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## ARTICLE I.

*Bibliotheca Symbolica Ecclesiae Universalis. The Creeds of Christendom, with a History and Critical Notes.* By PHILIP SCHAFF, D. D., LL. D., Professor of Biblical Literature in the Union Theological Seminary, N. Y. In three Volumes. New York: Harper & Bros. 1877.

A short notice of this voluminous work appeared in our last number, together with a promise of a more extended examination. This promise we now propose to redeem, according to the measure of our ability.

Dr. Schaff's design is a grand one. He proposes to set before us, in these volumes, not the results of the thinking of individual minds, not what the most illustrious doctors of the Church have thought upon questions no less awful than the being of God and the eternal destiny of man; but the products of the mind of the Church itself, of that vast community which professes to be the witness of God and of his Christ in the midst of a world full of darkness, pollution, and shame.

These creeds are not the expressions of *opinion* upon problems which have engaged and confounded the inquiries of philosophers. They are confessions of *faith* in the solutions of those problems by him who is the source of all truth, as he is the source of all being; solutions contained in a book divinely inspired, divinely authenticated, and divinely interpreted. The Church, in these creeds, declares that faith for which her members are willing to die and for which hundreds of thousands of her members have

willingly died; that faith which has confronted the lies of the devil from age to age, and will continue to confront them until the King of truth shall appear to settle the controversy forever. These creeds are the banners of the Church. They have passed through many a storm of fire and blood; and to him who is acquainted with the history of the Church, there is scarcely a line which does not tell of some struggle with the powers of darkness. No record is more worthy of our study.

The design of our author, it is needless to say, is not altogether new. There are very many collections of creeds. But so far as we know, his plan is more comprehensive than any which has been attempted before. His work, as the title implies, is a symbolical library of the Church universal. It contains, beside the principal creeds of the great historical churches, those also of many of the small "sects" and off-shoots of those churches, and even the confessions drawn up by individual doctors who are supposed to have had, or known from history to have had, a sort of representative significance. The comprehensiveness of the plan can be better indicated by some extracts from the table of contents. The creeds are contained in the two last volumes. The first of these contains "the Creeds of the Greek and Latin Churches." Under this head we find: I. "Scripture Confessions"—of Nathaniel, Peter, Thomas; the Baptismal Formula; the Mystery of Godliness; the Elementary Articles, (Heb. vi., 1, 2,) etc. II. Ante-Nicene and Nicene Rules of Faith and Baptismal Creeds—Ignatius of Antioch; Irenæus of Gaul, (three formulas); Tertullian, (three formulas); Novatian; Eusebius of Cæsarea; Cyril of Jerusalem, (two formulas); Epiphanius of Cyprus, (two formulas); Apostolical Constitutions, etc. III. (Ecumenical Creeds—The Apostles'; Nicene; Chalcedonian; Athanasian, etc. IV. Roman Creeds—including the Papal Syllabus and the Vatican Decrees of 1870. V. Greek and Russian Creeds—Mogilas, Dositheus, Philaret. VI. Old Catholic Union Creeds of 1874 and 1875. The second volume contains the Creeds of the Evangelical Protestant Churches. Under this head we find: I. Creeds of the Lutheran Church. II. Creeds of the Evangelical Reformed Churches—(besides the well known

principal symbols, such as the two Helvetic, Heidelberg Catechism, the Gallic, Belgic, etc.); the sixty-seven Articles of Zwingli, 1523; the ten Theses of Berne, 1528; the Lambeth Articles, 1595; the Irish Articles, 1615, etc. The author gives us also the Westminster Confession in Latin as well as in English, and the Shorter Catechism of the same great Assembly of divines. III. Modern Protestant Creeds—Congregational Confessions, (Savoy, 1658; Boston National Council, 1865; Oberlin National Council, 1865); Baptist Confessions, (Philadelphia, 1686; New Hampshire, 1833; Free Will Baptist, 1866); Quaker, Moravian, Methodist, 1784; Reformed Episcopal, 1875; and last, but by no means least, we imagine, in Dr. Schaff's estimation, "The Nine Articles of the Evangelical Alliance," 1846. Our readers will perceive from this table that our author has performed a valuable service to the Church, and especially to our ministers. No pastor ought to be without a collection of the creeds. Yet very few of them are near enough to public libraries to have access to the collections of Hase, Niemeyer, Strütwolf, Augusti, etc. Still less have they salaries large enough to admit of their buying books such as these. But here is a book which contains all that is necessary for the ordinary uses of a pastor; and if he be too poor to buy, and has not the good fortune to have a friend of a longer purse who will give it to him, let him "sell his garment and buy one." It is a sword that he cannot afford to be without.

