

## ARTICLE V.

## TRICHOTOMY: A BIBLICAL STUDY.

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CONSCIOUSNESS and revelation alike bear witness that, to speak in a general way, man is a being with a dual nature. I have a body; I am also conscious that I have a soul, of which my body is but the instrument. This is the true Ego; an immaterial essence, which thinks and feels and wills; but a material body has been assumed into organic union with it. Thus I am body and soul. In a like general way, in the account of creation as given in the book of Genesis, we read of two different elements as entering into the constitution of man; the one, material, a body, made "of the dust of the ground," the other, immaterial, the נְשֵׁמַת חַיִּים, "the breath of life (lives)," breathed into man by God, in the day that he created him. On this point, then, consciousness and Scripture bear consentient testimony; there is a dichotomy in the nature of man. But this being granted, the question still remains, whether a further analysis is possible. Philosophy, indeed, whether right or wrong, long ago insisted that a further distinction must be made in the immaterial part of man, as containing in the unity of the one person, first, the ψυχή, or "animal soul," and secondly, the νοῦς, or "intelligence." Whether these names were well chosen or not, or whether there was any sufficient ground for the distinction, we do not yet inquire. But the fact that long ago such a distinction has been made by an influential school of philosophy, at least suggests that there may probably be in human consciousness some phenomena which seem to point

to a duality in the immaterial part of man. The application which was made of the doctrine of a trichotomy by the Gnostics, and later, in the fourth century, in the formulation of the Apollinarian doctrine of the person of our Lord, no doubt has had much influence, even until now, in predisposing theologians against a view which has seemed to them to accommodate itself too readily to certain forms of erroneous doctrine; as, in a matter so important as the constitution of the person of Christ. But there are many indications that in our time, partly as a result of an exegesis less than in former days under the control of the dogmatic spirit, and still more in consequence of recent discoveries in physiology, the minds of many are inclining again to affirm the reality of a true trichotomy in human nature, as attested apparently both by Holy Scripture and by modern physiological research.

Stated as a biblical question, the question may be put in this form: When the sacred writers speak as they do of "body, soul, and spirit," do they mean thereby to denote the soul and spirit as being in some sense different and distinct entities, or do these two words simply denote the same thing under two different aspects? The latter view has been expressed by the late Dr. A. A. Hodge as follows: "The word *πνεῦμα* designates the one soul, emphasizing its quality as rational. The word *ψυχή* designates the same soul, emphasizing its quality as the vital and animating principle of the body." The only argument which he gives in support of this view is in these words: "That the *psuche* and the *pneuma* are distinct entities cannot be the doctrine of the New Testament, because they are habitually used interchangeably and indifferently." To this, Dr. Charles Hodge, in his "Systematic Theology," adds two other arguments, which will be noticed later. If, however, this affirmation be correct, then so far as this is a biblical question, no further argument is needed. But whether it be correct or

not, is a question which can be decided only by a careful examination of all the passages in the Bible where the words rendered "soul" and "spirit," or their Hebrew and Greek equivalents, occur. The original words which are thus translated, are, in the Hebrew, נֶפֶשׁ, רוּחַ, and רִיחַ; in the Greek, ψυχή and πνεῦμα. What, then, are the facts as to their usage? and does that usage authorize us to say that both designate the same entity, "the one emphasizing its quality as rational, the other emphasizing its quality as the vital principle of the body;" and that they are "habitually used interchangeably and indifferently"? or are they used with discrimination, in such a manner that they appear, according to that usage, to denote different elements of our immaterial nature?

In investigating the facts, it is well to remember the law of development of doctrine in the Scriptures; and therefore we should not lay undue stress, either way, upon the usage of the Old Testament, especially in the older books. Still it will be instructive, especially as the New Testament usage in Greek is much influenced by the use of the corresponding Hebrew terms, to review rapidly the facts regarding the usage of the Hebrew words. The facts with respect to רוּחַ are as follows. Primarily and by etymology it means "wind," in which sense it appears about one hundred times. Examples are: in Gen. iii. 8, "in the cool [lit. the wind] of the day;" Ex. x. 13, "the Lord brought an east wind;" Jon. i. 4, "the Lord sent out a great wind," etc. Immediately derived from this primary signification, we have the signification, "blast," or "breath;" as, e. g., in Ex. xv. 8, "with the blast of thy nostrils;" Job iv. 9, "by the breath of his nostrils are they consumed;" Isa. xi. 4, "with the breath of his lips will he slay the wicked;" and, probably, though not certainly, in the narrative of the Flood, in Gen. vi. 17; vii. 15, 22; in all other places, about two hundred and twenty in number, it is rendered "spirit."

The word נֶפֶשׁ occurs much more frequently, about seven

hundred times in the Old Testament. It also has much greater diversity of meaning. The radical meaning, like that of *ruach*, is probably "wind," but it does not occur in this sense. From this, as in the case of *ruach*, the meaning "breath" naturally comes; but *nephesh* is so rendered only once, in Job xli. 21, "His breath kindleth coals." In very many places it denotes the life or animating principle, whether of man or beast; as, in Lev. xxiv. 18, "he that killeth a beast" (Heb., "he that smiteth the life of a beast;" R. V., "he that smiteth a beast mortally"); Deut. xix. 21, "life shall go for life." Next, in a sense still broader, *nephesh* denotes the whole man, both soul and body; as, in Ex. xii. 16, "that which every man must eat;" Josh. xi. 11, "they smote all the souls;" and xx. 9, "whosoever killeth any person." In this sense it is thus often used where we should use "person," "individual," or simply "man." But the word even denotes, in a similar manner, an animal, as made up of soul and body; as, in Gen. ii. 19, where we read, "Adam called every living creature;" and in Gen. ix. 10, 15, 16, it is similarly used of the animals that went in with Noah into the ark. As thus often in a broad sense comprehending the entire personality of man, soul and body, it is often used pleonastically with a possessive pronominal affix, as a personal pronoun, as often in the Psalms; e. g., Ps. xi. 1, "How say ye to my soul?" i. e., "to me;" xxii. 29, "none can keep alive his own soul," i. e., "keep himself alive." As thus used of the whole person, the *nephesh* is even said to die, and is spoken of as dead. Thus it occurs in this idiom in Num. vi. 6, "he shall not come near to a dead body," "a dead *nephesh*;" and ix. 6, 7, "defiled by the dead body (*nephesh*) of a man."

