ Rambam, apud Kircher, tom. ii. p. 293.

hand, cannot well be brought in proof, that the ancient Jewish rabbi did, in reality, conceive the three first SEPHIROTH, or SPLENDORS, to shine with a degree of lustre peculiar and intrinsic; that THEY were BEINGS eternal and intellectual, while the remaining Sephiroth were nothing more than the perfections and attributes of Deity.

The names of those Sephiroth are, GEDULAH, Strength or Severity; GEBUTAH, Mercy or Magnificence; TIPHEROTH, Beauty; NERSAH, Victory or Eternity; HOD, Glory; JESOD, the Foundation; MALCUTH, or the Kingdom. This is the order in which they are arranged in the circular table engraved in the work of M. Bafnage, of which I have presented the reader with a copy. The circle, being the most perfect of figures, denotes the perfection of Deity and its attributes. That Deity, infinite in his nature, and otherwise incomprehensible to man, has chosen to manifest himself by his attributes, as the soul manifests herself by acts of wisdom and virtue. As the virtue, latent in the coal, is displayed by the flame which it diffuses; so is the glory of the Deity revealed by the emanations which proceed from him. To illustrate their sentiments, the Jews have imagined certain  
 certain

certain CONDUITS, or CANALS, through which the influences of the Splendors are communicated, and glide into one another. The PERFECTIONS of God are the pillars which support the universe. MERCY illumines JUSTICE, and BEAUTY decorates STRENGTH. The sephirotic canals, which are twenty-two in number, corresponding to that of the letters of the Hebrew alphabet, convey the influences throughout the whole circumference of creation, harmonising all the orders of being, and regulating all the operations of nature. These canals never ascend; for, as the source of the terrestrial rivers is in the lofty and inaccessible mountains; so does the celestial stream of the Sephiroth spring up out of the remote and inexhaustible fountain of the Godhead. The romantic imaginations of the rabbi have conceived no less than fifty GATES, which are so many degrees of wisdom, and so many avenues to the attainment of sublime and mysterious truths. It is incumbent on men that they study the MYSTERIES before they can receive the influx of DIVINE LIGHT. But the progress through these gates, of the candidate for celestial wisdom, is exceedingly slow, and obstructed by numerous difficulties. Moses is recorded to have

have passed through the forty-ninth, and Joshua, his successor, to have reached the forty-eighth; but neither Moses himself, nor even Solomon, who in wisdom surpassed all mankind, could ever open the fiftieth gate, which leads immediately into the presence of the *En Saph*, the Infinite and Omnipotent God, whom no mortal ever yet beheld or could fully comprehend.\*

I should not have dwelt so long on these particulars, but for the very striking resemblance which subsists between this relation and what has previously occurred concerning the rites of initiation into the Mithratic and Eleusynian mysteries; the *θεια φωτα*, or DIVINE LIGHTS, displayed in them, during that splendid exhibition, to the view of the INITIATED: and the INTELLECTUAL LADDER and SIDEREAL GATES, mentioned in Celsus.

That passage cited from Celsus, in the second volume of this work, in which the sidereal Metempsychosis, or migration of the soul through the SEVEN PLANETARY GATES, is symbolically represented, is a very curious fragment of antiquity, for which we are obliged to Origen, who was engaged in a theological controversy with

\* Basnage and the rabbies there cited, p. 189.

with that philosopher: it is likewise a very valuable one, because we find no such particular information relative to the Mithratic rites, once so predominant throughout Asia, in any other of the ancient writers on that subject. Celsus possibly might have conversed with some Persian who had been initiated into those profound mysteries in which the Metempsychosis was so early propagated, and the symbols of the doctrine itself so conspicuously displayed. The general prevalence of that doctrine in the remotest periods in Persia, India, and Egypt, exhibits another proof that they must all have originally derived it from some common source, the corrupted branch of one great family; and it came to the Persians through the medium of the prior Zoröaster, or Belus, whose name indicates him to have been the earliest astronomer; who built the first observatory; and who first taught mankind the worship of the planets. How far the ancient Jews sanctioned with their assent the doctrine of the Metempsychosis will be discussed hereafter when we consider the Zorästrian Oracles; but that they were no strangers to the symbol is evident so early as the age of the patriarch Jacob, who not only beheld that MIGHTY LADDER set upon the earth, the top of which reached

reached up to heaven, and on which the angelic beings *ascended and descended*, but at the sight exclaimed, *Surely this is none other than the HOUSE OF GOD, and this is the GATE OF HEAVEN!* Here then is a most ancient patriarchal notion plainly taken up and propagated afterwards in the Gentile world, but flourishing among the Jews BEFORE THEIR SOJOURNING IN EGYPT. Indeed I cannot help remarking, that, the farther we advance in our comparison of the sciences prevailing among the most ancient Hebrews and those flourishing during the earliest periods among the other nations of the East, we shall discover additional and more powerful arguments in support of the hypothesis, of which some faint outlines are drawn in the preface of this volume, that all the sciences and theology of the ancient world originally came, not from Egypt, but from Chaldæa, and, in particular, that astronomy, the noblest of them, was carried in that part of Asia to a high point of improvement before it began to be cultivated in Egypt. In the book of Job, many passages have been pointed out by Mr. Costard in proof of this assertion, and strong additional evidence will hereafter be adduced by myself. As we penetrate deeper into the mystery of the Hebrew Sephiroth, we find

find circumstances open, which evince it to have been at once a physical and a theological symbol: and to me it appears indubitable, that the primitive idea altogether originated in astronomical speculations. It is necessary, then, to acquaint the reader, that these FIFTY GATES of wisdom are distinguished by the Hebrew mystagogues into FIVE chief ones, each of which comprehends ten. The three former of these greater gates include the knowledge of the first principles of things; and, in passing through them, the soul is busied in discussing the nature of the first matter, of the gloomy chaos, of the immense void, and of the elements; the mineral and vegetable creation; insects, reptiles, fishes, birds, and quadrupeds; and, finally, of the creation of man, of his faculties, senses, and various other particulars of a deep metaphysical kind. But it is the FOURTH GATE which in a singular manner claims our attention; for, through that gate we are immediately introduced into the planetary world; and all the wonders of astronomy, as far as then known, are exhibited to our view. There we find one of the names of the *seven planets*, and one of the *seven* angels who direct their course, allotted to each of the inferior Sephiroth; and upon this I found my conjecture that



that the whole might originally be an astronomical symbol; the oldest, doubtless, in the postdiluvian world, and possibly tinged with the wisdom of the antediluvians. Hence, probably, the SEVEN GATES erected in the caverns of Mithra; hence the Brahmin CHAR ASHERUM,\* or FOUR DEGREES of Hindoo probation, if not the whole body of science and theology inculcated in the four VEDAS, or books of knowledge; hence the excruciating trials, still more severe than those in India, through which the aspirant in the Persian mysteries was compelled to toil while he passed the TWENTY-FOUR degrees of probation, and suffered the dreadful fast of FIFTY DAYS;† hence were derived the Zoroastrian Wisdom and the Chaldaic Theurgy, as well as their magic and other dark arts of divination, which spread thence to Egypt, to Greece, and from those countries throughout the whole world.

The conjecture of the Sephiroth being of astronomical original is not a little strengthen-

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\* When I come to the consideration of the CHAR ASHERUM, I shall compare the sufferings of the Brahmin and Persian candidates for initiation, which were of a nature appalling and tremendous, being plunged in alternate baths of flame and water.

† See Porphyry de Abstinentiâ, cap. 6, sect. 18.

ed by their very name of CELESTIAL BRIGHTNESSES, as if we should say the SAPPHIRES of the Sky, and by the Hebrew title prefixed to the fourth gate of wisdom, in the Cabala Hebræorum, of which the translation is, *MUNDUS SPHÆRARUM*. In this table the three superior Sephiroth are denominated, the first, *Cœlum Empyreum*; the second, *Primum Mobile*; the third, *Firmamentum*; that is, the THREE HEAVENS: while to the seven inferior, according to the order of their numeration, are assigned the names of the SEVEN PLANETS, or the Sun, Venus, Mercury, the Moon, Saturn, Jupiter, and Mars. Consonant to the ancient idea, mentioned before, of the stars being *animated intelligences*, the Hebrews appointed to these seven planets, as they did to all the stars, presiding angels, whose names are Raphael, Haniel, Michael, Gabriel, Zaphkiel, Zadkiel, Gamaliel; and these probably are the same with the SEVEN MINISTRING ANGELS, that, in the Revelations, are said to stand before the throne of God. This circumstance, alone, if duly considered, exhibits the most direct corroborative testimony of the inferior point of view in which the Jews regarded the SEVEN LAST SEPHIROTH.\*

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\* See *Œdip. Ægypt.* tom. ii. p. 520; and *Baſnage*, p. 11.

One of the most ancient symbolical representations of a triune power existing in the Godhead, and one the most of all illustrative of the ideas entertained by the Jews on this subject, is that which I am now about to exhibit to the reader: it is the ancient mode by which they designated the name Jehovah, and, if Kircher may be credited, is at this day to be seen in the old Hebrew manuscripts of the Vatican. The reader has already received some intimation of the profound veneration in which the Jews have ever holden this ineffable name: but the cabalists have exceeded all bounds in their romantic panegyrics upon its awful properties and wonderful perfections. At the pronounciation of this august name, those rhapsodists affirm, all Nature trembles; the angels feel the motion of the universe, and ask one another with astonishment, whence comes this concussion of the world? Scripture itself seems to authorise the most profound veneration for it, since it was of this name that the royal Psalmist exclaimed, *O Lord God! how excellent is THY NAME in all the earth.* Every letter that contributes to the formation of it is of the most deep and mysterious import. The ' , or Jod, which is the first, denotes the thought, the idea, of God.

It is a RAY of LIGHT! say the enraptured cabalists, which darts a lustre too transcendant to be contemplated by mortal eye;\* it is a POINT, at which thought pauses, and imagination itself grows giddy and confounded. "Man," says the rabbies, "man, may lawfully roll his thoughts from one end of heaven to the other; but they cannot approach that inaccessible LIGHT, that primitive existence, contained in the letter Jod."† To the other letters in this ineffable name scarcely less wonders are attributed; but what must be considered as very remarkable, is, that, according to Kircher, the ancient Jews absolutely applied the three first letters of this name to denote the three superior Sephiroth; and he remarks, that, in fact, there are but three distinct letters in the word, which are, Jod, He, and Vau; the last letter being only a repetition of the second. The initial  $\aleph$ , Jod, therefore, denotes the *fons et principium*, or first hypostasis; the  $\beth$ , He, being one of their double or compounded letters, is properly applied to express the second hypostasis, who unites,

\* See, in page 200, the CORONAL RADII, by which were designated the THREE JODS by which they anciently symbolized the name Jehovah.

† M. Bafnage's History of the Jews, p. 193.

unites, in his own person, two natures, the divine and the human; while the medial ו, Vau, which is copulative, combining the letters preceding and subsequent, is as just an emblem of the Holy Spirit; of that Spirit, “ qui, cùm sit amor Patris et Filii, quo se invicem amant, rectè nexus et copula utriusque nuncupatur. Quarta verò litera ה, He, secundæ junctâ in יהוה, Jehovah, duplicem in filio naturam designat: ה equidem post ו, *divinam*; ה verò post ה, *humanam*.”\* This curious information is transcribed by Kircher from Galatinus, who quotes rabbinical authority in proof of his assertions. Lest, however, these writers should be thought fanciful, and the evidence suspicious, I shall immediately proceed to produce evidence more directly in point, and from as high authority as can be brought.

One of the profoundest scholars that ever flourished in the annals of Hebrew literature, since the æra of Christianity, was BUXTORF the younger; and his treatise on the ten names of God is deservedly holden, even by the Jews themselves, in a degree of respect with which they honour few Christian writers beside. His remarks on the most venerated title, יהוה,

\* Œdip Ægypt. tom. ii. p. 234.

Jehovah, particularly merit our attention, since they open new sources of information, and unfold the most secret mysteries of the cabalists. “This name,” says Buxtorf, “signifies ENS, EXISTENS A SEIPSO, *ab æterno et in æternum, omnibusque aliis extra se essentiam et existentiam communicans*; the Being existing of necessity from all eternity and to eternity, and communicating to all things being and substance.” In another place, consonant to a phrase of St. John in the Apocalypse, he asserts that Jehovah signifies the Being WHO IS, and WHO WAS, and WHO IS TO COME; and remarks that the letters, which compose the word, in a singular manner illustrate the meaning of it; “Nam, litera Jod ab initio characteristica est *futuri*: VAU in medio, participii temporis *presentis*: HE, in fine, cum Kametz subscripto, *præteriti*.” — “Accordingly,” adds Buxtorf, “God was pleased mystically to reveal and typify himself under that name to Moses; FUI, SUM, ERO.”\*

According to this author, “In antiquis paraphrasibus Chaldaïcis manuscriptis Judæorum, nomen hoc TETRAGRAMMATON scribitur per TRIA JOD cum subscripto Kamets, et

\* Vide Buxtorfi Dissert. de Nominibus Dei Hebræicis, apud alias Dissert. pp. 241, 242, edit. Basl, quarto, 1662.

et nonnunquam circulo inclusa. Tria Jod, putant denotare tres hypostases; tria Jod, tres æquales hypostases; unicūm Kametz, tribus illis subscriptum, essentiam unicam tribus personis communem.\* It is affirmed, that, in the ancient Chaldee paraphrases, preserved in manuscripts among the Jews, the sacred Tetragrammaton is written after the following manner: They drew three Jods with the point Kametz placed underneath, and sometimes inclosed the whole in a circle. The THREE JODS were so drawn to mark the THREE HYPOSTASES in the divine nature. EQUAL in magnitude, and similar in form, they denoted the CO-EQUALITY of those persons. By the single KAMETZ, placed underneath, they meant to symbolize the UNITY of the essence, common to each person. The author of a rabbinical book, cited by Kircher, and intituled PARDES, confirms the fact thus related by Buxtorf, in the following express words: *Quod ad mysterium hoc nomen scribunt TRIBUS JOD; and Lilius Gyraldus† asserts the same thing: “ Apud antiquos quosdam Hebræos legimus*

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\* Vide Buxtorfi Dissert. de Nominibus Dei Hebræicis, apud alias Dissert. p. 260, edit. Basil, quarto, 1662.

† Lili Gyraldi Hist. Deorum, Syntagma i. p. 2.

hâc significatione notarum, tribus videlicet Jod literis, quæ circulo concludebantur, supposito puncto Chametz hoc modo :”



There is no occasion to collect additional evidence on this subject from Hebrew authorities, since, as I have already remarked, Kircher affirms, that, to his own knowledge, all the most ancient Hebrew manuscripts of the Bible in the Vatican exhibit the Tetragrammaton thus written. Nor was this the only emblematical design by which the ancient rabbies have discovered to posterity their true sentiments on the subject, so obstinately denied by their descendants; for, Galatine has proved that they sometimes designated the mysterious name of God by three radii, or points, disposed in the form of a crown,† after the following manner :



And Johannes Hortensius, in a book written expressly on the mystical signification of the Hebrew letters, and cited in the original by Kircher, thus corroborates his assertions :

“ Veteres,

† Galatinus, lib. ii. cap. x. fol. 49 and 50.



“Veteres, aliâ ratione, scribebant Jehovah; aliâ, legebant. Quidam id, TRIBUS JOD, quidam TRIBUS APICIBUS, ad trium divinarum proprietatum judicandum, scribebant.”

The Jews apply the letters of the Hebrew alphabet to numerical purposes; and Calmet informs us, that they believe all the letters of that alphabet depend upon the name JEHOVAH. They cast up, therefore, the sum and value of those which compose that name, and frame, thence, one of *twelve*, mentioned, but not explained, in a preceding note; *i. e.* the HEMMIMPHORAS: another of *forty-two*, of which a specimen occurred in a former page: and a third of *seventy-two* letters, which is endowed with a more wonderful potency than all.

If the reader should be desirous of knowing more about the power ascribed to sacred names and mystic numbers by the ancient Hebrews; from whom it cannot be doubted but that Pythagoras, when at Babylon, stole his sacred TETRACTYS, or quaternion of letters, and other numerical symbols; he may consult M. Basnage, lib. ii. cap. 13 and 14, who has entered extensively into that curious subject.

subject. Various tables of these sacred numerical calculations are also exhibited, among the Cabala Hebræorum, in the second volume of the *Œdipus Ægyptiacus*; and, though they may appear trifling, yet they rise to infinite magnitude and importance, when any doctrine, so momentous as that under discussion, can be proved thence not only to have been admitted into their creed, but to have been the subject of extensive speculation and of profound research. This is apparent from the following remark of the same celebrated and holy rabbi, from whom the Hebrew passage was cited in page 153 preceding: “ Ex nomine duodecim literarum emanat nomen 42 literarum; quod est, PATER DEUS, FILIUS DEUS, SPIRITUS SANCTUS DEUS, TRINUS IN UNO, ET UNUS IN TRINO; quæ in Hebraïco 42 literæ.” The cautious rabbi immediately subjoins, “ Notare autem debes, hæc nomina esse ex divinis arcanis, quæ à quocunque occultari debent, quousque veniat MESSIAS JUSTUS NOSTER. *Illa tibi patefecì; tu verò ea occulta fortitèr.*”



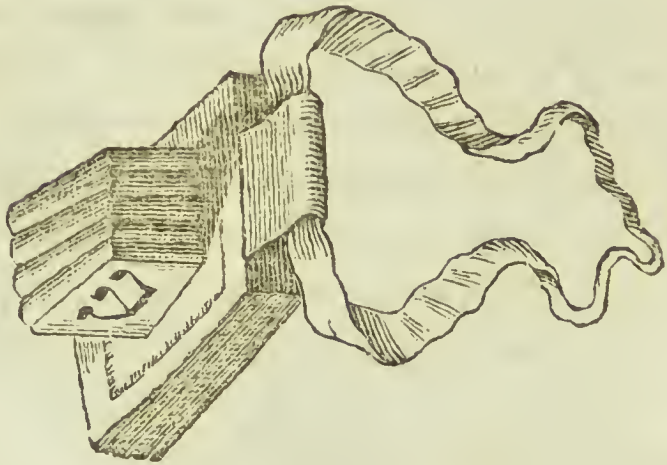
I have observed, in a preceding page, that the author of the Zohar must have been convinced of this distinction in the divine nature, since he brings the Hebrew letter SCHIN as a symbol of that distinction. He asserts, that the three BRANCHES, arising out of the ROOT of this letter, are an emblem of the heavenly FATHERS, whom he denominates, JEHOVAH, OUR LORD, JEHOVAH.\* This comparison, indeed, was natural enough to an author who, according to a passage cited before, had exclaimed, “Veni, et vide mysterium verbi ELOHIM! Sunt TRES GRADUS, et quilibet gradus per se distinctus; veruntamen sunt UNUS, et in unum conjunguntur, nec unus ab altero dividitur.”† I am inclined to think, that, in this very comparison, there is still a latent allusion to the TREE of the SEPHIROTH; for, we see the parallel extended both to the ROOT and to the BRANCHES of this letter. Whether or not there be any truth in the observation, it is still very remarkable, that this Hebrew letter, ש, is the first of the word, שַׁדַּי, SHADDAÏ, or Almighty, one of the appropriate and incommunicable names of God. Schindler

\* Zohar, fol. 54, col. 2; and Dr. Allix, p. 170.

† R. Simeon Ben. Jochai, in Zohar, ad 6 Levitici sectionem.

dler and other Hebrew lexicographers represent it as exhibiting the figure of a TRIDENT, and as a letter of high mystical import among the cabalists. In the more ancient Samaritan character, the strokes of this letter are still more equal, and the idea of co-equality, therefore, more exactly expressed: but distinct traces of both those letters are evidently discernible in the Persian and Arabian Schin; of which latter language Sir William Jones, in the preface to his Persian Grammar, asserts, that the Hebrew, the Chaldaic, the Syriac, and the Ethiopian, tongues are only dialects.

THE HEAD-PHYLACTERY OF THE JEWS,  
COPIED FROM SURENHUSIUS.



Surenhusius,

Surenhusius, in his notes upon the *Mischna*,\* giving an account, from Rabbi Maimonides, of the *TEPHILIM*, or phylacteries, which the Jews were accustomed to wear, asserts, that, on the outside of the phylactery for the head, both before and behind, this letter was cut so high and deep as to be distinctly visible, and strikingly to attract the eye. In the phylacteries, or *MEZUZOTH*, which they fastened round the left arm, the same word *יהוה*, *SHADDAÏ*, was inscribed at length; and the reader will be pleased to remark, that this very word contains both the *SCHIN*, the acknowledged symbol of the three hypostases, and the *Jod*, the initial letter of the word *Jehovah*. Calmet adds somewhat still farther remarkable; for, according to him, the old Jews not only wore this mystical letter on the phylactery, but took especial care to tie the thong that bound it round the arm in a knot resembling the form of the letter *JOD*.† This was, doubtless, done to express that *UNITY*, by which, though we know not the manner, the three hypostases are

\* Vide *THE MISCHNA*, tom. i. p. 9, edit. fol. Amsterdam, 1698; where the reader will find all the species of phylacteries accurately engraved.

† See Calmet's Dictionary, on the word *Phylactery*.

are inseparably connected. And here justice compels me to add; to the honour of that nation of whose sublime theology this tenet forms the predominant feature, and that which distinguished them in so remarkable a manner from the surrounding nations, involved as those nations were in a barbarous and boundless polytheism; that, by whatever symbolical allusions they anciently figured out the PLURALITY of the persons, they, at the same time, constantly and decisively marked the UNITY of the essence. Besides the evidence just adduced, I have exhibited instances of their rigid adherence to this maxim in the CIRCLE that included the three Jods, as well as in the ROOT of the branching tree of the Sephiroth and of the letter Schin: I shall now produce an additional proof of this assertion in the figurative way by which they anciently designated the JOD, that important and mystical letter, concerning which so much has been already said.

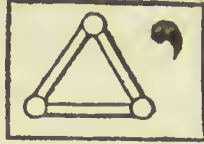
The reader has been informed, from Sir William Jones, that the Hindoos have a sacred alphabet, the characters composing which are believed to have been taught to the Brahmins by a voice from heaven; as well as that

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the Egyptians also had a sacred sacerdotal language, in which were wrapped up the most awful mysteries of their theology, and to which they equally assigned a celestial origin. The Jews, in their assertions, are by no means behind their Asiatic and African competitors for *literary* renown, since they boast of a celestial and mystical alphabet communicated by angels to the patriarchs, their ancestors.\* This alphabet may, with more truth than either of the others, be called CELESTIAL, since the characters that compose it were, in the earliest ages, applied in the very same manner as Bayer, in modern times, made use of the letters of the Greek alphabet, more distinctly to mark the position of the stars in the various constellations. The plate, which displays those letters thus applied, is a most curious remnant of Jewish antiquities, to be seen in the Pantheon Hebraicum, and I may possibly, hereafter, borrow it from Kircher, to illustrate my sentiments on the early proficiency of the Hebrew patriarchs in astronomical science: for the present, I mention it only to remark the proof which it affords how early the Jews entertained the notions of a heavenly TRIAD, and yet how anxious they

\* See this alphabet in *Cædip. Ægypt.* tom. ii. p. 105.

they were, at the same time, to express the UNITY. The Hebrew JOD, then, in that alphabet, is designated by an EQUILATERAL TRIANGLE to denote the former, and a SINGLE JOD to shadow out the latter, in the following manner :



If any body should, in answer to this, contend, that the Jews might have borrowed the notion of thus representing the three divine hypostases from the Egyptians, among whom, I have myself repeatedly observed, this geometrical figure was a known emblem of Deity ; I shall not violently dispute that point in favour of the Jews, in opposition to the people who, probably, of all other nations, first cultivated the science of geometry ; but shall only remark, that, though a ceded, it would by no means be a proved, point. I shall leave it to the reader's reflection, and to what may be the result, in his mind, of a comparison of this with other kindred symbols previously produced.

Another evident and memorable token of the belief in this mystery of the ancient Hebrews is the manner in which (it has been already remarked) the high-priest was annually



ally accustomed to bless the assembled people: During this ceremony, he not only THREE TIMES\* pronounced the eternal benediction, quoted before from Numbers vi. 24, and each different time in a different accent; but, in the elevation of his hands, extended the three middle-fingers of his right hand in so conspicuous a manner as to exhibit a manifest emblem of those THREE HYPOSTASES, to whom the triple benediction and repetition of the word Jehovah, in a varied tone of voice, evidently pointed. I am credibly informed, that, at this day, on certain high festivals and solemnities, this form of blessing the people is still adhered to by the Jewish priests, but is attempted to be explained by them, as if allusive to the three patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; an explanation, of which it may be doubted whether it favours more of impiety or absurdity. Captain INNYS, of Madras, will, I hope, excuse my producing him as a voucher on so important a fact as that the Moham-  
 medan priests also, at present, use the same form; for, when in England, that gentleman

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informed

\* Kircher, to prove this custom, gives the highest authority possible, that is, Maimonides: "TERTIO, NON SINE ALTIS-  
 SIMO MYSTERIO, TESTE RAMBAM."

informed me he had been an ocular witness of it in India. This is a very strong collateral circumstance; for, since it is notorious that Mohammed was indebted for a considerable part of his theological knowledge to the secret instructions of a Jew,\* he probably learned from that Jew the symbol; and it was consequently practised in the Arabian mosques so early as the seventh century. Nor ought the circumstance of the Mohammedan faith, inculcating in such direct terms the unity of God, to be urged as any objection, since neither the Jew nor the impostor, might have known the original cause or meaning of the usage. The symbol itself is preserved by Kircher, from whom the representation annexed is copied.



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\* See Mr. Sale's profound preliminary discourse to the Koran, and the article MOHAMMED in the General Dictionary.