In these two volumes, however, Dr. Schaff appears only as a faithful collector and editor. It is in the first that he appears as an author; and it is the first, therefore, which claims chiefly our notice as reviewers. It is entitled "A History of the Creeds of Christendom." No one who is acquainted with the author's labors in the field of Church History can entertain a doubt as to his fitness to write such a history. His learning and his industry are known to all men, and are worthy of all praise. His impartiality is exemplary. This is, no doubt, due in some, perhaps in large, measure to the integrity, purity, and simplicity of his character. But he is not a little indebted, we think, to his German education for it. In his native country, learning is so

general, so extensive, so thorough, and literary activity and competition so great, as to secure speedy protest and exposure for any misrepresentations of facts, whether wilful or undesigned. Scholars there acquire a very wholesome habit of cautiousness in making statements of facts, or in proposing theories which, instead of affording a plausible explanation of the facts, do them manifest violence. There are exceptions, of course, to all rules: and polemics may be found in Germany to-day as bitter as Calovius, or as one-sided as Godfrey Arnold ever were. But the prevailing tone is what we have described. Even the infidel, by his impartial (or indifferent) researches, has advanced the cause of truth; and the scholars of the Papal communion in Germany have exposed themselves, by their moderation and candor, to the perils of the Prohibitory or Expurgatory Index.

Our author's charity is also large—too large. It does almost literally and absolutely "think no evil." He seems to forget at times, that "charity is no fool," that the "sins of some men are open beforehand, going before to judgment;" that there are human "dogs" to whom we are forbidden to give that which is holy, and human "swine" before whom we are not allowed to cast our pearls; and who, therefore, can be known or righteously judged to be dogs and swine. Even charity must discriminate, or incur the risk of rejoicing (or of making others to rejoice) in iniquity as well as in the truth. Universal praise is universal detraction, because it reduces all men to a level. As one example of the spurious charity we have ventured to ascribe to our author, take the statement on page 153, concerning Pius IX. and Cardinal Manning: "Both these eminent and remarkable persons show how a sincere faith in a dogma which borders on blasphemy, may, by a strange delusion or hallucination, be combined with rare purity and amiability of character."\*

\*Dr. Schaff says, in another place, (Vol. I., page 165,) of the dogma of infallibility: "It involves a blasphemous assumption, and makes the nearest approach to the fulfilment of St. Paul's prophecy of the man of sin, 'who, as God, sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.'" (2 Thess. ii. 4.) Justly and manfully spoken. He also calls the Papacy (p. 185)—the whole system, as we understand him,—

Our readers, then, will please note that a man's purity of character is not necessarily destroyed, or even seriously impaired, by the sin of blasphemy. For Dr. Schaff finds at least two men guilty of this sin, who are not only of pure character, but have "*rare* purity of character." And this blasphemy, be it observed, was not a sudden explosion produced by powerful temptation, and then immediately bewailed in dust and ashes, but deliberately meditated and resolved upon by the Pope, who assembled the dignitaries of the whole body throughout the world to see him do it, and to sustain him by their suffrages in doing it; and constantly repeated and defended by the Cardinal, who is not only a blasphemer, but an apostate. What can Dr. Schaff mean? That a man's faith has nothing to do with his moral character? Then what mean the innumerable declarations of Scripture about the necessity of *faith* in order to salvation? "He that *believeth* shall be saved; he that *believeth not* shall be damned." What mean these three thousand pages about creeds from our author's own hand? Is it all mere history? Have these blood-stained confessions, after all, nothing to do with purity of character? Our author will not say so. He thinks worthier of the truth and of his own labors than to think so. What can he mean? That the Pope and the English Cardinal are not given to sensual vices and brutal pleasures, as so many popes and cardinals have been? That Pius is not such a Pope as Borgia, nor Manning such a Cardinal as Cossa? Or is purity so rare among Popes and Cardinals that average decency is to be regarded as *rare* purity? Or, is Satan to be considered a person of rare purity because he is free from these vices? Perhaps the meaning is uprightness in dealing with men. Then we ask, is a man's dealing with his fellow-men of more consequence than his dealing with God? Because a man respects the rights of his fellows, is he to be deemed of rare purity of character, although at the same time he is guilty, as Dr. Schaff believes he is, of an audacious usurpation of the prerogatives of his Maker? But, is it even dealing fairly a "colossal lie." As we cannot pretend to the overflowing charity of our author, we are glad to have his authority for characterising the system as it deserves.

with men, is it respecting their rights, to demand submission to a mortal like themselves claiming to be infallible, not only without evidence, but against the overwhelming evidence of reason, history, and Scripture, as bishops in the Vatican Council themselves demonstrated?

Dr. Schaff's good words in behalf of these two worthies, remind us of the like in one of Jeremy Bentham's biographers. After having said that "he had no doubt of Jeremy being an atheist," he proceeds: "We may be sorry for such things; but *if they are otherwise good men*, our sorrow will lead us rather to pity than to rage or hatred for them. As well might we rebuke those who are troubled with fever, as them that require to be convinced by touch, or taste, or ciphering, of the existence of a deity. Why may not men be suffered to believe what they please, or what they *can*, rather, about God and a future state, and all the mysteries of theology, as about any other subject of dispute or inquiry?" Dr. Schaff would be very ready with an answer to this foolish and wicked question. He has no sympathy whatever with those who assert that a man's creed is a matter of no consequence. If he had, he would never have taken the trouble to prepare these bulky volumes on creeds. And yet he has laid down a general proposition which involves two enormous errors. The *first* is, that blasphemy is not incompatible with rare purity of character; and the *second*, that the sincere belief of the blasphemous dogma is some sort of excuse for holding it and proclaiming it. Upon the first we have said enough. A few words upon the second.