נִשְׁמָה, like the two words already noted, primarily means "wind," and then "breath." It is much less common,

“breath” or “breathe;” in three places more, “blast” (2 Sam. xxii. 16; Job iv. 9; Ps. xviii. 15). In only two places it is translated “spirit;” Job xxvi. 4, “whose spirit came from thee?” and Prov. xx. 27, “the spirit of man is the lamp of the Lord.” In one passage alone it is rendered “soul;” viz., Isa. lvii. 16, “the souls which I have made.” In Job xxxii. 8, A. V., it is rendered “inspiration,”—“the inspiration of the Almighty;” but the Revised Version gives the more usual rendering “breath.”

Summing up now the results of this part of our induction, we find that, as regards *nephesh* and *ruach*, they are by no means used indifferently and interchangeably. The facts are as follows:—

1. Both *ruach* and *nephesh* are used in the physical sense of “breath;” *ruach*, frequently, *nephesh*, but rarely.

2. Both *ruach* and *nephesh* are used to denote the life or animating principle, whether of man or beast; but while this is the most common sense of *nephesh*, it is rare with *ruach*, which in this sense, indeed, perhaps occurs in no other place than in the sceptical passage in Eccl. iii. 21, “Who knoweth the . . . . spirit of the beast, whether it goeth downward to the earth?”

3. Both *ruach* and *nephesh* are used in a broader sense, as comprehending the whole immaterial part of man, not only the principle of animal life, but also the higher rational spirit. But with this generic reference *nephesh* again appears to be the more common word, and *ruach* is employed more rarely.

4. While *nephesh* is frequently used to denote the whole man, soul and body, *ruach* is never thus employed. Still less can *ruach* be used, like *nephesh*, to designate an irrational animal, as made up of a soul and a body.

5. While *nephesh* is even applied to the body after the soul has left it, such a usage never occurs with *ruach*. On the contrary, *רוח* is contrasted with *בשר*, “flesh,” as some-

thing vastly higher (Isa. xxxi. 3).

6. Accordingly, by metonymy, the *nephesh* is said to die and be dead, a usage which never occurs with *ruach*.

7. So also, the idiom by which *nephesh* is used with a possessive suffix to denote, in a periphrastic and sometimes emphatic way, the personal pronoun, rarely, if ever, is found with *ruach*.

8. But finally, whenever the reference is to God or to angels, *ruach* is always found, and *nephesh* never.<sup>1</sup> In other words, *nephesh* is never used except of the immaterial principle as in connection with the animal body.

Certainly these facts warrant us in saying that it is not true that *nephesh* and *ruach* are interchangeable. There appears to be a difference between the two words, of such a kind, that, while the one may be used both of the Creator and the creature, the other is applied only in the sphere of the organized creation.

The use of *n'shama* corresponds rather with that of *ruach* than with that of *nephesh*. In proportion to the frequency of its occurrence, however, it is used more frequently than either *ruach* or *nephesh*, in the material sense of "breath." But, on the other hand, when *n'shama* is used of the immaterial part, it is even more closely restricted than *ruach* to the spirit of man and of God. Indeed, we find no instance of its application to an irrational animal; it is never used to include both soul and body; nor is it by any rhetorical figure ever spoken of as dead. As regards its Greek equivalents, we may dismiss the matter by simply saying that it is always represented in the Septuagint either by *πνοή* or *ἐμπνοος*.

The facts as to the usage of *ψυχή* and *πνεῦμα* can be briefly stated. The New Testament use of these words is based

8, "the spirit of Pharaoh was troubled," where, only, *psuche* stands for the Hebrew *ruach*. Hence the Hellenistic use of *psuche* is much broader than the classical, as it is applied in all the instances above mentioned in the case of *nephesh*. Hence it comes that *psuche* and *pneuma* are employed in the New Testament to denote the whole immaterial part of man; as, in Matt. x. 28, "able to destroy both soul and body in hell," where the Greek has *psuche*; and James ii. 26, "the body apart from the spirit is dead," where the Greek has *pneuma*. Still it is not true that the words are used indifferently and interchangeably. In particular, the following facts are to be observed:—

1. *Psuche* alone, like *nephesh*, is used of the life, whether of man or beast; as, e. g., in Matt. ii. 20, "they are dead which sought the young child's life;" vi. 25, "Take no thought for your life;" Rev. viii. 9, "creatures which had life;" and of animals; as, xvi. 3, "every living creature died in the sea."

2. As a significant fact, in accord with ordinary Old Testament usage, the Holy Spirit in the New Testament never attributes *pneuma* to irrational animals; the possession of *pneuma* stands out in the whole New Testament as the peculiar distinction, among earthly creatures, of man alone.

3. And, on the other hand, in the New Testament, as in the Old, the possession of *psuche* is never affirmed of God or angels.<sup>1</sup> God is *pneuma*, not *psuche*; angels, *pneumata*, not *psuchai*.

