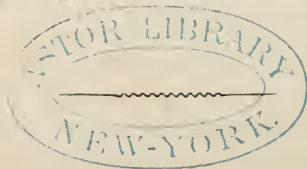


REMARKS
ON THE
HISTORY, STRUCTURE, AND THEORIES
OF THE
APOSTLES' CREED.

by John Williams



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THE APOSTLES' CREED.

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THE first act of the Christian life is, "I believe." In this act, the soul awakes to the consciousness of a new life. It enters on a new creation; old things are passed away, behold all things are become new. It passes from death to life. It is delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son. It is pardoned, justified, has peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, has access into this grace wherein it stands, and rejoices in hope of the glory of God. The love of God is poured out within it by the Holy Ghost. And now begins that marvellous inward history which, through sore conflicts, and "groanings which cannot be uttered," finds its true consummation at last, in "the manifestation of the sons of God."

And as the Christian life begins in faith, so it is sustained,

advanced, and completed by it. The Christian "walks by faith," "works by faith," "endures by faith," and finally "dies in faith." As the first act of his inward life is, "I believe in the Lord Jesus Christ," its last is a recollection and re-affirmation of that faith, "I know whom *I have believed.*"

Heathenism had no faith, because it had no truth. Its notions of supernatural things were expressed by such terms as *ἐννοιαί* and *γνώμαι*; but *πίστις* was unknown to its religious phraseology. Christianity was from the first distinguished as the Faith, the Faith in Christ, the Christian Faith. This was at once, the reproach of its enemies and the glory of its disciples. They were called, and called themselves, *believers* and the *faithful*.*

As it stands in the Christian system and history, faith is truth apprehended and received on the testimony of God. When it is so apprehended and received, truth passes into the subjective form and becomes faith. In both forms it is the gift and operation of God. "*Truth* is the word of God," (to transpose the terms of our Saviour's declaration,) and "faith is the gift of God." Christ is at once, "the Truth" and "the Author and Finisher of Faith."

All the great deeds of holy history have been achieved, and all its renowned characters formed "through faith." (Heb. xi.)

To beget this faith is the distinct object of the history and all the various revelations of the Gospel. "These things are written that ye might believe."

This faith, however, so "precious," and of such wondrous might, is not a mere mental act. It must find its way forth in the form of utterance or confession. "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, but with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."

How large a part of the acts and teachings of our Lord, his precepts, rebukes, and commendations, his whole discipline in a word, had a distinct and special reference to the production, strengthening, and manifestation of faith! "Wherefore is it that ye have no faith? O thou of little faith, wherefore didst

* The very use of these terms shows the general impression made on the world, and the consciousness of the church herself, that the essential claim of Christianity was to be derived immediately and wholly from God.

thou doubt? Be not faithless but believing. Verily I say unto you, have faith in God. Only believe; all things are possible to him that believeth. Said I not unto thee, that if thou wouldst believe, thou shouldst see the glory of God? Believe in God, believe also in me. He that believeth in me hath everlasting life and shall never perish, but I will raise him up at the last day. He that believeth in me, the works that I do shall he do also, and greater works than these shall he do." What vast blessings, what divine might in faith!

To draw out this faith into manifestation and confession, was also, on many occasions, his special and evident object. Thus, when he delayed and apparently slighted the prayer of the Syrophenician woman, till her faith showed itself too strong and persevering to be disheartened by slights and delays, and then exclaimed, (as if faith were an admirable spectacle to the Son of God himself,) "O woman, great is thy faith! be it unto thee even as thou wilt;" and when the centurion said that diseases waited on his omnipotent "word," even as disciplined soldiers on the command of their officer, "Jesus turned to his disciples, and said, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel!" And yet more distinctly, when he proposed such questions as these, "Believest thou this? believest thou on the Son of God? believest thou that I am able to do this? believest thou not that I am in the Father and the Father in me?"

Each of these questions was intended to elicit a creed or confession of divine and saving faith. The responses to each was (where it is given) such a creed. Of such creeds the Bible contains great store. Some of these are short and simple indeed. "Abraham believed God." His creed was comprehended in one word. His faith embraced one fact, "that God was faithful who had promised." But what a mighty and prolific faith was that! "It was imputed to him for righteousness. He became the father of all them that believe;" and "through" that "faith there sprang of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea-shore innumerable." The creed of Peter (for which he was "blessed" and honoured to be the first to proclaim the rock on which the church was to be built, and to

receive his name from it,) consisted of but one article, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." On another occasion it was amplified by the additional clause, "Thou hast the words of eternal life." Nathanael's creed was, "Rabbi, thou art the Son of God, thou art the King of Israel." That of Martha, "Yea, Lord, I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world." That of the restored blind man, "Lord, I believe" (i. e. "in the Son of God," see verse 35.) That of the disciples, collectively, is thus expressed by our Saviour, "They have believed that thou didst send me." All future sharers in the benefit of his intercession are described as "those who shall *believe on me* through their word." And the award of the last day will bestow glory and honour and immortality on those who *confess Christ* before men.

In the Apostolic Church and ministry, we find the same necessity, virtue and power awarded to faith, the same importance attached to its confession, the same methods employed to elicit it. Philip said to the Eunuch of Ethiopia, "if thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest." "And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And Philip baptized him, and he went on his way rejoicing." "King Agrippa," said Paul, "believest thou the prophets?" Alas! that this noble interrogation and confiding solicitation to faith should only have called forth "almost" a confession of it! The Gentile world were admitted into the Church through "a door of faith." Acts xiv. 27. And here is Paul's statement of "the word of faith which we preach:" "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus Christ, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved."

Do we inquire into the philosophy of this divine energy and these incomparable virtues and benefits of faith? All must be finally resolved into this: "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight!"

"This faith in the promises of God, this relying and acquiescing in his word and faithfulness, the Almighty takes well at our hands, as a great mark of homage, paid by us frail creatures, to his 'goodness' and 'truth,' as well as to his 'power'

and 'wisdom;' and accepts it as an acknowledgment of his peculiar providence and benignity to us. . . This oblation of an heart fixed with dependence on, and affection to him, is the most acceptable tribute we can pay him; the foundation of true devotion, and life of all religion. . . . This is the way that God deals with poor, frail mortals. He is graciously pleased to take it well of them, and give it the place of righteousness, and a kind of merit in his sight, if they believe his promises, and have a steadfast relying on his veracity and goodness."*

Subjectively considered, the marvellous energy of faith lies in this, that it opens and first makes visible and real to the soul a new world of sublime and certain truth, invisible to sense and undiscoverable by reason, and therefore before unknown, but to the objects and persons of which, the believing soul finds that it stands even now in the most intimate relations, and that at the extinction of this mortal breath, it will enter on them fully, and leave all else behind. In the world which faith discloses, God stands fully revealed to the believer as his Father, Christ as his Redeemer, Advocate, Friend, Teacher, Brother, the Holy Spirit as his Sanctifier, angels as ministering spirits to him, life as a state of tuition and discipline, heaven as his home, glory and honour and immortality as the proper and only worthy objects of his ambition. He sees at his feet the precipice over which he himself, till awakened and rescued by grace, was about to fall into endless misery. He sees his fellow men blind and unconscious as he once was himself, in danger of the same perdition. These things may doubtless be professed by those who in works deny them; they may be preached with the tongues even of envy or strife, or for filthy lucre, or dominion over the flock of God; and though they be thus preached "with the tongues of men and angels," and with such a confidence of their truth as "to remove mountains," never send one transforming ray into the deceiving and self-deceived soul. But where they are seen and felt and "believed in the heart," they must appeal to every faculty and energy of man with a power which will make "the things that are seen

* Locke. Reasonableness of Christianity, as delivered in the Scriptures, p. 88. London, 1791.

and temporal" fade away into utter insignificance before "those which are not seen and are eternal."

With such ideas of faith and of its confession, bequeathed to her by her Lord and his inspired apostles, we are not surprised to find that the early Christian church turned all her thoughts and energies towards awakening faith in the minds of men, and drawing it forth in confession. In this work, she had all the wisdom, might, and magnificence of the world against her; its learning, its habits, its political organizations and religious establishments, its pride and sensuality. To all this array of material and intellectual power, she had nothing to oppose but the divine verities, and unconquerable energy of her faith. The weapons of her warfare were not carnal, yet were they mighty through God to the pulling down of fortresses, the overthrow of reasonings and every high thing that exalted itself against the knowledge of God. She was victorious in the conflict; and "this was the victory which overcame the world, even her faith."

In this purely spiritual form of church extension, she had almost overspread the world and won to Christ all its centres and citadels of influence and civilization before a solitary church edifice had been erected on the face of the earth.*

Surely, then, her maxims and methods are worthy of our deepest attention. Have we not the same truth in our possession, the same objects before us, the same promises of Christ's presence? The work and conflict of the church is and ever must be, through all outward changes, substantially the same; the setting up of the kingdom of God, a purely spiritual and "inward reign," the kingdom of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. The weapons of her warfare are the same, the sword of the Spirit, the armour of light, the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left. The pro-

* "The first instance recorded of the Christians assembling in what would now be called a church," is about A. 229. Barton Ecc. Hist. p. 496. So little has the whole matter of "Ecclesiology" and church-finery to do with the true power and majesty of Christianity. *Ἐκκλησία*, says Chrysostom, *οὐ τόπος, ἀλλὰ τρόπος*. "The church, not the place, but the character" (temper, influence which it should form and exert.) "Do walls make Christians?" said Victorinus. (*Ergo parietes Christianos faciunt?*)

cesses by which this warfare are carried on must therefore be substantially the same. This is still the victory which must overcome the world, if it is overcome at all, "even our faith."