By a sincere belief is meant, of course, a belief which is not pretended or feigned. Now we all admit that sincerity is better than hypocrisy. If a man professes to believe a lie, knowing it to be a lie, he adds the sin of hypocrisy to the sin of holding a lie. But how comes it to pass that any man believes a lie about God, especially a man who has in his hand what he professes to believe is a revelation from God, given for the very purpose of teaching him the truth concerning God? How came the Pope to believe the enormous lie of his own infallibility, if he was neither a dotard nor a madman? Had he never read the Bible?

Had he never read the history of his predecessors in the Roman See? If he had never read anything, the speeches of the anti-Infallibilists in his own Council might have convinced him. That he was not convinced—that he believed himself infallible—can only be accounted for by that awful judgment which the apostle describes in 1 Thess. ii. 11, 12. Our own opinion is, however, that the Pope and the Jesuits who rule him, no more believe that the occupant of the Roman See is infallible, than they believe that “virtue is its own reward,” or that “honesty is the best policy.”\* The decrees of the Vatican Council are simply culmination of the aims which the Jesuits have pursued with unrelenting cruelty and craft from the very foundation of their order. They have always professed to be “*perinde cadavera*” in the hands of the Pope, because they always intended that the Pope’s hands should be moved by themselves. They professed obedience to the Pope’s commands, because they would see to it that the Pope should command nothing except what they suggested or approved. They aimed at making themselves masters of the whole body and of the world; and the shortest method of accomplishing that aim was to have but one authority in the body, and to govern that authority. They have succeeded at last. There is but one sword, extending to the ends of the earth, with the hilt at Rome.

But whatever may be Dr. Schaff’s charity for the persons or the blasphemers, he has none for the blasphemy. He gives no quarter to the Vatican decrees. We do not remember to have read a more conclusive argument than that which he gives us against the audacious and blasphemous claim of infallibility, in the first volume of this work. Even here, however, we must be permit-

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\*De Maistre (*Du Pape*, C. 1,) explains infallibility to be the same in the spiritual order that sovereignty means in the civil order. He demands for the Papal body only “that it should be allowed the right which is conceded to all sovereignties, of acting as if they were infallible. All government is absolute; and the moment it can be resisted under the pretext of error or injustice, it exists no longer.” (Schaff, Vol. I., p. 166.) If this were all that the claim of infallibility means, then indeed the Jesuits would be firm believers in it.

ted to enter a *caveat*. In noticing the Papal argument for infallibility, based upon such passages as Luke xxii. 31; Matt. xvi. 18; John xxi. 15;\* our author concedes the truth of "Peter's primacy among the apostles," and admits that "this is the truth which underlies the colossal lie of the Papacy." He proceeds, indeed, to show that "the position which Peter occupied, no one can occupy after him." But truth will not permit us to concede any such primacy as that which the Papists claim for him. He was no more than *primus inter pares*. Dr. Schaff himself demonstrates this. He says, what so many writers have said before him, that "the New Testament shows not one single example of an exercise of jurisdiction by Peter over the other apostles, but the very reverse; that that apostle, in his Epistles, disowns and prophetically warns his fellow-presbyters against the hierarchical spirit; (1 Pet. v. 1-4) that Paul and John were perfectly independent of him; that Paul openly rebuked him at Antioch," etc. The Primacy of Peter, as the New Testament really presents it, is not at all what the Papists want. Their policy is to quote the passages and ring the changes upon them, without inquiring what they mean. It is only a variety of what Whately calls "the fallacy of quotations." For what purpose, then, the concession that these passages contain "a truth which underlies the colossal lie of the Papacy?" We can ascribe it to nothing but an amiable mania of the author for concessions. He cannot prove even the sin of blasphemy upon a man without taking off his hat and making his obeisance to him. For ourselves, we confess that we have more sympathy with the language of Paul to Elymas, when we are called to deal with impostors and hypocrites, who, for filthy lucre, are perverting the right ways of the Lord, and turning men away from the faith.

\* We ought not to have said "based upon." The truth is, as Whately has some where observed, the errors of Romanism are not based upon Scripture, not even upon false interpretations of Scripture, but have arisen altogether independently of it. But having arisen, support is sought for them in Scripture. Hence, when the false interpretations of Papal doctors are exposed and overthrown, we make very little impression upon them. When all the Scripture props are knocked from under them, they stand as they did before; a very conclusive evidence that these proofs were not the support upon which they rested.