We must conclude, then, that it is not true that these words "are habitually used interchangeably and indiffer-

<sup>1</sup> Such an expression as is found in Matt. xii. 18, where God is represented as using the words "in whom my soul is well pleased" cannot be justly

ently." It is indeed freely granted that in the absence, both in Hebrew and Greek, of any more generic term, both *ruach* and *nephesh*, and *psuche* and *pneuma*, sometimes designate the whole immaterial part of man; but they do not therefore always, or even most commonly, carry, each and all of them, that one comprehensive meaning. It is equally plain, from the study of the passages in which these words severally are used, that *ruach* and *pneuma* do designate an immaterial existence of a higher order than *nephesh* and *psuche*. Man is represented as having both a soul (*nephesh*, *psuche*) and a spirit (*ruach*, *pneuma*); God has—or rather essentially *is*—Spirit (*ruach*, *pneuma*).

However then, under other circumstances, we might be justified in ignoring or declining to attach dogmatic weight to any passages in which the *psuche* is apparently distinguished from the *pneuma*, the actual usage of the Bible seems to forbid us to regard such expressions as we shall have now to consider, as merely pleonastic or accidental. As already remarked, it were not indeed strange, if in the Old Testament we should not find a distinction between the terms for "soul" and "spirit" sharply and indubitably indicated, even if such a distinction were a fact. It were not consistent with the law of progress in the revelation of doctrine which is to be observed throughout Holy Scripture. And yet, in Job xii. 10, we find a passage in which the two words are apparently used with discrimination in accordance with the distinctions already shown; "in whose hand is the soul (*nephesh*) of every living thing, and the breath (*ruach*, marg. R. V. "spirit") of all mankind." With good reason, too, Professor Delitzsch has called attention to the language in combination with a possessive suffix is used, with no reference to its distinctive meaning, as an emphatic form of the personal pronoun. Hence



in Gen. ii. 7, where we are told that the human *nephesh* was the result of God's breathing into man the  $\text{נְשָׁמַת חַיִּים}$ , "the breath of lives." Are we to identify the antecedent *n'shama* with the resultant *nephesh*? Still, for the reason already given, we are not inclined to press any such statements as proof-texts on the constitution of man's immaterial nature. It is enough to call attention to the fact that they are such as are in perfect harmony, to say no more, with what we should expect on the assumption that the *psuche* and the *pneuma* were distinct entities.

But the New Testament, to many, seems much more explicit. The *locus classicus* is 1 Thess. v. 23, which reads (R. V.): "The God of peace himself sanctify you wholly; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved entire, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." In this passage the second clause certainly appears to be a fuller explication of the reference in the term  $\text{\textcircled{O}}\lambda\text{\textcircled{O}}\tau\epsilon\lambda\eta\varsigma$ , explained by Jerome as signifying *per omnia vel in omnibus*; so also the Vulgate renders *per omnia*, "through all," *sc.* "all parts of your being." And then what this "*omnia*" includes, is set forth by the terms, "spirit," "soul," and "body." As to the significance of these words we heartily accept the words of Dean Alford, who says: "*Pneuma* is the SPIRIT, the highest and distinctive part of man, the immortal and responsible soul, in our common parlance: *psuche* is the lower or animal soul, containing the passions and desires which we have in common with the brutes, but which in us is ennobled and drawn up by the *pneuma*. That St. Paul had these distinctions in mind is plain from such places as 1 Cor. ii. 14." To the same effect are the remarks on the same passage by Bishop Ellicott, who says, that we have here "a distinct enunciation of the three component parts of the na-

*impero tenetur* (*ibid.*), the sphere of the will and the affections, the true centre of the personality. . . . . To assert that enumerations like the present are rhetorical (De Wette), or worse, that the apostle probably attached no distinct thought to each of these words (Jowett), is plainly to set aside all sound rules of scriptural exegesis." With all which we cannot but fully agree. To suppose that we have here a mere tautology is quite out of accord with the rest of the verse. Surely the *πνεῦμα*, *ψυχή*, and *σῶμα* are exegetical of the term *ὀλοτελής*, in the former clause of the verse. How, again, can the assumption that Paul did not mean to indicate any distinction, be harmonized with his explicit statement made to the Corinthians, that the things which he taught in his Epistles he taught "in *words* which the Holy Ghost teacheth"? We are thus, for our part, quite unable to avoid understanding the apostle here to teach a trichotomy of the nature of man. It is not indeed the trichotomy affirmed by the Platonists, who thought that the *νοῦς* in man was a part of the eternal self-existent God, or Logos. It needs to be emphasized that this erroneous notion has no necessary logical connection with the affirmation of a trichotomy: since the question as to the *fact* of a trichotomy is quite distinct from that as to the essential *nature* or *origin* of each part of man's threefold nature.