By her preaching,* reading,† exposition,‡ catechesis,§ and circulation of the word,|| the primitive church laboured to impart to the souls of men that truth which is the seed of the new life, the mould of Christian character, the object and the life of faith. With equal solicitude, she sought, in the preparation of her converts and catechumens for baptism and at their admission to that initial seal of her communion, to elicit the "faith" which had thus "come by hearing," in the form of sincere, intelligent, individual and appropriative confession. It was this "utterance together," (ὁμολογία) with the church, (not only of such of her members as were then assembled with them, but of all the faithful dispersed over the earth, of the whole community, in fact, both militant and glorified) of her divine faith, which made them Christians. Nor did her labour and care end when they were thus "added to the church." They were still "nourished up in the words of faith and sound doctrine,"¶ warned and guarded against harmful fellowship with "the unbelieving," called back with rebukes and discipline when they "erred from the faith," exhorted to "hold fast to," and "stand fast in the faith," to "abound in faith," and to "add to their faith virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly-kindness and charity," aiming at nothing less than complete Christian knowledge and virtue.¶

How exact was the conformity of these methods to the parting command of our Lord, "Go ye and *teach* (μαθητεύσατε) all nations, *baptizing* them in the name of the Father, and of the

* Αὐξῶντες εἰς πλεον το κηρυγμα και τα σωτηρια σπέρματα της των οὐρανῶν βασιλείας ἀνα πασαν ἐπισπεύροντες την οἰκουμένην. Eus. Ecc. Hist. III. 37.

† Scripturarum tractatio plenissima et lectio sine falsatione. Iren. Adv. Hær. IV. 63.

‡ Γραφῶν θείων ἐξηγήσεις. Dionysius (2d Cent.) quoted by Eus. Lib. IV. c. 23. Routh, Rel. Sac. Tom. I. p. 130. Secundum Scripturas expositio legitima et diligens. Iren. Adv. Hær. IV. 63.

§ Ἡ μὲν γὰρ κατήχησις εἰς πίστιν περιώγει. Clem. Alex. Pæd. I. 6.

|| Την τῶν θείων ἐναγγελίων παραδίδόναι γραρῶν. Eus. Ecc. Hist. III. 37.

¶ Routh p. I. 172.

Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you."

Here then was the type or delineation of Christian doctrine. Here was in brief form, the truth which, "believed in the heart," "confessed with the mouth," and that confession sealed and publicly ratified by baptism, constituted a Christian. "He who" thus "believeth and is baptized, shall be saved." He "enters into the kingdom of God," "born of water and of the Spirit." He is "saved by the washing (laver λουτρῶν) of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost." He is one of that Church for which Christ gave himself; which "having cleansed with the washing of water by the word," it is his purpose "to sanctify and to present unto himself a glorious Church, having neither spot nor wrinkle nor any such thing, but holy and without blemish."

Having become "a disciple" he was still under the tuition of the Church, whose faithful labours had made him so. Those who had "taught" and "baptized" him were still to "teach him all things whatsoever Christ had commanded."

This was the faith into which the Church was to *disciple* the nations. This was the full course of Christian education, "teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you."

Here then was the original outline or frame-work of the Christian Creed, "I believe in the Father, and in the Son, and in the Holy Ghost." Every expression of the Church's faith, every manifestation of her life was, in truth, a Creed. Her letters of mutual edification, her apologies to emperors and nations, her homilies, her hymns, her litanies, doxologies,* and benedictions, all were confessions of her faith; and all retained this original and divinely impressed form with surprising distinctness.

As particular aspects of heathenism pressed upon her, as Judaism sought to intrude its obsolete and abolished peculiarities into her faith, as heresies arose within her own bosom, other ideas and phrases were inserted or added, exegetical or completive of these great linear verities of the Creed. These

* Clem. Alex. Paed. Lib. III. end.

ideas or phrases were added on the authority and from the teaching of the Scriptures. They were such as to assert more fully or distinctly some particular truth of Christianity in the face of some particular error or corruption.

The only creed in full of Christians (and this idea we find most distinctly recognized in their earliest writings,) was Christianity itself,* as delivered in the teachings of our Lord and in the inspired writings generally of the Old and New Testaments.† It was from this common source they derived their “one and the same faith” expressed in “dissimilar languages and phrases.”‡ The divine beauty and truthfulness of the Church’s early life is, in fact, chiefly discerned in the variety and freeness of manifestation and expression combined with unity of faith.

The only recognized *formula* of that faith was, at first and for a long time, that which Christ delivered at the institution of baptism. This was undoubtedly “the immovable rule of truth” which Irenaeus says, the convert to Christianity “received by baptism.”§ Even as late as the fourth century (and the beginning the fifth) it was so recognized. Gregory of Nyssa (4th cent.) says, expounding “the faith of Christians,”|| “We believe even as our Lord unfolded the faith to his disciples, when he thus spake,¶ ‘Go ye and teach all nations, bap-

* ‘Ἡ ἐν Χριστῷ πίστις. Clem. Rom. ad Cor. i. 22, immediately and largely developed from the words which “himself spake to us by the Holy Spirit.” ‘Ἡ Χριστιανῆ συντάξις. ‘Ἡ οὐρανίος πηγὴ τοῦ ὕδατος τῆς ζωῆς τοῦ ἐξήντος ἐκ τῆς νηδύος τοῦ Χριστοῦ. It was to this the martyrs of Vienne and Lyons gave their ὁμολογία and which “refreshed and fortified” them amidst torture and death. See their deeply affecting letter cap. 6 and 11, and in fact throughout. Routh, Rel. Sac. Vol. I. p. 267, &c.

† Dei voluntas in Scripturis tradita, fundamentum et columna fidei nostræ. Iren. adv. Hær. I. 1.

‡ Loquelæ dissimiles, . . . una et eadem fides. Iren. I. 3.

§ Regulam veritatis immobilem quam per baptismum accipit—and he adds, on the same line, “the contents of the Scriptures” (quæ sunt ex Scripturis) as the source and test of truth which he accepted by the adoption of this *regula*. Adv. Hær. I. 1.—near the end.

|| Fides Christianorum.

¶ Credimus quemadmodum suis discipulis Dominus exposuit, sic locutus, Euntes docete, &c.

tizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of Holy Ghost.' This is the word of the mystery,"* &c.

Chrysostom on Matt. xxviii. 19, 20, says that in this passage, our Lord "gave a charge to his disciples, relating partly to doctrines and partly to precepts."† . . . "He commands them," he adds "to disperse over the whole globe of the earth, *and commits to them a compend of doctrine to be communicated through baptism.*"‡ To fulfil this two-fold charge, he says, was "the whole apostolic work,§ nor need the private Christian," he adds, "attempt (or look for) anything beyond it."||

Athanasius, (who in time preceded those just mentioned,) says, "The sum and body of our whole faith is contained in the words of baptism, and is founded in that Scripture, ¶ 'Go ye,' " &c.

Basil (of Cæsarea), in his two admirable books on Baptism, begins with this passage, and unfolds from it the whole Christian doctrine and life, without the remotest allusion to any other summary or formula.**

And Augustine, (early in the fifth century,) says, "the creed consists of words of the gospel."†† And, in his sermon on the Creed; "This norm of faith the Lord Jesus Christ himself drew up,‡‡ and none but an impious man doubts concerning that rule of the catholic faith, which he to whom the faith itself is owed, dictated. Our Lord Jesus Christ himself, therefore,

* Hic est sermo mysterii. Greg. Nyss. Opp. Or. I. cont. Eun. p. 253. See below.

† Partim de dogmatibus, partim de præceptis mandans. We have some of his Commentaries only in the Latin version.

‡ Compendiarium quæ per baptismum fieret doctrinam. Chrys. on Math. xxviii. 19, 20.

§ Hoc opus est Apostolicum.

|| Nec plusquam tibi opus sit exquiras.

¶ Cont. Greg. Sabell. quoted by Voëtius p. 66. Summa et corpus totius nostræ fidei continetur in verbis baptismi, et fundatur in illa Scriptura, Ite &c.

** Opp. (Ed. Bened. Gaume) Tom. III. p. 887. He says, "The things which are here laid down by the Lord, *in the way of outline*, (τῶ Κυρίῳ ἐπιστηνῶς προσαχθέντα) are in other places fully delivered." Lib. I. Cap. 1.

†† Symbolum constat verbis Evangelicis. Cont. Donatistas, Lib. 6, c. 25, quoted by Voëtius.

‡‡ Hanc fidei normam ipse Dominus noster Jesus Christus instruxit. Aug. Sermon. de Symbolo, quoted by Voëtius, *ibid.*

when he rose, now glorified, from the dead, and was about to ascend to heaven to the Father, left these mysteries of faith to his disciples, that is, the Apostles. For he saith, ‘Go ye and baptize all nations in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.’”

Whether the candidate for baptism was required to repeat this passage aloud in the form of a creed, (“I believe in the Father,” &c.) as a confession of his faith, or to give his assent to it in reply to certain questions, does not certainly appear. The latter method is implied by Cyprian* and Augustine,† and as respects the Roman Church, is distinctly affirmed by Rufinus.

