

**THE ROCK OF AGES; OR,
SCRIPTURE TESTIMONY TO THE
ONE ETERNAL GODHEAD OF THE
FATHER, AND OF THE SON, AND
OF THE HOLY GHOST**

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The Rock of Ages; Or, Scripture Testimony to the One Eternal Godhead of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost by Edward Henry Bickersteth

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OF THE HOLY GHOST.

BY

EDWARD HENRY BICKERSTETH, M.A.

INCUMBENT OF CHRIST CHURCH, HAMPSTEAD.

"Comparing spiritual things with spiritual."

1 Cor. ii. 13.

SMITH, HAMPSTEAD.

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1859.

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TO

The Unitarians of England,

AND TO ANY OTHERS WHO CONFESS OR CONCEAL DOUBTS
REGARDING THE MYSTERIES OF THE FAITH,

THIS TREATISE,

ACCOMPANIED WITH MANY PRAYERS,

IS, IN ALL HUMILITY, ADDRESSED BY

THE AUTHOR.

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P R E F A C E.

THE title-page of this Treatise may sufficiently indicate the line of argument I have attempted to pursue. My standard of reference throughout, has been the memorable precept, "Trust ye in the Lord for ever, for in the Lord Jehovah is the Rock of Ages." (Isai. xxvi. 4.) That the one Infinite God claims our supreme and undivided confidence; that the same confidence is, on the warrant of Scripture, to be reposed in the Father, and in the Son, and in the Holy Ghost; and that therefore Father, Son, and Spirit are equally God over all, blessed for ever, the Triune Jehovah, in whose name alone we trust, on whose arm alone we rely, and whose majesty alone we adore and love:—such is the brief outline of a train of thought indelibly impressed many years ago on my own mind.

Local circumstances, to which I allude in my opening chapter, induced me this autumn to commit these thoughts to paper. I intended to write only a brief pamphlet. But I found that proofs from the written word accumulated upon me so rapidly, that I could not duly sketch this most momen-

tous of subjects in so cursory a way. I therefore suffered Scripture as it were to lead me by the hand: until by compiling and illustrating Bible evidence alone, my little essay swelled to nearly its present dimensions. And when the rough draft of my manuscript was to some extent completed, I did not scruple to avail myself of the labours of those authors, to which I have from time to time referred, so far as my limited leisure permitted me to consult them. I especially allude to Dr. Pye Smith's "Scripture Testimony to the Messiah:" my readers will find how much I am indebted to that truly learned and elaborate work. I would also mention a short but valuable treatise, now out of print, by the late Mr. Serjeant Sellon; Dwight's Theology, vol. ii; Wardlaw's Discourses; Serle's Horae Solitariae; Lectures at Christ Church, Liverpool; Scholefield's Hints; Dr. Gordon's Supreme Godhead of Christ; and Jones' Catholic Doctrine of a Trinity: though to many of these authors I have only been able to refer, as isolated passages led me to desire to know their judgment on contested interpretations. With respect to the last, "Jones' Catholic Doctrine," which contains so much in so brief a space, I had not seen it until my Treatise was almost finished. His system of proof is in some respects similar to mine: but even my threefold comparison in the last chapter of this work, which resembles his arrangement the nearest, was commenced before the possession of his work enabled me to enrich this and two or three earlier sections likewise, with some most apposite quotations gleaned by him from the Word of God. I mention this only to shew that my collection of Scriptural

evidence was, in the main, independent; for in such a subject, of all others, claims of originality can have no place. Here eminently, *καὶ οὐκ ἐστὶν ἄλλο*. But while speaking of other writers, may I be permitted to urge any, who do not know them, to study some essays "On the Religions of Man and the Religion of God," by the late Professor Vinet, of Lausanne? Space alone prevented my quoting at the close of this book a large portion of his admirable remarks on the mysteries of Christianity. He is not unjustly called the Chalmers of Switzerland; for in his hands the deepest subjects bloom with life and love.

But after all, our appeal must be to *One Book*. I have honestly tried to understand the views of sincere Unitarians; but I can come to no other conclusion, than that while sometimes freely using the language of Scripture with respect to our Lord, they regard Him only as a most highly exalted and divinely endowed CREATURE. In a word, to them He is not God. And therefore, on their hypothesis, if men trust in Him for eternal salvation, reposing their entire confidence in Him, they are trusting in a creature, which is idolatry. (Jerem. xvii. 5—8.) Whereas if they do not so trust in Him, they are rejecting the only name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved. (Acts, iv. 12.) From this disastrous alternative I see no possible escape.

I rejoice to think, however, they are bound down by no

* The work is called 'Vital Christianity': and is well translated by an American pastor. It is published in a very cheap form, by W. Collins, Paternoster Row, London.