Scarcely less decisive than the words of the apostle in 1 Thess. v. 23, seems to us the use by the same apostle of the two adjectives, respectively derived from these two nouns, in 1 Cor. xv. 44. In that place the apostle is distinguishing this present corruptible body from that which we are to re-

versions before them, did not render the adjective, in the absence of any English adjective derived from "soul," as *psuchikos* from *psuche*, by the word "animal." "It is sown an animal body," expresses very happily what Paul evidently meant; but the body of the resurrection, in the new order which is to come, will be just as "natural" as the present. Now if the original terms *psuche* and *pneuma* are only different names for the same immaterial part of man, then we confess ourselves unable to derive any definite idea from the apostle's statement. For we cannot, with some, understand the term *psuchikon* to refer indeed to the human soul, one and indivisible, and the term *pneumatikon* to have reference to the Holy Spirit, defining the body of the resurrection as one formed by him. For, in the first place, we do not find that, according to New Testament usage, *psuche* is employed as antithetic to *pneuma*, in the sense of the Holy Spirit. The antithesis is then expressed not by  $\psi\upsilon\chi\acute{\eta}$ , but by  $\sigma\acute{\alpha}\rho\kappa\acute{\iota}$ , "flesh," denoting corrupt human nature in its totality. And, in the second place, so soon as we accurately define the term *pneumatikon*, it appears that, if referred to the Holy Spirit, it will not bear the meaning which the obvious antithesis requires. On the other hand, if the *psuche* implied in *psuchikon* denote that animal soul which man possesses as an animal, and the *pneuma* implied in *pneumatikon*, that higher immaterial part in virtue of his possession of which he is said to be made in the image of God, then the two adjectives can be explained each in strictest analogy with the other, and the antithesis intended will be brought out with the greatest clearness. For, as regards the term *psuchikon*, we can hardly doubt that when Paul so calls the present body, he intends to describe it as a body formed by the organizing energy of, and adapted to the necessities and desires of, the

would maintain that the operation of the Holy Spirit in the formation of the resurrection body is to be thought of after the manner of that of the *psuche*, as the organizing principle of the body which we now have. Else it were hard to see, since a *material* identity is denied to the resurrection body as compared with the present (ver. 37, 38), in what then the continuity of the new body with the old could consist. But assume that the word *pneumatikon* refers not to the divine but to the human *pneuma* spoken of by Paul in 1 Thess. v. 23, and the sense of the words becomes perfectly simple and clear. The *soma psuchikon*, or body which we now have, is one formed by the *psuche*, or animal soul, like the body of any other animal; an organ perfectly adapted to its needs and desires, and perfectly to these only. This we leave in the grave. But in the resurrection the believer will receive a *soma pneumatikon*; i. e., a body in which not the *psuche* but the *pneuma* will be the organizing principle, and which will therefore be as admirably and perfectly fitted to be its expression and the instrument for its free activity as is the present animal body for the animal *psuche*. The present body, as we all painfully feel, is but a very weak and inadequate organ for the activity of the spiritual life. Hence the Holy Spirit promises that in the resurrection we shall have a body as well adapted to our higher nature as this is to the lower nature which we now have.

The necessity which the context forces on us for some such interpretation of these words, is so evident that even Dr. C. Hodge has been compelled to disregard, in his comment on this passage, his elsewhere expressed opinion, that the adjective *pneumatikon* in the New Testament always designates that which pertains to the Holy Spirit; and,

the *psuche* which is implied in the adjective *psuchikon*. His words are: "A natural body (*soma psuchikon*) is a body of which the *psuche*, or animal life, is the animating principle; and a spiritual body (*soma pneumatikon*) is a body adapted to the *pneuma*, the rational, immortal principle of our nature." And, again, he defines the former as a body "adapted to the *psuche*, or principle of animal life," and the latter as "a body adapted to the *pneuma*, or principle of rational life." He is careful explicitly to add, and quite correctly, that "'spiritual' in this connection does not mean animated by the Holy Spirit."<sup>1</sup> Than this nothing could be more satisfactory; and had we nothing else one would naturally infer that the writer accepted the trichotomy as a fact implied in these statements of the apostle. But, to avoid this almost inevitable inference from such language, he adds the caution, that "the Bible uses these terms without intending to teach that the *psuche*, or *life*, is a distinct substance from the *pneuma*, or *rational spirit*, but only that as we have certain attributes in common with irrational animals, so we have now a body suited to those attributes; and, on the other hand, as we have attributes unspeakably higher than those which belong to brutes, we shall hereafter possess bodies adapted to those higher attributes."<sup>2</sup> But of this assertion that the Bible does not here intend to teach any distinction of substance between the *psuche* and the *pneuma*, no proof is given. Moreover, this attempt to avoid the inference of a trichotomy which might so naturally be drawn from his first clear statements, seems to us to involve a degree of confusion of thought. The expressions "adapted to the principle of animal life" and "adapted to certain attri-

not the same thing. If there are attributes, they presuppose a substance in which they inhere. And, on the other hand, how can we conceive of "a principle of life" with all its wonderful powers and properties, except as a substance in which these properties inhere? But if "a principle of life" cannot be thought of except as a substance in which certain attributes inhere, and if, as Dr. Hodge, under the stress of these words of the apostle, verbally admits, there are in man two "principles of life," a "principle of animal life" and "a principle of spiritual life," how can one escape the conclusion that in 1 Cor. xv. 44, Paul assumes a trichotomy as a fact, and that in Pauline phraseology, *psuche* and *pneuma*, "soul" and "spirit," designate these two elements of man's immaterial nature?<sup>1</sup>

In the light of these passages, other statements of Scripture, less dogmatic in form, should fairly be interpreted, and, while they had not been in themselves decisive, they now acquire value as confirmatory of the doctrine. Thus, even Heb. iv. 12, despite the denial of its relevancy by anti-trichotomists, seems not to be without force by way of confirmation. We grant that it is true, indeed, that "the word of God" which is here said to pierce "even to the dividing of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow," does not divide the one "metaphysically" any more than it divides the latter "physically." But certainly it is meant, to use the words of Delitzsch,<sup>2</sup> that it does so "inquisitorially and judicially," searching out and revealing the presence and defilement of sin in each and every part of man's complex nature,—both of his material part, the body, and of his immaterial part, the soul.