Another signal exception to the strictly historical character of the first volume is the fine argument against the dogma of the immaculate conception of the Virgin. The history of the bitter contests concerning this dogma in the Papal body, furnishes a striking commentary upon its boasted unity, and goes far towards justifying the sarcasm of the Edinburgh reviewer. "Their unity is the unity of chaos. There was but one chaos; but in that one there was infinite confusion." Even our amiable author cannot find in this "colossal lie" a single element of truth. It is a pure invention of the same audacity and wickedness which has deified the Virgin; nay, set her above God and his Christ. Dr. Schaff's treatment of the dogma, both historical and polemic, is in his very best style, and is worthy of all praise.

The part of this volume which will be most interesting to our Presbyterian people is that in which the author treats of the Westminster Assembly and Standards. He has evidently taken great pains with it; and it would not be easy to find any where, in the same space, an account of the great men of that Assembly, and of the immortal symbols they produced, more impartial, or, we may add, more lively. We cannot, indeed, concur in all he says about the Confession and the Catechisms, for we are in full sympathy with them; and he is not and does not profess to be. But we think that we all owe a debt of gratitude to him for doing justice to a body of men who, though they extorted the admiration and praise of John Milton, yet afterwards, by their fidelity to truth, incurred his displeasure, and have been misrepresented and maligned ever since by a class of writers who had as little sympathy with Milton as with them. "Whether we look at the extent or ability of its labors," says our author of the Assembly, "or its influence upon future generations, it stands first among Protestant Councils. The Synod of Dort was indeed fully equal to it in learning and moral weight, and was more general in its composition, since it embraced delegates from nearly all Reformed churches; while the Westminster Assembly was purely English and Scotch, and its standards are to this day little known on the continent of Europe.\* But the doctrinal legislation of Dort was

\*"It is characteristic," says our author here in a foot-note, "that Dr. VOL. XXIX., NO. 1—2.

confined to the five points at issue between Calvinism and Arminianism; the Assembly of Westminster embraced the whole field of theology, from the eternal decrees of God to the final judgment. The Canons of Dort have lost their hold upon the mother country; the Confession and Shorter Catechism of Westminster are as much used now in Anglo-Presbyterian churches as ever, and have more vitality and influence than any other Calvinistic confession." (P. 728.) He also quotes Hallam as saying that "the Assembly was perhaps equal in learning, good sense, and other merits, to any Lower House of Convocation that ever made a figure in England"; and then adds the opinion of "one of the best informed German historians," expressed in these words: "A more zealous, intelligent, and learned body of divines, seldom ever (*sic*) met in Christendom." Such testimonies more than counterbalance the insolent and malignant slanders of Clarendon and his copyists.

Dr. Schaff finds some fault in the theology of the Westminster Assembly, beside its doctrine concerning the relation of Church and State, which has never been accepted by the Presbyterian Church in America. We feel strongly inclined to follow him into that field. We think it would not be difficult to show that the Assembly is right and that he is wrong. But it would lead us away too far from the purpose of this article. We must be permitted to say, however, that he is evidently not as much

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Niemeyer published his collection of Reformed Confessions, the most complete we have, at first without the Westminster Standards, being unable to find a copy, and issued them afterwards in a supplement. Dr. Winer barely mentions the Westminster Confession in his 'Symbolik,' and never quotes from it. If German Church historians (including Gieseler) were to be judged by their knowledge of English and American affairs, they would lose much of the esteem in which they are justly held. What is *westward*, is a *terra incognita* to most of them. They are much more at home in the by-ways of the remote past, than in the living Church of the present, outside of Germany."

The Westminster Confession was probably better known (in the Latin translation) on the continent in the seventeenth century than it is now. We remember seeing it quoted by Beaulieu, in his "Theses Sedanenses," in support of his view of the nature of saving faith, as against the view of Luther and Calvin.

at home in the department of dogmatic theology as in that of Church history. In the latter it would be hard to find his equal; in the former, it would be easy.

Before passing to the more general remarks that we propose to make upon this work, we shall notice some of its slighter but very pleasant features. The style is very remarkable for a German who was old enough, before he made his home in this country, to have acquired a brilliant reputation in his own. It is almost always grammatical, generally idiomatic, sometimes even elegant. Occasionally he uses a phrase which is wholly colloquial, and once or twice one which borders on slang. This is not strange. The only wonder is that such blemishes are so rare. We think that the amiable author's expatriation has been a benefit to himself, to the country of his adoption, and to his own native country. His style has gained immensely in clearness. Perspicuity, it must be acknowledged, is not a prominent characteristic of the style of our German friends. It is impossible that it should be, so long as the principle upon which they construct their sentences seems to be that of putting in each all that it can possibly be made to contain. De Quincey's humorous description is hardly an exaggeration, at least in its application to the style of the theologians and philosophers. "The character of German prose," he says, "is an object of legitimate astonishment. Whatever is bad in our own ideal of prose style, we see there carried to the most outrageous excess. Herod is out-Heroded, Sternhold is out-Sternholded, with a zealotry of extravagance that really seems like wilful burlesque; . . . a sentence is viewed by Kant, and by most of his countrymen, as a rude mould or elastic form, admitting of expansion to any possible extent; it is laid down as a rude outline, and then, by superstruction and *epi*-superstruction, it is gradually reared to a giddy altitude which no eye can follow. . . . It is like an Act of Parliament, where the exceptions, the secondary exceptions to the exceptions, the limitations and the sublimitations, descend *seriatim*, by a vast scale of dependencies," etc. Sentences of this sort, he suggests, are not only of great calibre, but of very large *bore*. The want of perspicuity is also due, no doubt, to the fondness for speculation (in the German sense of