The same author acquaints us, “ Reperio quoque, unico digito erecto, qui index dicitur, in quo tria internodia TRIA JOD exprimebant, veteres juramentum hoc modo præstitisse:”



Which information I insert, not that I lay any stress upon it, although the fact is curious enough, but on account of the intelligence contained in the latter part of the sentence, where our author subjoins; “ quam consuetudinem et Pythagoram, digito elato, per TTRACTYN jurare solitum, in scholam suam transtulisse verisimile est.”\* Indeed, it is highly improbable, that Pythagoras, while he stole the sacred name of the Hebrew Deity, should neglect to imitate also the mystic mode of designating that name, or symbolizing that Deity. This form of bestowing the benediction, as mentioned above, he remarks in another place, is still observed in many provinces

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provinces

\* Œdip. Ægypt. tom. ii. p. 241, ubi supra.

provinces under the jurisdiction of the Greek, and even the Roman, church; “In hunc diem, non in Græcâ tantùm ecclesiâ, sed et Latinâ, multis in locis adhuc moris esse intelligo; etsi moderni Hebræi, in odium sanctæ fidei nostræ, uno omisso Jod, *plerumque* duobus tantùm id effigient ut sequitur: ’.’”\*

The last symbol which I shall select in proof of these assertions, from that valuable repository of Asiatic antiquities, the *Œdipus Ægyptiacus*, is as remarkable a one as any of those preceding; and proves that the Jews could not only *delineate spheres*, but that they thought the *GLOBE*, thus artificially represented, was, in reality, supported by three sovereign, but co-equal, hypostases, symbolized in a manner exactly conformable to the old Jewish notion; which, I have shewn in a preceding page, so remarkably displays itself in the paraphrase of Jonathan, and that called the Jerusalem Targum: it is a species of armillary sphere, sustained by *THREE HANDS*, and inscribed with three Hebrew letters, the initials of three Hebrew words signifying *TRUTH*, *JUDGEMENT*, and *PEACE*.†

From

\* *Œdip. Ægypt. tom. ii. p. 115.*

† See this symbol engraved also on the plate annexed.

From the rabbinical notion of the two HANDS of God, (a notion at least eighteen hundred years old,) we should be naturally led to conclude, that this was a very ancient symbol of the Triune Power that governed the world; and it was copied by our author from the beginning of a manuscript-commentary on the famous rabbinical book called PIRCHE AVOTH. Rabbi Gamalides, who composed that commentary, thus explains the symbol which formed possibly the frontispiece of his volume: "Super TRIA mundus subsistit; supra Veritatem, supra Judicium, et Pacem; juxta quod dicitur: Veritas, et Judicium, et Pax, judicant in portis vestris:" *The universe is established upon Truth, Judgement, and Peace; according to that sacred adage, Truth, Judgement, and Peace, preside within your gates.* These words were, doubtless, intended by this rabbi as allusive to the Omnipotent Judge of all the earth; to THAT ANCIENT OF DAYS before whom the JUDGEMENT was set and the books were opened; to that MESSIAH, who declared that He was, at once, THE WAY, THE TRUTH, and THE LIFE; and to that holy RUAH, who is the author and giver of ALL PEACE.

The stupendous symbol of the HEBREW CHERUBIM must now become the subject of our extensive disquisition; a symbol which, I have observed, in the minute investigation of the objects which compose it, will compel us to take a wide range in the walks of Asiatic theology and philosophy, and will gradually lead us back to that point from which we have so long diverged, but which we have not entirely neglected, during this digression, the theological rites of Hindostan, in which the grand TRIAD, Brahma, Veesnu, and Seeva, bear so prominent and conspicuous a part.

In the works of Philo Judæus there is an express dissertation upon the Cherubim, in which that writer repeatedly asserts, that those TWO POWERS in God, which we have seen the paraphrasts denominate the TWO HANDS of God, are symbolized by the cherubic figures of the ark; in allusion to which, it is said, *God dwelleth between the Cherubim*. The learned Bochart, in his treatise "De Animalibus Sacræ Scripturæ," and Spencer, "De Origine Arcæ et Cherubinorum," have likewise entered very deeply into the investigation of this Hebrew hieroglyphic. There is

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one point, however, in which I feel myself compelled to differ from Spencer and other writers who have propagated opinions similar to those which he has laboured to support, *viz.* that this symbol owed its origin to the connexion of the Jews with the Egyptians, because Cherubim is the plural of CHERUB,\* a Hebrew word signifying *to plough*, and the god Apis was worshipped in Egypt under the figure of an ox, the face of which animal one of the four aspects of the Cherubim is represented to possess. I cannot but consider this hypothesis as an insult to the majesty of that Supreme Being whose awful denunciations were constantly directed against the base idolatry of Egypt, as well as degrading to the character of his prophet. Let us, in the first place, attentively consider what is related concerning the Cherubim in the prophetic vision of Ezekiel; and then advert to what Philo and Josephus, who must be supposed fully to know, and accurately to report, the sentiments of their nation, have observed on this head. It may be truly said of the description in Ezekiel: of which, however,

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\* Spencer, de Legibus Hebræorum, p. 763, edit. fol. Cantab. 1685.

since it extends through nearly the whole of the first chapter of that prophet, I can only insert the outlines in these pages; that, in grandeur of idea and energy of expression, it as far surpasses the loftiest strains of Homer and the most celebrated Gentile authors, as, in the opinion of the great critic Longinus, the account which Moses gives of the creation does all their relations of the cosmogony.

At the commencement of this sublime book, which is properly asserted by Lowth to abound with that species of eloquence to which the Greek rhetoricians give the denomination of *δεινωσις*, and which Rapin calls *le terrible*, the prophet represents himself as sojourning, amidst the sorrowful captives of Judah, on the banks of the CHEBAR, when, to his astonished view, *the heavens were opened, and he saw visions of God*. This stupendous appearance of the GLORY OF JEHOVAH, which immediately took place, is represented by him as preceded by a whirlwind from the north, attended with *a great cloud*, and a fire *infolding itself*, that is, spiral, while a brightness issued from the centre of it, vivid and transparent as *the colour of amber*. The four sacred animals



mals that supported the everlasting throne which resembled the sapphire, and on which sat the LIKENESS OF A MAN, whose appearance, *from his loins upwards and from his loins downwards*, was like that of an ardent flame encircled with variegated splendors, such as are visible in the *bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain*, exhibited to Ezekiel a four-fold aspect. They had each the face of A MAN; they had likewise *the face of a lion and the face of an ox*; they four also had *the face of an eagle*. They had each *four wings*, which were joined one to another; and the noise of those wings, when they moved, was loud as *the noise of great waters*, awful as *the voice of the Almighty*; and *the likeness of the firmament upon the heads of the living creatures was as the colour of the terrible crystal stretched forth over their heads above*. This magnificent chariot of the Deity is likewise said to have *wheels of the colour of a beryl*, that is, azure, the colour of the sky, wheel within wheel; or, as Jonathan's paraphrase translates the word *ophanim*, SPHERE WITHIN SPHERE; and those wheels had rings, or strakes, full of eyes, *so high that they were dreadful*; that is, observes Lowth, their circumference was so vast as to

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raise terror in the prophet who beheld them.\* Such is the lofty description of the chariot that conveyed the personified SHECHINAH, the GOD-MAN, who, in the likeness of the rainbow, sat upon the sapphire throne, and who, half-human, half-divine, in that appearance exhibited to the favoured prophet the mystery of the future incarnation of the Λογος.

Thus are the three persons in the Holy Trinity shadowed out under the similitude of the three noblest animals in nature; the BULL, the lord of the plain; the LION, the king of the forest; and the EAGLE, the sovereign of birds. But, though each of the sacred Cherubic figures had the aspect of those august animals, they had likewise the face of A MAN, to denote that the human nature was blended with the divine in Him who condescended to take our nature upon himself, in that particular person of the divine Triad who is emphatically called, *the Lion of the tribe of Judah*. In another chapter of this prophet, it is said, that *their whole body, and their backs, and their hands, and their wings, as well as the wheels, were full of eyes round about*. Ezekiel,

x.

\* Lowth, on Ezekiel, cap. i. 18. See also the whole chapter.

x. 12. This must be considered as a striking and expressive emblem of the guardian vigilance of Providence, all-seeing and omniscient; while the multitude of wings, with which they are adorned, exhibits to us as direct symbols of that powerful, that all-pervading, Spirit, which, while it darts through nature with a glance, is every where present to protect and defend us. So attached to this heavenly symbol were the Jews, that, when Solomon erected that stupendous temple which continued for so many ages the delight and boast of the Hebrew nation, we are told, 1 Kings, vi. 29, *he carved all the walls of the house round about with sculptured figures of Cherubim.* In the splendid vision also, above-described, which Ezekiel was permitted to have of the new temple, to be formed upon the model of the old, it is said that the walls were adorned with carved-work of CHERUBIM and palm-trees; *so that a palm-tree was between a cherub and a cherub; and every cherub had two faces; so that the face of A MAN was toward the palm-tree on the one side, and the face of A YOUNG LION toward the palm-tree on the other side: it was made through all the house round about.* Ezekiel xli. 18, 19.

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That the symbol of the Cherubim, as described in Ezekiel, did not owe its fabrication to ideas engendered during the connexion of the Jews with the Egyptians, I request permission to propose this additional argument. The symbol itself is apparently of astronomical origin; and, in that light, I hope, without the imputation of aiming to engraft romantic and unfounded notions upon the exalted system of the Hebrew theology, I may be permitted to consider it. In fact, if understood in this point of view, it imparts great additional lustre and sublimity to that system, since it represents the eternal throne of God to be established upon the adamantine pillars of the universe, as exalted on high above the canopy of heaven, and supported by the rolling spheres. In fact, as I shall shew more at large hereafter, the lion, the bull, and the eagle, were among the most ancient and the most distinguished of the forty-eight great constellations, into which the Asiatic astronomers, according to Ulug Beg, not the least celebrated among those of more recent date, in the most early ages, divided the visible heavens. “*Ut autem hæ stellæ à se invicem dignoscantur, excogitatæ sunt 48 figuræ, quarum 21 ad Boream*

ream zodiaci, 12 in ipso zodiaco, et 15 ad austrum :”\* or, that these stars might be distinguished each from the other, forty-eight figures of animals were fixed upon, by which they were designated; of these, 21 are situated to the north of the zodiac, 12 in the zodiac itself, and 15 to the south of it. This division was first made, as I shall likewise endeavour to demonstrate hereafter, not by the philosophers of Egypt, but by the progenitors of the human race, on the beautiful and spacious plains of Syria, where tradition places the seat of Paradise. Although I am not so sanguine as to affirm, with Gale and others, that all the learning, for which Egypt was so celebrated; especially in point of astronomical research, was imported into it by the Patriarchs Joseph and Abraham; yet, that the arts and sciences could not have had their birth in Egypt, there is this very strong presumptive evidence: it was impossible for Egypt, and especially the DELTA of Egypt, to have originally been inhabited but by a race already considerably advanced in the principles of geometry; a people, indued with previous skill to drain those vast marshes that probably overspread

\* See Ulug Beg, *Tabulæ fixarum Stellarum*, edit. Hyde, quarto, Oxon. 1665.

overspread the face of the country, and to erect the stupendous dams necessary to fence off the inundating Nile.

That the learned among the Jews had made, at some distant period, from whatever quarter derived, very considerable progress in astronomical and physical studies, is indisputably evident from what Josephus observes in describing the Tabernacle, its ornaments, and utensils. According to that author,\* the Tabernacle itself was fabricated to resemble THE UNIVERSE: he affirms, that the twelve loaves, ordered by Moses to be placed on the table, were emblematical of the TWELVE MONTHS which form the year; that, by branching out the candlesticks into SEVENTY PARTS, he secretly intimated the DECANI, or *seventy divisions* of the planets; and that the seven lamps upon the candlesticks alluded to the courses of the SEVEN PLANETS. He adds, that the two veils of the temple, composed of *four different* materials, were emblematical of the *four* elements; for, the fine linen, which was made of *flax*, the produce of the earth, typified THE EARTH; the *purple tinge* shadowed out THE SEA, because stained of that colour by the blood of a marine shell-fish; the

\* Antiq. Judaic. lib. iii. cap. 7, and the whole of sect. 7.

the DEEP BLUE was symbolical of the cærulean sky, or THE AIR; and the *scarlet* is a natural emblem of FIRE. He extends the philosophical allegory even to the blue and linen that composed the vestment of the high-priest, to the ephod, and the interwoven gold. He asserts, that the breast-plate, placed in the middle of that ephod, was typical of the earth placed in the CENTRE; and the zone, or girdle, which encompassed the high-priest, of the ocean that surrounded the earth. The two sardonyses on the high-priest's shoulders, he contends, pointed out the SUN and MOON, and the TWELVE STONES imaged out the TWELVE SIGNS of the zodiac; the BLUE MITRE, decorated with a golden crown, and inscribed with the awful name of GOD, was emblematical of heaven itself and the Deity who resided there.\* This account, by a Jewish historian, for which, however in some respects exaggerated, he had, no doubt, good TRADITIONAL ground to found his assertions upon, will not only prove how near even to the altar of their God the Hebrew philosophers

\* I have not the honour of being a MASON; but am informed, that, in the LODGES of that ORDER, many of these Jewish hieroglyphics, that ornamented the temple erected by Solomon, are at this day scrupulously preserved.

phers carried their allusions of this speculative nature, but will, in some measure, justify my calling the Cherubim a SUBLIME ASTRONOMICAL SYMBOL.

I have had repeated occasion to observe, that, before the invention of alphabetical characters, knowledge could only be communicated among mankind through the medium of hieroglyphics; and this was the solemn, the majestic hieroglyphic, by which the Almighty was pleased to manifest to man his attributes and properties. The mystic symbol was first erected, and the holy characters first engraved, on the east gate of the garden of Eden, to be viewed with reverence and studied with devout attention by the fallen posterity of Adam. Josephus, the more effectually to excite respect and veneration for this Hebrew symbol in the minds of his readers, purposely throws over it the veil of obscurity. He says, "The Cherubim are winged creatures; but the form of them does not resemble that of any living creatures seen by men, although Moses said he had seen such beings near the throne of God."\* Their figure, however, is accurately delineated both by Ezekiel, and in the Apocalypse; and the meaning of the symbol itself

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\* Josephi Antiq. lib. iii. cap. 6, sect. 5.



is too clear and too pointed to be mistaken. This grand similitude of the triune Deity, familiar to all the patriarchs from Adam, who gazed upon it with admiration in Paradise, to Moses, who trembled before it on Mount Sinai, may be considered as the grand prototype of every sacred hieroglyphic, by which, in succeeding ages, mankind symbolized the Supreme Being, or those base deities whom they mistook for that Being. It behoves me to bring as decisive proof of this assertion as the subject will allow to be brought. Having seen, therefore, among the Hebrews, the awful similitude of God, let us examine how the heathens shadowed him out. Having noticed the bull, the lion, and the eagle, of the Mosaic dispensation, let us inquire to what particular objects those THREE archetypal symbols were applied among their pagan neighbours of Asia.

The reader has been already informed, that the first object of the idolatry of the ancient world was THE SUN. The beauty, the lustre, and vivifying warmth, of that planet early enticed the human heart from the adoration of that Being who formed its glowing sphere and all the host of heaven. The sun, however, was not solely adored for its own intrinsic

lustre and beauty; it was probably venerated by the devout ancients as the most magnificent emblem of the SHECHINAH which the universe afforded. Hence the Persians, among whom the true religion for a long time flourished uncorrupted, according to Dr. Hyde, in a passage before referred to, asserted, that the THRONE OF GOD was seated in the Sun. In Egypt, however, under the appellation of Osiris, the Sun was not less venerated than, under the denomination of Mithra, in Persia. But all the deities of the ancient world were constantly designated in their temples by some expressive symbol; and it is remarkable, that the symbols figurative of the most illustrious of those deities were the sacred animals of which the CHERUBIM were composed, and which are represented as wafting, through the expanse, the effulgence of the divine Shechinah. Their admiration of this wonderful and mysterious hieroglyphic had finally the effect to render the Jews themselves guilty of the grossest idolatry; and their progressive descent through the stages of that nefarious offence merits an attentive retrospect.

Impressed with the deepest awe and veneration, by contemplating the GLORY of Jehovah,

hovah, while that illustrious appearance remained *present* to his view, the pious zeal of the Hebrew induced him, when the similitude of Deity *was removed*, to endeavour to animate his devotion by an emblematical representation both of the GLORY and the CHERUBIM. The original intention, however afterwards perverted, was innocent; and the designation of Deity and its revered attributes, however afterwards degraded, were, in the first instance, if not *laudable*, far from *criminal*. But in what adequate manner shall the enraptured fervor of patriarchal devotion represent, when absent, the ineffable, the eternal, Shechinah? A radiated circle of light, darting every way a dazzling splendor, seemed the most proper emblem, and was therefore adopted. The descendant of HAM saw and admired the radiant symbol. Ignorant of the real purpose of the pious designer, who meant to shadow out a spirit, not a substance, he conceived it to be the image of the SOLAR ORB, which he had long beheld with wonder. He fell prostrate and adored it; and his imitative pencil drew the first outline of that wonderful and multiform system of hieroglyphics, under which were represented the objects of Egyptian idolatry. We might be

justified, indeed, in tracing, even higher than to this remote period, the origin of solar superstition, and by the very same channel. CAIN, doubtless, remembered with anguish the glory of that PRESENCE from which, after the murder of his brother, he was driven with the fiercest denunciations of divine wrath. He might possibly, therefore, instruct his antediluvian posterity in this species of hieroglyphic idolatry; for, it is not a little remarkable, that the Egyptian Trinity consists of an ORB, or GLOBE, sometimes radiated, with a WING and a SERPENT issuing from it. An engraving of it, as taken from the front of a most ancient Egyptian temple, accompanies this volume, and the explanation of that curious symbol will be given in a future page.

To this representation of the Shechinah itself, to complete the symbol, the Hebrew Patriarch added the illumined heads of the sacred animals above-described. While some adorned the cherubim with innumerable EYES, others covered them all over with WINGS, according to one or the other description of them in the ancient prophets. These figurative emblems they set up in those parts of their houses which were peculiarly appropriated

priated to the rites of devotion, and in whatever places, when absent from the domestic roof, in groves of oaks, or in the sacred recesses of caverns, where they thought the Deity might be more successfully addressed. They called them TERAPHIM, a word translated by the SEVENTY Εἰδωλα, representative images, like the silver shrines of Diana; they considered them as the peculiar and hallowed residence of the TRIUNE DEITY; and, when the Hebrew religion began to decline from its original purity, they adopted the Pagan manners, and consulted them as those Gentiles did their oracular images and instruments of divination. In this sacred and compound hieroglyphic we discover of what nature, *probably*,\* were the domestic gods which Rachel stole from her father Laban, the loss of which he so bitterly lamented.† Without going to Egypt for a species of idolatry which the Egyptians, perverting the primitive symbol, probably obtained from the Hebrew patriarchs, to this origin we may trace that fatal error of the Israelites, in setting up and worshipping

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\* I say *probably*, because I am aware that the TERAPHIM are, by respectable authors, and particularly by Calmet, very differently described and delineated.

† Genesis xxxi.

the golden calf; the similar offence of Jero-boam,\* and the first vestige of the Grecian, Roman, and, I may also add, the Indian, DII PENATES.

Although the Deity was more generally represented under the form of an OX, in Egypt, than in many other Eastern nations, so much more so, that, by degrees, from symbolizing God under that similitude, they proceeded to the impiety of adoring the animal itself, and he, in time, became the public idol of their temples: yet was the sacred bull an object nearly of as high and peculiar veneration both in Persia and India. *One incentive* to that devotion undoubtedly arose from the affectionate gratitude of the shepherds of Chal-dea, not only for the benefit of the nutritious milk which the herd abundantly bestowed, but for their great use in agriculture. The twofold blessing which that class of animals thus liberally imparted, in their opinion, rendered them proper symbols of the great Parent of men, who created all things by his nod, and supports them by his bounty. Thus, in Persia, according to a most curious account taken from the genuine books of the PARSEES, by M. Anquetil du Perron, and in-

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\* 2 Kings, xii. 28, 29.

ferred in the third volume of his ZEND AVES-TA, the Supreme Being was originally symbolized, adored, and addressed, under the form of a bull; and the reader may there peruse a translated prayer to the GOD-BULL. It was upon this account, according to the same learned and ingenious author, that, when men began to worship their deceased ancestors, and Noah, the great progenitor of the renovated world, came to be numbered first among those deified mortals, he was represented and venerated under a figure compounded of half MAN, half BULL, and denominated, in their sacred writings, *l'Homme Taureau*. The Apis of Egypt had, doubtless, a similar origin. The Brahmins of India, who represented all the operations of nature, as well as those of the mind, under significant symbols, found out an additional cause for reverencing the bull, and numbering that useful creature among their sacred hieroglyphics. That philosophic race, as deeply engaged in physical as metaphysical disquisitions, thought that no more proper emblem could be found of the great generative and prolific power of nature than the lordly bull, who, in the pride and vigour of his youth, ranges uncontrolled amidst the numerous and willing females of the pasture.

It is, therefore, as we have before had occasion to remark, that the bull is the animal which constantly accompanies Seeva, the god of generation and fecundity, who only *destroys to re-produce*. In the paintings of some of the pagodas, this animal is portrayed standing near him; in others he appears mounted upon his back.

The horns on the HEAD of the BULL, as is evident from the Egyptian ISIS and the Grecian IO, represent the rays which LIGHT and FIRE emit, the irradiations of celestial glory; and, in consequence, supreme eminence and strength. Hence the high altar at Jerusalem was decorated with four HORNS; hence Moses himself, and all the distinguished personages of antiquity, whether real or mythologic, as well in Egypt as in India, are, in the most ancient sculptures and paintings, invested with this symbol.

The HEAD of the LION, both in Persia and Tartary, was, in a peculiar manner, sacred to the solar light; the superior strength, nobility, and grandeur, of that animal, in addition to what has been remarked before concerning his being a distinguished constellation of the zodiac, and the sun shining forth in his greatest splendor from that sign, rendered him a  
proper



proper type of the sun, the being they adored, blazing in meridian fervor. The majestic orb of his countenance, his glowing eye-balls, and shaggy mane, spreading in glory around, like rays or clustering sparks of fire, upon the neck, which, like that of the horse in Job, may be said to be clothed with thunder, contributed perhaps in their allegorical fancy to give no less energy than lustre to the conception. In confirmation of what has been just said, it may be observed, that, to this day, on the imperial standard of the Great Mogul, of which the reader may see an engraving in Tavernier and Terry's *Voyage to India*, is portrayed THE SUN RISING IN GLORY BEHIND THE BODY OF A RECUMBENT LION; and an Arabian voyager, speaking of the dress of the Banians, says, "Their turbans in particular are highly curious, being formed of white muslin, and rolled together in such a manner as to imitate the horns and head of a cow or heifer, an animal revered among them even to adoration."

The EAGLE, that, with its *ardent eye*, could look steadfastly upon the solar blaze, and that, with its *soaring wing*, was imagined able to reach it, was a symbol of the divine nature, holden sacred in most nations of the Pagan world;

world; and, indeed, was in so peculiar a manner sacred to the sun, that one species of that bird is at this day denominated the EAGLE OF THE SUN. Strabo informs us, that, in Egypt, the Thebans worshiped the eagle;\* and authors need not be cited to prove a fact so well known as that, in Greece, the eagle was emphatically called THE BIRD OF JOVE, which bore his thunder, and reposed on the sceptred hand of the celestial king. Wings, however, (I do not merely speak of those of the eagle,) were, in ancient Egypt, the universal hieroglyphic of the WINDS. Wings of various kinds are conspicuously engraved near or upon most of the sacred animal figures that decorate the Mensa Isiaca; but are seen in a more particular manner expanded over the two heifers of Osiris and Isis.† No apter emblem indeed could be found to represent, in a general way, wind, or air, a rapid and restless element, than birds, or the wings of birds, gliding impetuously through the expanse of heaven. Scripture itself seems to justify the similitude, since the Almighty is sublimely represented as WALKING upon the WINGS of the WIND. But, as the course of birds is various, and as the

regions:

\* Strabonis Geograph. lib. xvii. p. 2.

† See Mensa Isiaca, opposite page 32.

regions in which they delight to reside are different, one species of winged fowl denoted the quarter from which one wind blew, another from which a second, another from which a third; and these various hieroglyphic birds are engraved on the ancient monuments of Egypt, as may be seen on those copied thence in the *Œdipus Ægyptiacus* of Kircher, in Montfaucon, and in Pococke.

To give one remarkable instance of what is here asserted in regard to that country which Holy Writ itself, most decidedly in support of my argument, has denominated **THE LAND SHADOWING WITH WINGS**. *Isaiah xviii. 1.* The two particular winds that most affected Egypt, were the northerly Etesian wind and the southern. The latter, springing up about the summer solstice, drove before it that vast body of aggregated vapours, which, discharging themselves in torrents of rain upon the high mountains of Ethiopia, caused the waters of the Nile to rise. The **HAWK**, therefore, observing at a particular season the same course, was considered as the most natural type of the Etesian wind. That propitious wind, on the contrary, which, rising after the inundation, blew from the South, and contributed its powerful aid towards the  
draining

draining off of those waters, was as naturally represented by the WHOOP, a bird, which, watching the subsiding of the inundation, issues from his retreat in Ethiopia, and, descending progressively with the decreasing stream, in its passage from Memphis to the ocean, feeds upon the luxurious repast which Providence has so kindly provided for it, in the numerous race of gnats, flies, and other insects, which are generated in abundance amidst the fat and prolific slime left by the retiring river.

Of the preceding reflections upon this favourite symbol of the Jews, reflections which are necessarily of a nature somewhat desultory and unconnected, the following is the sum and result. Without laying any improper stress upon this Hebrew hieroglyphic as an *indisputable proof*, though it is certainly a very strong *collateral evidence*, of their belief in a Trinity, we may safely allow that the illuminated heads, the innumerable eyes, and the extended wings, of the cherubic beings, which, in the Jewish hieroglyphics, ever accompanied that refulgent symbol, were doubtless intended to represent the guardian vigilance of the supreme Providence, as well as the celerity of the motions of that celestial light and spirit  
which

which pervades and animates all nature. The innocent and expressive emblem, which devotion had originally formed, was caught up and debased in the Pagan world. The FIRE, LIGHT, and SPIRIT, which, among the former, were only typical of the Supreme Being and his attributes, were by them mistaken for the Supreme Being himself, and were accordingly venerated in the place of that Being. These three principles became inextricably involved in their theology, and inseparably incorporated in all their systems of philosophy. They called the elementary fire, Pitha, Vulcan, Agnee; the solar light they denominated Osiris, Mithra, Surya, Apollo; and the pervading air, or spirit, Cnep, Narayen, Zeus, or Jupiter. Under those and other names they paid them divine homage; and thus, having, by degrees, from some dark ill-understood notions of a real Trinity in the divine nature, united to that mysterious doctrine their own romantic speculations in the vast field of physics, they produced a degraded Trinity, the sole fabrication of their fancy; and, instead of the GOD OF NATURE, nature itself, and the various elements of nature, became the objects of their blind and infatuated devotion.