In almost all the writings which remain to us from that early period, we meet with summaries, here and there, of Christian doctrine; as in Clement of Rome,‡ Justin Martyr,§ Irenæus,|| and Tertullian.¶ These are simply given as *first aspects*, or prominent lines and points of truth. When such terms as *regula fidei*, *regula veritatis*, *lex veritatis*, &c., or such epithets as *una*, *immobilis*, *irreformabilis*, ἀσάλευτος, and the like are applied to them, it is obvious that these names and epithets were meant for *the whole truth, from which these points stood prominently forth*. This is quite manifest from two facts: 1st. No one of these summaries is ever appealed to as an acknowledged and authoritative *formula*, having the sanction of the Church or any part of it, but its derivation from Christ or from the Holy Scriptures is asserted and proved, and thus its true ground and authority intimated: and 2d, *No two of*

* Ep. 69 and 70. Opp. p. 297 and 301. Bp. Fell’s ed. Some explanatory questions are there inserted. The whole is called in a general way, “ipsa interrogatio quæ fit in baptismo.”

† Si dixerimus catechumeno, Credis in Christum? respondet, Credo.

‡ I ad Cor. Cap. 46.

§ Ad Græc. Cohort. and twice in his Apol. II. pro Christ. Opp. pp. 9, 56, and 60.

|| Adv. Hær. Lib. I. Cap. 2d and 19th, and Lib. IV. Cap. 52 and 62, the Greek of which latter is preserved in one of the Fragments in Codice. Ed. Feu-Ardentii. Paris, 1639.

¶ De Virg. Veland. C. I. De Præsc. Hæret. C. 13, end. Adv. Prax. C. 2, beg. and other places. P. Mos inibi servatur antiquus eos qui gratiam baptismi suscepturi sunt, publice, id est, fidelium populo audiente, symbolum reddere. Ruf. p. 170.

these summaries are the same, either in contents, order, or phraseology, in any two writers, nor even in the same.

The second century was the age, emphatically, of Apologies for Christianity. Quadratus presented one to Adrian, about A. 126; Aristides, to the same emperor, in the same year; Justin Martyr to Antoninus Pius, about A. 140, and a second to Marcus Antoninus, about A. 162; Melito, to Marcus Antoninus, A. 170; Apollinaris, to the same emperor, probably a little later; Athenagoras, to Marcus Antoninus and Commodus, about A. 177; Miltiades, to Commodus, about A. 180. The Oration of Tatian to the Greeks, about A. 172, and the Books of Theophilus to Antolycus, about A. 180, belong to the same class. Tertullian addressed his Apology to the Roman Magistrates,* near the close of the second or beginning of the third century.

Most of these apologies have descended to us entire or nearly so. Of the rest, we have only scraps or allusions, in Eusebius and Jerome. Their express object was to exhibit, explain, and vindicate the Christian Faith; to correct misrepresentations, and to answer objections. Had any recognized formula or summary of that faith been then in existence, we could scarcely have failed to meet with it or hear from it, in some of these works. They contain, however, nothing of the kind.

An equally profound silence reigns through the third century in respect to any received symbol, or formula of the Christian Faith.

Nor do the early historians of the church, Hegesippus in the second century, and Eusebius in the fourth, mention any.

In the course of the fourth century, some of the *first truths* of Christianity were collected and arranged in the form of symbola. There has been infinite dispute about the sense in which the Greek word, *σύμβολον*, was applied to these documents. The most general use of it by the ancients, and therefore the most probable application of it by the Christians, was in the sense of a *tessera* or badge of mutual recognition.† The acceptance

* Vobis, Romani imperii antistites. Cap. I.

† Ut singuli fideles tesseram et indicium haberent. Heidegger. p. 679.

of the formula marked a disciple of "the common faith," and distinguished him from those who took or kept the name of Christianity, while they rejected more or less of its truth.

These summaries, symbols, or creeds were all constructed on the frame-work of the original baptismal doctrine of faith, (Matt. xxviii. 19). They varied largely as it respects fulness of detail, but "the first principles of the doctrine of Christ" were the same in all. The churches of Jerusalem, of Rome, and of Aquileia, at least, had each a creed of its own.* Rufinus specifies differences between the creeds of the Eastern† and Western churches. He points out several differences between the creed after which he had been baptized, in the Church of Aquileia, and that of the Roman Church. In fact he has one statement which is curious and interesting. "In other churches," he says (besides that of Rome,) "on account of various heretics, certain articles seem to have been added (to the creed) by means of which, the tenets of the new doctrine might be excluded." How plain, therefore, that each church drew up its own summary of truth to suit itself, and altered it to meet its own exigencies! All this occasioned no suspicion of schism, no fear of damage to Christian unity—so long as the particular creed harmonized with "the common faith."

Ursinus,‡ in a learned historical notice of the early creeds, enumerates the following as "catholic or universal, that is, received by the consent of the whole orthodox Christian Church, namely, the Apostolic, Nicene, Constantinopolitan, Ephesine, Athanasian, and Chalcedonian."

Vossius and Heidegger, in their elaborate creed-histories, reduce the number received by the whole church, both Eastern and Western, to three, viz., "the Apostolic, Athanasian, and Nicene, or Niceno-Constantinopolitan."

The shortest, simplest, most comprehensive, and most

* That of Jerusalem is given in the 18th Catechesis of Cyril. Those of the Churches of Rome and of Aquileia, are given by Rufinus.

† E. g. He says of the article "He descended into hell," *non in orientis ecclesiis habetur hic sermo*, p. 179.

‡ Admon. Neustad.

strictly scriptural* of these is, without doubt, the Apostolic creed.

The term "Apostolic," however, was by no means exclusively applied to this particular creed. Cyril calls the creed of the church at Jerusalem "a confession of the holy and *Apostolic* faith."† Epiphanius says, in introducing the Nicene creed, "This faith was delivered from (or by) the holy Apostles."‡ "By the Western churches also," says Arch. Usher, "that longer form of the creed which went under the name of the Nicene, was also reckoned *Apostolic*." And he quotes the "Ordo Romanus" before the institution of baptism, which calls it "inspired by the Lord, *instituted by the Apostles*."|| "And in the celebration of the holy Supper," he continues, "the Latin Missal, which was in use about the beginning of the ninth century, speaking of the same (Nicene) creed, adds these words, '*the Apostles' creed* being ended, the priest shall say,' " &c.

So that the distinctive title of "the Apostles' creed" as applied to this symbol, is not of very high antiquity, even in the Roman Church. It has of late, however, become general.

When it reached its full form, as it now stands, cannot with certainty be determined. "The creed of the Roman Church,"§ as it stood at the time of Rufinus, and is compared by him with that of his own church of Aquileia, differs in several phrases, from that which passes under the name of the Apostles' Creed, and is now claimed as the special and ancient creed of the Roman Church, being often thus appropriated under the title of "Credo (or Symbolum) Romanum." We give them in parallel columns, with marks to indicate the omissions in the earlier creed:

* Heidegger thinks he can find every phrase of it in the Scriptures. Vossius says, *præ aliis symbolis, verbis etiam gaudet Apostolorum et Evangelistarum*; Diss. primi, p. 17. And Ursinus, totum fere ex verbis Scripturæ constat. Exp. Cat. 2. 23.

† Ἀγίας καὶ ἀποστολικῆς πίστεως. Cat. 18th.

‡ Ἀὕτη ἡ πίστις παρεβίβη ἀπὸ τῶν ἁγίων ἀποστόλων, quoted by Arch. Usher, p. 314.

|| A Domino inspiratum, ab Apostolis institutum.

§ Ecclesiæ Romanæ symbolum. Ruf., p. 179.

"*Symbolum Romanæ Ecclesiæ*," in *Rufinus*.

Credo in Deum Patrem Omnipotentem
 et in Christum Jesum, unicum
 Filium ejus, Dominum nostrum: qui
 natus est de Spiritu Sancto ex Maria virgine, crucifixus
 sub Pontio Pilato et sepultus,
 tertia die resurrexit a mortuis, ascendit ad cælos, sedet ad
 dexteram Dei Patris, inde venturus
 est judicare vivos et mortuos,
 et in Spiritum Sanctum, sanctam Ecclesiam
 Ecclesiam remissionem peccatorum,
 hujus carnis resurrectionem.

*Symbolum Apostolorum, from the Roman Breviary.**

Credo in Deum, Patrem Omnipotentem, Creatorem cæli et terræ, et in Jesum Christum, Filium ejus unicum, Dominum nostrum; qui conceptus est de Spiritu Sancto, natus ex Maria virgine, passus sub Pontio Pilato, crucifixus, mortuus et sepultus; descendit ad inferos: tertia die resurrexit a mortuis: ascendit ad cælos, sedet ad dexteram Dei Patris Omnipotentis: inde venturus est judicare vivos et mortuos. Credo in Spiritum Sanctum, sanctam Ecclesiam Catholicam, sanctorum communionem, remissionem peccatorum, carnis resurrectionem, vitam æternam. Amen.

It will be seen by a comparison of the two that "the creed of the Roman Church" as it stood in the fifth century differed from "the Apostles' Creed," as follows. From the first article† the creed of the Roman Church omits "creatorem cæli et terræ;" from the third, "conceptus;" from the fourth, "passus" and "mortuus;"‡ from the fifth, the entire clause, "descendit ad inferos;"§ from the sixth, omits "omnipotentis" after "Patris;" from the eighth, omits "Credo," before "in Spiritum Sanctum;"|| from the ninth article omits "Catholicam"

* Breviarium Romanum ex dec. S. S. Conc. Trid. restitutum, S. Pii V. Pont. Max. jussu editum, &c. Paris, 1842.

† We follow the "Catechismus Conc. Tridentini," in the division and numbering of the articles. Pars I. Cap. 2—13.

‡ It must be allowed that *passus* is sufficiently expressed by *crucifixus*, and *mortuus* implied in *sepultus*.