The words of Jude, ver. 19 of his Epistle, are also deserv-

ing of note in this connection: "These are they who make separations, sensual (marg. "animal," Gr. *ψυχικοί*), having not the Spirit." (R. V.) As thus given, the reference is made to the Holy Spirit, as is indeed possible. But it is more than probable, if the above interpretation of more explicit passages be granted, that the reference here is not to the divine, but to the human spirit; for, as previously remarked, the antithesis which we should expect if the former were intended, would be not *psuchikoi*, but *sarkikoi*, "fleshly," in the ethical sense of that term. These words would thus appear to hold up the unregenerate man, or apostate Christian, as a man who, being destitute of spirit as a controlling power, is therefore *psuchikos*, a man under the dominion of the animal nature alone. The thought receives illustration from the expression used in 2 Pet. ii. 12, concerning the same class of persons: as "creatures without reason, born mere animals." (R. V.) Thus the words in Jude harmonize with more explicit teaching as to a trichotomy, adding the very momentous suggestion that the unregenerate man is a man in whom the spirit is as if it were not; dead, at least in such sense that it no more can exercise its proper functions.<sup>1</sup>

The words of Paul in 1 Cor. ii. 14, 15, read in the light of the more explicit passages above discussed, are also instructive on this subject. We read, "The natural (Gr. *ψυχικός*) man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; and he cannot know them because they are spiritually judged. But he that is spiritual (Gr.

<sup>1</sup> In so far we can agree with Alford's interpretation of these words "'Not having the spirit,' . . . not directly the Holy Spirit of God (the absence of the article would be no objection to this) but the higher spiritual life of man's spirit in communion with the Holy Spirit. These men have not indeed

πνευματικός) judgeth all things, and he himself is judged of no man." As for the frequent interpretation which refers the word *pneumatikos* here, as everywhere else, to the Holy Spirit, we must urge still, as in other cases, that this does not bring out the force of the antithesis with *psuchikos*, and that instead of the latter, if the reference were to the Holy Spirit, the word *sarkikos* was to be expected. And it is a further advantage of the interpretation which here again refers the adjective *pneumatikos* to the human *pneuma*, that it includes and implies the indirect reference to the Divine Spirit, as spoken of in the context. For it was the teaching of the Lord (John iii. 6) that the spirit in the renewed man is born of the Holy Spirit of God; which fact shows how it is that, as the apostle here teaches, only the man in whom the spirit has been quickened into life by the Holy Spirit, can, in virtue of this relation thus established, understand the things of the Spirit of God. The words thus teach that the spirit, born anew in man from and by the Holy Spirit of God, has a faculty of discerning spiritual things of which the *psuche*, or "soul," is wholly destitute.

Against these intimations of the later revelation, the contention of the elder Dr. Hodge, that the doctrine of trichotomy contradicts the account given of man's creation in the book of Genesis, which recognizes only two elements in man's nature, "body" and "soul," seems to us of little force. For, in the first place, it is a question whether even this passage in Genesis does not itself imply a trichotomy, as Delitzsch and others have insisted. But even if we accept his interpretation of Genesis ii. 7, his argument would have little



grant, then, without prejudice to the above argument, that the object of the writer of the narrative in Genesis was only to teach us that both the material and the immaterial part of man was the work of the creative power of God; for surely, if it should later appear that there was a dualism in the immaterial part of man as thus created, there would be in this no contradiction to the earlier statement.

It is further argued by Dr. C. Hodge against the truth of a trichotomy, that "consciousness reveals the existence of two substances in the constitution of our nature; but it does not reveal the existence of three substances."<sup>1</sup> To this we answer, first, that though we admit that consciousness does not witness to the existence of more than two substances in our nature, in the broad sense of that word, material and immaterial, yet this alone does not disprove the possible reality of a dualism in man's immaterial part. The mere silence of consciousness on this or any matter, as regards direct testimony, is by no means equivalent to contradictory testimony. To illustrate, there is much revealed in Holy Scripture, as to the work of the Holy Spirit in the heart and the agency of Satan on the soul, as to which consciousness is absolutely silent. But because consciousness does not directly discriminate between the workings and suggestions of the Holy Spirit in the mind of man and those due to the man himself, surely we shall not argue that therefore in these matters the testimony of consciousness contradicts the testimony of the word. Silence is not of necessity contradiction.

But we may venture to go much further. We argue rather that when the facts of consciousness and intelligent

ject have been so clearly summed up by Sir William Dawson, that we cannot do better than to give his words. He says:—

“ We know . . . . that the gray cellular matter of the brain constitutes a reservoir of sensory and motor energy. . . . Further, there seems the best reason to believe that the mass of the brain is directly connected with sensation and motion, though there seem to be means of regulation and co-ordination of sensations and actions in connection with the front and back portions of the cerebral hemispheres. There are facts indicating that the anterior portions of the hemispheres are the organs of a certain determining and combining property, of the nature of animal intelligence, and that the posterior portions, in association with the sympathetic nerve, are connected with the affections and passions. . . . Now all this . . . . is possessed by man in common with animals. They, like us, can perceive and reflect, and have affections, passions, and appetites. They, like us, can perform reflex or automatic actions, altogether or partially involuntary. Even in animals this presupposes something beyond the mere organism, and which can combine and compare sensations and actions. This is the animal or psychical life, which, whatever its essential nature, is something above and beyond mere nerve power, though connected with it, and acting by means of it. But in man there are other and higher powers, determining his conscious personality, his formation of general principles, his rational and moral volitions and self-restraints. These are manifestations of a higher and spiritual nature, which constitutes in man the shadow and image of God . . . . . The more recent discoveries as to the functions of brain . . . . serve to correct the doctrines of those who have run into the extreme of attaching no importance to the fleshly organism and its endowment of animal life . . . . These discoveries are tending to establish definite boundaries be-

tween the domain of mere automatism and that of rational will . . . . In so far as these results are attained, we are drawn more closely to that middle ground occupied by the New Testament writers, which . . . . gives a fair valuation to all the parts of the composite nature of man. . . . . The New Testament has undoubtedly pointed to solutions of the mysteries of our nature, at which science and philosophy are beginning to arrive by their own paths; just as, in another department, the Bible has shadowed forth the great principles and processes of creation, in advance of the discoveries of geology.”<sup>1</sup>

