

**A STATEMENT OF THE
TRINITARIAN
PRINCIPLE, OR LAW
OF TRI-PERSONALITY**

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EPHRAIM LANGDON FROTHINGHAM

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A
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OF THE
TRINITARIAN PRINCIPLE,
OR
LAW OF TRI-PERSONALITY.

Ephraim Langdon *Proctor*

"For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word,
and the Holy Ghost: and these three are One.

And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, the Water,
and the Blood: and these three agree in One."

1 JOHN, 5: 7, 8.

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INTRODUCTION.


THE following statement of the Trinitarian Principle, or Law of Tri-Personality, was made by the writer many years since as the foundation of a Universal Science, or form of Universal Philosophy; a work that has since then occupied a portion of his time, and which he is now preparing for publication, as "*The Marriage of Philosophy and Faith.*"

The statement here made is a logical argument based upon *self-evident truths* demonstrating that fact of Tri-Personality in God which has always been assumed dogmatically by the Church as the foundation of its theology; but which being, as there stated, poetical, and not rational, could not serve as a foundation for Philosophy, or even as a *permanent* basis for Theology. Although the foundation upon which this statement of Tri-Personality rests is partly hypothetical, as it is also *self-evident*, this logical demonstration ought to be regarded as sufficient, and the Law of Tri-Personality thus established be received without question as the only true ground of Philosophy, and the only rational foundation for Christian Theology. It is not, however,



upon this internal evidence alone that we intend to rest our statement. Being founded in Universal Laws of Being, which can be illustrated by all the phenomena of natural existence, it will also be demonstrated in other portions of our work by a process of *analogical* reasoning that will be still more satisfactory, as it will be more copious and more definite. It will also be demonstrated by its result in the system of which this statement constitutes the foundation; a system that will realize for the first time Philosophy as "the *science* of things Divine and of things Human," including Psychology, Theology, and Ontology, made one as Body, Soul, and Spirit.

This statement is published in advance of the work for several reasons, besides the urgent request of friends who have been interested in the progress of our work. First, the writer wishes to establish *the law* of Tri-Personality in connection with *the fact* of Tri-Personality in God, as they are here stated, upon internal ontological evidence alone; so that he may have a right to use these as a foundation for the psychological and theological theories which, together with other facts now generally recognized, are to be used in illustrating and more completely demonstrating this Law and this Fact, so that it may not be said that the writer has *begged* a single question, or assumed any other hypothesis than the original one contained in this statement. He therefore challenges the whole world to controvert either the premises or the conclusions here stated, feeling confident that no valid argument can be brought against them; external authority being of course out of the question. He will thus be doubly



armed ; because, as the Law of Tri-Personality is the law according to which, or corresponding with which, all natural things are created ; the mass of *external* evidence that can be brought in support of this statement would be abundantly sufficient even if no other existed.

Another reason for this publication is, that a demonstration of Tri-Personality upon a rational or spiritual basis is particularly needed at the present time ; not only for the purpose of turning the mind from naturalism and materialism, in which it is now immersed, but also for the purpose of redeeming Truth from the bondage of a morbid sentimentalism under whose tyrannical sway it is now suffering a sort of martyrdom ; for, judging from the effect that has been produced by it upon the mind of the writer, it is calculated to produce such a result. Such has been the increase of naturalism in this country, that the doctrine of Tri-Personality has been very extensively abandoned in the Church. So much so that it has been found impossible to obtain a verdict of heresy against a popular divine who has openly declared it to be nothing but a *poetic fiction made necessary by human imperfection*. Now as all the theological doctrines of the Church are dependent for support upon this fact of Tri-Personality in God, or rather upon *her statement* of this fact, its subversion must of course inevitably lead to their overthrow. It would therefore seem that a *rational demonstration* of this fact, heretofore dependent upon sentimental recognition, ought to be acceptable to the Church as presenting a barrier against the tide of heresy that is now setting so strongly against it. Not that *we* imagine this difficulty

to be so serious as it undoubtedly appears to them, because we regard these doctrines as *natural substitutes* for spiritual truth that are destined in the natural course of things to decay and death, that they may experience a resurrection to spiritual life *in a rational form*; and thus, that, although the Church and the doctrines of the Church must always remain, when the religious sentiment *in individuals* is not sufficiently strong to compel subjection to it without any other aid, these doctrines will, of course, be given up by them.

There is another and a very different class of individuals belonging to the "*no Church*" party, and known as Transcendentalists, to which such a statement as the one here offered might be of much more importance. Although these individuals have long since passed beyond the point when the doctrines of the Church could be received through sentimental recognition,—and although their position is removed as far as possible from all that relates to a spiritual order of thought and of experience,—still, the fact that they have exhausted all *natural* sources of instruction, makes it necessary that those of a *spiritual* character should be presented to them, and that the steps of these prodigal sons should be directed towards their father's house. Many of these individuals have arrived at the "*great gulf*" which separates the natural from the spiritual; and, although no broad highway can be constructed across this gulf for the multitude of travellers through this vale of tears, *for these individuals* it has become *imperative* that some bridge should be provided that shall be competent, with the aid of faith, to enable them to "*pass over*" in security. Even now many are watching in darkness

upon this perilous shore for the appearance of some star in the East to guide them on their way. Already they cry, "Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night?" and the Watchman replieth: "The morning cometh and also the night. If ye will inquire, inquire ye."

As both the *necessity* and the *possibility* of obtaining an absolute ground for philosophy, or any other foundation for Theology than the one given to us in the Scriptures and taught by the Church, may be questioned; we will, as an introduction to this statement, undertake to demonstrate these two facts, and thus answer the two principal objections that will probably be urged against our system, and which, if true, would render the statement here made entirely unnecessary.

Cicero has defined Philosophy to be "*the Science of things Divine and of things Human*;" and this definition is undeniably correct, because the very nature of philosophy demands rationality, consistency, or oneness; and, admitting a *relationship to exist* between the Divine and the Human, philosophy cannot be realized without a foundation in absolute law, that will include and govern *both* the Divine and the Human subject. It therefore becomes evident that no philosophy can be true, and so can neither be permanent or extensively useful; that is not universal in its character, scientific in its form, and founded in absolute law; or in those universal laws of being in which God exists and through which he manifests himself; so that these laws shall govern all its departments and unite them in one general system. This fact seems to have been very well understood by the ancients, it being undeniably ap-