§ Rufinus says "this clause is not contained either in the Creed of the Roman Church, or in those of the Eastern Churches; the meaning of the expression, however, appears to be the same with this, that he was *buried*." Sciendum sane est, quod in Ecclesiæ Romanæ symbolo non habetur hic sermo, vis tamen verbi eadem videtur esse in eo quod sepultus dicitur, p. 179.

|| Vossius remarks (p. 28), that this word was sufficiently *understood* from the beginning of the Creed, and that the insertion of it here tends somewhat to give it the appearance of another creed. But he adds, "Cum initio solum sit, *Credo in Deum Patrem et in Jesum Christum et in Spiritum Sanctum*; postea etiam, multis insertis, remansit vetus formula, *et in Spiritum Sanctum*: cui posteriores τὸ *credo* quod ἀπὸ κωνσταντίας antea erat supplendum, majoris claritatis causa, præmiserunt."

after "Ecclesiam,"* and the latter clause entire, "sanctorum communionem;" and ends with "hujus carnis resurrectionem," omitting entirely the last or twelfth article, "et vitam æternam."†

The question respecting the history and structure of this creed assumes a far higher than merely historical interest from the theory which the Church of Rome has put forth respecting it, and the pretensions which she has founded upon it.

That theory, as it stands in the highest authority known to the Roman Church,‡ is as follows:

"The doctrines which Christian men ought first to hold, are those which the guides and teachers of the faith, the holy apostles, inspired by the Divine Spirit, have marked out in the twelve articles of the Creed. For when they had received from the Lord a command that, in discharge of their commission from him, they should go forth into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature, they determined to compose a formula of the Christian faith, to the end that all men might think and say the same thing, and that there might be no schisms among them whom they called to the unity of the faith; but that they might be perfect in the same mind and in the same judgment. This profession of the Christian faith and hope, composed by themselves, the Apostles denominated a creed (symbol): either because it was formed of the various sentences which each con-

* So the edition before us, Paris, 1580. Pamelius added *Catholicam*; against the authority of ancient copies, says Vossius. *Aliter libri veteres: and adds, quid mirum si non legatur apud Rufinum, cum nec habuerit Augustinus? Nec adeo levis est momenti. Imo Apostolorum ætate nondum obtinebat consuetudo, ut Christiani dicerentur Catholici.*

If *Catholicam* had stood in the original text of Rufinus, that prolix and churchly commentator would surely have expounded it in his commentary, *which he has not.*

† And Jerome states that it stood there in his time. In symbolo fidei . . post confessionem Trinitatis et unitatem Ecclesiæ, *omne Christiani dogmatis sacramentum carnis resurrectione includitur.* Hier. ad Pammachium, adv. err. Io. Hieros. Opp. Tom. II. p. 59. (Ed. Erasmi.)

‡ Catechismus Concil. Trident. issued with the bull of Pius V., and with the usual complement of Papal anathemas, threatening "the wrath of Almighty God, and of the blessed Peter and Paul against any man who should rashly dare to oppose it." (*Ausu temerario contraire.*) Pars I. and bull at the end of the volume. We quote from the fine edition "*ad usum seminariorum.*" Lyons and Paris, 1848.

tributed, or because they used it as a mark or badge, whereby they might easily distinguish deserters or false brethren, privily brought in, who adulterated the gospel, from those who bound themselves by the oath of the warfare (army) of Christ."

This creed is thus propounded as the product of inspiration, the rule of Christian faith. It is constantly affirmed by the highest Roman authorities to contain *all that is essential for a Christian to believe*.* And as the creed is not contained in the canonical books, but has been handed down by church tradition, the Papacy founds thereupon its theory of *tradition* or the oral transmission of truth and law of Christ, in the bosom of the Church and under its auspices and control, and that the doctrine and precepts so handed down have the same authority with those revealed in the Scriptures.

This theory, therefore, simply puts the creed in the place of the Bible.

The illustrious Protestants whose names stand at the head of our article, (with many others) have assailed this theory with an erudition which had left almost no document of ancient or mediæval times unsearched or untaxed. To us their onset seems like a war of giants, to demolish a pigmy; so utterly destitute of historical basis is the Romish figment which they attacked. But the labour was by no means unnecessary in their day. Under the long and absolute sway of the Papacy, this notion had been so *drilled and soldered* into the minds of men, that even after the Reformation, not a few intelligent Protestants were found (as Voëtius assures us) who could, with difficulty, be disabused of the impression which invested the creed *formally* with a sort of divine and inspired authority. And so long as this impression lingered among men, how was it possible to restore the word of God to its primitive and just supremacy in the church?

If the creed was composed by the Apostles, why is it not mentioned among the "Acts of the Apostles?" Why never alluded to in the Epistles? If it was composed by the Apostles, under divine inspiration, it must have formed a part of the canonical Scriptures, which has never been pretended. If it

* Tous les mystères qu'il importe de croire. Bellarmin. Pref. p. 1.

was composed by the Apostles, it must have been in the Greek language, and of course would have been received and carefully preserved by the Greek churches, but they were not in possession of it (by the plain statement of Rufinus) some time after the beginning of the fifth century. If it was composed by the Apostles before their separation, it must have been drawn up at Jerusalem, and of course, the church of Jerusalem would have first received and ever retained the precious deposit, which it did not, but had a creed of its own, as we have seen. Of all the early ecclesiastical writers who have narrated the acts of Christ and his Apostles, and the Confessions drawn up by Synods, antisynods and councils, no one has ever mentioned a creed composed by the Apostles. Hilary in his first book on the Trinity, appeals to the Niceno-Constantinopolitan creed, in support of the doctrine, but never mentions the Apostles' Creed. In his sixth book he enumerates all the Confessions of the Christian faith, but the list does not contain the Apostles' Creed. If it was composed by the Apostles, it would have been delivered to all the churches of the world; how then was it unknown to so large a part of them in the fifth century? how did it exist with so many variations for several centuries afterwards? * why was it necessary for the fathers both of the eastern and western churches, to draw up so many symbols and confessions on the rise of various heresies, (which are quite inferior to it in simplicity and precision,) if they could have fallen back on so venerable and unquestionable an exposition of the faith as an "Apostles' Creed?"

Such are some of the arguments by which "the might of" Vossius, Usher, and their compeers, have demolished the curtain which the Papal "builders" had been, for ages, erecting between the Church and the Bible.

Shall we add a mite of our own to a stock already so ample?

The ancient Christians were in the habit of reading, beside the Holy Scriptures, the pious remains of yet earlier times (as

* Arch. Usher produces a creed which he found written in the Latin Psalter of King Ethelstane, and another from the end of an old MS. of the Acts of the Apostles, in the Oxford library, both of which differed not inconsiderably from "the Apostles' Creed." So did another cited by Etherius, a Spanish bishop, A. 785, mentioned by Heidegger, p. 642.

Eusebius and others tell us) not indeed as of authority, but for edification in their religious assemblies; but neither among inspired nor ecclesiastical writings so read, is there any mention of an Apostles' Creed. There is the same unbroken silence respecting it alike in the assailants and apologists of the early church; in the heretics who forsook and afterwards attacked, and the orthodox who defended her faith.

One unquestionable fact concentrates the force of all these arguments, and is of itself sufficient to overturn the whole Papal theory and the vast structure of traditional imposture which has been built upon it; "*the Apostles' Creed,*" *either in name or form, was unknown to the Christian Church, for at least four hundred years after Christ.*

Witsius, speaking of Usher, Voëtius, Vossius, and Heidegger, remarks that "the almost measureless reading* which they all brought to the discussion of this subject has left nothing for other men to do." But no subject was ever yet exhausted. Truth and error alike change their aspects and relations as ages roll on. The whole front and issue of this question has, within a few years, so totally changed, that the artillery of these renowned defenders of the faith, sweeps over a now almost unoccupied field.

The new Creed Theory, forming a part of the system of "Development," as maintained by Moehler in Germany, Newman in England and Dr. Nevin in this country (and others in both,) is so remarkable that we shall leave Dr. Nevin to state it in his own language.

With regard to the historical era of the completion of the creed, Dr. Nevin expresses himself as follows:

"His (Irenæus's) whole manner may be taken as evidence that no fixed formula of this sort, as afterwards settled in our present Apostles' Creed, was then," (in the second century,) "in ecclesiastical use."† He speaks of "all its variations in the second century,"‡ and expresses his admiration "that it should rise into view gradually, now one article, now three, and now twelve,

* Maximi viri Usseus, Voëtius, Vossius, et Heideggerus, omnes immensæ propemodum lectionis, &c. p. 1.

† P. 113.

‡ P. 220.

. . . that it should appear under so many editions and phases, . . . that it should be so loose a deposit, apparently, in the hands of the Church, *from the first century to the fourth*, and after all, assume *in the end, the settled form it now carries, &c.*"

And yet on the page opposite our first quotation, he says: "the probability is certainly strong that *early** in the second century, *if not before*, nearly all the particulars now embraced in it (the creed) were found more or less in current use." And again more distinctly, "we meet the several parts of the creed under full revelation in the second century."

The reader is just as able to put these statements together in an intelligible and self-agreeing form, as we are.

As it regards the source of the creed, however, Dr. Nevin is entirely clear.

"The creed does not spring from the Bible. The early Church got it not from the Bible, but from the fact of Christianity itself, which must be allowed to be in its own nature older even and deeper than its own record under this form.† . . The divine tradition, which starts from the original substance of Christianity itself, as it underlies the Bible, meets us under its clearest, most primitive and most authoritative character, in the Apostles' Creed."‡

Nor is the creed the work of the Apostles. It is not "a bound scheme of words, handed down from the Apostles."§ The creed is no work of mere outward authority, imposed on the Church by Christ or his Apostles. It would help its credit greatly in the eyes of some, no doubt, if it could be made to appear under this view. Their idea of Christianity is such as involves prevailing, the notion of a given or fixed scheme of things to be believed and done,|| propounded for the use of men, on the authority of heaven, in a purely mechanical and outward

* Irenæus was *late* in the 2d century. Tillemont dates his work *Against Heresies* about 190, and says he died in 202.