From

From this combination of religious sentiment and sacred symbol, it probably arose that the images of their most venerated deities were represented either in sculpture or in poetry with THREE heads, or THREE faces, allusive, as we have exemplified above in the Grecian Zeus, to their office and attributes. Hence Mercury was called *triceps*; Bacchus, *triambus*; Diana, *triformis*; and Hecate, *tergemma*. These two last epithets occur together in the following line of the Æneid:

Tergeminamque Hecatem, tria virginis ora Dianæ.\*

Hence the symbols of all their principal divinities were of a threefold nature. Jupiter has his *three-forked* thunder, Neptune his *trident*, and Pluto his *three-beaded* Cerberus. In short, it probably arose from this source that the number *three* was holden by all antiquity in the most sacred light; and that the *triangle* and the *pyramid* came to be numbered among their most frequent and esteemed symbols of Deity.

This grand hieroglyphic of the Jews was either borrowed from their neighbours in Asia or they had it from the Hebrew patriarchs;

\* Æneid, b. iv. l. 511.

archs; and I think it disgraceful to the Jewish church, and derogatory to the God they adored, that any of the inspired prophets should take their ideas of Deity and divine concerns from the pagan rites of worship. This is my sole reason for having dwelt so long upon the subject of the cherubim, as portrayed in the vision of Ezekiel, and as sculptured in the temple of Solomon; and I trust, that, with the candid, it will be esteemed a sufficient reason. This mode, however, of representing the cherubim, in sculpture, was not universally adhered to. Those which were immediately over the ark were naked figures in a human form, whose expanded wings, meeting together, at once overshadowed the mercy-seat, and formed a sacred pavilion for the residence of that GLORY which is affirmed to have visibly dwelt between them. In this manner, they are delineated in the authentic volume of Calmet and Prideaux, and from them is copied the engraving in the next plate. It is of these figures, in which the human and angelic nature is so strikingly blended, that Philo speaks when he declares, *Αρχης μὲν ἐν καὶ Ἀγαθοτητος τῶν ΔΥΕΙΝ ΔΥΝΑΜΕΩΝ τὰ Χερσβιμ εἶναι συμβολα,*

ἑολα,\* “ that of the two powers in God, principality and goodness, those cherubim were the symbols;” and Rabbi Menachem, on the Pentateuch, is, in the following extract from Allix, asserted to extend the idea somewhat farther, even to the ark itself, to which they were inseparably united by the express command of God to Moses; to that ark which was a known and acknowledged symbol of Jehovah. “ They propose,” says this learned person, “ the image of the two cherubim which were drawn from the ark to give the idea of the two last persons; for, the *distinction of the cherubim* was evident, although there was an *unity of them with the ark*. In this manner speaks Rabbi Menachem, fol. lxxiv. col. 3.”† Considering, therefore, the former merely in the light of a noble astronomical symbol, we have, from this rabbi and Philo, sufficient evidence that the Jews once entertained similar conceptions with Christians, not only of a plurality in the divine nature, but of a Trinity in Unity, of which the cherubim of the ark and the ark itself were considered, by some of their writers, as immediate symbols. Let us now extend our view over the countries adjacent to

Judæa,

\* De Cherubim, p. 86, G. † Allix's Judgement, p. 169.



Judæa, and inquire what traces of this doctrine exist either in the hieroglyphics or the writings of the other pagan nations of the Eastern world. The subject is indeed vast and comprehensive, but will not be unattended with utility; and it is intimately connected with INDIAN ANTIQUITIES.



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A  
DISSERTATION

ON THE

PAGAN TRIADS OF DEITY;

INVESTIGATING THEIR SOURCE, AND EXPLAINING  
THE SYMBOLIC REPRESENTATIONS OF THEM,  
ON SCULPTURES AND MEDALS, DIFFUSED  
THROUGH ASIA.

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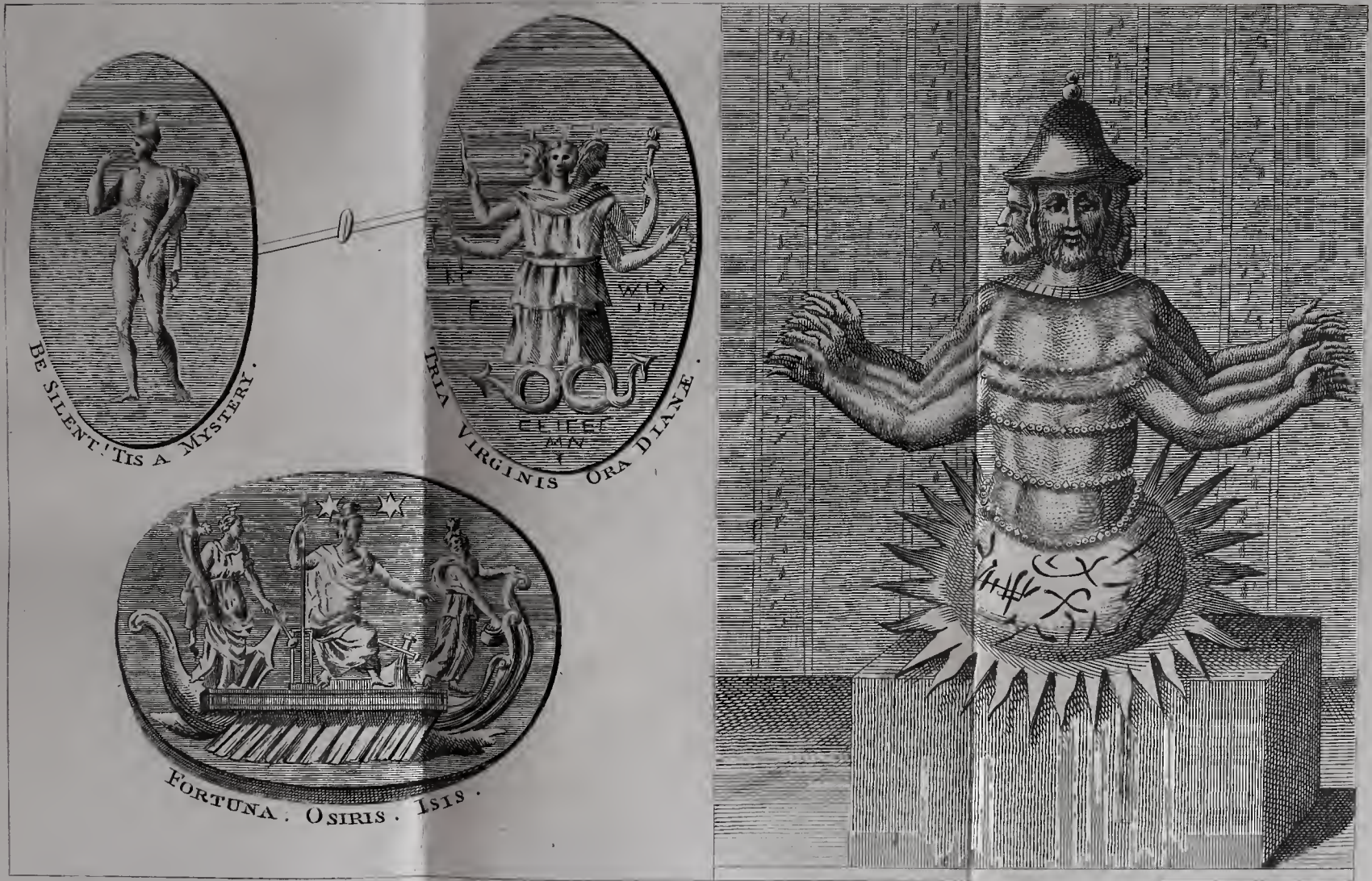
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OSIRIS GUBERNATOR MUNDI .

NUMEN TRIPLEX JAPONICUM .

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A

DISSERTATION, &c.

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CHAPTER I.

*In the Review of the Pagan Trinities, the ORACLES OF ZOROASTER, as the most ancient Relics of Pagan Wisdom and Philosophy, are first considered. — Those ORACLES contain internal Evidence that they are not wholly spurious. — The Assertion proved, in a short Comparison of the theoretic System of Theology laid down in those Oracles, and the practical Worship of the Chaldæans, Persians, and Indians. — The THREE PRINCIPLES, mentioned in the Zoroästrian, or Chaldaic, Oracles, probably the most early Corruption of the Doctrine of the Hebrew Trinity. — Various Passages of those Oracles, intimately correspond-*

*ing with others in sacred Writ, produced. — The philosophical Principles of the old Chaldeans and Indians compared. — Their Opinion concerning the Operations of FIRE, as the primary Element, and their Arrangement of the other Elements, consonant with those of the Brahmins. — Their Belief in the Agency of good and evil Demons, of Planets and planetary Influences, of the sidereal Metempsychosis through Seven Boobuns, or celestial Spheres, of a Hell composed of Serpents, and of the powerful Effect of various Charms and magical Incantations, the same. — The Race, therefore, originally the same, and the Scripture-Statements proportionably confirmed.*

**I** THINK it necessary to commence the following disquisition, concerning the pagan TRIADS OF DEITY, by again offering it as my humble, but decided, opinion, that this original and sublime dogma, inculcated in the true religion, of a Trinity of hypostases in the divine nature, delivered traditionally down from the ancestors of the human race and the Hebrew patriarchs, being in time misapprehended, or gradually forgotten, is the fountain of all the similar conceptions in the debased systems of theology prevailing in every other



other region of the earth. Of a doctrine thus extensively diffused through all nations; a doctrine established at once in regions so distant as Japan and Peru; immemorially acknowledged throughout the whole extent of Egypt and India; and flourishing with equal vigour amidst the snowy mountains of Thibet and the vast deserts of Siberia; there is no other rational mode of explaining the allusion or accounting for the origin. Of the hypothesis, indeed, that asserts TWO PRINCIPLES, the cause *can* be divined in the blended mixture of GOOD and of EVIL that unhappily prevails in the dark and chequered scenes of human existence; but, independently of what we know from Revelation, there appears to be no more moral necessity that there should be *three*, than that there should be *ten*, agents in the dispensations of the divine economy: for, with respect to the *preserving* Veeshnu of India, and of the *mediatorial* Mithra, those secondary characters are not necessarily distinct from the principals of their respective triads, Oromasdes, or Brahma; since it is surely consistent with the character of a good being to *preserve*, and nobody will be so hardy as to deny that he has power to *preserve*, if he pleases, without the interference

of any *mediator*. That there is a *Mediator* in the grand scheme of the Christian theology is alone the effect of a predetermined plan, asserted in Scripture to have been benevolently formed in the Almighty mind, of which the councils are inscrutable to mortals, but which, although they *are* at present inscrutable, may possibly be unfolded to his adoring creatures in the state of glory promised to obedient piety hereafter.

I have not hitherto attempted to draw any immediate parallel between the religion and customs of the Hindoos and the Chaldæans. The monuments of Chaldaic worship and manners, as represented in profane writers, are too disputable and too scanty to allow, in any extent, of such a parallel; and those, preserved in the Scriptures, are, for the most part, to be found in the occasional digressions that relate to the Hebrews. As the colony established in ELAM, or Persia, was, doubtless, one of the earliest that emigrated thence, in that region we may expect to find, and we *have* found, decided remains of Chaldaic superstition, particularly in that general veneration of FIRE so universally practised at UR, in Chaldæa. This city, according to  
Bochart,

Bochart,\* not only derived its name from a word signifying *lux*, seu *ignis*; but, because the pious Abraham refused to concur in that worship, it is recorded, by the Jewish rabbi,† that he was thrown, at the command of Nimrod, into a fiery furnace; from which, by the miraculous power of Jehovah, that rendered the surrounding flames innoxious, he came out unconsumed. The fire-temples of Chaldæa were called CHAMANIM; which the same Bochart derives from Chaman, a word signifying *to glow with the solar warmth*; which plainly indicates the origin of this devotion. The Persians, deeply infected with the Chaldaic idolatry, afterwards converted the CHAMANIM, or portable shrines, in which they cherished the fire lighted by the sacred rays of the sun, into magnificent PYRÆIA, or PURATHEIA, many of which remain to this day both in Persia and India. A gentleman, who filled with honour a high station in India, informed me, that, in a famous temple of this kind, resorted to by the Persees in Guzurat, the priests boast to have cherished the sacred flame, unextinguished, for eight hundred

\* Vide Bocharti Geograph. Sacr. p. 83, edit. quarto, Francfort, 1681.

† See Jerom, on Gen. xi. 31, citing the Jewish traditions.

dred years, that is, ever since their expulsion from IRAN by the Mohammedan arms.

The Jews themselves were by no means uninfected by the reigning superstition. *שן*, *æsh*, is the Hebrew word for FIRE, that most ancient and venerated symbol of God throughout the East; and they justify their applying that title to the Deity, because, in their own Scriptures, they read that God is a CONSUMING FIRE. *Æsh*, among the cabalists, answered to *Geburah*, or MIGHT, the fourth of the Sephiroth, and the literal meaning of *Ælohim*, as the word should more properly be written, is, *the strong gods*. Hence *El*, when the Jews relapsed into idolatry, became the common name of the SUN; and hence, doubtless, through the medium of the Phœnician language, whence the Greek was formed, those known appellatives of that planet, *Αελλιος*, and the Latin *Helius*.

There is a very curious story, related at length in *Suidas*,\* of a contest for superiority that took place between this deity of the Chaldæans and the Egyptian god *Canopus*: for, according to the Greek author, the ancient Chaldæan priests used to carry about, through different regions, their vaunted god,

to

\* See *Suidas*, in voce *Canopus*.

to contend with others, worshipped in the neighbouring kingdoms. The gods of gold, silver, and baser metals, were soon reduced to ashes by the all-conquering FIRE. But the priests of Canopus, in Egypt, resolved to check the insolence of those fire-worshipping priests by a display of the superior power of the deity they adored. Canopus was no other than the god of water, or, rather, WATER itself personified; (an evident proof how early and in what place men began to worship the various elements of nature,) on which account, in the hieroglyphic sculptures of Egypt, he was delineated with a human head and arms affixed to an immense vase, or urn, richly sculptured, and of which the reader will find, in Kircher's third volume, opposite to page 434, a plate containing no less than 16 different engraved representations. The GOD-ELEMENTS, therefore, were now to engage in contest for dominion over the vassal minds of an idolatrous world. The Egyptian pontifex contrived to inclose the element, the object of his devoirs, in one of those earthen vessels, perforated with numerous holes, which are at this day used in Egypt to filtrate the muddy waters of the Nile. He carefully stopped those holes with wax; then, painting  
over

over the whole with hieroglyphics, and adding to the vase the usual head and symbols of the deity, set up his idol, and defied its rivals. Not at all daunted by the defiance of the priest of Egypt, nor the formidable appearance of the aquatic deity, the priests of Chaldæa immediately placed their omnipotent fire beneath the ample vase, which in a short time dissolving the wax, the inclosed element rushed out in torrents, extinguished the flame, and thus, to express myself in their own mythological manner of writing, gained a complete victory over the radiant progeny of the SUN.—The reader will easily be induced to pardon this digression, which is not totally foreign to the subject under consideration, since it points out the origin and gradual progress of that two-fold idolatry which formerly overspread the East, and both of which, or something very much like them, have been so long predominant in Hindostan: for, that the Indians worship the sun and fire has been demonstrated; and they pay a homage scarcely inferior to their consecrated rivers. Indeed, I have a print of the Ganges personified, which, though a female, in the features of its face, is not unlike the most comely of the figures of Canopus, exhibited

by Kircher. But let us return to the subject of the first appearance of the Hebrew doctrine of the Trinity in the Gentile world.

The earliest dawn of it in PAGAN ASIA is to be found in the ORACLES of the Persian Zoroäster, I mean the original Zoroäster, that obscure character in remote antiquity to whom those characters are generally referred, and not that Zoroäster, or Zerdusht, who was only the reformer of the Magian superstition, and flourished at a much later period.

I have observed, in a former page of this Dissertation, that, among many discordant opinions, there were two more generally prevalent in antiquity concerning that venerable, but mysterious, personage. The first-mentioned was, that he was king of Bactria, and slain by Ninus; the second, that he was a native of Persia, and flourished in the days of Darius Hyftaspes. There is no point, however, concerning which the most celebrated writers are more divided. The whole is veiled in impenetrable obscurity. The difficulty has been attempted to be solved, by supposing, that there existed, at various periods, several persons eminent for wisdom, who assumed that name, or to whom, as was

an usual custom in the ancient world, his zealous and affectionate disciples applied that illustrious appellative. I have also pointed out, in the course of this Dissertation, some very striking circumstances of similarity in the respective doctrines which the Indian and Persian legislator inculcated, and have even ventured to hazard a conjecture that the more ancient Zoroaster, and Belus, the founder of the Indian empire, were the same person, under two different appellations. It is a fact, however, which cannot be shaken, that, in those primitive ages, mankind acknowledged and venerated in one person the sacerdotal, the regal, and the paternal, character. An instance of this sort remains at this day in the grand Lama of Thibet, who not only unites in his own person the regal and sacerdotal character, but one somewhat more exalted, since he is regarded by his subjects in a light in which the grateful and affectionate race, who were the immediate descendants of Noah, regarded that patriarch, and by that means sowed in the renovated world the first seeds of idolatry; he is venerated as a DEITY. Stanley derives the term ZORÖASTER from the Hebrew SCHUR, whence the Chaldee ZOR was formed, signifying *to contemplate*, and IS-



THER, a Persian word, signifying a star, whence probably the Greek *αστρον*.\* Allow-  
 ing this derivation to be just, we find in Zoroaster the great Baal, or Belus, who, Pliny† informs us, was the inventor of astronomy in Chaldæa, and possibly, as I shall hereafter endeavour to prove, the same personage venerated in India under the renowned Hindoo appellation of Bali. The old Scripture-name of the Chaldæans, which is Chusdim, leads us directly to the person of the real Zoroaster, and much corroborates this opinion, either that Chus himself, or his son Belus, was in reality the personage on whom antiquity has bestowed that celebrated name. Belus, being the grandson of the arch-apostate Ham, was most likely to be the first corrupter of this pure doctrine. We accordingly find the earliest attempt to philosophise (that is, to deprave by human wisdom) this doctrine, so much sublimer than the sublimest metaphysics, in the ORACLES ascribed to that legislator, which are justly supposed to be the genuine source of both the Persian and Egyptian, and consequently

\* Vide Stanley's *Chaldaic Philosophy*, p. 2; and Bochart's *Geograph. Sacr. lib. i. cap. 1.*

† Belus inventor fuit sideralis scientiæ. *Plinii Nat. Hist. lib. i. cap. 26.*

consequently of the Greek, theology. Whoever of the ancient postdiluvian sages he might have been, the name, as thus derived, is exceedingly applicable, since both the nations, over whom Brahma, or Rama, and Zoroäster were legislators, have, next to the Chaldæans, ever been considered as the most early cultivators of astronomy in Asia, and especially the latter, who will be proved hereafter to have carried that science to a point of astonishing improvement, and far beyond that to which it ever attained in Egypt. I am not ignorant that the whole of these oracles have been asserted to be a gross forgery of some Pseudo-Christian Greek; but, as they are found interspersed, in detached sentences, throughout the writings of the early Greek philosophers, that objection, at least in regard to *the whole of them*, must fall to the ground; and they probably are, what Stanley seems to be persuaded they are, and what their dark mysterious doctrines seem to evince, the genuine remains of the Chaldaic theology; that theology, which, according to Proclus, as cited by the same writer, was revealed to the Patriarchs by the awful voice of the Deity himself.

It would, indeed, be absurd to deny that there are, intermixed with the genuine ORACLES of Zoroäster, some spurious passages and many dogmas of the more recent Greek philosophers ; but, in many of the precepts contained in them, there appear, as I have just asserted, such evident marks of a certain obscure and mysterious kind of hieroglyphical theology as prove them to be the production of the ancient school of Chaldæa ; of that grand theological school in which the Metempsychosis was first divulged ; in which the sidereal LADDER and GATES were first erected ; and in which that subtle, luminous, æthereal, all-penetrating, all-enlivening, FLAME, which gives elasticity and vigour to the various parts of the animated universe, from its profoundest centre to the most extended line of its circumference, was first, from intense admiration of its astonishing properties, adored as a divinity. According to the authors cited both by Kircher and Stanley, they were originally written in the old Chaldaic language, and translated into Greek either by Berofus, Julian the philosopher, or Hermippus ; and they have descended to posterity only in detached pieces ; which, I have observed before, is a cogent argument in favour of their originality.

lity. What remains to us of the writings of Hermes is strongly tinged with the Zoroastrian philosophy. Plato and Pythagoras, in their visits to the Persians at Babylon, drank deep at this primeval fountain; and their writings, also, thus infected with the philosophy of Zoroaster, contributed to spread the physical and theological doctrines of Chaldæa widely through Greece. The whole of these oracles are given by Stanley, according to the more esteemed edition of Patricius, with the notes of Pletho and Psellus; and to his page I must refer the reader for the extracts that follow.

What the writer of these oracles, whosoever he was, could possibly mean by the singular expressions that occur throughout the whole of the first section, except to shadow out the mystery of the Trinity in Unity, a mystery, after all, but partially understood by him, it is difficult to conceive; since, exclusive of the error of placing PRINCIPLES for HYPOSTASES, which was natural enough to an unenlightened Pagan, it is impossible for language to be more explicit upon the subject of a divine Triad, or more conformable to the language of Christian theologers.

Ὅπως πατρικὴ μονὰς ἔστι,  
 Ταναῆ ἔστι μονὰς, ἢ δύο γεννα.

“Where the PATERNAL MONAD is, that paternal-Monad amplifies itself, and generates a Duality.” The word πατρικῆ, or paternal, here at once discovers to us the two first hypostases, since it is a relative term, and plainly indicates a SON. The paternal Monad produces a duality, not by an act of creation, but by generation, which is exactly consonant to the language of Christianity. After declaring that the Duad, thus generated, καθηται, *sits* by the Monad; and, shining forth with intellectual beams, governs all things; that remarkable and often-cited passage occurs :

Παντι γὰρ ἐν κόσμῳ λαμπεῖ Τριάς,  
 Ἡς μονὰς ἀρχεῖ.

“FOR, A TRIAD OF DEITY SHINES FORTH THROUGHOUT THE WHOLE WORLD, OF WHICH A MONAD IS THE HEAD;” that is, all created things bear impressed the seal of the great triune God. In a succeeding verse of this section we are informed :

Εἰς τρία γὰρ νῆς εἶπε Πατρός τεμνεσθαι ἅπαντα,  
 Οὐ το θελεῖν κατενευσε, καὶ ἤδη πάντα ἔτετμητο.

“For, the mind of the Father said that all things should be divided into THREE; whose will assented, and all things were divided.” The sentence is obscure; but the meaning of the former part of it seems to be that all things are under the government of a divine Triad; and the latter part exhibits a striking parallel to the words of that divine *Λογος*, who said, *Let there be light; and there was light: of HIM who spake, and it was done; who commanded, and it stood fast.* Immediately after follows a passage, in which the three Persons in the divine essence are expressly pointed out by appellations, under which we instantly recognise the three superior Sephiroth of the Hebrews:

Και ἐφανησαν ἐν αὐτῇ ἡ τ' Ἀρετη,  
Και ἡ Σοφια, και πολυφρων Ἀτρεκεια.

“And there appeared in this Triad, VIRTUE, and WISDOM, and TRUTH, that know all things.” Though these three hypostases are afterwards styled principles, and though, in this respect, the Chaldaic philosophy appears to blend itself with the Chaldaic theology, the first Sephiroth, or KETHER, the Crown, is doubtless alluded to by Ἀρετη, or Virtue: the second appellation is still more remarkable; for,

for, of the COCHMA of the Hebrews, Σοφία, or Wisdom, may be termed an exact and literal translation. Nor is the similitude at all less impressivè in the appellation of the third of these principles, (as Zoroaster mistakenly denominates them,) for, of the heavenly BINAH, or Intelligence, can language convey any more accurate conception than is to be met with in the word πολυφρων Ἀτρεκεια, *multiscia Veritas*, the Spirit of Truth, full of celestial wisdom, that omniscient Spirit who trieth the reins and searcheth the hearts of the children of men? That these three hypostases, or persons, are in the latter part of this section denominated PRINCIPLES, is not a little singular; and, at all events, it is a mode of expression very inconsistent with what previously occurred concerning the relation which the name of *son* bears to *father*, and with the term of *generation* by which the Duad were said to have been produced.

Singular, however, as this conduct may appear, it is not inconsistent with other gross errors of the idolatrous sons of Chaldæa. Though that infatuated race had traditionally received from their pious ancestors that first sublime principle of religion, that there presided over the universe an infinite Omnipotent

GOD, who was a SPIRIT, and to be worshipped in spirit and in truth, they had forgotten the Deity himself in the darling object of their veneration, the adorable flame, before which they incessantly bowed the servile knee. If they could thus early and fatally forget the great Creator of all things, and worship, in the place of him, one of the elements, formed by his power; is it a subject of wonder that there should have been alike obliterated from their minds all remembrance of that awful mystery at the same time revealed, that distinction in his nature which we denominate Trinity of persons? or that, only faintly remembering the awful truth, they should finally insult the holy hypostases by the degrading appellation of principles? The very institution of divine rites in honour of their base idol, the substitute of Deity, proved the prior existence of a purer worship in their country; and the very *number* and *name* of their imagined PRINCIPLES demonstrated that, in remote periods, incense to a nobler TRIAD had burned on their adulterated altars.