We make no apology for introducing this long citation from one who has spoken so truly and so well; words which, we believe, the continuous progress of scientific investigation has only the more confirmed. We believe, therefore, that instead of the facts of consciousness contradicting the doctrine of a trichotomistic division in human nature, in so far as they are accurately read and their significance scientifically interpreted, they are tending more and more to establish its reality, and thus must henceforth more and more incline all for whom the word of God speaks with authority, to accept this trichotomistic explanation of such passages as we have discussed.

But the question will at once come up, if we admit that there is a distinction between the soul and spirit, in what this distinction consists. It needs, however, to be carefully observed, that the exegetical question whether the Scriptures teach a trichotomy, will not be affected in the least, even though, with our present imperfect scientific knowledge, we should not be able to draw the line of demarcation between the soul and the spirit, with infallible precision. We must needs speak on this matter with a degree of reserve, and wait for fuller light, which may possibly require us to modify

<sup>1</sup> Princeton Review, Nov. 1879; article, “Points of Contact between Science and Revelation,” pp. 602-606.

some statement. The Scriptures, however, and the facts of human life as made known by modern physiology, seem to warrant some such suggestions as the following:—

The soul and the spirit are not to be conceived of as two distinct substances *in the broad sense* of that term. That is, we are not to regard them as substances *generically* distinct, as when we contrast matter and spirit. Thus, as already remarked, it is quite true that, taking the words “spirit” or “soul” in the broad sense, the Bible does teach, and consciousness affirm, a dichotomy, no less really than a trichotomy, of substance. But the word “substance” is used not only in this broad and generic sense, but also in a sense narrower and more specific. Using it in the broad sense, we say, for instance, that, so far as we know, there are but two substances in the universe, matter and spirit. But, on the other hand, in the narrow sense of the word, we say with equal truth, that there are many substances; that iron is one substance, copper another, and so on. All which expressions simply mean, of course, that the one substance, matter, exists under many different forms. Now in the light of Scripture and modern investigation, we appear to be warranted in saying that while soul and spirit are not two substances in the broader sense of that word, they are so in the narrower sense: that immaterial substance, like material substance, exists under more than one form.

It should be hardly needful to remark that this mode of speaking, however imperfect the expression may be, by no means implies materialism. We are dealing merely with a single point of analogy between the two cases. So far as we are able by our senses to distinguish one form of matter from another, the distinction between them lies in this, that in these diverse forms matter is endowed with various proper-

we speak of a certain form of matter as a different substance from another, we never mean to intimate that these essential properties are wanting, but only that others, not incompatible with them, are superadded. Precisely so as regards immaterial substance: when we say that it apparently exists under different forms, it is not thereby suggested that its essential qualities as immaterial substance are wanting, but only that in one case it has certain powers or properties which it has not in the other. When we speak of soul and spirit as distinct, we only mean that immaterial substance in the case of the soul, the principle of animal life, is endowed with one set of powers; in the case of spirit, the higher principle of spiritual life, it is endowed with another and higher class of powers. The *generic* characteristics in either case are the same; the *specific* characteristics are different. Both soul and spirit, as contrasted with matter, which has extension, are essentially non-extended; both soul and spirit, as contrasted with matter, which has inertia, are substances essentially active. The mode of activity in the two is, however, different. The characteristic activity of the former appears to be most clearly revealed in automatism and spontaneity; that of the latter, in free moral self-determination. It is indeed true that precisely to determine which elements in our various actions are to be assigned to the soul and which to the spirit, may even be forever impossible. Many of our activities are, no doubt, a complex result of the joint working of both the soul and the spirit in variant proportions. But so much as this it seems safe to say, that, at the one extreme, all automatic and involuntary actions are certainly to be referred to the soul, which we possess in common with animals; and, on the other, all acts of free moral self-determination are to be regarded as the manifestations of the spirit: a conclusion which is in harmony with the fact that in the

while, with a uniformity scarcely ever broken, the word "spirit" and its equivalents are applied only to free moral agents, human, angelic, or divine.

We are thus led to regard the spirit as the seat of those characteristics in man which unquestionably distinguish him from even the highest types of animal life. These *differentiæ* are not found in the possession by man of the powers of knowing, remembering, or even of affection and aversion, all which are to be observed in many of the higher animals, as also, to a limited extent, the power of reasoning. It is possible indeed that these powers may be common both to the soul and the spirit. In any case, it is plain that these which are common to man and the brute cannot constitute the *differentiæ* between them, nor be regarded as exclusively faculties of the human spirit. But there is more in man than these powers of knowing and feeling, and of such reasoning as is possible to brutes. It is when we rise to the region of the higher intellectual, moral, and spiritual life, that we discern man's true glory, and find that of which it is safe to say we can discover no trace in the highest animal. No horse, dog, or monkey has a conscience, the power of distinguishing abstract right and wrong, or even of abstract reasoning; and, especially, no brute has the faculty of recognizing and knowing the invisible God. In other words, no animal is capable of religion. Still less has any animal, like the regenerated man, a faculty of loving, trusting, and communing with an unseen God. Certainly, in these activities we must recognize the specific and peculiar action of the *pneuma*.