† P. 337.

‡ P. 339.

§ P. 221.

|| Tertullian seems to have had a very similar "idea." "This I lay down," he says, "among first principles; that there was *one fixed scheme instituted by Christ*, which all nations must, under all circumstances, believe." In primis hoc propono: unum utique et certum aliquid institutum esse a Christo, quod credere omnimodo debeant nationes. De Præsc. Hæret. IX. Opp. p. 205.

way. . . It is plain, however, that no such origin as this can be asserted in its favour. . . In no such form could it be the glorious Christian *creed*, which we now find it to be in fact.*

“In the next place, it is no product of *reflection*, . . no result of joint deliberation and discussion. This last view, especially, would suit the taste of many; more particularly, if it could be made to appear that the Bible had been taken as the source and rule of all evidence in the case, and that the formulary was exhibited, throughout, as an extract simply, and summary, of what is to be found in its inspired pages; . . . if that famous synod at Jerusalem, for instance, or some other . . were known to have taken the matter in hand, (after the fashion of the great *world convention* in London,) and to have produced . . what they conceived to be . . a truly *scriptural*† platform of Christian doctrine.” “‘The articles of agreement’ of the late “Evangelical Alliance’” are instanced, and that new creed lately originated for the use of the Protestant Armenian Church, in Constantinople. We can see and understand easily how *that* was made; the missionary goes into his upper room, takes the Bible into his hands, &c., &c. . . All this we miss in the creed which bears the name of the Apostles. . . . It is not the work of any mind or set of minds . . reducing the contents of Christianity to logical statement for the understanding.”

Whence, then, *is* this “glorious Christian Creed,” which is neither from the Bible, from Christ, nor from the Apostles, nor yet the “product of reflection” or “joint deliberation,” nor even “the work of any mind or set of minds?” The reader may go through Aristotle’s Categories of space, or Plato’s world of “things movable and things immovable,” or even range over “the things which are in heaven and on earth and under the earth,” and not find it. We do not wonder that, after all these negations, Dr. Nevin says, “No one can tell exactly whence or how it comes.”—He essays the difficult task however.

“The immediate substance of Christianity,” he says, “as it comes to a real revelation in the first place directly for faith

* Pp. 201, 2.

† All the italics on this page are Dr. N’s.

forms the contents, and furnishes us with the true idea of the ancient creed. . . Its propositions are the utterance only of what is immediately at hand in the proper Christian consciousness itself. . . It owes its origin to the faith of the church . . in the way of free, gradual progress and growth. . . The creed, we say, sprang in the beginning, from the faith of the church as a whole. It is the product of the Christian life, in its general and collective capacity. . So in the early life of nations, we meet with creations continually, products of the spirit that seem to shoot forth spontaneously, by a sort of inward organic force, from the substance of the national mind itself. . . This may serve to explain what we mean when we say that the creed is to be taken as the full, free outbirth of the Christian faith as a whole. . . . The mere letter of Christianity, even as it stands in the New Testament itself" he represents as ("for a thoughtful mind") "something secondary to its living substance as exhibited in the actual mystery of Christ and his Church. . This mystery is actualized, . . comes to its revelation as the supernatural in the form of faith, by means of the Church. . . *The primitive form of this revelation is presented to us in the creed.* . . It must be taken as the grand epos of Christianity itself, the spontaneous poem of its own life unfolded in fit word and expression from the inmost consciousness of the universal Church." . . It is "the free, spontaneous product of the life of the Church as a whole, the self-adjusted utterance of its faith. . . . It is the free spontaneous externalization of the Christian consciousness, the substance of living Christianity as a whole, in its primary form of faith. . . The creed was not *made*; it *grew*, self-produced, we may say, out of the great fact of Christianity itself. . . Its contents thus come from within, and not from without." Again he calls it "the ancient creation of the church."* On the *authority* of the creed, Dr. Nevins is quite up to the highest point of Papal orthodoxy. . . . "To reject it is to reject the ancient faith; to make light account of it is to make light account of the very substance of Christianity, as it stood from the beginning. If the *regula fidei* of Irenæus and Tertullian, is to have any reality or be of

any force for us whatever, we must own its presence in the Apostles' creed. We shall have for it most certainly but a figment of our own minds, if we pretend to find it any where else."*

This is philosophical catholicism. It is a combination of the mystical philosophy of our own age with the Romish idea of the Church. It is the helping hand stretched forth by the infidel philosophy to the Papacy, in the hour of her agony. It comes too late, it is true, to save her claim of infallibility. The Council of Trent, as we have seen, and the earlier Roman doctors (Bellarmine among the rest,) insisted that *the Creed was composed by the Apostles themselves, under divine inspiration*. This "old wife's fable" they were not ashamed to repeat to children, long after full grown men perceived its ridiculous inconsistency with history. But this figment is no longer necessary.† Romanism, since her marriage with the modern philosophy, is quite ashamed of it. Dr. Nevin distinctly repudiates it. He is "not disturbed‡ in the least by the difficulty some urge against the creed, on the ground of its outward history, as showing it to be vague and uncertain in its origin. . . . The outward history of it shows clearly enough that it did *not* pass at once into the complete form in which it became finally established." (A cruel thrust at the infallibility of the Council of Trent, and of Pius V.; in fact, at the truth of the whole testimony of the Roman Church, including councils, popes, catechisms and doctors, as to the history of the creed, down to our own times.) "The very circumstances which go with some to invalidate the credit of the Apostles' creed, in what regards the manner of its origin, *we hold to be of special weight in its favour*."§ Certainly, the modern doctrine of

* P. 201—221.

† It is however, still taught in the Roman Catechisms. So Bellarmine. "Les Saintes Ecritures ne pouvant être lues en entier, ni comprises dans toutes leurs parties, les apôtres, établis par Jesus Christ maîtres de l'univers, ont extrait du corps des Ecritures et réduit à douze courtes sentences tous les mystères qu'il importe de croire. . . . On l'appelle *Symbole des apôtres* parceque les apôtres, avant de se séparer pour aller prêcher l'Evangile dans tout l'univers, laissèrent aux fidèles cet abrégé de la doctrine; et ce symbole est composé de douze articles, nombre égal à celui des douze apôtres qui le composèrent."—*This edition is of 1842.*

‡ P. 218.

§ P. 220.

“development” is far more convenient and pliable for Papal purposes. The creed *was*, according to the old Roman doctrine, “an extract from the Holy Scriptures;” it is now “a product of the Spirit,” “shooting forth spontaneously, by a sort of inward organic force, from the substance of the church itself; the full, free outbirth of the Christian faith.” It *was* a rigid formula uttered, perhaps penned, by inspired Apostles; but now it is itself “the primitive form of revelation,” “the self-adjusted utterance of the church’s faith,” “the substance of living Christianity as a whole.” It *was* held to a somewhat close and uncomfortable relation to the “mere letter of Christianity, as it stands in the New Testament itself;” now, that “mere letter of Christianity” is “made (for a thoughtful mind,) *secondary* to its living substance as exhibited in the actual mystery of Christ and his church,” and “this mystery is actualized,” “comes to its revelation as the supernatural in the form of faith by means of the church, and the *primitive form* of this *revelation* is presented to us in THE CREED.” On the old Roman system, it was enough that the authority of the church, should be *co-ordinate* with that of the Scripture.* It is now held to be *above* it; “the mere letter of Christianity as it stands in the New Testament” being “(for a thoughtful mind,) something *secondary* to its *living substance*.” The Bible is thus *secondary*, the creed “the primitive of the revelation of the supernatural.” And this “creed was not *made*; it *grew*, self-produced, the spontaneous product of the life of the church. Its contents come *from within*, and not *from without*.” It is “the ancient *creation* of the church.” Antiquity was once regarded as the exclusive claim and necessary imprint of Catholicism. It is so no longer. Her own “substance,” “spirit,” “life,” “faith,” is the “womb unmeasurable and boundless breast” which “teems and feeds” an endless progeny of “outbirths” and “creations.” Unwritten traditions handed down by mysterious transmission from the days and lips of the Apostles, were once affirmed as the warranty of Papal innovations; but “young Rome” turns out of doors without ceremony that

* Omnes (scriptores pontificii) *parem* illi (symbolo) *authoritatem* tribuunt cum Scripturis canonicis. Voëtius, p. 67.

hoary imposture and absurdity, or keeps its beard only to overawe children with; the creed is now claimed as her own "creation," "the externalization of her consciousness," "the free spontaneous product of her life," "the *self-adjusted* utterance of her faith," "the full, free outbirth of her life;" and of course, she can "create," "externalize," "produce," "adjust," and "bring forth" whenever, whatever, and how much soever she likes; for her *vis genitrix* cannot be other than inexhaustible, her "living substance" being as Dr. Nevin affirms, "divine."* The $\chi\rho\omicron\upsilon\varsigma \acute{\alpha}\rho\chi\alpha\iota\omicron\varsigma$, the *antique mould* which of old time gave the creed and other "products" of "the church" so much of their reverence and authority, is thus brushed away without hesitation, for lo! beneath it, under the magic touch of the modern philosophy, there appears the bloom of perpetual and self-renovating youth. "It is this *living* character precisely, its *self-conserving* and *self-determining* power which clothes it" (the creed) with its chief title to respect.†

One difficulty, however, meets us. As the creed came to its present size "in the way of free gradual progress and growth,"‡ why may it not continue to "grow?" Why may not this "trunk" put forth more shoots, more "living branches?" Dr. Nevin decides that it cannot, at least that it will not; having reached "the round symmetrical beauty of its *last* settled form," "its proper *ultimate* and *constant* type."§ By what authority he thus pronounces the process of "free growth" and "externalization" arrested, *ended, and determined*, he does not inform us. Is it because it has reached the apostolic number of twelve? But let us dispense with conjecture. It is quite needless that the creed should "grow" any more. It is now large enough. That single article, "I believe in the Holy Catholic Church," with the Papal interpretation, is a gate large enough for "an army with banners" to pass through. What an interminable line of shaven monks, begging friars, lying Jesuits, and inquisitors keen on the scent of heretical blood—what rites, orders, and ordinances ("which the Lord commanded not, neither came it into his mind,") interdicts and indulgences, anathemas and canonizations have already emerged through that ample portal and are ever on the march, a new line defiling at

* P. 217.