It is unnecessary to swell these pages with many additional extracts, corroborative of my assertions from these ἹΕΡΑ ΛΟΓΙΑ, or holy oracles, as in his treatise De Insomniis they are



are termed by Synesius, a writer who flourished about the year 400, and which circumstance is a convincing proof in how venerable a light these ancient fragments were holden even in that early period of Christianity; but there remain a few others too remarkable and too decisive to be wholly omitted. In the very next section of these oracles, remarkable for its singular title of ΠΑΤΗΡ και ΝΟΥΣ, or THE FATHER and THE MIND, that Father is expressly said “to perfect all things, and deliver them over to Νῶ δευτερω,” the SECOND MIND; which, as I have observed in the early pages of this Dissertation, has been considered as allusive to the character of the mediatorial and all-preserving Mithra; but could only originate in theological conceptions of a purer nature, and be descriptive of the office and character of a higher MEDIATOR, even the eternal ΛΟΓΟΣ. The whole of the passage runs thus:

Παντα γαρ ἐξετελεσσε ΠΑΤΗΡ, και ΝΩ παρεδωκε  
ΔΕΥΤΕΡΩ, ὃν πρωτον κληιζεται παν γενος ἀνδρῶν.

“That SECOND MIND,” it is added, “whom the nations of men commonly take for the FIRST.” This is, doubtless, very strongly in favour of the two superior Persons in the

Trinity. Christians, indeed, are taught to consider the second hypostasis as the more immediate Δημιουργος, or celestial architect of the world; yet it must still be owned, that, in the three first verses of Genesis, creation is represented as the work of the collective Trinity. Overlooking and correcting the mistake of assigning to the first hypostasis the operations that more peculiarly belong to the second, we shall find this passage of the Zoroastrian oracles exceedingly conformable to the language of Holy Writ itself; for, it is there said, *by the WORD OF THE LORD the heavens were MADE, and all the host of them by the Spirit of his mouth.* Psalms, xxxiii. 6. And the Logos himself authoritatively declares, *All power IS GIVEN UNTO ME both in heaven and in earth.* Matth. xxvii. 18.

In the third section of the Chaldaic oracles, as arranged by Patricius, in which, and that immediately following, a still wider range is taken in the physical and intellectual world, and where we find the primordial source of those speculative notions, which, probably, formed the basis of the Pythagorean and Platonic philosophy, it is observed, with singular conformity to this Hebrew doctrine of a certain plurality existing in the divine essence;

Ἐπο δὺοιν νοῶν ἡ ζῶογονοσ πηγὴ περιεχεται ψυχῶν,  
 Καὶ ὁ ποιητὴσ, ὁσ, αὐτὲργῶν, τεκτὴνατο κοσμον,  
 Ὅσ νοοσ ἐκθορε πρῶτοσ.

“ Under TWO MINDS is contained the life-generating fountain of souls; and the ARTIFICER, who, self-operating, formed the world; he who sprang first out of that Mind.” In this passage, by the former of the Minds is decidedly pointed out the great ΑΥΤΟΘΕΟσ, the eternal spring and fountain of the Godhead; by the second, the creative Logos, who is an emanation from that fountain; the same Logos whom St. John says, *was in the beginning with God; that Word, by whom all things were MADE; and without whom was not any thing MADE that was MADE.* John i. 1.

The following passage, cited by Proclus from these oracles, is not less indubitably decisive, in regard to the third sacred hypostasis, than the preceding passages are in regard to the two second:

Μετα δε πατρικασ Διανοιασ Ψυχη ἐγῶ ναιω,  
 Θερμη, ψυχασα τα παντα.

That is, “ in order next to the paternal mind, I, PSYCHE, dwell; warm, animating all things.”

things."—Thus, after observing, in the first section, the Triad, or *το Θεϊον*, the whole Godhead collectively displayed, we here have each distinct hypostasis separately and clearly brought before our view. That the persons themselves are sometimes confounded and their respective functions mistaken by unenlightened Pagans, Christians, who are in possession of this doctrine by a renewal of divine revelation, ought not to be struck with wonder, but penetrated by benevolent pity.

Since the philosophy of the Chaldæans was so intimately blended, or rather incorporated, together with their theology, this will be a proper place to consider the great outlines of that philosophy; and I must again urge as my apology, for entering thus largely into the investigation of it, the striking similitude which its ruling features bear to that species of physical theology promulged in the sacred Sanscreeet writings of India. The most prominent of those features displays itself in the following passage :

Πάντα ΠΥΡΟΣ ἘΝΟΣ ἐκγεγαῶτα.

ALL THINGS ARE THE OFFSPRING OF ONE FIRE.

Let us investigate the origin, the progress, and the diffusion, of the first grand superstition,

tion, which led to that so largely descanted upon in a former part of this work, and therefore not here necessary to be resumed, the worship of the orbs of heaven, which they imagined to have been themselves composed of ÆTHERIAL FIRE.

The patriarchs, who dwelt in Chaldæa, held FIRE in profound, though not in idolatrous, veneration; because, like their ancient neighbours of Persia and India, they thought it the noblest image and symbol of God in nature. Their extensive speculations in physics, also, increased that veneration: they considered it as an immediate emanation from God; they knew that it was the grand agent, under the Deity, in all the operations of nature. When sensible objects and secondary causes became, in the philosophy of succeeding ages, the more immediate object of minute investigation, the GREAT FIRST CAUSE OF ALL, being an object more distantly remote from thought, was by degrees neglected, and the worship of Himself, as was too usual in the ancient world, was transferred to the symbol that represented him. After this all-pervading fire, their philosophy led the Chaldæans to place next in order that finer, subtle, and luminous, fluid, which they  
denominated

denominated the SUPRAMUNDANE LIGHT, in which the heavenly bodies floated. This fluid they esteemed far less gross than the air which surrounds the globe, and this, in India, is called the AKASS. By the AKASS, as my account of the Cosmogony of Hindostan will hereafter acquaint the reader, the Indians mean “ a kind of celestial element, pure, impalpable, unresisting, and resembling the air rarefied into æther of the Stoïc philosophers.” Next to the supramundane light, ranks the EMPYRÆUM; and, nearest the earth, the grosser æther, which is still denominated a kind of FIRE, *πυρ ζωογονον*, a life-generating fire, of which are formed the orbs of the sun and planets. Of the first ætherial light, or fire, which emanates from God himself, are composed the eternal Monad, and all the various orders of subordinate deities, *ζωναιοι και αζωναιοι*, that is, those who exert their influence and operations about the zones of heaven; created intelligent angels; good dæmons; and the souls of men. All these orders, the orders of light and immateriality, are under the government and direction of ORMUZD, the god of light and benevolence. But, as there are orders of luminous and immaterial beings; so there are those also of darkness and materiality: these

these consist of evil dæmons, and they are six in number. The first of them inhabit the regions more immediately sublunary; the second, the regions nearer the earth; dark, stormy, and full of vapours: the third are those malignant and unclean spirits that range the earth: the fourth inhabit the depths of waters, and agitate with storms and whirlwinds the gloomy abyss of the ocean: the fifth are subterraneous, and delight to dwell in caverns and charnel-vaults; these excite earthquakes, and other internal convulsions in the bowels of the harassed globe: the sixth, lucifugous, and, hardly sensible of animation, or capable of motion, roam through the profundities of darkness, and hold their reign, as it were, in the very centre and bosom of chaos: all these obey ABRIMĀM as their supreme lord and captain. The whole of this hypothesis may be found in India; and a part of it has been already unfolded. There, on the one hand, we see the benevolent spirits the offspring of light; the Soors, possibly so called from Surya, the Sun, headed by Brahma or Veesnu, issuing from the empyræum, or inferior heaven of Eëndra, and animated by affection, or melted with pity, watching over, preserving, and protecting, the human race:

on

on the other hand, we observe the dreadful army of the Affloors, those dark and perturbed spirits who tenant the dreary regions of the North pole, drawn up in terrible array under the Mahaffloor, or Lucifer of India, meditating the molestation and destruction of the human race, and showering down upon them desolation and plagues. Other grand points of similitude or sentiment, existing between the two nations in physics and philosophy, will be considered at large in my chapter relative to the literature of Hindostan: for the present, I shall only notice a few of them that are the most remarkable:

Ἑπτα ἐξωγκωσε πατηρ στερεωματα κοσμων

That is, “ the FATHER hath congregated seven firmaments of worlds ;” by which worlds are, doubtless, to be understood the seven planets, or BOOBUNS, as they are called in India. Afterwards, exactly in the style of those who thought the stars were animated beings, who called them by the name of different animals, and who thus designated them in their hieroglyphic sculptures, he is said to have “ constituted a septenary of ERRATIC ANIMALS;”

Ζωνν δε πλανωμενων υφεσηκεν επταδα°.

Both



Both these extracts are cited only as introductory to a passage in a following section, where we find at last the original idea of the ladder with the seven gates; whence possibly Celsus had his singular notions concerning that curious symbol, erected in the Mithratic cavern:

Μη κατα νευσης κρημος κατα γης υποκειται,  
 Επταπορε συρων κατα βαθμιδος ην υπο δεινης  
 Ο θρονος εστι Αναγκης.

“Stoop not down; for, a PRECIPICE lies below on the earth, drawing through the LADDER WITH SEVEN STEPS; beneath which is the THRONE of dreadful NECESSITY.”

It may fairly be presumed, that, arguing from analogy, and from what we now know concerning the sidereal ladder, two additional symbols, probably used in the cave of Mithra, discover themselves in this passage. The deep GULPH, or PRECIPICE, (that is, the inferior hemisphere, or TARTARUS, of the ancients,) which yawned at the foot, and down which the soul that could not rise to the more elevated spheres of virtue on the erected ladder, or that relinquished its vigorous efforts to ascend up to them, rapidly plunged; and the THRONE OF NECESSITY, (that NECESSITY which,

which, we know, was the basis of all Pagan theology,) demonstrating that the progressive stages of the Metempsychosis must absolutely be toiled through, before the highest sphere of happiness, the SUPREME ABODE of the Indian Brahmins, could be reached.

However disputable may be the point, who was the real author of the venerable maxims laid down in these Chaldaic oracles; I must again repeat, that they appear to me indisputably to contain many fundamental principles both of the Persian and Indian systems of theology and philosophy. Substantial proof of this assertion may possibly be admitted as decisive evidence in favour of the genuineness of, at least, that portion of them in which those principles display themselves. Before, therefore, I shall proceed to exhibit the strong traits of a TRINITY which so distinctly appear in those venerable fragments of antiquity, preserved to us in the page of the Egyptian Hermes, and in the hymns attributed to the Grecian Orpheus, personages scarcely less obscure than Zoroaster himself, it is my intention to point out a few additional instances in which the features of that similarity appear still more prominent and unequivocal.

The

The most remarkable one, next to the ADO-  
 RATION OF FIRE and the HEAVENLY ORBS,  
 and the belief in GOOD AND MALIGNANT  
 DÆMONS, already amply unfolded, is the doc-  
 trine of the METEMPSYCHOSIS, which spread  
 from Chaldæa to Persia and India; for, that  
 the Persians, as well as the Indians, actually  
 believed in the transmigration of the human  
 soul, is proved by the evidence brought from  
 Porphyry in a preceding page, and by the  
 following short passage in Dr. Hyde: *Decre-  
 tum enim apud primos habetur de animarum in  
 diversa corpora transmigratiōe, id quod etiam  
 in MITHRÆ mysteriis videtur significari.\** The  
 Metempsychosis is there unfolded in these  
 terms, which, however obscure themselves,  
 are by the context evidently demonstrated to  
 allude to it :

Διζέο συ ψυχῆς ὄχετον, ὅθεν, ἢ τινι ταξεί.  
 Σωματι πειθησας, ἐπι ταξίν ἀφ' ἧς ἐρρύηκας  
 Αὐθις ἀνασησεις\* ἱερῶ λογῶ ἐργον ἐνωσας.

“ Explore thou the TRACT OF THE SOUL ; †  
 whence and by what order it came. Having  
 performed thy service to the body, to the  
 S same

\* De Hist. Religionis vet. Pers. p. 254.

† Ψυχῆς ὄχετον, the canal, or vehicle, through which the  
 migrating soul glides.

same order from which thou didst flow, thou must return again, joining action to sacred speech."

In an episode of the MAHABBARAT, Creeshna, an incarnation of the Deity, is represented as thus addressing Arjun : " Both I and thou have passed MANY BIRTHS : mine are known to me, but thou knowest not of thine." Bhagvat Geeta, p. 51. " At the end of time, he, who having abandoned his MORTAL FRAME, departeth, thinking only of me, without doubt GOETH UNTO ME ; or else, whatever OTHER NATURE he shall call upon, at the end of life, when he shall quit his mortal shape, he shall ever go unto it. Wherefore, at all times, think of me alone." P. 74. Pletho, in explaining the passage in the oracles above-cited, observes, that, by *sacred speech*, is meant invocation of the Deity by divine worship, and that, by *action*, divine rites are signified. In the same Geeta, we read that the Deity casts those who despise him " into the wombs of evil spirits and UNCLEAN BEASTS." Geeta, 117. In the Zoroastrian oracles we find ideas exactly similar :

Σου γὰρ ἀργεῖον θῆρες χθονος οἰκησασσι.

" For,

“ For, THY VESSEL the BEASTS OF THE EARTH shall inhabit.”

Concerning this doctrine of the Metempsychosis, however ample has been the preceding account, there still remains a vast and wonderful field for inquiry and speculation. It is undoubted of most ancient date in Asia, and we have seen it plainly revealed in the Geeta, an Indian composition supposed to be four thousand years old. The ancestors of the Hebrews, however, were not without some conceptions of this kind, as is evident from what M. Basnage relates of some rabbies explaining, by the doctrine of the transmigration of souls, that menace to Adam in Genesis: *Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return!* that is, say they, thou shalt return to animate another body formed of *kindred dust*. It is very remarkable too, that their great and ancient paraphrast Jonathan, in his commentary on the following passage in Isaiah, xxii. 14, *Surely this iniquity shall not be PURGED from you till ye DIE, saith the Lord God of Hosts*, explains this purgation, or purification of the soul, in nearly the same manner as it is explained in the GEETA, by *morte secundâ*, a second death.\*

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“ By

\* See Jonathan's Targum, in Walton's Polyglot, tom. iii. p. 193.

“ By this second death (says M. Basnage) is not meant HELL, but that which happens when a soul has a second time animated a body, and then departs from it.”\* The same sentiments, he adds, are found in the book Zohar, and in Philo.

It may gratify curiosity, to pursue somewhat farther the parallel opinions of the Hebrews and Hindoos on this curious subject.

The CANAL, or VEHICLE, mentioned above, through which the soul glides from one order of being into another, will probably bring to the recollection of the Hebrew student the imagined canals by which the influences of the splendors of the Sephiroth are united, and through which they flow into one another. The Hindoos have invented, as we have often related before, seven inferior spheres of purgation and purification, through which the soul, polluted by guilt, is doomed to pass after its exit from this earthly tabernacle: and seven superior spheres for pure and beatified spirits, all containing various degrees of increasing happiness. The rabbies also, according to M. Basnage, believe in a gradation of punishments and enjoyments in the other world.

They

\* See Basnage's History of the Jews, p. 386.

They say there are SEVEN HELLS,\* because they find, in Scripture, hell mentioned under *seven* different appellations. Their hell, too, like that of the poets, consists in the sufferers alternately enduring the extremes of heat and cold, exactly as Virgil describes it :

*Aliis, sub gurgite vasto,  
Infectum aluitur scelus, aut exuritur igni.*

Or, as our greater Milton ;

From beds of raging fire, in ice to starve  
Their soft ætherial warmth.

We have before remarked that the Hindoo hell, or Naraka, consists of *serpents*, probably allusive to the corrosive gnawings of that *worm* which never dieth. But, as the Hebrews had seven hells, so had they likewise seven heavens ; or, rather, they divided the celestial Eden into seven apartments, the raptures enjoyed in which were proportioned to the merits and capacity of the liberated soul. Here they assert, as in the paradise of Eëndra, that the soul shall dissolve in an influx of celestial pleasures ; and it is very remarkable, that, in the imagined

Elysium of the rabbies, as in that of Eëndra and Mohammed, sensual pleasures are by no means to be excluded. Maimonides gives a most luxuriant description of this beautiful and magnificent abode. The houses he represents as entirely constructed of precious stones, after the same manner as the heavenly city is described by St. John in the Revelations: a proof that either Maimonides had seen the Apocalypse, or that the descriptions of both were regulated by some very ancient traditions. The rivers of that celestial Jerusalem flow with wine; the air is fragrant with perfumes; and all care and sorrow are annihilated. As the soul is to enjoy all kinds of most refined spiritual delights, so is the body, according both to Rabbies Menasse and Abarbanel, to enjoy pleasures suited to its nature: for, why, say those rabbies, should bodies rise again, if they were not to act over again the same things, and be engaged in similar employments to those in which they were occupied when existing in this terrestrial scene? Every sense, therefore, is to be amply and completely gratified; but the gratification is to be *more refined*, like that of Adam in innocence, for whom God made a body before the fall; and God makes nothing in vain, nor bestows the *means*,

without



without the *power*, of fruition. Therefore the most delicious banquets are to be prepared for the blessed; the pleasures of the nuptial state are to be realized in heaven, and celestial children to spring from the chaste embrace.\*

It is plain that the Jews, in our Saviour's time, indulged some notions of this kind, when, speaking of the woman who had been married to seven brothers, they asked him, Whose wife shall she be in the resurrection? and the reply of Christ, that, in the resurrection, they neither marry nor are given in marriage, ought to have taught them, as well as the modern sect of Swedenburg, the falsehood and absurdity of the degrading conceptions entertained by them concerning the nature of the joys of another life. We read in Scripture of the translation of Enoch and Elijah, and of the bosom of Abraham; while the answer of our Saviour to the thief on the cross, his assertion that in his Father's house there are *many mansions*, and that in St. Paul of a third heaven, of the heaven of heavens, and of one star differing from another star in glory, afford substantial proof that some distinction in those regions, and in the state of those who inhabit them, will doubtless be made; but what those

distinctions may be, it is as useless to speculate, as it is impossible to decide.

Whosoever will read with attention that particular section of these oracles, which treats concerning the nature of the SOUL, the BODY, and MAN, the compound of both, and compare the whole with what has been intimated before in regard to the Mythritic mysteries and the sidereal ascent of the transmigrating soul, will find the whole strikingly allusive to that system of philosophy once so predominant in the Oriental world as well as highly illustrative of it. In one of those effata we find, mentioned in express terms, the *φυσειως αὐτοπτον ἀγαλμα*, THE GREAT SELF-CONSPICUOUS IMAGE OF NATURE; of which so much has been said before as a principal symbol in the mysteries. In the mysterious rites of Isis in Egypt, amidst other strange and dreadful noises, the HOWLINGS OF DOGS (referring, I presume, to the character of ANUBIS, the celestial Sirius, or Barker,) were distinctly heard — *Visæque canes ululare per umbram*. Allusive to the same mystic subterraneous exhibition, we read in these oracles:

Ἐκ δ' ἀρα κολπῶν γαίης θρωσκῆσαι χθονιοὶ κύνες,  
Οὐ ποτ' ἀληθές σωμα βροτῶ ἀνδρὶ δεικνύντες.

“ Out

“Out of the cavities of the earth spring TERRESTRIAL DOGS, glancing, in delusive vision, before the view of the initiated.” These terrestrial dogs, though in Egypt doubtless referring to Anubis, might possibly also in India have a sidereal allusion; for, Sirius is one of the brightest of the constellations, and the Indians were immemorially astronomers: if not, they had reference to the groveling vices and guilty passions, those evil dæmons that haunt the human race in an unpurified state, and gnaw like dogs and ravening vultures the mind that harbours them. We read again, in these oracles, of the mysterious potency of certain names recited in those rites by the hierophant:

Ὄνοματα βαρβαρα μηποτ' ἀλλαξῆς.  
 Εἰσι γὰρ ὀνοματα παρ' ἑκάστοις ΘΕΟΣΔΟΤΑ,  
 Δυναμιν ἐν τελεταῖς ἀρρήτην ἔχοντα.

that is, “Do not alter the names that come to you from the barbarians;\* for, there are names in every nation immediately given from the Deity, which have an unspeakable power  
 in

\* This insolent appellation the Orientals and the Greeks promiscuously conferred upon all foreign nations. The custom remains among the Indians to this day, who denominate all foreigners MILPECHIHAS, or infidels, as the reader may see by consulting the Asiatic Researches, vol. ii. p. 201.

in sacred mysteries." There can hardly be a doubt that the author, by the term *barbarous*, alluded to the nation of the Hebrews and the mystic powers attributed by them to the INEFFABLE TTRACTYS, that Tetractys by which, I have observed, Pythagoras swore, and which was very early corrupted, in the Pagan world, by the title of JAO, JAVE, and JOVA. There is a passage in Warburton on this subject, which will be of great use in explaining this apothegm." "When the whole ceremony of initiation was over, then came the Ἀπορητα, and delivered the hymn called *the theology of idols*. After this, the assembly was dismissed with these two barbarous words, ΚΟΓΞ, ΟΜΠΙΑΞ, which evince that the mysteries were not originally GREEK. The learned M. Le Clerc well observes, that this seems to be only an ill pronounciation of ΚΟΤS and ΟΜΠΗΤS, which, he tells us, signifies, in the Phœnician tongue, WATCH, AND ABSTAIN FROM EVIL."\*

As we have seen the ladder and the αὐτοπτον αἶγαλμα, so we may in these oracles discover THE SACRED FIRE, the emblem of the Divinity, that illumined the Mithratic cavern, in the following passage, which occurs last in order, (for, they are variously arranged by different

\* Divine Legation, vol. i. p. 157, edit. oct. 1738.

different editors,) as they stand in the edition of Fabricius, and from him copied by Stanley :

Ἦνικα συ βλεψῆς μορφῆς ἀτέρ ευῖερον πυρ,  
 Λαμπομενον σκιρτηδον ὄλα κατα βενθεα κοσμη,  
 Κλυθι: πυρος φωνην.

“ When thou beholdest the sacred fire, bright and formless, flashing through the depths of the WORLD, hear the voice of that fire.” Of this obscure passage no sense can possibly be made, except we apply it to that Mithratic cave, which represented the WORLD MADE BY ΜΙΤΗΡΑ; and, therefore, the meaning of the writer seems to be included in the following paraphrase. When thou seest the sacred fire, during the celebration of the mysteries, blazing through the profound recesses of the CAVERN, consider it as an emblem of the Deity, who thus diffuses his genial influence through the most dark and cheerless recesses of the universe. Revere, therefore, the awful image of God, shining forth in that nature, of which he his the munificent author; and learn gratitude, affection, and duty, from the instructive symbol.

Of the continual interference of the evil Dewtah in the affairs of men, repeated accounts have been already presented to the  
 reader

reader from various Sanscreeet authorities ; and, that the Brahmins were anciently attached to those *magical* mysteries, which were first so denominated from the *magi* of Persia, very probable conjectures have been offered. A remarkable passage in the Sacontala, compared with a verse of these oracles, will evince how little the Zoroastrian and Brahmanian doctrine in this respect differed. The writer of the oracles asserts,

Αἱ ποῖναι μεροπῶν ἀγκτεῖραι·

which passage Stanley thus translates, “the Furies are the STRANGLERS of men” and Pfellus, commenting upon it, says, that the dæmons who torment mankind, being the vices and passions of men personified, torture them for their crimes, and, in a manner, STRANGLE them. The exhibition of the contests of these good and evil genii seems formerly to have constituted as favourite a portion of the dramatic productions of India, as our VICE, and other mythologic characters, used to be in the ancient dramas of Britain. In the Sacontala, dæmons of either sort are frequently introduced, and greatly promote the denouement of the piece. “What!” says the Emperor Dushmanta, “are even my se-  
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cret apartments infested by SUPERNATURAL AGENTS?" To whom Madhavya, from behind the scenes, exclaims: "Oh! help: oh! release me: for, a MONSTER has caught me by the NAPE OF MY NECK, and means to snap my back-bone as he would snap a sugar-cane!" The ancient kings of India seem likewise to have possessed a similar power, with the renowned Amadis's of Europe, to rescue mankind from the grasp of these enraged dæmons; for, the Son of the Sun instantly calls for the immortal bow given him by Eëndra, the god of the firmament, and hastens to the relief of his suffering friend. But, in the interim, the dæmon, more firmly grasping his trembling captive, exclaims: "Here will I stand, O Madhavya; and, thirsting for thy fresh blood, will slay thee, struggling, as a tiger slays its victim." Sacontala, p. 82.

In regard to the magical rites and incantations of either country, since, wheresoever in the ancient world astronomy flourished and the orbs of heaven were adored, that mysterious science, above all others, prevailed in its vigour, and indeed the Chaldæans are ever blended with the *soothsayers* in Scripture; and, since a comparison and investigation of their practises in these *dark arts* will form a very interesting

interesting part of a future Dissertation, I shall therefore only here mention a parallel passage or two, and conclude, for the present, this retrospect towards the theology and sciences of the parent-country of the world.

Ἦνικα δ' ἔρχομενον προσγειον δαιμον' ἀθροισης,  
Θυε λιθον Μνιζυριν, ἔπαυδων.