this word,) the "*mens pasta chimæris*." "The English," said Jean Paul, "have the empire of the sea, the French of the land, the Germans of the air"—and of the clouds. The "obscure" of their philosophy may be made "palpable"; but it cannot be made clear by any artifices of style. Even Cousin cannot do it without the aid of the philosophy of common sense, although a Frenchman, and therefore, either clear or—nothing. Dr. Schaff's thorough study of English literature, and his intercourse with the English and American people, have helped him mightily. We cannot remember a single sentence in this large volume of which the meaning, if not intuitively obvious, cannot be discerned without difficulty. We have noticed some instances of not very happy translation in the volumes containing the creeds, but these are from another hand, not his own.\* And now, as he has become so familiar with the English tongue, we cannot refrain from expressing the hope that he will address himself to the task of completing his history of the Christian Church. If it is easier for him to write in German than in English, let him finish that great work in German; and then we shall venture to hope that he may still find as happy a translator as Mr. Yeomans.

Another pleasant feature of the Historical Introduction are the anecdotes (*anécdotes*), biographical, academic, literary, which are so plentifully sprinkled over his pages, especially in the foot-notes. They are interesting in themselves, and serve to relieve the strain of attention which is demanded by the grave matters of history or disquisition. We mention but one specimen of these *anécdotes*. It concerns the famous words, "*in necessariis unitas, in non necessariis libertas, in omnibus caritas*,"—the motto of peace-loving men for so many generations, and dear, of course, to our

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\* For example, in the translation of the French Confession, "justice" is several times rendered "justification," instead of *righteousness*. So also in Art. XIX., the words, "il convient tenir notre vie du lui, comme de notre *chef*," are rendered "we must hold our life from him (Christ) as from our *Chief*," where *head* would have been the better rendering. So again, "les uns" is rendered "the ones," which may be literal, and may be tolerated in colloquial English, but seems out of place in a grave document like this.

author. The words have generally been attributed to Augustine, but, it seems, erroneously. Lücke has devoted a special treatise to them, their age, their author, etc, and traces them to Rupertus Meldenius, the obscure author of "*Parænesis votiva pro pace ecclesie ad theologos Augustanæ confessionis*," (before 1635), in which the sentence occurs, "*Si nos servaremus in necessariis unitatem, in non-necessariis libertatem, in utrisque caritatem, optimo certe loco essent res nostræ.*" (I., p. 588.)

We propose now to gather some of the lessons which this collection of creeds and their history are suited to impress upon us.

1. And, in the first place, we are impressed with the necessity for creeds, if there be a necessity for the existence of the Church itself. "*Ecclesia sine symbolis nulla.*" The Church is an assembly, and an assembly consisting of persons who believe and have communion or fellowship in their belief. How is it possible that this fellowship can exist without a statement or expression of what is believed? Such a statement, be it long or short, is a creed. Those bodies of professing Christians, therefore, who boast, like the Campbellites, of having no creed, are really disclaiming the character and status of a visible Church. There is no bond of fellowship in the faith, if their boast be well founded. The truth is, it is not well founded. Men may associate for many purposes, for the accomplishment of which no faith (in the religious sense) is required. Men of all complexions of religious faith may unite to build a railroad, or throw a bridge across a river, or even to establish a civil government. But they cannot constitute a Church without faith, and without agreement as to the things which are the objects of faith. The Campbellites are, therefore, agreed as to certain doctrines which they profess to believe, or at least as to certain doctrines which they profess to disbelieve. Their positive creed may be very, very short, and their negative very, very long, but a creed they must have, or they could not continue to subsist as a religious association. It must be confessed, however, that so long as they refuse to inform us what their creed is, or continue steadily to deny that they have any, we are compelled to take them at their word, and to refuse to them the character and title of a visible Church; while, in the

exercise of that charity which believeth all things and hopeth all things, we believe and hope that there may be true children of God among them. It is a very significant fact, that in this voluminous work which we are reviewing, projected upon the most comprehensive scale, and written by a man of the most comprehensive charity, all he can find to say about the "Disciples" is contained in this short sentence: "These are very numerous in the West; they reject all creeds on principle."

Again, the great function of the Church is to bear witness to the truth. She is the representative on earth of the "Amen, the Faithful and True Witness," her Head invisible, in heaven. He is the Light, she is the Lamp; he the *lumen illuminans*, she the *lumen illuminatum*. She cannot perform this office by holding up a collection of writings and proclaiming, "This is my faith;" nor can she fulfil it by the preaching and writings of her ministers. They may misrepresent her testimony through ignorance or malice, as they have done a thousand times. She must have a standard by which the ministers themselves are to be judged, and to which all men may appeal. In short, she must have a creed.