† Ibid. p. 221.

‡ p. 215.

§ p. 220.

every order from the Vatican. Verily, the “merchandize” that passes in and out at that portal, is great—“the merchandize of gold, and silver, and precious stones, and of pearls, and fine linen and purple, &c., and souls of men”—and all under the sacred auspices and unquestionable sanction of “the *holy Catholic Church*.”

Never was so bold a theory of church power and supremacy propounded before. Even the Jesuits, who paid divine honours to the Pope,* held that the creed was “an extract from the Holy Scriptures,” “the commandments of the Church based on the law of God” and “the Pope the vicegerent of Christ upon earth.” But here is “a *regula fidei*,” “a primitive form of faith” “externalized from the inmost consciousness,” “created from the substance” of the Church herself.† And yet, “to reject *it*, is to reject the ancient faith; to make light account of *it*, is to make light account of the *very substance of Christianity*.” “If the rule of faith is to have any reality, or be of any force for us whatever, we must own its presence in the *Apostles’ Creed*. We shall have for it” (Dr. Nevin warns us,) “most certainly but a figment of our own minds, if we pretend to find it *anywhere else*”—even of course in “the mere letter of Christianity as it stands in the New Testament.”

It is but little to say of this system that it antiquates the

* “Gregory XV. went to visit the dying Cardinal, (Bellarmine,) who addressed him in these words, *Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldst come under my roof, (Domine, non dignus sum ut intres, &c.) words which prove to what point Cardinal Bellarmine carried his respect for the Vicar of Jesus Christ.*” Vie de Bellarmine, by M. Abbé Migne. pref. to his Cat. “Must not all serious believing Protestants,” says Dr. Schaf, (Prin. of Prot., p. 103,) “feel themselves more closely related in spirit to a Bellarmine . . . than to . . . a Bruno Bauer?” If we are called upon to choose between an idolater and an atheist, our hesitation is not long. We say *neither*. Blessed be God, we have a better alternative.

† We cannot wonder then, that Dr. Nevin lays down the following order of precedence, (and in doing so, distinctly takes the side of Rome in the great central issue between her and Protestantism,) “*First the Church, and then the Bible.*” So in the creed, ‘I believe in the Holy Catholic Church,’ not ‘I believe in the Holy inspired Bible.’ Not, certainly, to put any dishonour on this last, but to lay rather a solid foundation for its dignity and authority in the other article.” (p. 339.) To lay a solid foundation for the dignity and authority of the Bible, in the faith of the Church!!

Scriptures, it nullifies inspiration,* it removes the Church from its ancient foundation "of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone," and hangs it, self-poised, in mid air. It makes it the source of law, faith and life to itself. What reverence does it leave, what significance even, for those glorious and precious revelations, "Thy word is truth. I am the Life. Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world;" or what force in those precepts, "Search the Scriptures, for *in them ye think ye have eternal life*." "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly." What shadow of respect for that divine communication, (appended alike to the "law which was given by Moses" and to "the grace and truth which came by Jesus Christ;") "Ye shall not *add* unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish aught from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the Lord your God." "If any man shall *add* unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book."

The issue here is of no less magnitude than *the source and derivation of Christian truth*. The Papal theory, in whatever form, makes the "Apostles' Creed" a *separate, subsequent and sufficient* revelation of Christianity. Whether, with some of the eminent Papal writers, you hold it to be the composition of the "hundred and twenty" including the Apostles,† (Acts i. 15) or of the twelve Apostles, immediately after the descent of the

* It is well known that the Mystical Philosophy holds that a revelation being *ex necessitate rei*, made to the intuitional faculty, a verbal revelation is a sheer impossibility, and a transmission of the contents of a revelation from one mind to another, of course, yet more so,—and therefore the ideas that "holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost," and that all *Scripture is given by inspiration of God*" are just to be regarded as among the myths of the world's childhood. (Dr. Nevin, however, holds to inspiration. He thinks that Ursinus was inspired. "In a deep and true sense," he says, (Hist. and Gen. of the Heid. Cat. p. 129,) "we may even say that he was inspired. He spake not of himself nor from himself simply: but *it was the life of the Church, (which is always truly a divine life,) that sought and found expression through his words*. It is this pre-eminently that imparts to the Catechism its power and glory." The Church, then, it seems, can inspire, though the Head and Creator of the Church cannot. Of course, if she can "create," "produce from her own substance" and externalize from her own consciousness a creed, she is quite competent to *inspire* a catechism. Whether Ursinus would have laughed at the nonsense or shuddered at the blasphemy of such "philosophy," we will not pretend to decide.)

† Antonius Nebrissensis, cited by Vossius, p. 3.

Holy Spirit at Pentecost,* or of the twelve, with Paul and Barnabas, (making, of course, fourteen authors and articles,†) or of the twelve in the second year of Claudius, before they fled to escape the persecution of Herod:‡ — whether it was *written* by the Apostles, or orally delivered and committed to the memory of the faithful:—whether it was a collect from the Scriptures,§ or given by inspiration of God, apart from all previous or other revelations;|| whether its sentences were contributed singly or severally by the Apostles, Peter, (of course,) beginning, “I believe in God the Father Almighty,” John adding, “Maker of heaven and earth,” James, &c., &c.;¶ whether it was drawn up to preserve their own unity,** or to serve as an invariable and perpetual formula †† of the faith to Christians throughout the world and to all future time, it is, through all these modifications, *an independent revelation of Christianity, apart from and unknown to the inspired Scriptures, bearing in itself the contents of the Christian faith*—“the things which Christian men ought to hold,” and is so finally ruled and settled by the supreme authority of the Papacy.

* Ante conversionem Pauli, of course. Bonaventura, cited by Voëtius, p. 66.

† Whose fourteen *sententiæ*, like so many osiers, were woven into a holy *basket* by Peter, quasi *cophinum* contexuit Petrus. Albertus Patav. quoted by Vossius. p. 4.

‡ Baronius, in Heidegger. p. 640, 1.

§ Extrait du corps des Ecritures. Bellarm. Pref. to Cat. Paschasius Ratb. also quoted by Vossius, p. 4.

|| This is the general opinion of the Papal writers. *Sententia est vulgatio*, Vossius, p. 4.

¶ Each Apostle contributing his *bolus*, and all together making a *σύμβολον*, or *epulum spirituale*, as they call it, with a ridiculous disregard of the meaning of the word, not *σύμβολον* but *συμβολή*, signifying such a *collatio*.) And what, for four hundred years, became of half the *bolus* of Thomas (“he descended into hell”) and for nearly the same length of time of the same portion of the *bolus* of James the son of Alphaeus, “the Holy Catholic Church?” And yet this silly story has been adopted by Baronius; “ex Augustino suppositio.” Heidegger, p. 640, “a sermon falsely attributed to St. Austin.” Lord King, p. 26. The passage is now given up on all hands.

** So some after Rufinus “normam sibi futuræ prædicationis in commune constituunt, ne forte alii alio adducti, diversum aliquid his qui ad fidem Christi invitabantur, exponerent, p. 1. As if the illumination of the Holy Ghost were not sufficient to secure the Apostolic unity!

†† Certa et constans formula; such is the general account of its design.

In the later and far bolder form of the Papal theory, advanced by Dr. Nevin and the men of "development," that namely, which holds it to be neither "got from the Bible,"* nor "imposed on the Church by Christ or his Apostles,"† but "a growth from within,"‡ "a creation of the Church," "owing its *origin* to the faith of the Church," vivified, as she is, by the incarnation of the Son of God, and so made "the bearer" and "depository of supernatural powers,"§ and yet "the primitive form of revelation," to which "the mere letter of Christianity, even as it stands in the New Testament, is something secondary," "the substance of living Christianity as a whole, in its primary form of faith,"|| in this form we say, there is a yet more distinct renunciation of all dependence of the Church on the Scriptures, and all necessary connection between them.¶ If this theory be true, the creed ought forthwith to take the place of the Bible throughout the whole Christian œconomy. Instead of "searching the Scriptures," men must henceforth *search the creed*. Instead of having the "word of Christ dwell in them richly," they must have *the creed dwell in them richly*. Instead of going to "the Scriptures all-inspired of God," they must go *to the creed created by the Church*, for "doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness." Instead of being "sanctified by the word of God," they must be *sanctified by the creed of the Church*. All things must be changed to suit. Preachers, instead of taking a text from the Bible, must henceforth take a text from the creed.** The Church, instead of singing,

"Thy word is everlasting truth,"

must sing

My creed is everlasting truth!

The change would greatly abridge the cost and labour of our

* P. 337.