“When thou see'st the terrestrial dæmon approach, sacrifice the stone MNIZURIS, using evocation.” What extensive and astonishing virtues the ancients imputed to certain stones, consecrated with great ceremony under the particular influence of some benignant planet, must have been apparent to the reader in the account we gave of the sacred stones, called BÆTYLI. The Mnizirus was a stone holden by the Chaldeans\* in this sacred point of view, and, according to Pfellus, it was supposed to possess the power of evocating the superior and immaterial dæmon, whose more potent energy, called forth by solemn sacrifice, obviated the malevolent purposes of the sinister or terrestrial dæmon. Of the similar predilection of the Brahmins for stones, gems, and shells, to which a certain sanctity is affixed,

and

\* Vide Pfellus, apud Stanley's Chaldaic Philosophy, p. 61, edit. fol. Lond. 1701.



and a mysterious or fanative power attributed, I shall treat largely hereafter. In this place, I shall mention only one, the famous PEDRA-DEL-COBRA, or serpent-stone of India, which is said to be a sovereign antidote against the bite of the most venomous serpents, and of which most of those, who have visited Eastern countries, have heard. They are to be purchased of the *Brahmins alone*, and are said, in reality, not to be the production of any animal of the serpentine kind, but to be fabricated by them of certain drugs, and compounded with many mystic prayers and superstitious ceremonies. The reader will find, in the second part of Tavernier's Indian Travels,\* a long account of this ancient stone, together with an engraving of the large hooded serpent, from whose head it is absurdly said to be taken. How well, indeed, the Indians understood, and how frequently they employed themselves in the composition of, CHARMS that were supposed to have an influence upon the fortunes of mankind, is evident from the following passage in the drama just cited, which is spoken by the attendant of Sacontala, *initiated*, we must suppose; for, we are still in the retreat of the Brahmins: " Let us dress  
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\* See Voyage de Tavernier, lib. ii. p. 391, edit, Rouen.

her in bridal array. I have already, for that purpose, filled the shell of a cocoa-nut, which you see fixed on an AMRA-tree, with the fragrant dust of NAGACESARAS: take it down, and keep it in a fresh lotos-leaf, whilst I collect some GORACHANA from the forehead of a sacred cow, some dust from consecrated ground, and some fresh cusa-grass, of which I will make A PASTE TO INSURE GOOD-FORTUNE." P. 44. The good dæmon of Chaldæa was to be evocated by the sacrifice of the Mnizuris in the consecrated flame. The evil dæmon of India is repulsed by the secret and powerful virtues of the hallowed grass, called CUSA.

Dushmanta, having entered the forest of Gandharvas, where the most hallowed groves of the Brahmins extended, is informed, that, during the absence of Canna, the Arch-Brahmin, "some EVIL DÆMONS had disturbed their holy retreat:" and afterwards, that, while they were beginning the evening sacrifice, "the figures of BLOOD-THIRSTY DÆMONS, embrowned by clouds, collected at the departure of day, had glided over the sacred hearth, and spread consternation around." P. 38. They lay claim particularly to the exertions of that virtuous monarch, because "the  
 gods

gods of SWERGA, one of the superior boobuns, those gods who fiercely contend in battle with EVIL POWERS, proclaim victory obtained by his braced bow." The pupil of Canna presently enters upon his office of driving away the evil dæmon, which is done by scattering "bundles of fresh CUSA-GRASS round the place of sacrifice." His attention is presently called off from the holy rite by PRIAMVADA, whom he addresses in a manner that highly illustrates the subject before us. "For whom are you carrying that ointment of USIRA-root and those leaves of water-lilies? I will administer, by the hand of Gautami, some healing water, *consecrated in the ceremony called VAI-TAMA.*" Sacontala, p. 26. These reverend hermits, however, in their sylvan retreats, were not always animated by the spirit of charity and meekness; they were sometimes dreadful in wrath as the evil Genii themselves, and could thunder forth anathemas against the human race with as loud vociferation. "Let them beware," says Dushmanta, "of *irritating the pious*: holy men are eminent for patient virtues, yet conceal within their bosoms *a scorching flame.*" Sacon. p. 29. The full meaning of the last words may be gathered from the following passage, cited in a

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former page ; “ Who, like the choleric DURVASAS, has power to consume, like RAGING FIRE, whatever offends him.” Sacont. p. 40. Sir William Jones, in the Asiatic Researches, acquaints us, that there is in the ATHARVA, or fourth VEDA, a most tremendous incantation with consecrated grass, called DARBHA ; and indeed the whole drama of the Sacontala, or the FATAL RING, rendered so by the awful imprecation of the offended Cana, is founded on the supposition of magical power possessed by the Brahmin who utters that imprecation. Even the curious art of PALMISTRY was not beneath the notice of the sequestered sages of Heemakote, or Imaus, as is evident from the following passage, which is the last I shall trouble the reader with, from this celebrated and beautiful production of Calidas : “ What ! the very palm of his hand bears the marks of empire ; and, whilst he thus eagerly extends it, shews its line of exquisite network, and glows like a lotos expanded at early dawn, when the ruddy splendor of its petals hides all other tints in obscurity.” Sacont. p. 89.

Before I finally quit the Chaldaic Oracles, I request, on that subject, to be rightly understood ; for, I am by no means an advocate for the genuineness of the whole, but of those  
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only which have either the one or the other of the following marks of authenticity. Those may fairly be reputed authentic that are to be found in Porphyry, Damascius, Proclus, and other Greek writers of the first ages, not favourable to the cause of Christianity; and those in the doctrines of which I have been able to point out a marked similitude to the tenets propagated during the most ancient periods in India, Persia, and Egypt.



## CHAPTER II.

*The Trinity of EGYPT considered represented by a GLOBE, a SERPENT, and a WING. — The GLOBE, or CIRCLE, an ancient Emblem of Deity among the Egyptians, meaning HIM whose Centre is EVERY WHERE, whose Circumference is NO WHERE, to be found. — By the Globe, therefore, is designated the Omnipotent FATHER. — By the Serpent, the Symbol of Eternity and Wisdom, is typified the eternal LOGOS, the WISDOM of God. — By the Wing, AIR or SPIRIT; and, more particularly, the SPIRIT with incumbent WINGS. — An extended Account of HERMES TRISMEGIST, the supposed Author of this sublime Allegory. — A general View taken of the more secret and mystical Theology of the Egyptians; the Substance, of which their Hieroglyphics were the Shadow. — OSIRIS, CNEPH, and PHTHA, the nominal Triad of the Egyptians, but their Characters ultimately resolve them-*

*selves into those of the three Christian Hypostases.*

PREVIOUSLY to the examination of the more mysterious parts of the Egyptian theology, I must be permitted to repeat a former remark, that it is a circumstance which at least must strike with astonishment, if not with confusion, the determined opposer of the doctrine for which I contend, that, in almost every region of Asia to which he may direct a more minute attention, this notion of a certain Triad of persons in the Divine Essence has constantly prevailed. Even where the exact number of THREE is not expressly mentioned, the notion of a plurality in that essence, a notion grossly conceived and ill explained, still formed a prominent feature of the Pagan creed. In every age, and almost in every region of the Asiatic world, there seems uniformly to have flourished an immemorial tradition that one God had, from all eternity, begotten another God, the Δημιουργος and Governor of the material world, whom they sometimes called the Spirit, Πνευμα; sometimes the Mind, Νυς; and sometimes the Reason, or Λογος. Though they entertained strange notions concerning the persons who composed it, and often



often *confounded the order of the hypostases*, yet their sentiments upon this subject, of a divine Triad the supreme Governor of the world, seem to have been at once very ancient and very general. There were, indeed, in the system of the ancient Oriental theology, and especially that of Egypt, certain truths so awfully sublime, that the sacred guardians of that theology concealed them from public investigation under the veil of hieroglyphics, and wrapt them in the shades of allegory. One of those truths was the supposed nature of God himself, and this threefold distinction in that nature, a matter which, however obscurely they themselves understood, they seem to have laboured, by every possible means, to veil in additional obscurity, and principally by a multitude of symbols, of which only very doubtful explications have descended to posterity. There was ONE SYMBOL, however, so prominent and so universal, that its meaning can scarcely be misconceived or wrongly interpreted. It was invented in conformity to ideas, accurately to unfold which we must penetrate to the very highest source of the Egyptian theology, and investigate what has come down to us relative to the character and

history of its supposed author, the renowned HERMES.

In this comprehensive retrospect towards the earliest dawn of science and superstition in Asia, it is not the least perplexing circumstance to me, that the *persons* of all the primitive hierophants and legislators are involved in equal obscurity with the *doctrines* promulgated by them. If this assertion be true in regard to Zoroäster, of the leading principles of whose theology and philosophy we have just taken an extensive review, so is it in a degree no less remarkable than generally acknowledged of the Hermes of Egypt and the Thracian Orpheus. The task I have undertaken becomes more arduous every step that I advance; and the indulgent reader, it is humbly hoped, will extend to my labours a proportionate degree of candor.

As the name of Zoroäster was usurped by more than one celebrated character in antiquity, so was that of Taut; but still our concern is principally with the most ancient of the name; and the united voice of antiquaries assigns to him a Phœnician origin. It was from the writings of this most ancient Taut, the first inventor of letters, that Sanchoniatho drew the materials for his Phœnician history,

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the valuable fragment of which is preserved by Eusebius, and has been commented upon at considerable length by Bishop Cumberland. The age in which Taut flourished it were in vain to attempt to ascertain, since even his copier Sanchoniatho lived before the Trojan war. Phœnicia, having been peopled by the race of Canaan, as Egypt was by that of Mizraim, the two sons of Ham, the grand post-diluvian idolater, may well be supposed to have its theology debased by a very considerable alloy of gross superstition. In fact, their systems of the cosmogony were generally considered by Christian writers as completely atheistical, till the genius and industry of Cudworth, displayed in his Intellectual System of the Universe, were exerted to vindicate the respective hypotheses adopted by each nation from the heinous charge. This he has effected in regard to the cosmogony of Phœnicia, by giving a more favourable construction to the words of Sanchoniatho than they have been allowed by preceding commentators: he considers it as founded on the basis of the doctrine which maintains two predominant principles in nature, Matter or Darkness, and Spirit or Intelligence. By the former he would understand the chaos, obscure and turbid; by the latter

latter the agitative Πνευμα, wind or spirit, which put that chaos in motion, and ranged in order the various parts of the universe. Concerning his able vindication of the Egyptian cosmogony from the imputation of establishing Atheism, much will occur in the succeeding pages. On this particular point, however, since the first volume of this History treats largely of all the Asiatic cosmogonies, I shall at present add nothing farther, but return to Taut; who, according to Philo of Biblus, the interpreter of Sanchoniatho, went from Phœnicia in the earliest ages of the world into Upper Egypt, where he established a vast and powerful empire; and, according to the whole stream of genuine antiquity, taught the Egyptians astronomy, music, and letters. This Taut, or Thoth, was the true Anubis of the Egyptians; and, for the brilliance of his genius and discoveries, their gratitude assigned him, when dead, a station in Sirius, the brightest of the constellations. He was likewise one of their eight greater gods; and the HARP which he invented is the TESTUDO of the celestial sphere. We shall, probably, hereafter discover that he was the elder Bhood of India, who flourished at the beginning of the Callee Yug, and possibly that the Tortoise, in which Veesnu, of whom

Bhood

Bhood was one appearance, became incarnate, was no other than the same Testudo. Taut, however debased by the representation of Sanchoniatho, whose real wish seems to have been to have established a system of cosmogony on atheistical principles, was probably the author of that nobler theology which, Eusebius informs us, prevailed in the Thebais, and which, however in some points obscured, asserted the agency of a supreme Agathodaimon, or good spirit, whom they called ΚΝΕΡΗ, in the government of the world. By a minute investigation of this more ancient Egyptian theology, we shall at once discover very expressive traits of the true religion, and strong connecting lines of its gradual and increasing corruption by Chaldaic physics and Hammonian idolatry.

I have before observed, in the case of Zo-  
röaster, that if any person, peculiarly eminent for science and genius, flourished in the remotest ages of the world, and happened to be followed in succeeding ages by another distinguished by similar endowments and rival genius, the ancients frequently bestowed upon the second great character the name of the first. This has occasioned infinite confusion, and accounts for the numerous catalogues of synonymous gods and heroes that swell the  
historic

historic page. The real reason of this conduct is to be found in the general prevalence during those periods of the doctrine of the Metempsychosis, since they believed the latter to be animated by the soul of the former during the course of its terrene migration. This was exactly the case with the two personages who bore the name of Hermes in Egypt, on the latter of whom, not less than the former, the Egyptians conferred the high-sounding title of TRISMEGISTUS, or TER MAXIMUS.

This is not the exact place for a disquisition on *the origin of letters*; but, when the ancients assert that the elder Hermes was the first inventor of letters, they doubtless mean an hieroglyphical character which bore considerable resemblance to the object described. The sun, for instance, could not be more strikingly represented than by a CIRCLE; nor the waning moon than by A HALF CIRCLE. Chemistry, indeed, still perseveres in using this species of symbolical designation; for, by the former, it distinguishes gold; by the latter, silver. It was probably from him that the Egyptians learned to designate the perfection of the divine nature, of which they thought the sun the purest and brightest emblem, by A CIRCLE, and the distinction pleaded for in that nature by

by AN EQUILATERAL TRIANGLE ; but it was the second Hermes who flourished four centuries after, to whom posterity, as the fragment of Sanchoniatho in Eusebius informs us, are indebted for deciphering that hieroglyphical species of writing, and forming it into a regular alphabet. Taut was governor of Sais in the Upper Egypt, and the same Eusebius, citing Porphyry, acquaints us, that while the people, who inhabited the lower region of that country, were plunged in the depth of the grossest idolatry, the whole Thebais united in acknowledging a supreme presiding Spirit, whom they called CNEPH, upon which account they were excused from paying the public taxes, levied to defray the expenses of maintaining the sacred animals adored in the other cities of Egypt. “ This supreme and uncreated god CNEPH,” says my printed, but not yet published, account of the cosmogony, citing Eusebius, and guided by Cudworth, “ the nations of the Thebais worshipped with the purest rites ; and symbolically represented by the figure of a being of a *dark-blue complexion*, holding a girdle and a sceptre, with a royal plume upon his head, and *thrusting forth from his mouth an egg*. From this egg there proceeded another god, whom they denominated

nated ΠΥΘΙΑ; a term which Dr. Cudworth remarks is at present used among the Copts, to signify the Divine Being. Now Bishop Cumberland\* deduces the term Cneph from a word which, in Arabic, signifies to *preserve*, or to cover any way, but especially *with wings*; an idea, adds the Bishop, who wrote before the modern discoveries in India, and had never heard of Veeshnu, which is very applicable to the Great Preserver of men. Plutarch, in his treatise *De Iside et Osiride*, expressly asserts the god Cneph to be without beginning and without end, and it is he who informs us that the inhabitants of Thebais, by whom the Deity was worshipped in such purity, were excused from paying the public taxes, levied on account of animal-worship. In succeeding ages, however, this pure worship of Cneph, the one God, the great Cause and *Preserver* of all things, was changed into an idolatrous adoration of the dragon, or *winged serpent*, CNUPHIS, whose superb temple at Elephantina in Upper Egypt is described by Strabo, † and of which the extensive ruins, even yet awfully magnificent, were visited by the modern traveller M. Savary. ‡

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\* Cumberland's Sanchoniatho, p. 14, edit. 1720.

† Strabonis Geographia, p. 774, edit. 1549.

‡ Savary on Egypt, vol. i. let. 13.



It was usual with the less ancient Egyptians, after they had thus degenerated from the simplicity of their original theology, to represent the Supreme Being and his attributes by various emblems and hieroglyphics. They drew Cneph in the form of a serpent, which was with them, *as with the Indians*, the emblem of eternity, and they added to the body of the serpent the head of the sharp-sighted hawk. Their ideas being thus perverted, they, by degrees lost sight of the divine original, and, at length, as I have before had frequent occasion to remark was too generally the case in the ancient world, adored the symbol for the reality. In confirmation of what has been said above, a passage from Philo-Biblius in Eusebius may be adduced, where Epeis, their greatest hierophant and scribe, is said to have asserted that the earliest and most venerated of the Egyptian gods was a serpent, "having a hawk's head, beautiful to look upon; who, if he opens his eyes, fills the universe with light in his first-born region; if he wink, it is darkness."\*

The

\* See the whole passage of Philo-Biblius, as given by Eusebius, in *Præp. Evangel.* p. 41, at C; Bishop Cumberland's *Sanchoniatho*, p. 14; and the *History of Hindostan*, vol. i, p. 74.

The reader will, I trust, excuse my citing, on this occasion, an inedited part of my own History; but, as I could only have repeated the same thing, I thought it best to use the same words; and it is alone the nature of the subjects in which I am engaged that has retarded its appearance, and compels me to be guilty of the indelicacy.

From these quotations it is evident, that, whosoever might have been the author of it, a species of theology, very much resembling the true, was once prevalent in Upper Egypt; where the first settlers probably took up their residence, however darkened that theology by the gross ignorance and blind superstition of succeeding ages. The winged *CNEPH* produced the god *PHTHA*; but the great god *OSIRIS*, the supreme indivisible *Εικτον*, has yet been unnoticed, and he was professedly the most high of the Egyptian gods; the primordial source from which those subordinate deities emanated. It is *OSIRIS*, *CNEPH*, and *PHTHA*, therefore, that form the true Egyptian Triad of Deity. As *Osiris* was a title afterwards applied to the *SUN*, so *Phtha* was to the *FIRE* that issued from the solar orb, while *Cneph* was the mighty spirit, the *ψυχη κοσμου*, that pervaded and animated the whole world. *Osiris*, the *gubernator mundi*,

*mundi*, is, therefore, on many Egyptian sculptures, painted in a boat with two attendants; himself seated in supreme majesty in the middle, and his attendants stationed at each end of the vessel. In the illustrative engraving annexed, copied from an ancient gem, he is so designated; and its allusion is too plain to need any more particular explanation.

It has been observed, that, in the more ancient and refined theology of Egypt, the sublime CNEPH, the being of a *dark-blue* complexion, is represented as having produced from his own infinite essence another god, whom they denominated PHTHA: now CNEPH, the sky-coloured winged spirit of Egypt, is no other than the Narayen of India, who is represented as a spirit of a *blue* colour, and floating upon the chaotic waters. Narayen and Brahma, therefore, are synonymous terms; and, what is very remarkable, Brahma produces VEESHNU, a spirit likewise of a *blue* colour, in the very same manner in which Phtha is produced: for, in an ancient Shaster, that describes the CREATION, thus is the birth of Bishen, or Veesnu, described.

“ Bramha forthwith perceived the idea of things, as if floating before his eyes. He said, LET THEM BE! and all that he saw became

real before him. Then fear struck the frame of Bramha, lest those things should be annihilated. O immortal Bramha! cried he, who shall preserve those things which I behold? In the instant, A SPIRIT OF A BLUE COLOUR ISSUED FROM BRAMHA'S MOUTH, and said aloud, I will. Then shall thy name be Bishen, because thou hast undertaken to *preserve* all things."\*

The Shafter, from which this passage is quoted, is one of those interpreted by Colonel Dow's PUNDEET, which, I think, may be safely cited as original, and as possessing strong internal evidence of authenticity, since we may be as certain that the Pundeet had no more consulted Porphyry than the worthy Colonel had read Eusebius. But let us investigate the character of Φθας, or ΡΗΤΗΑ: Suidas, on this word, will let us into the secret of his real character. He says, Φθας Ἡφαιστος παρα Μεμφιταίς; Phtha is the god Vulcan of the Memphites: and Eusebius, citing Porphyry, confirms this; for he asserts the Egyptians thought that Phtha, *the god Vulcan*, was generated from Cneph, the most high creator. In this instance we have a remarkable and early proof  
not

\* See Dow's Prefatory Dissertation to his Translation of Ferishta, p. 47. edit. 4to, 1760.

not only of the corruption of the true faith, but the adoption of the Chaldaic philosophical theology by the Egyptians. For Vulcan is FIRE, the son of the SUN, Osiris, and the first deity in Manetho's dynasties, who reigned thirty thousand years, the imagined period of the sun's great revolution, which in reality, however, is but 25,920 years.\* Phtha, then, was the same with the great first principle in the Chaldaic philosophy; it was the central, the all-pervading, Fire, which, emanating from the sun, is diffused through the boundless universe. By the same kind of fatal delusion it was that a system, first of pantheism, then of naturalism, gradually infected the whole Asiatic world. The sublime character and attributes of the Deity they impiously degraded by the humiliating appellation of NATURE; while Nature herself, and her plastic powers, *originating* solely in the sovereign energies of the supreme creative source of all being, they as absurdly dignified by the majestic denomination of God. This supreme creative energy, this beneficent active principle, diffused through

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Nature,

\* The ancient astronomers, I mean those of the Platonic school, supposed the PRECESSION OF THE EQUINOXES to be after the rate of a degree in one hundred years; but the more accurate observations of the moderns have fixed that PRECESSION at the rate of a degree in seventy-two years.

Nature, they distinguished by various names ; sometimes it was *Osiris*, the fountain of **LIGHT**, the **SUN**, the prolific principle by which that Nature was invigorated ; sometimes it was the *Πυρ ζωογονον*, the life-generating **FIRE**, the divine offspring of the solar deity ; and it was sometimes called by an appellation consonant to *Ψυχη κοσμου*, or the **SOUL OF THE WORLD**. Often too the ancients combined these three ; and of celestial **LIGHT**, **FIRE**, and **SPIRIT**, those mighty agents in the system of Nature, formed one grand collective **TRIAD OF DEITY**.

The whole of what has been just observed respecting the **FIRST VIVIFIC PRINCIPLE**, the *Πυρ ζωογονον* and *Ψυχη κοσμου*, emanating from the primæval source of being, is visibly of Chaldaic origin, and thence, through the medium of the Egyptians, the Stoic philosophers doubtless had their doctrine of “ the fiery soul of the world,” by which they supposed all things to be created, animated, and governed. This universal spirit, infinitely extended, like the matter which it animated, was the only divinity acknowledged by that sect, and is sublimely described, by Virgil, in terms singularly congenial with the doctrine noticed before of those Indian philosophers,

phers, who assert that " GOD IS EVERY WHERE ALWAYS."

SPIRITUS intus alit, totamque, infusa per artus,  
MENS agitat molem, et magno se corpore miscet.

ÆNEID, lib. vi. v. 126.

However incongruous and even absurd to appearance may be the assertion, yet I have the respectable authority of Plutarch for dividing the Egyptian theology into two classes, the *spiritual* and the *physical*: the one was arcane, and revealed to the initiated alone; the second was of a less abstruse nature, palpable to the senses, and therefore better adapted to the capacity of the vulgar. By this clue, if allowed me, I shall be able to unravel the whole mystery, which, without it, appears to be, and in fact is, impenetrable. I would call that more ancient, or rather primæval, theology, described above, as particular to the Thebais, the SPIRITUAL AND PURE, for it certainly approaches to the purity of the patriarchal religion: to the less refined system, which prevailed in the Lower Egypt in later times, and which I am now going more particularly to unfold, I would give the name of PHYSICAL.

It is, however, very remarkable, that, whether we investigate the former or the latter system, a kind of TRIAD still forces itself upon our notice; for, if we lose sight of Osiris, Cneph, and Phtha, our attention is still attracted by the joint operations of Osiris, Isis, and their son Orus. It is these distinguished personages that superintend the concerns of men, and wage unceasing combat with Typhon, the determined enemy of the human race, the Lucifer of India. I have already, in a former volume, exhibited those great outlines of the Egyptian theology, considered in a physical sense, which more immediately point to the worship of Osiris and Isis, a worship so apparently indecent, but attempted to be explained by Plutarch, upon the principle of the earth's being impregnated by the generative warmth of the solar beam. The whole system of the vulgar theology of Egypt seems to have been erected on that basis; and even in that perverted and debased system, the vestiges of the grand primæval theology, and the doctrine of the three hypostases, governing the universe, are not wholly obliterated. Let us impartially examine the hypothesis, and attentively consider the purport of the varied allegory. In this investigation, however, it is

scarcely



scarcely possible to avoid a repetition of many circumstances already recapitulated; since he, who would completely explore the Egyptian theology, is like one who travels through a vast labyrinth, where, amidst a thousand devious and intricate mazes, his path still terminates in one central point, while his view is for ever bounded by one uniform object.

When the true knowledge of God, as a SPIRIT eternal and invisible, was forgotten, and when all immediate intercourse of the devout soul with that SPIRIT ceased in the line of Ham, the corrupted mind of man sought out for a deity palpable to the senses, a deity more suited to the degraded condition of his nature, and more comprehensible by the narrowed faculties of his soul. Degraded, however, as that nature was now become, and lessened as were those faculties, no object inferior to that which is THE MOST GLORIOUS IN THE UNIVERSE could possibly succeed to the beautiful and sublime image of Deity originally implanted and cherished in the human breast. It was Osiris, the SUN, the most ancient symbol of God, as well among the Pagans themselves as among paganizing Jews, that alone was esteemed, in the vulgar theogony of Egypt, as the great Creator of the world.

Osiris was not only the husband, but the brother, of Isis; and their love was so ardent, that they copulated in the very womb of their parent; and, from that embrace, Horus, their only son, the *πρωτογονος θεος*, or first-begotten god, of the Egyptians, whose name may be traced to the Hebrew root AOR, *lux*, was produced. Isis, at once the *consort* and *sister* of Osiris, was the fruitful mother of all things; and, on the front of her majestic temple at Sais, under the synonym of Minerva, according to Plutarch, was this solemn and comprehensive description of her engraved; “I am every thing that hath been, that is, or that will be; and no mortal hath ever yet removed the PEPLUM, or veil, that shades my divinity from human eyes.” In elucidation of this celebrated description of Isis, there is, in the second volume of Montfaucon, a most curious and picturesque engraving of the goddess herself, which, that antiquary observes, exhibits at one view the whole plan of the religion of the Egyptians, considered in this physical sense, and may be called an abstract of it, equally forcible, though not so ample, as the celebrated fragment of antiquity that bears the name of MENSÆ ISIACA.

