

(Numbers refer to page numbers in the LCC edition.)

THE TASK AND THE METHOD.

Through faith and on 'the mighty authority of Scripture' (177,58;Mt 28,Dt 6) we believe that God is Trinity. We want to arrive at a satisfactory understanding of this (128). In order to do this we study the image of the Maker, the human mind,<sup>which is</sup> less difficult for us to understand (58). We find this image immortal-ly planted in the soul (102), which shall always be (101) and is our most excellent element, having the capacity to participate in God (108). When the mind reflects on itself it sees that it was never without knowledge and love of itself (84). The mind always remembers, understands and loves itself, and in this we perceive an image of the Trinity (109). This knowledge, memory and will of the mind in regards to itself is not "adventitious," has no source other than the mind, and never ceases to be (112). It is this mental image of the Trinity that Augustine will explore. Before we turn to this, let us recall some things from his summary of Books I-XIV: Scripture teaches the unity and equality of the Trinity; the missions of the Son and the Holy Spirit (130); the predicates of relation (of God) do not denote substance, God is not three <sup>but</sup> (one power, one wisdom, etc.) (131); the Trinity shows itself to the mind as lover, beloved and love, and we find a kind of trinity in the mind which more manifestly is memory, understanding and will. Of the various "trinities" this is the most fruitful <sup>one</sup> to study.

THE MENTAL IMAGE OF THE TRINITY.

When the mind knows and loves itself, it is the whole mind which does this (78). The triad of mind, knowledge and love is one substance, all are in all, each is the mind, there is no "third party" (60-63). When we conceive a knowledge of something, we have it in us as a kind of word which remains and which owes its existence to love (65f.). It is a likeness we form in the mind; in the case of the mind knowing itself, this likeness corresponds exactly to the mind's knowledge of itself (69). Like begetter and begotten, love joins them together (71); i.e., what I know is stored in my memory, "the prime fount"; I turn my thought to it "and say within myself what I know, begetting out of my knowledge memory a true word" (169). It is love, the act of will, "that takes the vision which has its seat in memory, and the vision of thought which thence receives form, and joins them together as parent and offspring" (169). This triad, regarded substantively, is one (mind, life); relatively,<sup>it</sup> is three (activities) (88). Inwardly, in regard to itself, the mind is always remembering, understanding and loving itself (107).

When what we know is true, the "true word" begotten of the memory, before it is uttered, is the closest likeness and image of what we know, having nothing of itself but having everything it has from the thing known (151). But even this (human) word has not been begotten out of our essence, as is God's Word (God's being and knowledge are identical) (153). It is rather an enigma, a kind of likeness to the Word. Our words are formable

first and then formed; the Word was never without form and is incomposite and equal to God from whom it is derived.(156). Our memory, then, has a certain likeness to the Father, our understanding to the Son and their link, human love, is another (inadequate) likeness to the Holy Spirit (170). Our triad does not compose us, but belongs to us; in the Trinity the three "Persons" do not belong to God but are God (171).

### THE TRINITY.

"The absolute transcendence of <sup>supreme</sup>the Trinity defies comparison." (170). The distinguishing terms applied to the Persons only denote mutual relations; everything else that is said of the Trinity denotes not three beings but one God. Such terms as good, almighty, etc. are essential (the essence of God is the same as God's being great, good, etc.) and are applied to each\* and all+ of the Persons equally (38). God is spirit uncompounded; in God's utter simplicity to be wise is to be; God has no qualities or accidents; God is everything God is in substance (135). There is one simple potency in God, not separate faculties such as memory, understanding and will. What God possesses is Godself (158). God as a whole is nothing but Trinity; each Person is love, wisdom, etc., by "him"-self and not through another Person (139). The Word is entirely what the Father is, except that he is not the Father. The Word gets its being from the Father, who "spoke himself" perfectly in the Son, who is not God's (unformed) thought but God's Word (156). This much for the Father and the Son.

\*individually +the Trinity

Scripture teaches us that the Holy Spirit is the spirit of both Father and Son and of neither alone; "and so his being suggests to us that mutual charity whereby the Father and the Son love one another" (157). Both Father and Son are "holy" and "spirit" and the Holy Spirit is common to both and displays the communion of both, and is thus "by a special fitness" named charity (159) (though each Person is charity also). "Yet there is good reason why in this Trinity we call none Word of God but the Son, none Gift of God but the Holy Spirit, none of whom the Word is begotten and from whom the Holy Spirit originally proceeds, but God the Father. I add the word 'originally,' because we learn that the Holy Spirit proceeds also from the Son." (158). By a special fitness the Word is given the name Wisdom (1 Co 1:24). Only the Father is God without being "of God" (derived) (160). Timelessly the Father has given all to the Son, including that the Holy Spirit should proceed from the Son (175). Only the Son is begotten. To sanctify us, the Spirit proceeds from both; his proceeding from the Son is the Father's gift to the Son (177). Through the Holy Spirit the Trinity makes its habitation in us (161).

We shall one day behold the Trinity (171) and perhaps we shall with one insight (156) understand the processions. But now we cannot even fix our gaze on that Light which enables us to glimpse these truths; this is because of our infirmity due to our iniquity (178f.). But "Upon the remembering, beholding and loving of that supreme Trinity, that (we) may recall it, contemplate it, and delight in it" we ought to make our life depend (168).