Further, there must needs be heresies in the Church. Heretics, as distinguished from infidels, profess to believe the Scriptures. How can they be separated from the Church, except by a creed? Hence "forms of sound words" have been in use in the Church from the beginning. The matter of Scripture has been stated in words, about which there could be no mistake or misrepresentation as to their meaning. Men affect to doubt, as has been well said, whether the Bible teaches the Church doctrine of the Trinity, or the doctrines of the Calvinistic system. But who doubts whether the Nicæno-Constantinopolitan Creed teaches the former, and the Westminster Confession the latter? Aye! the Church has been able to find words which, like the spear of Ithuriel, have compelled the spirit of evil to reveal itself. A jot or tittle, an iota, the smallest letter in the Greek alphabet, inserted in the middle of a word, was an excruciating test of orthodoxy in the fourth century, and, in spite of the sneers of Gibbon, subserved the purposes of fundamental truth. The presence or the absence

of the iota in a man's confession determined whether he confessed Christ to be the Almighty God or a mere creature.

Creeds are necessary, then, for a testimony, for the very existence of the Church as an organised visible body, and for its defence against the inroads of heresy.

2. We learn the necessity for growth and development in creeds. In the infancy of the Church, as in the infancy of the children who are trained from age to age in her bosom, the creed is naturally short and simple. Her faith, like the faith of infancy, is spontaneous, unreflective, unscientific. The "Apostles' Creed" exactly represents it. It is not only free from what have been called "the speculative elements" of doctrine, but omits some of the fundamental doctrines of Christianity. It was simply impossible that the Church should be always satisfied with such a creed, if it was ever to pass beyond a state of infancy. The Arian and Pelagian had no hesitation in subscribing it. But if Arianism had never arisen to insult the majesty of the Redeemer, if no other form of heresy had assailed the foundation of the Church, the theology of the Church must have been developed by the very laws of the human intellect. Her spontaneous, unreflective faith had to be justified to her own mind. In reference to the relation (for example) of the Son to the Father in the God-head, the Church could not think long without feeling the difficulty of reconciling its monotheism with the worship of two persons, each of whom was represented in Scripture as the proper object of worship, and therefore God. The law of non-contradiction is a fundamental law of thought, and the mind is restless and impatient until it discovers the principle by which the apparent contradictions are reconciled. Many unsuccessful attempts may be made before the law of harmony is ascertained, but there is no rest for the mind until it is ascertained, or until it is demonstrated that, in the nature of the case, it can never be ascertained. The conclusions of the Nicene Council, therefore, were conclusions which the Church would have reached in the course of time, if Arianism had never arisen to compel the definition of the doctrine of the Trinity. It is vain to say that it would have been better for the Church if she had always been

content with the faith of her childhood; or, in other words, if there had never been any scientific theology; that a great many errors might have been avoided; that the "*rabies theologorum*," which afflicted the soul of Melancthon so grievously, would have had no cause for its existence. It would be as wise to say that it would have been better for mankind if there had been no science of chemistry, because that science has made men more expert poisoners than they could have been without it. Thinking is necessary to the progress of the race, and we must submit to the evils and abuses which attend it for the sake of the incalculable good which is its legitimate result. If the Church refuses to have a sound theology, the devil and his instruments will take pains to provide another sort of theology for her.

And this leads us to observe, that, in point of fact, the Church had no choice. Her faith was assailed. The "gates of hell" left nothing undone to subvert its very foundation. It had to be defended or surrendered. The result was not only the preservation of the faith, but a clearer knowledge of it, and a development of it. A clearer knowledge, because it had to be examined on more sides than one; on as many sides, in fact, as it had been assailed; and as "the science of contraries is one," the knowledge of the one contrary involves a clearer knowledge of the other. A development of it, because this is the necessary result of the many-sidedness of the examination. To illustrate our meaning, take the answer of the Westminster Shorter Catechism to the question (21st), "Who is the Redeemer of God's elect?" Here, in almost every clause, the "form of words" is determined by some error or errors by which the truth has been opposed—Arianism, Patripassianism, Nestorianism, Eutychianism. So, also, in the question which follows (the twenty-second); the form of statement is determined by the errors of the Docetists, the Apollinarians, etc.

As the theology is developed under these conditions, it would be unreasonable to expect that the creeds should remain stationary. The creeds of the Church could not be the same after the Christological discussions of the fifth century that they were before, any more than the Church could be satisfied with the Apostles' Creed

after the Arian controversy had arisen. So, also, it was impossible that the doctrines which belong to soteriology should not have greater prominence in the symbols of the Reformation era than in any preceding era. If there is no life in the Church, or if her life is characterised, like that of Thyatira, by a zealous ministry of love at the expense of fidelity to the truth, then, indeed, she may not feel the obligation to testify for any other doctrines than those which are absolutely necessary to distinguish Christianity from Judaism, Paganism, and Mahometanism. We are constrained to believe that many of the union schemes of our own day have no better origin; that they are essentially humanitarian in spirit, and place the welfare of man above the glory of God. Theology, which is the knowledge of God, is relegated to a position subordinate to philanthropy, which is the love of man. This is a fatal error. For the good of man can never be promoted by any measure which obscures the glory of his Maker and Redeemer. The only effectual method of securing the interests of holiness is to bear a faithful witness for the truth. Truth is the mould of holiness, and without holiness no man shall see the Lord. The world has never seen a truer philanthropist than that great Apostle of the Gentiles, who, when the truth was in question, "gave way by subjection, no, not for an hour." A philanthropy, without God, has deluged a land with blood and marked its progress with dead men's bones.