It was copied by Montfaucon from a painting on cloth, which, he tells us, forms the covering of a mummy now in the library of the bare-footed Augustine friers at Rome, and represents ISIS OMNIA, or ISIS ALL THINGS; which is a sentiment exactly contemporaneous with that inserted in a former page from Sir William Jones's literal Translation of the Bhagavat, in which the deity of India sublimely, though somewhat obscurely, declares, EVEN I WAS EVEN AT THE FIRST, NOT ANY OTHER THING; THAT WHICH EXISTS, UNPERCEIVED, (VEILED FROM MORTAL VIEW,) SUPREME; AFTERWARDS I AM THAT WHICH IS; AND HE WHO MUST REMAIN AM I. This is surely the same doctrine, expressed almost in the same language, and proves that Osiris and Eswara are the same deity, and that Isis is not different, except in sex, from Isa, the god of nature personified, who, in the concluding stanza of that quotation, is said to be EVERY WHERE ALWAYS. The figure of Isis on this hieroglyphic painting is in a sitting posture; upon her head rests a large globe, or circle, in which are inclosed three others gradually diminishing in size: these circles Montfaucon imagines to be the symbols of the four elements. The first and largest circle is white, representing

representing the colourless air which surrounds the earth; the second circle is of a blue colour, emblematical of the cærulean waters of the ocean; the third circle is of a dark ash-colour, the true colour of the earth; the fourth circle is of a bright red, typical of the fire, and is placed in the centre, because fire gives light and heat to all things. It is remarkable that these four colours, if we except a little yellow intermixed for ornament, are the only colours made use of throughout the whole table, by which the designer probably intimated that all things were composed out of the four elements. The head of the figure is covered with a large *blue veil*, which flows down upon her bosom. By this circumstance our antiquary is perplexed, expressing his doubt whether it may be intended for a mystery; but surely it is entirely consonant to the description of her *whose veil no mortal hath ever removed*, and the blue colour of it evidently points to her descent from the celestial regions. She supports, with her extended arms, two tables, the fringes of which are blue and yellow, but the ground of the painting is red: these tables contain a variety of Egyptian sacred symbols, of various allusion. The bosom of Isis is exposed, and bears a cross similar to that called St. Andrew's cross;

cross; the allusion to which on Egyptian monuments has been before explained, and the conjecture concerning that allusion not a little corroborated by its position in this place; for, below this cross, the body of Isis is painted in little squares of blue, red, and ash-colour, curiously intermixed, down to the very feet, on which, in the Oriental manner, she sits. Immediately under the arms of Isis, two large wings are expanded, stretching on either side to the very extremities of the table. In these the same significant and mysterious mixture of colours is perceived; but those mentioned above, as allusive to the four elements, the red, the blue, the white, and the ash-colour, are principally predominant. Two BLACK SPHYNXES, with white head-dresses, are couchant under the wings of Isis: the sphynx was the Egyptian symbol of profound theological mystery; it was, therefore, I have observed, that they were placed in long avenues before the temples of their gods. They are painted black in allusion to the obscure nature of the Deity and his attributes; and, possibly, the white head-dresses may allude to the linen tiaræ that are wrapt round the head of the ministers of religion. Isis is drawn *sitting*, to mark the permanent nature and centred stability

bility of the universe, which she represents, and which her wide-extended arms support in a due equilibrium; while her vast overhadowing wings signify the continual motion of the parts of nature, a motion which by no means disturbs its general order, but diffuses fresh animation and energy throughout the vast extent of creation. I prefaced these particular observations with remarking, that the Egyptian priests assigned to their mysterious ænigmas two different senses; the one *physical*, referring to the operations of nature; the other *moral* and *theological*, alluding to the GOD OF NATURE. The physical signification of this allegory has been explained, and I cannot avoid believing but that, in a moral sense, the figure of Isis, thus adorned with wings, has an immediate allusion to that primordial Cneph, or spirit, whose expanded and genial wings, at the beginning of time, brooded over and rendered productive the turbid waters of chaos.

Such was the physical and popular system of belief inculcated on the minds of those who were not admitted within the pale of initiation, into the more arcane and recondite theology, which descended from the venerable patriarchs. Of these, Abraham is asserted by  
some

some learned antiquaries to have been contemporary with the second Hermes, who obtained from him such ample information concerning this and many other mysteries of the Hebrew creed, as enabled him to explain, with accuracy, the hieroglyphic symbols of them with which the elder Hermes had decorated the lofty walls of the temples of the Thebais. Of the innumerable books, however, asserted to have been written by this reviver of the sciences and genuine theology of Egypt, only forty-two remained entire in the time of Clemens Alexandrinus, a Christian father, who flourished near the close of the second century.\* Of these, some scattered remnants are supposed to have reached posterity; but the genuineness of most of them may, with great justice, be suspected; and it is in Jamblichus, on the Egyptian Mysteries, that the only undoubted vestiges of the Hermaic writings, or of the ancient Egyptian theology, are to be found.

One of the most ancient maxims by which they expressed the inscrutable nature of God was, that his throne was centered in the bosom of intense darkness; by which they doubtless intended to shadow out the EN SAPH,  
 or

\* Vide Stromata, cap. iv. p. 757, edit. Potter.

or infinite unfathomable abyss, in which, according to the Hebrews, the awful arcana of the Godhead lay concealed from mortal view. Hence, under the symbol of Harpocrates, the god of silence, with his finger severely pressed upon his closed lips, as exhibited upon the engraving annexed, a symbol constantly occurring on all the gems and sculptures of Egypt, allusive to their sacred rites, a profound and inviolable secrecy in religious matters was forcibly inculcated upon the worshipper. Of this sentiment actually existing as a fundamental axiom in the Egyptian theology, Damascius, cited by Dr. Cudworth,\* affords the following remarkable attestation: *μια των όλων Ἀρχη σκοτος ἀγνωστον ἱμνευμενη, και τετο τρις ἀναφωνεμενον ετως*; “there is ONE principle of all things, praised under the name of the UNKNOWN DARKNESS, and this THRICE repeated.” There is also to be found in the writings of Hermes Trismegist a second maxim, which is exceedingly important to be noticed here, because highly illustrative of what will follow relative to the globe, the serpent, and wings, by which their notions of a Trinity in the divine nature were symbolised. The following sublime definition of Deity is to

\* See Intellectual System, vol. i, p. 354, edit. Birch.



to be found in those books: *Deus circulus est, cujus centrum ubique, circumferentia nusquam*; or, GOD IS A CIRCLE, WHOSE CENTRE IS EVERY WHERE, BUT WHOSE CIRCUMFERENCE IS NO WHERE, TO BE FOUND. This geometrical figure was considered as the most perfect of all those made use of in that science, and as comprehending in itself all other imaginable figures whatever. Hence it arose, that nearly all the Egyptian hieroglyphics, illustrative of the divine nature, were adorned with circular emblems; and that almost all the temples of Egypt were sculptured with the symbol under consideration. This, probably, is one reason why Osiris is constantly depicted sitting on the flower Lotos, of which both the fruit and the leaves are of a circular form, at once emblematical of the perfection of the Deity, as well as possibly allusive to the rapid circular motion by which every thing in nature revolves. It is, therefore, impossible for any symbol to be more express upon the unity of God than the hieroglyphic CIRCLE, or ORB, above alluded to.

And yet in the following passage, extracted by Kircher,\* from the Trismegistic books, and which I give in that father's Latinity, the  
conceptions

\* Vide *Ædip. Ægypt.* tom. iii. p. 576.

conceptions of Hermes, in regard to a Trinity, are equally decisive: *Una sola LUX fuit intellectualis ante lucem intellectualem, et fuit semper MENS mentis lucida; et nihil aliud fuit hujus unio, quàm SPIRITUS omnia connectens.* “There hath ever been one great intellectual LIGHT, which hath always illuminated the MIND; and their union is nothing else but the SPIRIT, which is the bond of all things.” Here the LIGHT, which is the Kadmon of the Hebrews, the MIND, which is the Νῆς of the Platonists, and the connecting SPIRIT, plainly manifest to us the three hypostases of a purer theology. But lest this authority, from the general suspicion which shades the fragments of Hermes, should appear insufficient, let us hear another author, a Platonic philosopher, to whom Proclus gives the exalted title of *Divine*; to whose keen exploring eye all the profound mysteries of the Egyptian theology were laid bare; and who wrote while the undoubted Trismegistic books were in being. Jamblichus, in his celebrated book *De Mysteriis*, professing to give a genuine account of the theological opinions propagated by Hermes, writes as follows: Προσατῆρι Ἑρμοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ Ἡμεῶν τῶν ἑπερανίων θεῶν ἡγούμενον: that is, “Hermes places the god ΕΜΕΡΗ (OR CΝΕΡΗ) as the prince and ruler over

over all the celestial gods." Now ΕΜΕΡΗ is no other than CΝΕΡΗ, who produced, in the manner before-mentioned, the deity Phtha, whence the famous word ΗΕΜΡ-ΤΗΑ, denoting their relation and indissoluble union: before which Emeph, however, he tells us, the same Hermes placed one primordial source of all being; *ὃν και Ἐικτων ἐπονομαζει, ἐν ᾧ το πρῶτον ἐσι νῶν, και το πρῶτόν νοήλον, ὃ δη και δια σιγης μονης θεραπευεται;* "him whom he calls ΕΙΚΤΟΝ, in whom is the first of intelligences, and the first intelligible, and who is adored only in silence." After these two, Hermes places the *δημιουργικος Νεϋς*, the DEMIURGIC MIND, which, in the Egyptian language, he says, is called *Αμων*, AMMON; but is sometimes denominated ΠΗΤΗΑ, the Vulcan of the Greeks; and at other times OSIRIS, according to its various operations and energies. But, what is very remarkable, as being entirely consonant with the Hebraic notions on this subject, Jamblichus adds, as companions to the *Νεϋς δημιουργικος, και της Ἀληθειας προσατης και Σοφιας*, or the guardian of TRUTH, (that is, the Ruah Hakkodesh, the SPIRIT OF TRUTH,) and WISDOM, the Cochma of the Hebrews. Surely it is impossible for language to be more decided than this, or any thing more expressly

to the purpose than the whole of the chapter whence these extracts are made.\* It should not here be forgotten, that Hermes is by Suidas asserted to have obtained his very name of *Τρισμεγιστος* from the plain allusions to a divine Triad to be found in his writings.

From the whole of what has been observed relative to the sacred symbolical sculptures of Egypt, as well in the pages immediately preceding, as in former parts of this Dissertation, three facts are indubitably established. The first is, that an orb, or circle, being the most complete figure in the whole science of geometry, was esteemed by them the most expressive emblem of the Omnipotent Father of the universe, the incomprehensible ΕΙΣΤΟΝ, the supreme OSIRIS, in his highest intellectual character, undegraded by physics; that first ineffable Numen, whose centre is every where, but whose circumference is no where, to be found. We are, therefore, authorized in applying this expressive symbol to the first hypostasis in the Christian Trinity. The second demonstrative point is, that the serpent, from its great vigour and reviviscence, was considered

\* For these four respective quotations, see Jamblichus de Mysteriis, sect. 8, cap. iii. p. 159, edit. Gale, fol. Oxoniæ, 1678.

ed as an equally picturesque symbol of ETERNITY; and, from its subtlety, of WISDOM. On this account it was thought the properest hieroglyphic to represent the demiurgic Mind, or Agathodaimon of the Egyptians, allusive to whose operations there were, in the temples of Egypt and Tyre, two remarkable sculptures; the former, that described from Eusebius, "as having a hawk's head, beautiful to look upon, who, if he opens his eyes, fills the universe with light;" the latter, designated in the attitude of encircling, in the genial folds of his warm and prolific body, the mundane egg, that is, the universe, and making it productive. This curious emblem the reader may see, engraved from Vaillant, in the second volume of Mr. Bryant's Analysis; and he will hereafter find it, in the first volume of this History, on that plate which exhibits the bull of Japan breaking the egg of chaos with his horn. This emblem, therefore, of eternity and wisdom, this image of the energy of creative power, we consider as referring to the eternal Logos in the Christian Triad; to that quickening WORD, *by whom all things were made, and without whom was not any thing made that was made.* Additional evidence, I am confident, need not be added to the accumulated proofs

previously adduced, that, by sculptured wings, (the symbols of air and wind,) ever extended to overshadow and defend, the Egyptians designated their famous Cneph; and though, in this respect, from their obscure notions concerning the Trinity, as before observed, they manifestly confounded the order of the hypostases, because the demiurgic Phtha is made to proceed from Cneph; yet, by the latter, they doubtless meant to typify the sacred person to whom we apply it, the incumbent SPIRIT *that moved upon the face of the waters*. If, now, we consult the Isiac or Bembine table, (an account of which has been given in a former page; or if we cast our eye upon the Pamphylian obelisk engraved in Kircher; or, indeed, on any of the portals of the Egyptian temples, copied in the accurate volumes of Pococke and Norden; for, the fronts of all are invariably decorated with it;) we shall find their conceptions, on this subject, fully expressed by the very picturesque and beautiful hieroglyphic so often alluded to in these pages, exhibiting a central ORB, with a SERPENT, and WINGS proceeding from it. It was principally to display this hieroglyphic on the very spot where it has flourished for near 4000 years, an irrefragable monument of the existence in the old Egyptian

Egyptian theology, derived from the venerable patriarchs in the infancy of time, of a dogma, falsely asserted to have been the invention of the Platonic philosophers 1500 years after, that I caused that superb portal of the grand temple of Luxore to be engraved from Norden's designs, which forms the frontispiece of the third volume of this work. He will find it likewise delineated on a separate plate, and upon a larger scale, from the same author's design of the celebrated temple of Isis, in the Isle of Philaë.

Kircher, treating of the Pamphylian obelisk, on which venerable monument of antiquity this hieroglyphic stands first in order, cites a variety of authorities, and, in particular, that of Abenephius, an Arabian writer, and a fragment imputed to Sanchoniatho, in testimony that the Egyptians really did intend, by this symbol, to shadow out *Θεον τριμορφον*, a tri-form Deity. I shall not, however, trouble the reader with a multitude of conjectures which he may think visionary, or of authorities which he may consider as doubtful. The true meaning of the symbol is only to be found in an impartial investigation and patient comparison of their theological sentiments, as represented by writers of high respectability and undoubt-

ed authenticity *in the Pagan world*, who can be suspected of no interest to warp, and no prejudice to mislead, them. That investigation, and that comparison, have now been made by me; and the result of the whole is, that, if Proclus and Jamblichus are deserving of credit, the most ancient Egyptians actually did entertain notions, though confused and obscure, of the doctrine which is the object of this extensive Disquisition.

## CHAPTER



## CHAPTER III.

*An Account of the Trinity of Divine Persons in the Hymns attributed to ORPHEUS. — Conjectures concerning the Age and History of that obscure Personage. — His Doctrines inculcate a Species of PANTHEISM, and are a Mixture of the Principles propagated in the MAGIAN and HERMETIC Schools. — All, however, to be met with in the ancient INDIAN SASTRAS. Proofs of the Assertion adduced from various Passages in the BHAGVAT GEETA. — The allegorical Hypostases in the Orphic Trinity, LIGHT, COUNSEL, and LIFE; very much resembling the SEPHIROTH of the Hebrews; possibly copied from their Books, or else the Result of Patriarchal Traditions diffused through Asia in the Time of ORPHEUS. — The Samo-  
thracian CABIRI, or THREE MIGHTY ONES, are next considered, and the Transportation of that Worship into Italy; which laid the Basis of the joint Adoration of Jupiter, Juno,*

*and Minerva, the TRIAD of the ROMAN Capital.*

**O**BSCURITY veils in her deepest shades every circumstance that relates to the origin, the age, and the country, of ORPHEUS: the very existence of such a person has, in consequence, been denied by some writers of antiquity; while, by others, no less than six different Orpheus's have been enumerated. From the circumstance of there being so many of this name enumerated, there arises evident proof, that, in the remotest æras, such a person actually flourished; and the multiplication of them may be accounted for by the same argument used before in regard to the multitude of successive Zoroasters, and the two Hermes, viz. that of the Metempsychosis, in which the soul of the first eminent person was thought to inspire those who were afterwards distinguished in the same line of genius and science. In regard to Orpheus, without entering into useless discussion, we may remark that the most ancient and genuine Orpheus, from whom the Greeks derived all the grand mysteries of their theology and all the profound arcana of philosophical science, is generally allowed to have been of Thracian origin, to have

have lived before the Trojan war, and to have travelled into Chaldea and Egypt, where he drank deep at the fountains of the Magian and Hermetic doctrines.

The whole system, however, of the Orphic theology, whosoever he was, is to be found in India. The sacred stream of that theology rolled first into Egypt in a direct and copious flood; it flowed thence into Greece, but, in its progress, the current was divided and its waters defiled. That grand principle of both the Trismegistic and Orphic religion, recorded by Proclus,

*Ζεὺς κεφαλή, Ζεὺς μέσσα' Διὸς δ' ἐκ παντὰ τετυκται \**

“Jove is the head and middle of all things; all things were made out of Jove;” is perfectly consentaneous with the often-cited extract from the Bhagavat relative to the Indian deity, who is affirmed to be “all that is, and every where always.” The Orphic maxim, that the divine Essence embraced, and was intimately diffused, throughout the essence of every created being, is to be met with in every page of the Geeta. Orpheus, however, does not appear so scrupulously to preserve the unity  
of

\* Proclus in Timæo, p. 95.

of the Deity unviolated. He has, as it were, infinitely partitioned out the *το μεγαλον σωμα Ζηνος*, the immense body of Jupiter, and peopled the universe with subordinate Deities; but the Geeta, in the following sublime passage, preserves that unity, and exhibits not the divine Essence divided, but all nature in its wonderful diversity, collected and arranged in harmonious order *within* the infinite expanded essence of God. At the earnest request of Arjoon, the Deity discloses to him his supreme and heavenly form, adorned with celestial robes and chaplets, anointed with heavenly odours, diffusing a glory like the sun suddenly rising in the heavens with a thousand times more than usual brightness. — “The son of Pandoo then beheld *within the body of God*, standing together, the whole universe divided forth into its vast variety. He was overwhelmed with wonder, and every hair was raised an end. He bowed down his head before the God, and thus addressed him, with joined hands.” &c. Geeta, p. 90.

The great difference, between the Brahmanian system of theology and that of the Grecian philosophers, consists in this, that the former were too much inclined to spiritualize, the latter to materialize, every thing : with the  
former

former all is Atma, spirit, and Maia, illusion; in the mind of the latter, for the most part, sensible objects predominate, and the universal phænomena were resolved into motion and matter: I say *for the most part*, since it would be equally unjust and untrue to deny that many of the Greek philosophers, and, in particular, Pythagoras and Plato, had very sublime conceptions of a Supreme Deity, distinct from all matter; the exhaustless fountain of all being; the eternal source of all benevolence. Indeed Orpheus himself, the father of the Greek theology, amidst many corruptions in the writings imputed to him, divulged this sublime truth; and, what is very remarkable, while he is thus express upon the existence and unity of a Supreme God, he as decidedly points out to us the triple distinction in his nature contended for, and which ever seems to have accompanied that notion in the mind of even the unenlightened Pagan.

The theologic doctrine of Orpheus was abridged by Timotheus, the chronographer, in his *Cosmopœia*, a book long ago extinct, but his abridgement has been preserved for posterity by Suidas, by Cedrenus, and in the *Chronica* of Eusebius, a writer not forward to acknowledge any traces of true religion in a heathen

heathen writer. According to Timotheus in Cedrenus,\* Orpheus asserted the existence of an eternal, incomprehensible, Being, Δημιουργον ἀπαντων, και αὐτα τε αἰθερος, και παντων των ἐπ' αὐτου του αἰθερα: "the Creator of all things, even of the æther itself,† and of all things below that æther." This doctrine is surely very different from that of Atheism imputed to Orpheus; and, though coming to us through the page of Timotheus, a Christian writer, is more likely than the other to have been the genuine theology of Orpheus, on account of the known veneration entertained for his writings by the two most enlightened sects of philosophers in Greece, the Pythagoreans and Platonists, who were the express assertors both of a Supreme Being and the immortality of the soul. The account proceeds to state that this Supreme Δημιουργος is called ΦΩΣ, ΒΟΥΛΗ, ΖΩΗ; LIGHT, COUNSEL, and LIFE.‡ Suidas, wonderfully corroborating the whole of this hypothesis, adds, ταυτα τα τρια ὀνοματα μιαν δυναμιν

\* Cedreni Chronograph. p. 46.

† The word ÆTHER must here be understood in the sense of the Chaldaic philosophers, the more refined matter in which the celestial bodies float; the AKASH, OR FIFTH ELEMENT, of the Brabmins.

‡ Cedreni Chronograph. p. 47.

δυναμιν ἀπεφηνάτο; “ these *three* names express only *one* and the *same* power:”\* and Timotheus concludes his account by affirming, that Orpheus, in his book, declared, δια τριων αὐτων ὀνοματων μιας θεοτητος τα παντα ἐγενετο, και αὐτος ἐσι τα παντα; “ that all things were made by one Godhead in **THREE NAMES**, and that this God is **ALL THINGS**.”†

In this most ancient and recondite theology of Orpheus, beside the more general feature of affinity apparent in some parts of it to the true, it ought to be noticed as bearing, in respect to its threefold distinction of the divine Essence into Light, Counsel, and Life, particular resemblance to the three Sephiroth of the Hebrews; for, in Light, who does not perceive an imitation of the famous KADMON, the pure Light, the radiant CROWN of the three great splendors? In Counsel, is not the heavenly Wisdom, the second Sephiroth, equally conspicuous? And, in Life, is not the heavenly BINAH, the third of those Sephiroth, recognized? that holy, that quickening, Spirit, who is in Scripture not only affirmed *to give life*, but to be **THE SPIRIT OF LIFE**.‡ Since Orpheus

\* Suidas, in voce Orpheus.

† Timothei Cosmopœia, p. 61.

‡ Romans, viii. 2.

pheus is acknowledged to have penetrated deeply into the arcana of the Egyptian mystic theology, and since Abraham, Joseph, and other Hebrew patriarchs, during their long residence in that country, doubtless impressed upon the minds of the higher order of the Egyptians many sublime precepts of the true theology, this similarity between the Orphic and Hebrew theology is by no means to be wondered at. From the same quarter he assuredly borrowed his idea of the gloomy and boundless Chaos investing all things, and the primæval Light and Love that broke through and dissipated the incumbent darkness.

Left the reader, however, should be inclined to doubt the authenticity of Pagan doctrines descending to us through a Christian medium, I shall now produce an extract or two from a writer who can by no means be suspected of any partiality to tenets propagated in the Christian world; and these will evince so close an union of sentiment with what has been presented to him from Timotheus and Suidas, as cannot fail of vindicating those authors from the suspicion of misrepresentation. Proclus, upon the *Timæus* of Plato, presents us, among others, with the following verses, as the genuine production of Orpheus, which  
are



are as exprefs upon the Unity, as another paffage which I fhall prefently cite from the fame author is upon a Triad of hypoftafes in that Unity.

Ζεὺς βασιλεὺς· Ζεὺς αὐτὸς ἀπαντῶν ἀρχιγενεθλός·  
Ἐν κράτος, εἰς δαιμῶν γενετο, μέγας ἀρχὸς ἀπαντῶν

“ Jupiter is the king, Jupiter himfelf is the original fource of all things; there is ONE Power, ONE God, and ONE great Ruler over all.”\* The other paffage is from the fame author; who, in the courfe of his Commentary upon the Timæus, having noticed the divine Triad of Amelius, a Platonic philofopher, contemporary with Plotinus, as confifting of a *three-fold Demiurgus*, and *Opifex of the world*, or, to ufe his own words, Νεὲς τρεῖς, Βασιλεῖς τρεῖς, τοῦ ὄντα, τοῦ ἔχοντα, τοῦ ὄρωντα· that is, *three Minds, three Kings, Him that is, Him that hath, and Him that beholds*; moft remarkable expreffions furely to fall from the pen of a heathen writer; immediately after, in terms as remarkable, fubjoins: Τετρες ἐν τρεῖς νεὲς καὶ δημιουργεὺς ὑποβιθῆσαι, καὶ τεὲς παρὰ τῷ Πλάτωνι τρεῖς βασιλεῶς, καὶ τεὲς παρ’ Ὀρφει τρεῖς, ΦΑΝΗΤΑ, καὶ ΟΥΡΑΝΟΝ, καὶ ΚΡΟΝΟΝ, καὶ ὁ μα-  
λις α

\* Proclus in Timæo, p. 95.

λιστα παρ' αὐτῷ Δημιουργος ὁ Φανης ἔστιν.\* “Amelius, therefore, supposes these three Minds, and these his three demiurgic Principles, to be the same both with Plato's three Kings and Orpheus's Trinity of PHANES, URANUS, and CHRONUS; but it is PHANES who is by him supposed to be principally the Demiurgus.” To this I must be permitted to add, on the authority of my guide through this vast labyrinth of antiquity, Dr. Cudworth, that, in an inedited treatise of Damascius, *περὶ αρχων*, that philosopher, giving an account of the Orphic theology, among other things, acquaints us, that Orpheus introduced *τριμορφον Θεον*, a tri-form Deity.† I have been thus particular in regard to Orpheus, because, as I before observed, his numerous writings, or, at least, those imputed to him, are supposed to be the rich and abundant source whence all the systems both of theology and philosophy, that afterwards appeared in Greece, were derived.

Whoever will read the GEETA with attention will perceive, in that small tract, the outlines of nearly all the various systems of theology in Asia. That curious and ancient doctrine of the Creator, being both male and female,

\* Proclus in Timæo, p. 96.

† See Cudworth's Intell. Syst. vol. i. p. 304.

female, mentioned in a preceding page to be designated in Indian temples by a very indecent exhibition of the masculine and feminine organs of generation in union, occur in the following passages: "I am the *Father* and the *Mother* of this world; I plant myself upon my own nature, and create again and again this assemblage of beings: I am Generation and Dissolution, the place where all things are repositied, and the inexhaustible Seed of all nature: I am the Beginning, the Middle, and the End, of all things." In another part, he more directly says, "The great Brahme is the womb of all those various forms which are conceived in every natural womb, and I am the Father that soweth the seed." P. 107.

I do not at present intend to enter into the investigation of the physics of Orpheus and the other Greeks, but there are two passages of the Orphic writings, the former cited by Damascius, and the latter by Proclus, and therefore probably genuine, which are so remarkably consonant to the above-cited passages, that I am certain the inquisitive reader will excuse my inserting them: they afford proof beyond contradiction in what country the idea originated, and the sentiments as well as the language in which they are conveyed,

have such close affinity to each other, as would incline us to think the Orphic extracts nothing more than a literal translation of the more ancient, venerable, and authentic, production of India.