And this inference is fully borne out by the words of the apostle Paul in 1 Cor. ii., already referred to, where he speaks of this power of judging the things of the Spirit of God as precisely that which distinguishes the spiritual from the psychical man. One almost of necessity infers from this that this power does not belong to the *psuche*, and is therefore

beyond the attainment of the man in whom this is the dominant power, while the *pneuma* is virtually dead.

Without endeavoring at present a more precise discrimination, we may now in conclusion note briefly what appear to be the bearings of the doctrine of a trichotomy upon certain important Christian doctrines: and, first, as to the conclusion toward which this view, regarded in the light of other Scriptures, seems to point as to the condition of the natural, unregenerated man. This is repeatedly described in the Scriptures as a condition of death. This death of course is not death of the body, though it involves this as its ultimate issue. We accurately describe it in common theological language as spiritual death. It is death as regards the spirit. As regards the body, the natural man is alive; as regards the psychical life, he is also alive; but as regards the spirit, he is dead. And yet we are not to understand death in this case as involving the non-existence of that which is dead. Indeed, it does not necessarily imply this even with the body. That is dead in which there is cessation of all normal activity. So with the spirit in man; it is dead as regards all normal exercise of its functions. That it is yet, however, in some sense existent, is plain from the phenomena of conscience, the like of which we see not in any irrational creature. The condition of the spirit in the unregenerated man may be illustrated by the condition of the intellect in an idiot. That of which reason is the manifestation exists in him as in other men; but it is powerless as to the exercise of its functions. The idiot is a man who is intellectually dead; and just so the natural or "psychical" man is a man in whom the spirit is dead—powerless as to the proper exercise of its functions, in apprehending God and communing with him, and by the strength thus received ruling, as it normally should, the soul and the body. In a word, the psychical man is a man who is among spiritual beings what an idiot is among intellectual beings. Or, to

change the illustration, as the eye may still exist and even retain the power of distinguishing light from darkness, while yet the man may be none the less truly and hopelessly blind; and just as the light which for the seeing man is a means of sight and the source of delight, may become for such a man the occasion of exquisite pain, even so, it would appear, it is with the man who, alive indeed as to soul and body, is yet, because of death reigning in the spirit, spiritually blind. The *pneuma* in this man is in such a sense existent that he has still the power of discerning between light and darkness; and yet the spiritual light which is poured out around him, causing holy joy to regenerated souls, becomes to him, not the instrument of gladsome vision, but of intense pain and distress; which in its last degree of intensity doubtless constitutes the peculiar and inexpressible anguish of lost souls. And to follow out the analogy; as, while the eye still remains an organ of the body, man may even at last lose even the power of distinguishing light from darkness, so that practically he is as if he had no eyes, in some such way, as it would appear, is it possible for the psychical man to become in a peculiar and awful sense, in the words of the apostle Jude, "twice dead," "animal, not having a spirit."

And this leads us naturally on to the view which the Scriptures apparently require us to take of regeneration. It consists essentially in the impartation, by the Holy Spirit, of a new life to the dead spirit of man: according to the word of our Lord, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot see the kingdom of God;" and that other word:—"that which is [thus] born of the Spirit, is spirit." Nor can it be justly objected to this, that it makes regeneration to be only partial. For even so is it yet as true as on any other supposition, that regeneration affects the whole man. It is with the impartation of the new life as it was with the curse of death which fell on man because of sin. It meant death in every part of man's being, but it did not take



effect to the uttermost through all parts of his being at once, but only reached its consummation in the death of the body long afterward. The doom took effect on the spirit first of all, in that man at once lost spiritual life; and then, the spirit being dead because of sin, the regulative power being gone, death now went on to work out its sad effects in both soul and body. And so with the new life; it begins just where the death began, with the spirit, but stops not there; it goes on sanctifying soul and body, until, at last, as the spiritual death which began with the death of the spirit ended with the death of the body, so the life which is imparted to the spirit works on through our union to Christ as the life, by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in our spirits, till it reaches its full revelation and expression in the resurrection from the dead. And thus we now learn that the regenerated man is one who differs from other men, not merely in that he is a better man morally, but radically in this, that he is a man in whom the spirit, which in others is dead, has been quickened into new life by the Divine Spirit, and thereby empowered to resume its proper place of regnancy in man, as ruling and controlling, after the mind of the Holy Spirit, all the activities of both soul and body.

We may well also observe the bearing of this doctrine, if accepted, on the grand and yet so mysterious doctrine of the resurrection of the dead. The old Corinthian question is often still asked, though by no means always in the spirit either of scoffing or of incredulity, "How are the dead raised up, and with what body do they come?" In the answer which the apostle Paul gave to this question, no one particular is perhaps more instructive than this; that whereas the present body which is laid in the grave, is sown an animal body (*soma psuchikon*); it is raised a spiritual body (*soma pneumatikon*)." What the apostle means when he describes our present body as a psychical, or animal body, we have already seen. Certainly the thought is this,