It would really seem as if the lessons of history had been given in vain to these peace-makers. The course of the Church is strewn with the wrecks of such schemes. They have all failed, because they have all demanded that the Church should suppress her convictions of truth and annul her history; that the boy of ten should go back to the period of puling infancy, or that the man of mature years should abdicate all the dignity and strength which experience and reflection have conferred upon him. But the thing is impossible; and if not impossible, it is not to be desired. The first, original, genuine childhood has great charms; but a second childhood is a pitiable thing to contemplate. The simplicity of youth cannot be copied by age. Manhood has its cares and its conflicts, but they are cares and conflicts which en-

noble and elevate. Reflection conjures up a host of doubts and difficulties to torment us, but who, on that account, would be willing to abjure reflection? John Locke wrote a treatise to persuade the Church that no larger creed was necessary than the single article, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." Why was he not satisfied with the same brevity and simplicity in philosophy? His "Essay on the Human Understanding" has certainly been anything but an "*Irenicum*."

We have said that the course of the Church is strewn with the wrecks of union-schemes. Let us glance at some of them. One of the first is encountered in the Arian controversies—that of the "Homoians." This was a proposition to abandon the use of only one word—*ousia*—which had been the cause of so much dissension, and a word, moreover, whose use involved an audacious claim of ability to comprehend the incomprehensible. Why not lay it aside, and adopt a formula in which Homoousians and Homoiousians might unite, and so extinguish the war which was a scandal to the world? The scheme was for a time successful. The powerful influence of the Emperor, the intrigues of the bishops of his court, the adhesion of the Bishop of Rome, Liberius, the reluctant subscription of the Councils of Seleucia and Rimini, finally made Homoism the acknowledged creed of the empire, as Homoiousianism had been before. But in twenty years from the victory of the Emperor and his episcopal politicians, Homoousianism triumphed in the Council of Constantinople. The Christological controversies of the following century gave rise to similar attempts. The Monophysites and Dyophysites were to be reconciled by a "Henoticon," according to which the history for the last hundred years was to be forgotten, the church was to go back to the Nicaeno-Constantinopolitan creed, and all controverted points were to be carefully avoided. This Henoticon was the beginning of the schism between the Eastern and Western churches. A similar fate attended the conciliatory measures of Justinian, in the sixth century, and of Heraclius and Constans, in the seventh. The "Typos" of the last named Emperor was designed to quiet the Monothelite disputes, by restoring the *status quo*, that is, by commanding divines to speak

and write as if the controversies of the preceding thirty or forty years had not taken place.

After the Reformation, we have the like schemes for uniting the different branches of the nominal church and the same kind of basis proposed, if not for organic union, at least for "correspondence"—the oblivion of the past and the cessation of controversy. The scheme of Calixtus was to go back to the first five centuries—the "*consensus quinquesecularis*." This was practically to annul the history of the studies and conflicts of a thousand years. The labors of that great martyr in the cause of peace to realise his idea are almost incredible. Yet with what result? He "spun himself and his life out into one pitiful controverted conclusion." He was obliged to fail, because he was contending against the elementary forces of nature, and his proposals for peace became the signal for one of the fiercest wars that ever raged in Germany. One might have supposed that a man of great learning, as Calixtus undoubtedly was, would see from the first that his idea could never be realised before the millennium, and that then there would be no use for it. The creeds of the first five centuries were in possession of the Church and of every branch of it, and they were received by all. But this very fact was fatal to the scheme of the peace-maker. The reason is a very plain one. *Notwithstanding* the common reception of the Œcumenical creeds, the Church was divided into Roman, Greek, Lutheran, and Reformed. The very fact of division in spite of the *consensus quinquesecularis*, if properly considered, was enough to chill the ardor even of a Calixtus. The differences were as real as the agreements, and they could not be waved away by the wand even of such a wizard as he. This is the stubborn fact which his scheme had to encounter and against which it was doomed to be wrecked, and deserved to be. If he could have persuaded the churches that the differences were unreal or unimportant, then union or correspondence might have been established in *faith*. But the churches ought not to have united or corresponded upon any other basis than that of faith. The only body calling itself a Church which has succeeded in suppressing differences not upon the basis of faith, is the Papacy.