Damascius, treating of the fecundity of the divine nature, cites Orpheus as teaching *that the Deity was at once both male and female*, ἀρσενοθηλυον αὐτης ὑπεσῆσαίλο, προς ἐνδειξιν της παντων γεννηϊικης ἐσιας,\* *to shew the generative power by which all things were formed.* Proclus, upon the Timæus of Plato, among other Orphic verses, cites the following :

Ζεὺς ἀρσην γενέλο, Ζεὺς ἀμβροτος ἐπλετο νυμφη.†

“ Jupiter is a man; Jupiter is also an immortal maid.” Nay, in the same commentary, and in the same page, we read that all things were contained ἐν γαστέρι Ζηνος, IN THE WOMB OF JUPITER. As this subject, however, is deeply connected with the physics of Greece, upon the investigation of which I have declared it is not my intention *at present* to enter, I shall not farther prolong this account of the Orphic system of theology; a system with which the speculations

\* Damascius, apud Cudworth, vol. i. p. 302.

† Proclus in Timæo, p. 95.

speculations of philosophy are so intimately, so inseparably, blended.

In this survey of the Eastern Triads of Deity, the great gods CABIRI, who, according to Herodotus, had a temple at Memphis, into which it was unlawful for any, except the priests, to enter, ought by no means to be omitted; but such complicated difficulties attend the investigation of their history and character, and so little useful information would result from the inquiry, that I shall add nothing more concerning them than that the most ancient of these Cabiri, or Dioscuri, as they were sometimes called, are said by Cicero to have been in number THREE, and their names Tretopatæus, Eubuleus, and Dionysius.\* All that can be with truth averred concerning them is, that they were esteemed as the THREE MIGHTY GUARDIAN GENII of the universe, or rather the various parts of that universe physically considered, and that they were worshipped in Samothracia, with rites which were amongst the most mysterious and profound in all antiquity. One curious circumstance, however, concerning them, it is in my power to relate; for, as Hecate, from her threefold nature, or office, was honoured in

\* Cicero de Naturâ Deorum, lib. iii.

Greece with an anniversary festival, celebrated in a place where *three ways met*, so were the Ἄνακες, or gods Cabiri, honoured with another, called from them Ἀνακεία. The sacrifices offered at this solemnity, says Potter, in his account of the Grecian festivals, were called ξενισμοί, because those Deities were ξενοί, or strangers; and they consisted of *three offerings*, which were denominated τριτῶναι.\*

As the above account of these obscure personages may appear, from its conciseness, unsatisfactory, I shall add to it what the most able defender of this doctrine that ever wrote has said concerning the Cabiric worship in his transient retrospect upon the Pagan Trinities. This extract will both serve as an apology for the necessary brevity I have observed, and tend farther to elucidate the obscure subject. “Who these Cabiri might be, has been matter of unsuccessful inquiry to many learned men; the utmost that is known with certainty is, that they were originally THREE, and were called, by way of eminence, THE GREAT OR MIGHTY ONES; for that is the import of the Hebrew word Cabirim. And of the like import is their Latin appellation PENATES. *Dii per quos penitus spiramus, per quos habemus corpus,*

\* Potter's *Archæologia Græcæ*, vol. i. p. 366.

*corpus, per quos rationem animi possidemus.\* Dii qui sunt intrinsecus, atque in intimis penetralibus cæli.”†*

The worship of a triple power under the former name, Dr. Horsley is of opinion, was carried from Samothrace into Phrygia by Dardanus; so early as in the ninth century after the flood. The Trojans imported it from Phrygia into Italy; and he asserts, that vestiges of this acknowledgement and adoration of a Trinity are visible in the *joint* worship of Jupiter, Juno, and Minerva, the TRIAD of the Roman capitol.

“ This worship, therefore,” observes the Bishop, “ is plainly traced back to that of the THREE MIGHTY ONES in Samothrace, which was established in that island, at what precise time it is impossible to determine, but earlier, if Eusebius may be credited, than the days of Abraham.”‡

In testimony of what the learned Bishop has asserted in regard to the introduction of the Trojan gods by Æneas, though it be

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scarcely

\* Macrobii Saturnalia, lib. iii. cap. 4.

† Varro apud Arnob. lib. iii. p. 123.

‡ See Bishop Horsley's Tracts, p. 44, edit. oct. 1789.

scarcely necessary to cite that well-known passage in Virgil,

Sum pius Æneas, raptos qui ex hoste PENATES  
 Classe veho mecum ;

yet it will be highly corroborative of his succeeding assertion, that the Cabiri and Dii Penates were of kindred origin, to bring before the view of the reader another passage in the Æneid, where Augustus, under the joint protection of the Penates and Dii Magni, is represented as leading his troops to battle against those of Anthony and Cleopatra :

Hinc Augustus, agens Italos in prælia, Cæsar,  
 Cum patribus, populoque, *Penatibus et Magnis Dis*,  
 Stans celsâ in puppi.

Æneid, lib. viii. 678,

But this was not the first period of the introduction of this notion at Rome: the famous triple figures of sylvan deities dug up in Italy, and called by antiquaries HETRUSCAN, are proofs of this assertion. In most of those countries, where the Romans extended their arms and propagated their theology, the number *three* was considered as sacred, and a divine *Triad* was worshipped. In the 54th plate of Montfaucon's Supplement, in his account of Gaulic



Gaulic Antiquities, may be seen assemblages of deities in triple groups. In one of these groups it is not a little remarkable that the centre figure hath shoes on his feet, as if of superior dignity; the other two figures, as if subordinate, are bare-footed. In Gruter, too, may be seen deities in triple groups, worshipped by the ancient Germans, which they called MAIRÆ; and one is thus inscribed: *In honorem Domûs divinæ dîis Mairabus*; in honour of the DIVINE HOUSE to the goddesses Mairæ. These goddesses were, indeed, rural deities, as were the triple SULEVÆ and VACALLINEHÆ, alluded to before, of the Hetrusci; but this notion is easily to be accounted for in the debased theology of those who made the Earth the grand primæval deity, and adored it under the female form of Cybele, the mother of gods and men. From these additional instances we see how remarkably, throughout all the periods of antiquity, this humour of dividing every thing into THREE displayed itself; and whence, except from the source from which I have derived it, could this general, but mutilated, tradition of a triune God have originated? The FATES, those relentless sisters who weave the web of human life, and fix the inevitable doom of mortals,

were *three*; the FURIES, the dire dispensers of the vengeance of heaven for crimes committed upon earth, were *three*; the GRACES, who were honoured as divinities, and had a thousand altars and temples erected to them in Greece, were *three*; and the celestial MUSES, according to Varro, were originally included in the same solemn and mysterious number.

## CHAPTER IV.

*The PERSIAN Trinity investigated. — It consisted of three allegorical Personages, denominated OROMASDES, MITHRAS, and AHRIMAN. — Their respective Office and Attributes described. — MITHRAS himself often denominated TRIPLASIOS, or Threefold; sometimes the MEDIATOR. — The Doctrine patriarchal, originating from the Conviction that Man is a FALLEN CREATURE, wanting a Mediator. — Hence the STARS and PLANETS, or, at least, the Genii that guided their Orbs, considered as Mediatorial also, and on this Basis the SABIAN Superstition erected itself. — The DAPHNIC Festival of Greece. — Remarkable Resemblance between the Persian AHRIMAN, the Indian SEEVA, and the Egyptian TYPHON. — The Battle of the Gods an astronomical Allegory of the ancient Persians. — The Assertion, that the Idea of a Trinity in the Divine Essence was first introduced into the Church by Platonizing Christians, false, since this patriarchal Distinction*

*tion in the Godhead was immemorially diffused through all the GREATER ASIA.*

WE come now, in the progress of our extensive investigation, to consider the *vestiges of this doctrine*, which is all that is contended for, since, in its true character and undepraved purity, it exists only in the Christian world, among the ancient Persians; and we find those indubitable, though corrupted, vestiges remaining in their THREE GREAT DEITIES, Oromasdes, Mithra, and Ahriman. Of these deities, indeed, two are subordinate and finite, and their dispositions and attributes are represented as various, and even opposite. But I have not undertaken so much to account for its perversion, as to record and ascertain the fact of this notion of a TRIAD OF DEITY being radically interwoven in the theological codes adopted in almost every region of Asia; Asia, where the sublime system of the true religion was first revealed, where the pure precepts it inculcates were first practised, and where unhappily its leading principles were earliest adulterated. The Almighty, however, hath not left himself without a witness amidst the degrading superstitions and the false philosophy of the degenerate Asiatics.

In examining the Persian Triad, the first distinguishing feature which presents itself to our view, and which must irresistibly attract the notice, and excite the wonder, of even the sceptic to the more exalted Triad of Christianity, is, the character of Mithra, THE MIDDLE GOD, who is called THE MEDIATOR. Now the idea of a Mediator could alone originate in a consciousness of committed crimes, as well as a dread of merited punishment, and the first dawn of a Mediator among mankind darted into the mind of Adam, after he had committed the great transgression which exiled him from Paradise, and after his beneficent Judge had declared that *the seed of the woman should bruise the head of the serpent*. It was this glorious, but remote, prospect of the grand Intercessor of the human race, to appear in the due time of Omnipotent Wisdom, that made exile tolerable to our parents, and disarmed that death, which they were doomed soon to undergo, of all its novel and ghastly horrors. It was this hope of a spotless Mediator to emerge from the dark bosom of futurity, that animated the minds of the patriarchs during their toilsome migrations throughout the East, and, under all their persecutions, from age to age sustained, and still sustains,

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the spirit of the virtuous among the Hebrews. Infatuated men, your Mediator is arrived! Hear, and obey the summons of your God !!!

Far beyond all the periods to which human annals ascend, mankind have been uniformly impressed with the notion that they are *fallen creatures*. The conviction of their being spirits degraded from their original rank in the creation, forms the basis of the Metempsychosis of the Indians, a people only second in antiquity of all the nations upon the earth. Whence could this universal idea of corrupted nature and degraded station originate, but in some obscure traditions of the *fall*, handed down, through a long revolution of ages, from the parent of the human race? Whence could this universal belief in restoration to primitive purity to be obtained through the means of a *Mediator*, whether Mithra or Veeshnu, arise, except from the same genuine though distant source? Fatally for the happiness of mankind, amidst the rapid growth of crimes on the one hand, and the gradual increase of superstition on the other, though the consciousness of their degeneracy remained, the knowledge of the *true Mediator* was erased from their minds.

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While hardened Vice, however, openly braved the vengeance of the skies, humble and timorous Piety still lifted to heaven, in silence, the imploring eye, and extended, with diffident hope, the suppliant hand. The awful, the immense, distance of the supreme all-ruling Intelligence, whom they supposed to have his throne on the extreme verge of existence in the central abyss of light and glory, and, though not totally regardless of terrestrial concerns, inaccessible, except by beings of a more pure and elevated nature, induced them to explore the ætherial regions for intercessors among the higher and nobler orders of created beings. The devotion of the Chaldæans to astronomy, and their consequent veneration of the host of heaven, has been repeatedly noticed: it was not, however, to the orb itself, but to the spirit which was thought to reside in that orb, to be the soul of it, and to direct its course through the expanse of heaven, that they addressed their prayers. They flattered themselves with the hope that those benign spirits would act as their Mediators with the Supreme Power, whose nature they but obscurely comprehended, at whose majesty they trembled, and from whose vengeance they shrunk: and that, if they proved propitious, they

they would have influence enough to suspend his wrath and appease his vengeance. For the truth of what I have thus asserted, I shall produce in evidence two very high authorities; the first is the celebrated Rabbi Maimonides, who, in the *More Nevochim*, treating concerning the origin of the Sabian superstition, expressly informs us, "that the propagators of it acknowledged one supreme *Numen*, the Creator of heaven and earth; but that the residence of his majestic presence was in a region so remote from the earth as to be inaccessible to mortals: that therefore, in imitation of the conduct adopted by the subjects of terrestrial monarchs, they engaged, as Mediators with him, the planets and the guardian spirits that direct their course, whom they denominated princes and nobles, and whom they imagined to reside in those orbs as in sumptuous palaces and splendid shrines."\* The second proof of the above assertion is to be found in the very curious information relative to the Chaldaic worship of the planets, transmitted down to us in the authentic page of Diodorus, and purposely omitted by me in the preceding account of the superstitious practices of that people, because I thought it better

\* See Maimonides, *More Nevochim*, part iii. cap. 29.



better calculated to illustrate the present subject of the Persian Triad of Deity.

The Chaldæans, according to this author, were of opinion that the sun, the moon, and the five planets, were the principal intelligences ministering to the Supreme Deity; and that, under the direction of those planets, were thirty stars, whom they called Βελαεις Θεας, Counselling Gods; fifteen of which observed what was transacted *under* the earth, and the other fifteen what passed *upon* the earth and in the region *above* it. These thirty stars, they affirmed, were stationed in the great circle of the zodiac, but that twelve of them were of principal note, among which the planets more immediately revolved. Twelve of these stars towards the north pole, and twelve towards the south pole, they honoured with the title of Judges of all Things, and assigned those that we see *to the living*, and those that we do not see *to the dead*. Two of these stars they considered as messengers, and affirmed, that, once in every ten days, one of the highest order descended to them that were of the lowest order; and again, that, after the same interval, one from the lowest order ascended to those of the superior order; and this in alternate succession. By this means the  
Counselling

Counselling Gods above the horizon were fourteen in number, with an attendant ἀγγελος, or messenger, which is the true meaning of the word ἀγγελος; and exactly the same number remained below the horizon.\*

It would, however, be allowing too much even to the deservedly eminent Maimonides, and the accurate Diodorus, were we to assert that the Sabian idolaters had invariably, for the ultimate object of their addresses to the planetary angels, the Supreme Creator. No; they gradually forgot the Deity, invisible and inaccessible, in the dazzling splendor of the orb itself, and in the imagined influences dispensed by the *flaming heralds* of the divinity. The SUN himself, in time, became the Deity they adored, and the moon and stars his ministers and attributes. In Pausanias, there is recorded an account of a famous Grecian festival, celebrated among the Bœotians, in honour of Apollo, at the end of every nine years, and called Δαφνηφορια, which will serve as a pointed illustration of the preceding assertion. Upon the top of an olive-branch, adorned with garlands of laurel, (both, it is to be observed, consecrated woods,) and various kinds of flowers, they placed a large globe

\* Vide Diod. Siculus, lib. ii. p. 117, edit. Rhodomanni.

globe of brass, from which were suspended several smaller globes; about the middle of the branch were fixed purple crowns, and a globe a degree less in diameter than that which ornamented the top; the bottom was covered with a garment of a saffron colour. By the great globe on the summit, says Pausanias, they symbolized the SUN, that is to say, APOLLO; by the smaller globe directly under it, they intended to represent the MOON; by the globes suspended from that at the top were signified the STARS; while the crowns, being in number 365, represented that of the DAYS in which he performed his annual revolution. The bough, thus adorned, was carried about in procession by a youth selected for the occasion: he was obliged to be in the full vigour of his age, of noble parents, and beautiful aspect; his hair was dishevelled, doubtless, to represent the rays of the sun; he was apparelled in a sumptuous robe that reached down to his ancles; a rich crown of gold adorned his head, and costly sandals of a particular fashion, called *iphicratidæ*, from Iphicratides the inventor of them, covered his feet. This noble youth, for that day, executed the office of the priest of Apollo, and was honoured with the title of *Δαφνηφορος*, or the laurel-

laurel-bearer. A rod, (imitative of the solar beam,) richly decorated with garlands, was borne before him, and a chorus of virgins, (possibly typifying the hours,) bearing branches of laurel in their hands, followed him. In this order they proceeded to the temple of Apollo, surnamed Ismenius, where hymns and supplications to the god terminated the festival.\* By such delightful allegories as these did the genius of antiquity shadow out the operations of nature, and impress upon the admiring spectator the mysterious truths of theology.

From the preceding statement, it is evident that the ancients acknowledged a Mediator to be necessary; and Mithra, we have seen in the Persian theology, was that mediatorial and middle god. It was doubtless this notion of the necessity of a Mediator between God and man, or rather this tradition of one, appointed in the promise that "the seed of the woman should finally crush the serpent," that first induced the Persians to look upon the Sun as that Mediator, and to confer on him the title of *Mediatorial*.

It should be observed too, that this notion of Mithra as a mediatorial God was not confined

\* Pausanias in *Boeoticis*.

fin'd to the bosom of the priest, or locked up in the creed of the initiated; it was so universally known, and so generally the subject of belief, "that the Persians are affirmed by Plutarch, from this very character of their god Mithras, to have called any Mediator, or middle person between two, by the name of Mithras:."

Δια και Μιθρην Περσαι τον Μεσιτην ὀνομαζουσι.\*

But there was another very remarkable epithet that applied to the god Mithras by the ancients, which, in this review of the Pagan Trinities, deserves our particular notice and inquiry. This epithet was Τριπλασιος, or *threefold*; and here I cannot avoid once more remarking it as a circumstance that must be peculiarly perplexing to the oppugners of the sacred doctrine contended for, that, whatsoever personage the ancients thought proper to exalt to the rank of a divinity, they immediately found out for that divinity either *three* properties, or *three* qualities, which they made a distinguishing mark of the Godhead they thus presumptuously conferred.

In the same manner, if they treated concerning the world, which indeed they sometimes elevated to divine honours, they made a **THREEFOLD** partition of it; or rather they

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conceived

\* Plutarch, de Iside et Osiride, p. 43.

conceived three worlds, and distinguished them by the appellation of the *sensible*, the *aërial*, and the *ætherial*, by which latter *term* they must ever be considered as meaning the *AKASS* of the Indians. To these worlds again they assigned three principal properties, *Figure*, *Light*, and *Motion*; *Matter*, *Form*, and *Energy*.\* So, in succeeding ages, the Jewish rabbies divided the human nature into *πνευμα*, the spirit; *ψυχη*, the animal soul; and *σωμα*, the corporeal vehicle.

In regard to this epithet of *Triplafios*, *Dionysius*, the *Pseudo-Areopagite*, in his seventh epistle to *Polycarp*, says, *Και εἶσεται Μαγοι τα μνημοσυνα τῶ Τριπλασιῶ Μιθρῶ τελευσιν*: or, “the Persian Magi to this very day celebrate a festival solemnity in honour of the *Triplasian*, or *triplicated*, *Mithras*.” *Dr. Cudworth* remarks on this passage, that, as this title has been but very ill accounted for by the ancients, it cannot well be otherwise interpreted than “as a manifest indication of a higher mystery, viz. a *Trinity* of the Persian theology; which *Gerard Vossius* would willingly understand, according to the Christian hypothesis, of a divine *Trinity*, or three *hypostases* in one and the same *Deity*, whose distinctive characters

\* See *Kircher*, tom. i. p. 144 to p. 151, and tom. ii. p. 192.

acters are Goodness, Wisdom, and Power.\* In addition and corroboration of what Dr. Cudworth has said, I must remark, that, in all the ancient monuments on which *Mithra* is sculptured, three persons are invariably designated, himself in the centre, and the two others, generally, on each side of him; as they appear on the illustrative engraving of that divinity, which I have presented to the reader from Dr. Hyde's *Treasure of Persian theological Antiquities*. But, what is still more remarkable, the supreme god Ormuzd, or, as the Greeks softened down the word, Oromasdes, is by Plutarch said to triplicate himself in the same manner; ὁ μὲν Ὀρομαζῆς τρεῖς ἑαυτὸν αὐξήσας. "Oromasdes thrice augmented himself."† Without, therefore, at all introducing Ahri-man into the Persian Triad, we have in these accounts of the ancients, relative to the two superior hypostases, sufficient evidence to evince that the Persians were by no means destitute of ideas on the subject, similar to those of their Oriental neighbours. The true character of Ahriman, however, Dr. Cudworth seems to think has been generally mistaken by

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mythologists,

\* See Cudworth's *Intellectual System*, vol. i. page 285, edit. Birch.

† Plutarch, de *Iside et Osiride*, tom. ii. p. 370. Opera.

mythologists, and indeed he appears to me to resemble the Seeva of India, who, it has been observed, is only the Deity in his destroying and regenerative capacity, far more than the malignant Typhon of Egypt. Dr. Cudworth conjectures, that, by Ahriman, is to be understood not so much an evil principal co-eternal with the good principle, and ever hostile to his benevolent purposes, as asserted by Plutarch, and as afterwards represented by the Manichæan heretics; but that, by this distinction, and by this personification, they meant to point out to us a certain mixture of Evil and Darkness, together with Good and Light, which they imagined to exist in the composition of this lower world, and that they represented their conceptions by this allegorical personification; that Ahriman was in fact a Deity, but somewhat subordinate in rank and station, resembling the Pluto of the Greeks; and this opinion of Ahriman, being both subordinate and finite, is very coincident with the statement of Dr. Hyde on this subject.

An ample investigation of the character of Ahriman would be more proper for a dissertation on the gross physics than the purer theology of Asia; and, indeed, towards the  
close



close of the preceding chapter, his real character and functions, under the name of his prototype, Seeva, have been already investigated at considerable length. The parallel between the attributes and properties of Ahriman and those of the Indian destroyer, I had intended to reserve for the chapter on Hindoo literature; but as I know not when that treatise may appear, and as the sketch may afford my readers a still deeper insight into the system both of Oriental physics and morality, I shall, in this place, briefly delineate the features of that imaginary character, the destructive and regenerative power of God personified, to which the ancient Persians and Indians gave the name of Ahriman and Seeva. To delineate them properly, in all their variety of light and shade, would require a large volume; and it is a subject so curious and so interesting, that, possibly, a large volume on that topic would not excite disgust. I shall, however, compress my observations within the most contracted limits possible, that may be consistent with perspicuity.

Arguing from analogy, and guided by what we have already observed, relative to that deep tinge which the physical and astronomical speculations of the ancients have given to all

Asiatic theology, we may fairly conclude that a great part of the properties and attributes of both Ahriman and Seeva may be explained by Natural History and Astronomy. The whole hypothesis, indeed, appears to be nothing more than an ingenious detail of the Good and Evil, alternately predominating in this terrestrial globe, and the Light and Darkness that successively prevail in the two hemispheres. If the superior hemisphere is illuminated by light personified by Ormuzd, a Persian title, which means the primæval light, before the solar orb was formed, and which the Greeks softened down to Oromasdes; if nature is invigorated by the sun, Mithra, the parent of fertility; so is the sphere of the moral world irradiated by the beam of religion, and cherished by the lustre and energetic influence of virtue. Goodness and Light *create* and *preserve*; and, in this reflection, we have direct indications of the origin of the respective characters of the Indian deities, Brahma and Veeshnu. On the other hand, Evil and Darkness desolate and destroy; and, therefore, are personified by Ahriman and Seeva; but, from *evil*, or what is called and appears to be *evil*, though in fact only a less degree of attainable good, arising from change of place or circumstance,

supreme

supreme and unforeseen felicity frequently results: while from the apparent *destruction* of one being, another new-modified springs up, as in the dying vegetable the seeds of new life are contained, and generation vigorously germinates from the very bed and bosom of putrefaction.

Such is the solution of the allegory, considered in a physical, a moral, and theological, light. Understood in an astronomical point of view, from which, however, it is impossible wholly to separate their theology, this Eastern fable presents to our sight Ormuzd, or Mithra, the supreme deity of the upper hemisphere, the *Ἀγαθοδαίμων* of Persia, for permanent vigour and undecaying youth, symbolized by the serpent that annually sheds its skin, and flourishes, as it were, in life's perpetual spring: it presents to our sight, I say, on the one hand, Mithra, attended by a train of bright, that is, benignant, angels, by which the Persians meant the planets and stars personified, the radiant host of heaven, which, during the progress of the sun through the summer-signs, attend his car, and sparkle unseen around the throne of their chieftain. On the other hand, this astronomical view of the subject exhibits to us Ahriman, or Darkness, personified and symbolized

bolized by the great celestial serpent, or dragon of the skies, the Καροδαιμων, or evil genius of Persia, who is, as we have seen, the everlasting object of dread and horror to the Indians, leading up to battle against his mortal enemy the solar god, who reigns in the superior hemisphere, his sable train of malignant angels, or evil genii, that is, the stars of the inferior hemisphere, marshalled in dire array, and still more awfully formidable from the darkness that envelopes them. There is a remarkable passage in Plutarch, which will greatly elucidate the hypothesis just mentioned, of the six-summer signs, headed by Oromasdes, contending against the six winter-signs led on to battle by the great Draco, or dragon, of the celestial sphere; that Draco, whose station in the heavens is fixed on high amidst the gloomy regions of the north pole, where his vast body forms a most conspicuous constellation, and is therefore well calculated to be the mighty chieftain of the arctic signs. “Oromasdes,” says Plutarch, “created six gods, the six summer-signs of the zodiac, good and benevolent, like himself; Ahriman created, and opposed to them, six other gods, the wintry signs, dark and malignant, resembling his own nature. Oromasdes created also twenty-four  
other

other gods, all of which he inclosed in an egg, that is, the Mundane Egg, that most ancient symbol by which Indians, Persians, and Egyptians, alike shadowed out the universe; Ahriman, likewise, formed his twenty-four other gods, which were inclosed in the same egg. Now, by the twenty-four gods created by Oromasdes, added to the twenty-four made by Ahriman, are meant the forty-eight great constellations into which the ancients, as before observed from ULUG BEG, divided the visible heavens. The turbulent deities, made by Ahriman, broke the egg in which they were deposited, and, from that unhappy moment, Good and Evil, Darkness and Light, became promiscuously blended in that universe of which the egg was the expressive symbol.”\*

It was, undoubtedly, this mixture of physical and astronomical speculation, the eternal contentions of these two adverse champions, Light and Darkness, blended together, with some obscure traditions *of the revolt of the angelic bands, of the fall of man, and the contests of the great patriarchal families of Shem and Ham for the empire of the infant world*, that gave birth to the celebrated doctrine, so widely diffused

\* Vide Plutarch, de Iside et Osiride, p. 63.

diffused throughout the Oriental world, of the two principles of Good and Evil. We see this doctrine perpetually displaying itself in all the theological and metaphysical writings of the Pagan philosophers, and, as has been before observed, even in periods comparatively recent, it continued to flourish, in many parts of Asia, in the depraved superstition of the Manichæans. In Egypt, we have seen that the whole system of the national religion turned upon this basis: every thing that was wonderful and stupendous in nature; whatever events in the course of Almighty Providence either inspired the soul with affection and gratitude, or impressed it with apprehension and horror, were resolved into the various operations of the benevolent Osiris and the malignant Typhon.\* These two principles are represented as eternally contending together for the empire of the sublunary sphere; and there is a curious symbolical print in Montfaucon,† by which the ever-allegorizing sons of Mizraim shadowed out these contests, of which I have in this volume presented the reader with an engraving. These principles, undoubtedly  
of

\* See Hyde's *Hist. Rel. Vet. Pers.* p. 160.