† P. 201.

‡ P. 219.

§ Dr. Nevin. Antichrist, p. 52.

|| "All Christianity starts in the realities of the Creed, and is of no force any farther than these continue to be felt in the way of faith." Antichrist, p. 67.

¶ So the Romanist Mœhler, though by no means so boldly as Dr. Nevin, "when ecclesiastical education in the way described, takes place in the individual, *the Sacred Scriptures are not even necessary*." Symbolism, p. 350.

** Rather scanty material, but by the wise men of this school, *preaching* is thought to have been *overvalued*.

Bible Societies, which would then have only to print creeds instead of Bibles. It would quite supersede the voluminous emissions of our Boards of Publication. How light would be the burden of the colporteur! It would effectually tame the restless energy of our republicanism, and prove an absolute panacea for "the virulence of the *sect-plague*." Instead of the process ("full of peril") of *thinking* and *inquiring*, Christians would only have to *believe*.* In a word, in place of the Bible, through all the relations of Christianity, would be installed the Creed; from forth the ninth article of which, "the Holy Catholic Church" would "externalize" all matters of faith and practice, and (in the gateway of that article stands the Papal throne) would legislate† once more to Christendom and to the world.

Catholic instrumentalities, too, would be restored to full operation. Instead of an "Evangelical Alliance" to promote unity of faith, we should have an Inquisition; instead of gospel preachers, cowled monks and shaven priests; instead of "reasonings of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come," racks and thumb-screws; for evangelists, begging friars; for "the Bible and God's Spirit,"‡ Papal bulls, anathemas, and indulgences. The citizen would become a *peasant* again, and the Christian a *Catholic*. The Church and the world would be replaced as they were under the midnight glories of the Dark Ages. This is "the great Millennium, the Church of the Future," after which Dr. Nevin tells us, "very many truly Catholic souls are *silently* breathing an impatient, *How long, Lord?*§

Of all the millennarian schemes of our age, we like Dr. Nevin's millennium of darkness and retrogression, the least.

* "Faith," says Dr. Nevin "goes before *all thought* and lies at the ground of it." "Our creed *precedes* and *underlies* our *intelligence*."

† "What a conception is that of Christianity, which excludes from its organic jurisdiction the broad, vast conception of the commonwealth or state!" Catholicism, p. 14.

‡ "Few seem to have the least fear of schism, if only they can lay claim in their own way, to *the Bible and God's Spirit*." Ant. p. 84. Cf. John v. 39, and 1 John ii. 20, 27, both from the *mystical* Apostle!

§ Antichrist, p. 71 and 76.

Is it not, in every aspect, a new Christianity—"another gospel?"

The theory may seem ridiculous, but it is a grave matter, associated and identified as it is, with this still vast and powerful Papacy. On that stock it has grown. If the germ of mysticism had been "grafted" into any branch of vital and scriptural Christianity, it would have withered and died at once: for the stock and scion being of different genera, the bud would not take. But inserted in "Catholicism," it has vegetated with a prodigious luxuriance. It is, indeed, a vast advance on any earlier "stadium"* of that system. Yet it is strictly and legitimately a development of it. The Roman Church began her apostacy, by claiming powers which the word of God did not grant nor even permit to any part of the Christian Church; she next prohibited the Scriptures because they rebuked and exposed her corruptions of Christian truth, and encroachments on Christian freedom; the Creed was a great assistance to her in this matter, serving in her abuse of it to antiquate (as summaries often have done) the volume from which it had been compiled. She at length took courage to contradict and *nullify* the plain and acknowledged precepts of the word of God;† and now at last, if she betakes herself to the encampment prepared for her by German mysticism—and she seems on the march to do so—she fully and for ever *forsakes* and renounces the word of God, shakes off what slack allegiance she has hitherto professed to hold to it, and proclaims her Creed "the primitive revelation," and herself the "Creator of the Christian faith."

This is certainly, a new phase in the "revelation" of "the

* "The Church is never stationary, but always passing forward from one stadium of perfection to another." Antichrist, p. 35. What "Church" is that whose every successive *stadium* is a further departure from the word of God? What will be her last *stadium*?

† So in the Council of Constance, "Decretum est Sept. xiii. circa S. Eucharistiæ Sacramentum quod '*licet* CHRISTUS *sub utraque specie instituerit, eundemque administrandi modum Ecclesia Primitiva retinuerit, HIS TAMEN NON OBSTANTIBUS, consuetudo ECCLESIE, qua sub specie panis tantummodo a laicis suscipitur, EST OBSERVANDA.*'" Cave, Scrip. Eccles. Sæc. Synodale, p. 150. What was this canon less than a declaration of open revolt from Christ, and at the same time repudiation of Christian antiquity?

man of sin and the son of perdition." Never before has he so dietinctly taken the position of Antichrist; never before so boldly "seated himself in the temple of God, boasting himself that he is God." For who less than God can (either in the objective or subjective sense,) *originate and create faith?*

May God speed forward that revelation *in his time!* For "the day of Christ shall not come till that wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the Spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming."

Dr. Nevin does not attempt to bring from the Bible any testimony to its own degradation below the Creed. But he does claim for his theory—a theory never heard of by Christian, Pagan, or Infidel, till the time of Strauss*—the sanction of every thing that is venerable in the history of that Christianity of which it strikes at the very foundation.

"It, (the Creed,) forms," he says, "the basis of all sound Christian profession in the Protestant, no less than in the Roman Catholic Church."†

"It lay at the foundation of all Christianity with Luther himself . . . It was a necessary means of grace with him, he tells us himself, to repeat the creed with the Lord's Prayer, throughout his life." "*The creed with the Lord's Prayer!*" Here is Luther's own enumeration: "The Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, the Articles of Faith, some of the Psalms,‡ &c., I recite with myself early in the morning, and as often as I

* Dr. Nevin acknowledges, in the following passage, (p. 217,) to what notable source the Christian church is indebted for the *first hint*, which, by "thoughtful minds," has been wrought out into this new theory. "The main use of this work of Strauss, if it can be allowed to have any, is *found just in this*, that it serves, for a thoughtful mind, to *make the mere letter of Christianity, even as it stands in the New Testament itself, something secondary to its living substance, as exhibited in the mystery of Christ and his church* . . . So much of truth, however, may be allowed to it, that this mystery . . . comes to its revelation . . . by means of the church . . . The primitive form of this revelation is presented to us in the Creed." A fitting master, verily, to teach the Church of Christ such a lesson! When she goes to school to such "filthy dreamers" as Strauss, she may expect to come back with the discovery that the word of her Lord is "something secondary" to her own consciousness!

† P. 122.

‡ Orationem Dominicam, Decem Præcepta, Articulos Fidei, Psalmos aliquot, &c., Cat. Maj. Præf. Hase. Lib. Sym. p. 392.

have a little leisure;"—and he goes on to discourse of "the power of the word of God," and "the blessedness of daily meditation upon it," saying, that "no perfume is more precious, no odour more efficacious against devils and bad thoughts, than if thou handle by constant use the word and precepts of God, mixing therewith familiar discourses upon it, singing and meditating the same. This, verily, is that *holy water* and true *sign** (of the cross) whereby Satan is put to flight, and which he dreads above all things."†

So much for Luther's "necessary means of grace" in private, which were somewhat more ample than Dr. Nevin's *abridgment* would seem to imply. "His (Luther's) sense," Dr. Nevin adds, "of the authority that belongs to the ancient catholic faith altogether, was very earnest and deep." Undoubtedly it was; but not of that "catholic faith" of which "the creed is the primitive revelation." Hear his own words:

"By what sign, then," he says,‡ "shall I know a church? For some visible sign must be given, whereby we may be gathered together to hear the word of God. I answer, the necessary sign is Baptism, the Lord's Supper, and, most of all, the Gospel.§ These are the three signs, badges, and characters of Christians Where thou seest that the Gospel is not, (as we see in the synagogue of the Papists,)|| there thou mayest not doubt, *there is no church*, even though they baptize and eat from the altar . . . But there thou mayest know is Babylon, full of witches, owls, cormorants, and other monsters.¶ . . The Gospel, before Baptism and the Lord's Supper, is the one surest and noblest sign of a church, since by the Gospel alone, it is conceived, shapen, nourished, brought forth, brought up, fed, clothed, adorned, strengthened, armed, preserved,—in brief, *the whole life and substance of the church is in the word of*

* Hæc vere aqua illa sanctificata, verumque signum.

† Ibid. p. 393.

‡ Resp. ad Lib. Ambros. Catharini. Luth. Opp. Tom. II. p. 147. Wittenbergæ. 1546.

§ Omnium potissimum, Evangelium.

|| Sicut in Synagoga Papistarum videmus.

¶ Babylonem ibi esse scias, plenam lamiis, pilosis ululis, onocrotalis, aliisque monstribus.

God, even as Christ says, 'man liveth by every word which proceedeth from the mouth of God.'"*

"The Reformed Church here," says Dr. Nevin, was of one mind with the Lutheran. Thus, in Calvin's Catechism," &c.