that it is a body formed by and adapted to the needs and conditions of the *psuche*, or principle of animal life. This term describes the facts most precisely. The body which we now have, is in the same sense and for the same reason an animal body as that of any beast of the earth. The closest similarity exists between the body of man and that of the higher mammals. There is, indeed, something in man higher than the *psuche*, the animal soul, but this body, although affected manifestly by its presence, elevated and dignified thereby far above that of any brute, yet is none the less in all its essential characteristics, "an animal body." Now in contrast with this we are told that the body which Christ's people shall receive in the resurrection will be a "spiritual body (*soma pneumatikon*)." Certainly the two terms, *psuchikon* and *pneumatikon*, must be understood after the same analogy. If the present animal body is one in which the organizing principle is the animal soul, and which is adapted to its needs, so the spiritual body will be—not certainly a body which is immaterial, which were a contradiction in terms,—but a body in which not the animal soul, but the spirit in man, that which in him is affiliated with God, the Supreme Spirit, shall be the organizing principle, and which shall be as perfectly adapted to all its almost infinite longings, as perfect an organ of its transcendently exalted activities, as is the present body to those of the animal soul. Thus it follows at once, as the apostle says, that it must be "incorruptible;" for a body which is capable of dying cannot be an adequate organ of an immortal spirit, which in virtue of its very nature ever recoils from death and

be suited to the use of the perfected spirit, the resurrection body must therefore have, only with an unknown increment of power. Further, in that even with all these present faculties perfected we should still be under various limitations, often felt most painful, it is to be expected that a spiritual body, one which shall as perfectly satisfy the need of the spirit as the present body the needs of the animal soul, should also have new powers and endowments, at which as yet we can only guess. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be," even in respect of the life of the spiritual body. And so the other particular which the apostle adds in the context, is also included in that brief but most pregnant sentence, "it is raised a spiritual body;" it will be a glorious body. For if even this gross, unplastic, animal body, formed by and the special expression and organ of the animal soul, yet through the union of this with the spirit, often attains so much of beauty and dignity, and that even despite the presence and working of sin and death even in the holiest, what must a body be which shall be formed by, and be the perfect expression and organ of, a spirit, made perfectly holy and glorified! Surely it shall be endowed with a glory which excelleth.

It may not be amiss, before closing, to call attention to the possible bearing of this doctrine of a trichotomy on the question so hotly debated in our day, as to the origin of man. On the one hand, there are those who, under the powerful constraint of many undoubted facts which need not be here rehearsed, believe and insist that man, with all his present exalted powers, is simply and only the result of a natural process of evolution from the brute. For a divine interposition in a creative way, as the immediate cause of his origination, they see no place at all. At the other ex-

result solely of the direct and immediate creative efficiency of God. And so to this day the debate goes on. But the thought occurs, in the light of this doctrine of trichotomy, whether between these two opposing schools of thought an eirenicon may not be possible; at least as regards all such evolutionists as are not committed on *a priori* grounds to the denial of the possibility of the supernatural. If the distinction between the spirit and the animal soul in man be granted, then is it not possible that, if the facts should at last appear to compel all candid men to admit that man is genetically connected with the lower animals, we might yet fully admit this, and yet hold with perfect consistency to an immediate creative interposition of a personal God, as the efficient cause of his appearance, without which his origination by any mere process of natural descent had been utterly impossible? Or, to put the case more fully:—

Grant that the facts with regard to the human body and its organizing principle, the animal soul, point to its derivation in the way of descent from a lower type of animal life; may we not argue from analogy that, since other powers which man undoubtedly possesses, of which it is idle to pretend that the highest brute possesses a trace, are demonstrably identical in kind with powers belonging to the Supreme Being who made the earth and the heavens,—powers which, on the present hypothesis, we assign to the “spirit,” as distinguished from the “soul,”—these point no less unambiguously to a derivation in the human spirit, in some way, from the Supreme Spirit? And is it not then at least a possible solution of this profound question, that we may admit the animal soul and body of man to have been derived from other and lower orders of animal life through a process of genealogical descent, while none the less insisting that for

a personal God, who "made man in his own image" by breathing into his nostrils the breath of *lives*, and endowing him with a spirit like unto his own?<sup>1</sup>

We may now sum up the conclusions to which we have arrived. If our analysis of the teaching of the word of God is correct, then we seem warranted in laying down the following propositions:—

1. That man is composed of two substances, material and immaterial, which are in the Bible, as in common parlance, often designated as soul and body.

2. That the immaterial part of man comprehends, in an organic and personal union, two distinct entities, distinguished in the Scriptures as *psuche* and *pneuma*, "soul" and "spirit."

3. That to the former, the animal soul, are to be attributed all those powers and faculties, however different in degree, which man has in common with the brute.

4. That to the latter are to be attributed all those powers and faculties, intellectual and spiritual,—as, especially, knowledge of God and communion with him,—which clearly differentiate man from the brute, presenting between the two an impassable gulf, not to be bridged by any possible process of education or development.

5. That in the psychical or animal man, as the New Testament calls him, man as he is born into the world, the *pneuma*, or "spirit," although indeed not non-existent, is yet dead as regards any normal exercise of its functions, and can only be quickened into life by the supernatural operation of the Divine *Pneuma*, who is God the Holy Spirit, an act which the Scripture calls "a begetting," and the result of which the Lord designates as a "new birth."

faculties have been developed and strengthened by various discipline, but a man in whom the spirit, dead in other men, has been thus made alive with new life from God, and thus restored to its original and normal place as the supreme and dominating power in man, holding his whole being through the might of the indwelling Divine Spirit in the subjection of love to God's most holy law.

7. That, as the consummation of this saving work begun in the new birth, those who are thus regenerated by the Holy Spirit are at last to exchange these present weak and corruptible psychical or animal bodies for bodies spiritual, powerful, incorruptible, and glorious; and that these shall be distinguished from the bodies which we now have, fundamentally in this, that whereas these are formed by and specially adapted to the animal soul, so those, on the contrary, shall have for the animating and organizing principle the renewed and then perfected spirit, and shall be a perfect visible material expression of its inner spiritual perfection and moral beauty, as also an absolutely perfect and most glorious organ for its heavenly activities in the eternal kingdom of God.