† See Montfaucon, *Antiquité Expliquée*, vol. ii. part 2, plate 56.

of Persian origin, are in that print represented by two serpents raised erect upon their tails, opposite to each other, and darting looks of mutual rage: the one, who represents the good principle, and may be considered as the serpent Cnuphis, who, I have observed, had a temple in Upper Egypt, holds in its mouth an egg, that ancient symbol of the created world, very common in Egypt and Greece, and, as my future history of the Indian cosmogony will demonstrate, by no means unknown in Hindostan: the other, who may be considered as the evil principle, appears with its expanded jaws eager to seize upon, and tear from its rival, the egg for which they so fiercely contend.

In India, very plain traits of the same astronomical system are visible in the contests of the good and evil Dewtahs, that is, the stars personified, waging against each other perpetual war to obtain the empire of the agitated globe. Hence it is, that, in Mr. Halhed's fine edition of the Mahabbarat, illustrated with emblematical paintings, the Soors, or good Genii, the offspring of SURYA, the Sun, are painted of a *white* colour; while the Assoors, or children of darkness, who tenant the gloomy regions of the north pole, are  
 constantly

constantly depicted *black*. In the persons of Veesnu and Seeva, not only physical good and evil are incessantly opposed, and their respective followers inflamed with relentless fury against each other, but from the crescent, which, according to Mr. Wilkins, adorns, at Benares, the starry crown on the statue of this god, his astronomical attributes, and his connexion with the nocturnal hemisphere, are evidently pointed out.\* Veesnu rides upon his Garoori, or eagle, a bird ever sacred to the sun; and possibly this eagle is the same with the AQUILA of the celestial sphere, one of the ancient forty-eight great constellations; while the bull of Seeva may have as intimate relation to the Taurus of that sphere. It is by no means inaptly said, that Seeva should have command over the host of heaven, since, if I may quote a very applicable passage in a very excellent astronomer, Mr. Keill, speaking of the rise and extinction of the fixed stars, informs us, that “the principle of GENERATION and CORRUPTION is widely diffused through nature; it reaches even the most distant *fixed stars*, and all the bodies of the universe are under its dominion.”†

To

\* See Mr. Wilkins's Notes upon the Geeta.

† Keill's Astronomy, p. 55, 8vo. edit. 1769.



To the arguments which I have before produced towards establishing the authenticity of those portions of the Chaldaic oracles, which were transmitted down to us by writers who were ignorant of, or hostile to, the Christian religion, I shall now add the following very particular and pertinent passage in Plutarch, a Greek philosopher, who could draw no part of his theology from Christianity, and was so far from being friendly to a Triad of Deity, that he is generally supposed to be a strong advocate for the doctrine of true principles. Plutarch, however, gives this strong support to what I have asserted relative to the opinions of Zoroaster. “Zoroaster is said to have made a *threefold* distribution of things: to have assigned the first and highest rank to Oromasdes, who, in the oracles, is called the *Father*; the lowest to Ahrimanes; and the middle to Mithras; who, in the same oracles, is called *τον δευτερον Νεν*, the second Mind.”\* The sentiments thus imputed to Zoroaster must have come to Plutarch, who was born in the first century of the Christian æra, at a remote city in Bœotia, from some other quarter than a gnostic heretic, and his representation is certainly entitled to more respect than even

\* Vide Plutarch, de Iside et Osiride, p. 370.

even Proclus, who was born in the year 410 of that æra, or Damascius, who did not flourish till so late a period as the sixth century. Plutarch cites this passage, to mark the strong feature of resemblance existing between the Zoroastrian and the Platonic Triad of Deity, which would not have been the case had the learned of Greece generally conceived that the idea of such a Triad had solely originated in the school of Plato. I hope, however, finally to prove that the Zoroastrian school is the Indian school. One grand system of theology in those remote periods pervaded the Greater Asia; and if we should hereafter, as we doubtless shall, find the system already formed, and the doctrine flourishing in that country and Thibet five hundred years before Plato was born, the outcry of its being entirely the fabrication of Plato, and of its being introduced into the church by Justin Martyr, an admirer of Plato, in the second century, must henceforth cease. In fact, at that very period, and even at the distance of twice that period, the symbols of it were elevated and adored by the Brahmins in the deep forest of Naugracut, and sculptured in the sacred caverns of Elephanta: they were stamped on a thousand coins and engraved on a thousand gems; they decorated

decorated the tiara of the priest; they were interwoven in the purple robe of the judge, and sparkled on the rubied sceptre of the prince. Let us now, then, turn our eye eastward, to that country which is asserted, by some enraptured admirers of the religion, policy, and manners, of the Indians, to have been the cradle of mankind and the nurse of rising science.

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CHAPTER



## CHAPTER V.

*The Trinity of India discussed. — Composed of the three allegorical Personages, BRAHMA, VEESHNU, and SEEVA. — Immemorially represented by a triple sculptured Image, having one Body but three Heads. — Each Figure bearing in its Hands Symbols peculiarly descriptive of its separate Function and Attributes, as the CREATOR, the PRESERVER, and REGENERATOR, of Mankind. — Thus designated in the Cavern of ELEPHANTA, the Æra of whose Fabrication runs back to the patriarchal Ages: Most probably, therefore, the Idea originated in a Corruption of the patriarchal Doctrine on this Point. — The trilateral Word AUM allusive to this mystical Union of the three principal Deities. — Illustrations and Proofs from various Oriental Writers and Travellers.*

**O**F exquisite workmanship, and of stupendous antiquity; antiquity to which neither the page of history nor human tradi-

tions can ascend; that magnificent piece of sculpture, so often alluded to, in the cavern of Elephanta, decidedly establishes the solemn fact, that, from the remotest æras, the Indian nations have adored a TRIUNE DEITY. There the traveller with awe and astonishment beholds, carved out of the solid rock, in the most conspicuous part of the most ancient and venerable temple of the world, a bust, expanding in breadth near twenty feet, and no less than eighteen feet in altitude, by which amazing proportions, as well as by its gorgeous decorations, it is known to be the image of the grand presiding Deity of that hallowed retreat: he beholds, I say, a bust composed of three heads united to one body, adorned with the oldest symbols of the Indian theology, and thus expressly fabricated, according to the unanimous confession of the sacred sacerdotal tribe of India, to indicate the CREATOR, the PRESERVER, and the REGENERATOR, of mankind. I consider the superior antiquity of the Elephanta temple to that of Salfette, as established by the circumstance of its flat roof, proving it to have been excavated before mankind had discovered the art of turning the majestic arch, and giving the lofty roof that concave form which adds so greatly to the grandeur

grandeur of the Salfette temple. The very same circumstance, I may repeat, is an irrefragable argument in favour of the high antiquity of the structures of the Thebais, through the whole extent of which no arch, nor vaulted dome, meets the eye, perpetually disgusted with the unvaried uniformity of the flat roof, and the incumbent mass of ponderous marble, never deviating from the horizontal to a circular termination. M. Sonnerat thinks the pyramids of Egypt very feeble monuments of art and labour, if compared with the excavations of Salfette and Elora; the innumerable statues, bas-reliefs, and columns, he is of opinion, indicate a thousand years of continued labour; and, he adds, that the deprivations of time mark at least an existence of three thousand years\*. To what æra, then, will he refer the still more ancient temple of Elephanta? To ascertain, indeed, precisely that æra, is impossible; but, from various circumstances, recapitulated in many preceding pages, we are justified in fixing it as near the deluge as the progress of science will allow us with propriety to fix it; and the remarkable similitude which its sculptures bear, both in their style of designation and ornaments, to those of

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\* Sonnerat's Voyages, vol. i. p. 109. Calcutta printed.

the Sabians of Chaldæa, has been demonstrated in the former volume.

Although from the gross alloy of physics, by which the respective characters of Brahma, Veesnu, and Seeva, are degraded, any immediate parallel between those three personages, as at present conceived of in India, and the Christian Triad, cannot, without impiety, be made; yet the joint worship paid to that triple divinity, in ancient times far more general and fervent than in the present, when the great body of the nation is split into sects, adverse in principles and hostile in manners, incontestably evinces, that, on this point of faith, the sentiments of the Indians are congenial with those of their neighbours, the Chaldæans and Persians. But it is not only in their grand Deity, represented by *a bust with three heads*, that these sentiments are clearly demonstrated; their veneration for that sacred number strikingly displays itself in their sacred books, the three original Vedas, as if each had been delivered by one personage of the august Triad, being confined to that mystic number; by the regular and prescribed offering up of their devotions *three* times a day; by the immersion of their bodies, during ablution, *three* times in the purifying wave; and by their  
 constantly



constantly wearing next their skin the sacred ZENNAR, or cord of *three* threads, the mystic symbol of their belief in a divine all-ruling TRIAD.\* The Indians, we may rest assured, are too wise and too considerate a nation, to have adhered so invariably to these rites and ceremonies without some important incentive and some mysterious allusion!

The sacred ZENNAR, which we have just observed, the tribe of Brahmins constantly wear, deserves very attentive consideration. This sacred cord can be woven by no profane hand; the Brahmin alone can twine the hallowed threads that compose it, and it is done by him with the utmost solemnity, and with the addition of many mystic rites. The manner of performing the operation is thus minutely described in the Ayeen Akbery:—

“*Three* threads, each measuring ninety-six hands, are first twisted together; then they are folded into *three*, and twisted again, making it to consist of nine, that is, *three times three* threads; this is folded again into *three*, but without any more twisting, and each end is then fastened with a knot (the Jod of the Hebrews). Such is the ZENNAR, which, being

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\* See Indian Antiquities, vol. ii. p. 97; and the Ayeen Akbery, vol. iii. p. 217.

put upon the left shoulder, passes to the right side, and hangs down as low as the fingers can reach.”\*

What, I would now ask, can be intended by all this mystic ceremonial, except they meant by it to shadow out the close and mysterious union existing between the sacred persons who form the Indian Triad? and why is the ZEN-NAR to be for ever worn next the skin, but as a solemn and everlasting memorial of that Triad? It may here be remarked, as a very curious and somewhat parallel circumstance, that the Jews wear under their external garments two square pieces of cloth, called ARBA-KANFOTH, or *four corners*; the one covering the breast, the other the back, to which the fringes, which they are commanded to wear by the Levitical law, “are fastened,” says the Jew Gamaliel, “after a peculiar manner, for mysterious reasons.”

This Arba-kanfoth is what all Jews are commanded to be invested with, and the veil which they wear in the Synagogue, being adorned with fringes after the same manner, was originally instituted to be worn during the prayers, to supply the want of the Arba-kanfoth in such as had neglected to invest themselves

\* Ayeen Akbery, vol. iii. p. 215.

themselves with it. "These fringes they are obliged to kiss *three times* in the prayer of *Wawyomer Adonai El Mosheb*, every time they express the word fringe, which is *three times* mentioned in the aforesaid commandment."\*

By such mysterious reasons as these, possibly, the Brahmins are actuated in the multifold windings of the sacred threads that compose the Zennar; but its three final divisions are undoubtedly in memory of the three-fold Deity they adore.

Degraded infinitely, I must repeat it, beneath the Christian as are the characters of the Hindoo Trinity, yet, in our whole research throughout Asia, there has not hitherto occurred so direct and unequivocal a designation of a Trinity in Unity as that sculptured in the Elephanta cavern; nor is there any more decided avowal of the doctrine itself any where to be met with than in the following passages of the Bhagvat-Geeta. In that most ancient and authentic book, the supreme Veesnu thus speaks concerning himself and his divine properties: "I am the holy ONE worthy to be known:" he immediately adds, "I am the MYSTIC FIGURE OM; the REIG, the YAJUSH,

\* See the Prayers and Ceremonies of the Jews, second part, p. 6.

YAJUSH, and the SAMAN Vedas." Geeta, p. 80. Here we see that Veeshnu speaks expressly of his *unity*, and yet, in the very same sentence, declares he is the mystic figure AUM, which three letters, the reader has been informed, from Sir William Jones,\* coalesce and form the Sanscreeet word OM, a word similar to the Egyptian ON, of which denomination there were priests; a circumstance which proves to a demonstration that the mysterious import of that word was known to the initiated of both nations. But he is, moreover, the three ancient and original Vedas, or sacred books of the Brahmins, the names of which, we have observed from the same author, likewise coalesce and form the word RIGYAJUHSAMA. It may here be remarked, that there cannot be a greater proof that the fourth, or Atharva Veda, is not authentic, than that only the three former Vedas are mentioned in this most ancient production of the Hindoo hierarch, and that *to elucidate the nature of the Deity*. With respect to the disposition and meaning of the letters which compose this mystic symbol of the Deity, I shall now farther add, from Mr. Wilkins, that "the first letter stands for the Creator, the second

\* See Indian Antiquities, vol. ii. p. 69.

second for the Preserver, and the third for the Destroyer,"\* that is, the Regenerator. Here, then, is exhibited a complete, though debased, Triad of Deity, represented by three Sanscreeet letters, nearly in the same manner as the Hebrews represented the Trinity by the three Jods; but, what is still more admirable, the awful name formed by these letters is, like the sacred appellative imported by those Jods, forbidden to be pronounced, but is meditated upon in sacred and profound silence. Let me, however, steer clear of the rock on which so many preceding writers on Indian topics, and especially the missionaries, in their laudable anxiety to do honour to our holy religion, have stumbled. I do not assert that they stole those notions, any more than they did their lofty ideas of the unity of God, from the books of Moses in the first place, or from the rabbies afterwards; but it can scarcely be doubted in what primæval country the idea originated, and from the virtuous ancestors of what race (I mean the Chaldæan or Cuthite) the expressive symbol was borrowed.

“The Hindoos,” says M. Sonnerat, “adore *three* principal deities, Brouma, Chiven, and Vichenou, who are still but ONE; which kind of

\* Notes on the Geeta, p. 142.

of Trinity is there called Trimourti, or Tritvamz, and signifies the re-union of three powers. The generality of Indians, at present, adore only one of these three divinities; but some learned men, beside this worship, also address their prayers to the THREE UNITED. The representation of them is to be seen in many pagodas, under that of human figures with three heads, which, on the coast of Orissa, they call SARIHARABRAMA; on the Coromandel coast, TRIMOURTI; and TRERATREYAM in the Sanscreeet dialect:” in which dialect, I beg permission to add, that term would not have been found, had not the worship of a Trinity existed in those ancient times, full two thousand five hundred years ago, when Sanscreeet was the current language of India. But let M. Sonnerat proceed in his relation: “There are even temples entirely consecrated to this kind of Trinity; such as that of P ARPENADE, in the kingdom of Travancore, where the three gods are worshipped in the form of a serpent with a thousand heads. The feast of ANANDAVOURDON, which the Indians celebrate to their honour, on the eve of the full moon, in the month of Pretachi, or October, always draws a great number of people, which would not be the case, if those  
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that came were not adorers of the THREE POWERS.\* Such is the account of M. Sonnerat, collected from facts to which he was a witness, or from authentic information obtained in India, whither he travelled, at the expense of the king of France. There is, however, in his first volume, a literal translation from Sanscreeet of a POORAUN, which he denominates CANDON, and in which the following passage, decisively corroborative of his former assertions, occurs. Though, in this passage, it is plain that three attributes of the Deity are personified, yet the exact number of *three* only being selected, and their indivisible unity in the Indian Trimourti being so expressly specified, evidently prove from what doctrine the sentiment originally flowed; even from that most ancient doctrine, the perversion of which gave to Chaldæa its three PRINCIPLES, to Mithra his three PROPERTIES, and thence his name of Τριπλασιος; which induced the Phœnician Taut to fabricate the celebrated mythological symbol of the Circle, Serpent, and Wings; and which assigned to Osiris his two co-adjutors in the government of that world round which he is, on Egyptian sculptures, allegorically represented as sailing

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\* Sonnerat's Voyages, vol. i. p. 4. Calcutta edition.

in the sacred Scyphus; himself in the middle, and Isis and Orus at the two extremities. The passage alluded to is as follows: "It is God alone who created the universe by his productive power, who maintains it by his all-preserving power, and who will destroy (or regenerate) it by his destructive (or regenerative) power; so that it is this God who is represented under the name of THREE GODS, who are called TRIMOURTI."\* On this passage I shall only make one remark, which is, that, if the Indians had originally intended to deify merely three attributes of God, they would, surely, have fixed on the three principal attributes of the Deity, which are GOODNESS, WISDOM, and POWER, rather than his creative, his preserving, and his destroying, faculty. Of these there was surely but little occasion to make *three gods*, since he, who possesses the power to CREATE, must of necessity also possess the power to PRESERVE and TO DESTROY.

The Indians seem to have been, at some time or other, so absorbed in this worship, that they have both *varied* and *multiplied* the symbols and the images by which they designated their Triad. Mr. Forster, often cited  
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\* Sonnerat's Voyages, vol. i. p. 259, eadem edit.



by me as an authentic source of intelligence, because the actual spectator, as well as the faithful reporter, of their numerous superstitions, in his Sketches of Hindoo Mythology, writes as follows: "One circumstance which forcibly struck my attention was, the Hindoo belief of a Trinity: The persons are *Sree Mun Narrain*, the *Maha Letchimy*, a beautiful woman, and a *serpent*. These persons are, by the Hindoos, supposed to be wholly indivisible; the ONE is THREE, and the THREE are ONE."\* The sacred persons who compose this Trinity are very remarkable; for, *Sree Mun Narrain*, as Mr. Forster writes the word, is *NARAYEN*, the supreme God: the beautiful woman is the *IMMA* of the Hebrews; and the union of the sexes in the Divinity is perfectly consonant with that ancient doctrine maintained in the *Geeta*, and propagated by *Orpheus*, that the Deity is both *MALE* and *FEMALE*.† The serpent is the ancient and usual Egyptian symbol for the divine *Logos*, a symbol of which the Saviour of the world himself did not disdain, in some degree, to admit the propriety, when he compared himself

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\* Vide Mr. Forster's Sketches of Hindoo Mythology, p. 12.

† See page 338 of this volume.

to the healing serpent elevated in the wilderness.\*

M. Tavernier, on his entering the pagoda first described in this volume, observed an idol in the centre of the building sitting cross-legged, after the Indian fashion, upon whose head was placed *une triple couronne*;† and from this *triple* crown four horns extended themselves, the symbol of the rays of glory, denoting the Deity to whom the four quarters of the world were under subjection. According to the same author, in his account of the Benares pagoda, the deity of India is saluted by prostrating the body *three* times; and to this account I shall add, that he is not only adorned with a *triple* crown, and worshipped by a *triple* salutation, but he bears in his hands a *three-forked* sceptre, exhibiting the exact model, or rather, to speak more truly, being the undoubted prototype of the trident of the Greek Neptune. On that symbol of the watery deity I beg permission to submit to the reader a few cursory observations,

The very unsatisfactory reasons given by mythologists for the assignment of the trident  
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\* John iii. 14.

† See Voyage des Indes, tom. iii. p. 226, edit. Rouen, 1713.

to that deity, exhibit very clear evidence of its being a symbol that was borrowed from some more ancient mythology, and did not naturally, or originally, belong to Neptune. Its three points, or *tines*, some of them affirm to signify the different qualities of the three sorts of waters that are upon the earth; as the waters of the ocean, which are salt; the water of fountains, which is sweet; and the water of lakes and ponds, which, in a degree, partakes of the nature of both. Others, again, insist that this three-pronged sceptre alludes to Neptune's threefold power over the sea, viz. to *agitate*, to *assuage*, and to *preserve*.\* These reasons are all mighty frivolous; and amount to a confession of their total ignorance of its real meaning.

It was, in the most ancient periods, the sceptre of the Indian deity, and may be seen in the hands of that deity in the fourth plate of M. d'Ancarville's third volume, as well as among the sacred symbols sculptured in the Elephanta cavern, and copied thence by M. Niebuhr into the sixth plate of his engravings of the Elephanta Antiquities.† It was, indeed,

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\* See Varro, lib. ii. cap. 2; and consult Banier's Mythology on this symbol, vol. ii. p. 30.

† See Niebuhr's Voyage en Arabie, tom. ii. opposite p. 27.

highly proper, and strictly characteristic, that a *threefold* Deity should wield a *triple* sceptre : and I have now a very curious circumstance to unfold to the reader, which I am enabled to do from the information of Mr. Hodges, relative to this mysterious emblem. The very ancient and venerable edifices of Deogur, which have before been described as immense pyramids, do not terminate at the summit in a pyramidal point ; for, the apex is cut off at about one-seventh of what would be the entire height of the pyramid were it completed, and from the centre of the top there rises a circular cone, that ancient emblem of the sun. What is exceedingly singular in regard to these cones is, that they are on their summits decorated with this very symbol, or usurped sceptre, of the Greek Ποσειδων. Thus was the outside of the building decorated and crowned ; as it were, with a conspicuous emblem of the worship celebrated within, which, from the antiquity of the structure, raised in the infancy of the empire, after cavern-worship had ceased, was probably that of Brahma, Veeshnu, and Seeva ; for, we have seen that Elephanta is, in fact, A TEMPLE TO THE INDIAN TRIAD, evidenced in the colossal sculpture that forms the principle figure of it, and excavated probably

bably ere Brahma had fallen into neglect among those who still acknowledge him as the creative energy, or different sects had sprung up under the respective names of Veeshnu and Seeva. Understood with reference to the pure theology of India, such appears to me to be the meaning of this mistaken symbol; but a system of physical theology quickly succeeded to the pure one; and the debased, but ingenious, progeny, who invented it, knew too well how to adapt the symbols and images of the *true* to the *false* devotion. The three sublime hypostases of the true Trinity were degraded into three attributes; in physical causes the sacred mysteries of religion were attempted to be explained away; its doctrines were corrupted, and its emblems perverted. They went the absurd length of degrading a Creator (for such Brahma, in the Hindoo creed, confessedly is) to the rank of a created Dewtah, which has been shewn to be a glaring solecism in theology.

The evident result, then, is that, notwithstanding all the corruption of the purer theology of the Brahmins, by the base alloy of human philosophy, under the perverted notion of three attributes, the Indians have immemorially worshipped a threefold Divinity, who,

considered apart from their physical notions, is the Creator, the Preserver, and the Regenerator. I must again repeat, that it would be, in the highest degree, absurd to continue to affix the name of Destroyer to the third hypostasis in their Triad, when it is notorious that the Brahmins deny that any thing can be destroyed, and insist that a change alone in the form of objects and their mode of existence takes place. One feature, therefore, in that character, hostile to our system, upon strict examination, vanishes; and the other feature, which creates so much disgust, and gives such an air of licentiousness to his character, is annihilated by the consideration of their deep immersion in philosophical speculations, of their incessant endeavours to account for the divine operations by natural causes, and to explain them by palpable and visible symbols.

These three beings, in fact, are all sculptured with expressive emblems, or marks, that prove them to be not of temporal nor mortal, but of divine and spiritual, origin. The symbol of Brahma, which he constantly bears in his hand, is the CIRCLE; the known symbol of eternity in India, in the same manner as serpents in circles were, in Egypt, the symbol of revolving cycles and perpetual generations.

rations. His four heads mark the creator of the four elements of Nature; and their position in all sculptures and paintings, to front the four quarters of the world, points him out as the supreme inspector and governor of that universe which, I have frequently observed, *the effort of a God only could create*. When, therefore, some sects of Indians degrade Brahma from his divine rank; or when they vainly philosophize, and make him to be matter, and honour him with less solemn and respectful rites in their temples than Veeshnu and Mahadeo; it is evident they do not rightly understand their own system of theology; that they have forgotten the grand original tradition by which they were led to worship *three in one*; and are, moreover, guilty of the enormous solecism of making *matter create itself*. On every retrospect towards the benevolent character and amiable functions of the second person in the Indian Triad, it is, I conceive, abundantly manifest, that, by Veeshnu, the original inventors of this system of worship could only mean to shadow out the great *Preserver of mankind from the pains of eternal death*. Veeshnu invariably carries in his hand the celestial CHACRA, or Indian thunderbolt, which is likewise a weapon in

the form of a circle, continually vomiting forth flames ; and which, at the command of the god, itself instinct with life, traverses heaven and earth to destroy the Assoors, those malignant dæmons who perpetually plot the molestation and downfall of the human race, the object of his guardian care. Veesnu rides upon his Garoori, or eagle, which is constantly sculptured near him in the Indian temples ; a symbol, which, while it puts us in mind of the thunder-bearing eagle of the Grecian Jupiter, cannot fail of bringing to our remembrance that hallowed bird of the Hebrew cherubim, which, I have observed, formed a conspicuous constellation on the primitive and possibly antediluvian sphere. It should also be remembered, that to Seeva belongs the BULL, which is another animal in the grand Hebrew hieroglyphic, and, notwithstanding the wild mythology of the Brahmins, it is more than probable that this astronomical symbol, in ancient times, was at once both accounted for and applied in a manner widely different from that in which it is explained and applied by the present race of Indians. In respect to the remaining symbolical animal of the Cherubim, though the LION be not the immediate symbol of Brahma, yet it gives its name to too many of  
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the distinguished personages in the Indian history and mythology, to allow us one moment to doubt of their high and most ancient veneration for that zodiacal asterism, consecrated by the adoption of it among the few symbols admitted into the Mosaic theology. To close this extended Disquisition on the Indian Trinity, we see that the Elephanta cavern-pagoda, excavated in æras of unfathomable antiquity, was A STUPENDOUS TEMPLE TO THAT TRINITY; that their most ancient and venerated production, the Mahabbarat, is not less exprefs upon the unity of Deity than the threefold distinction contended for; that, in remembrance of this Triad, at first pure and holy in every feature of its character, but degraded afterwards by gross physics and false philosophy, they wear a sacred ZENNAR, or cord of three threads, next their bodies, and that thence the number THREE has been holden by them in the most sacred veneration through every æra of their existence as a nation; a nation distinguished above all others in Pagan antiquity for the profundity of its various learning and the purity of its primæval theology.