But with what results? One result was the monstrous doctrine of the dualism of truth—that the same proposition might be true in theology and false in philosophy, and *vice versa*; or the other monstrous doctrine, which has been ascribed to Occam, that God can make and unmake truth as it pleases him, and can authorise the Church to do the same. Another was the extinction of all love for truth and faith in it, and the erection, in the name of Christ, of a kingdom worldly in its aims, worldly in its means and policy, and caring nothing for God, heaven, or hell, except so far as these great ideas may aid its visible head and his advisers in accomplishing the schemes of their ambition and gratifying their lust for gold.

3. The last remark we make is that, while the study of this collection of creeds cannot fail to impress us with the differences which exist among Christians upon certain points of faith, it must impress us also with the real *consensus* of the Evangelical Churches upon others, and the most important. He who will take the pains to examine the creeds of these churches will find evidence enough that they have not only been governed by the same external standard, the Word of God, but that they have been led also by the same Spirit. He will also find that there is more real unity in the different branches of the Reformed body than there is in the one body of Rome, and that too in regard to the fundamental point, the way of salvation. Innocent III., in the thirteenth century, the historians inform us, was opposed to the formation of what he called “any new religions,” meaning new religious orders. The term was more happily chosen than he was aware of. Each one of these orders was a “new religion” in the sense of “denomination” as used by Protestants, except that they all agreed to submit to the Pope. But they were none the less jealous of each other on that account. The wars of the Dominicans and the Franciscans about the nature of sin and grace, fundamental elements of doctrine, soon justified the caution of the cunning Pope, to say nothing of their controversies concerning the immaculate conception of the Virgin. Then we have the controversies about sin and grace renewed between the Dominicans and the Jesuits, in the sixteenth century, which was

quieted according to the recipe of *Punch*—"the best way to crush a thing is to get a committee to sit on it." The congregation "de auxiliis" sat on the controversy for many years and smothered it. But it revived again in the next century between the Jansenists and the Jesuits, and the wish of Voltaire was at one time apparently almost realised, "to see the last Jansenist in the bowels of the last Jesuit." The unity of Rome is the unity of staves in a barrel. The staves are kept together by the hoops. There is no life, no organic unity, in the body considered as a religious body. There is life enough in it considered as a political corporation which is aiming, like its Pagan predecessor, to establish a universal dominion, an iron despotism which shall not suffer the slightest vestige of liberty to remain on earth. Not the slightest vestige of a church now remains at Rome, except the name.

The unity of the Evangelical Churches, on the other hand, is the unity of life. It is the unity of a living organism, not only admitting, but requiring, diversity. It is not a great iron wheel of which the different parts are only spokes having no other motion than that of the wheel itself, but a complicated structure of wheels within a wheel, like that of the prophet's vision, each having a sphere and a movement of its own, but all instinct with the spirit of the living creature. The individuality of the parts is preserved, yet all conspire for the accomplishment of the end designed for the whole. Each member of the system traverses its own orbit, obeying the attraction of the central sun, an attraction mighty enough to counteract the centrifugal force which, if left to its own operation, would drive them asunder forever. The *consensus* of the apostate churches, on the other hand, is a *consensus* in the denial of the great doctrines of salvation, and perfectly compatible with mutual anathemas of each other, as well as with a common anathema of those which hold the truth.

Let us hope that no further attempt will be made to disturb the true *consensus* of the Reformed Churches, by forcing a union which must be more or less insincere. Let us avoid the fatal error and the odious hypocrisy of Rome. Let us never forget that "fraternal relations" does not mean organic union or even "cor-

respondence," but the loving recognition of one Evangelical Church by another as a true Church of Christ. Above all, let us never forget the supreme importance of the truth itself, in which the glory of God and the salvation of men are so deeply concerned,—of that *doctrine*, which, however postponed in the esteem of many to the interests of peace, is, after all, as Calvin said, the "*sacrum vinculum fraternitatis beatæ.*"

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ARTICLE II.

GEOGRAPHICAL DISCOVERIES IN EQUATORIAL AFRICA.

In a previous number of this REVIEW we gave a brief sketch of the various explorations that had been made, in different ages of the world, to solve two great problems in African geography, viz., the outlet of the Niger, and the source of the Nile. The first of these problems was solved, as is well known, about fifty years ago by Richard Lander and his brother, and the other at a much later period by the combined researches of Speke, Grant, and Sir Samuel W. Baker. Since the last mentioned discovery, the work of exploration has gone on with great spirit and energy, so that we have now a tolerably correct map, not only of the sources of the Nile, but of all the important geographical features of Central Southern Africa—a vast region of country that has heretofore been almost entirely unknown to the civilised world. Of the more recent and important of these explorations may be mentioned those of Sir Samuel W. Baker, in the service of the Khedive of Egypt; of the well known veteran African traveller, Dr. David Livingstone; Dr. Georg Schweinfurth, under the direction of Humboldt Institution; Col. C. Chaille Long, in the service of the Khedive of Egypt; Commander V. L. Cameron, of the British navy; and Henry M. Stanley, joint commissioner, as he is called, of the New York *Herald* and the London *Daily Telegraph*. The journals of all these travellers have been pub-