Calvin's intention in following the order of the Creed and his view of the Creed itself is nowhere so fully stated as in his Institutes. "Thus far," he says, at the close of the second book, "I have followed the order of the Apostles' Creed; because, since it sketches in few words, the heads of redemption,† it may serve to us the purpose of an index,‡ in which we behold distinctly and severally, the Christian subjects which deserve our attention. I call it the Apostles' Creed, little concerned meanwhile, about its authorship.§ . . The only point of importance, I hold to be placed beyond controversy, that the whole history of our faith is therein set forth succinctly and in clear arrangements, and that nothing is contained in it which is not sealed by solid testimonies of Scripture."|| And again, "A creed must be a complete summary of our faith, into which *nothing may be infused, which is not derived from the purest word of God.*¶ And, "since we see the whole sum of our salvation and even its several parts comprehended in Christ, *we must beware lest we derive even the minutest portion of it from any other source.*"**

"So," continues Dr. Nevin, "in the admirable symbol of the Palatinate, the Heidelberg Catechism, it is 'the articles of our catholic and undoubted Christian faith,' as comprehended in the same Creed which are made to underlie the doctrine of salvation from beginning to end." And again,†† "it" (the Heidelberg Catechism) "is based directly upon the Apostles' Creed, *with the sound and most certainly right feeling, that no Protestant doctrine can ever be held in a safe form, which is not so*

* Breviter, tota vita et substantia Ecclesiæ est in verbo Dei.

† Capita redemptionis.

‡ Vice tabulæ nobis esse potest.

§ De auctore interim minime sollicitus.

|| Nihil autem contineri, quod solidis Scripturæ testimoniis non sit consignatum. Inst. II. 16. § 18.

¶ Nisi ex purissimo Dei verbó petítum. II. c. 16, § 8.

** Cavendum ne vel minimam portunculam alio derivemus. II. 16. § 19.

†† Introduction to Williard's Ursinus, p. 15.

held as to be in truth, a living branch from the trunk of this primitive symbol in the consciousness of faith."

The Heidelberg Catechism consists of three parts. The *second* of these follows the order of the Apostles' Creed. What it is that *underlies the doctrine of salvation*, to the apprehension of the author of the Catechism, (Ursinus,) is best learned from his own words. He inserts the Creed in his Catechism, with these and the like preliminary cautions. "Faith is borne upon the whole word of God and firmly assents to it.* . . *Human traditions*, edicts of popes and decrees of councils are excluded"† (from the ground of faith.) "*For faith can rest on the word of God alone, as its immovable foundation.*‡ Christians therefore, are neither to form for themselves matters of faith, nor to embrace what is formed or handed down by men, but *to believe the gospel.*"§

And with regard to this theory of a church-created creed, if Ursinus had been gifted with prescience to foresee that combination of Popery and mysticism, he could not have struck it with greater precision than he has done in the following words.

"Certain it is that no Church, whether of angels or of men, has power to frame new laws concerning the worship of God, or *new articles of faith binding the conscience*. For that belongs to God alone. Nor are we to believe God on the testimony of the Church, but the Church on the testimony of God."||

Dr. Nevin claims also the sanction of the "Gallican," "Belgic," and "Helvetic Confessions," and "the Articles of the Church of England"¶ in support of his creed theory. A short citation from each will show what these "good confes-

* Fides igitur fertur in omne Dei verbum, eique firmiter assentitur.

† Excluduntur traditiones humanæ, &c.

‡ Solo Dei verbo tanquam immoto fundamento. Exp. Cat. Q. 22.

§ Supported by Mark i. 15.—1 Cor. ii. 5.

|| Certum est, nec angelorum, nec hominum ecclesiam habere potestatem con-
dendi novas leges de cultu Dei, aut novos articulos fidei obligantes conscientiam.
Id enim est solius Dei. Neque Deo propter ecclesiæ, sed ecclesiæ propter Dei
testimonium credendum est. Exp. Cat. Q. 23.

¶ Pp. 123, 4.

sions" "witness before" the world to be the fountain of Christian truth and the rule of Christian faith.

The Gallican Confession, (after the list of the canonical books,) declares as follows.

"We recognize these books to be canonical and the certain rule of our faith,* not so much by the common harmony and consent of the Church, as by the testimony and interior persuasion of the Holy Spirit, who makes us to discern them from other ecclesiastical books, on which, though they yet be useful, no man can found any article of faith."†

"And since it" ("the word which is contained in these books and proceedeth from God‡") "is the rule of all truth,§ containing all that is necessary for the service of God and our salvation, it is not lawful for men nor even for angels to add thereto, nor to diminish or change it. Whence it follows, that neither antiquity, nor customs, nor multitude, nor human wisdom, nor judgments, nor sentences, nor edicts, nor decrees, nor councils, nor visions, nor miracles, must be opposed to that Holy Scripture, but on the contrary, all things must be examined, proved and reformed according to it.|| And in this view,¶ we acknowledge the three symbols, to wit, of the Apostles, of Nice, and of Athanasius, because they are conformed to the word of God."**

The Belgic Confession is admirably full and clear "de auctoritate"†† and "de perfectione‡‡ *Sacrae Scripturae*." We cite but one sentence: "Since the whole method of that divine *cultus* which God requires from the faithful,§§ is therein most exactly and copiously described;|||| for no man, though he

* Règle tres certaine de nostre Foy.

† Sur lesquels (encore qu' ils soyent utiles,) on ne peut fonder aucun article de Foy. Conf. Fid. Gall. Art. IV. Niemeyer, Coll. Conf. p. 314.

‡ Procédée de Dieu.

§ La règle de toute vérité.

|| Ainsi au contraire, toutes choses doyvent estre examinées, reiglées et reformées selon icelle.

¶ Suyvant cela.

** Pour ce qu' ils sont conformés à la parole de Dieu. Art. V.

†† Art. III. and V.

‡‡ Art. VI.

§§ Omnis divini cultus ratio, quam Deus a fidelibus exigit.

|||| Exactissime et fuse descripta.

be endowed with Apostolic dignity, nor even for any angel sent down from heaven, as holy Paul speaketh, is it lawful to teach otherwise than we have been already taught in the sacred Scriptures.”*

In the article on “the most Holy Trinity” it says, “we freely receive those three symbols, namely, the Apostolic, Nicene and Athanasian.”† The Helvetic Confession is particularly exact and full on the relation of church doctrine, whether brought out in the shape of interpretation, tradition or creed, to the Scriptures.

“The Canonical Scripture,” it declares,‡ “which is the word of God, delivered by the Holy Spirit, and set forth to the world by prophets and apostles, is the most ancient, perfect and exalted philosophy§ and alone contains all|| that conduces to the true knowledge, love and communion of God, to genuine piety and to the ordering of a devout and holy life.

“This holy, divine Scripture, is interpreted by none other than itself, and is cleared up by the analogy (under the guidance) of faith and love.”¶

“So far as the holy fathers have not gone aside from this kind of interpretation, we not only receive them as interpreters of Scripture, but revere them as chosen vessels of God.”**

“For the rest of the traditions of men, however specious and universal, which lead us aside from God and the true faith, we say in the words of the Lord, in vain do they worship me, teaching the doctrines of men.”††

The doctrine of the Reformed Church of England on the subject of “the Holy Scripture” and of “the Creeds” is as follows:‡‡ “Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation; so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be

* *Aliter docere quam jam pridem in Sacris Scripturis edocti sumus.* Niemeyer, p. 361, &c.

† *Recipimus libenter, &c., Art. IX.* Niem. p. 365.

‡ *Art. I.* Niemeyer, p. 105.

§ *Die aller älteste, vollkommeste und höchste leer.*

|| *Begriff allein alles das, das zu warer erkenntnüss, liebe und eer Gottes, &c.*

¶ *Erklärt werden durch die richtschnur des glaubens und der liebe.* Art. II.

** *Art. III.*

†† *Art. IV.*

‡‡ *Articles VI. and VIII.*

proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of the faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation.

“The Nicene Creed and *that which is commonly called the Apostles’ Creed*, ought thoroughly to be received and believed: *for they may be proved by most certain warrants of Holy Scripture.*”

What then was the “warrant” by which the creeds themselves were to “be proved,” what was the “basis” of Protestant doctrine, the “trunk” from which it grew and depended, the only “safe form” in which it could be “held,” is abundantly evident from these citations. And every time the Reformed Church uttered her voice on this subject, whether it was among the mountains of Switzerland or in the Universities of Germany and England, or a century later, in the Synod of Dort and the Assembly of Westminster, it was to proclaim that *the word of God is the sole and all-sufficient rule of faith and life to the Christian Church.*

And her voice in this grand and unanimous utterance of it, was a distinct reverberation of that which came down to her, weakened and confused somewhat, but never extinct, through the lapse of ages, from her elder sister, who in *voice* as well as *feature*, bore a strong family resemblance to her, the Primitive Church. And yet Dr. Nevin claims the sanction of this too, for his theory of a “growing,” “expanding,” “self-adjusted,” “church-created” Creed.

“That such an Apostolical rule, as to inward substance, existed and had force, as the unity of the universal Christian faith, in the early Church, no one who does not choose to put out his own eyes, can for a moment doubt; *and yet, it is just as clear that this living rule embodied itself finally, and became permanent and fixed, in the Creed as we now have it.* . . . If the *regula fidei* of Irenæus and Tertullian, is to have any reality, or be of any force for us whatever, we must own its presence in the Apostles’ Creed.”*

Now, we should be sorry to “put out our own eyes,” for this, among other reasons, that then we might *fall into the ditch* with

* Apostles’ Creed, No. III. p. 221.

this *blind guide*. But having our eyes open, and Irenæus and Tertullian before them, we confess ourselves amazed at the temerity of this citation.

Shall we summon Erasmus to try conclusions with Dr. Nevin on this point? Here is his testimony: "Irenæus fought against the troop of heretics with arguments (munitions) drawn *from the Scriptures alone*."*

But let the good bishop of Lyons, (or Presbyter, for as to the matter of fact, we firmly believe it is of no consequence which title we use, *since he uses both indifferently*,) expound himself on this point.

Irenæus mentions no *regula fidei*. The phrase does not occur in his writings. "Regula veritatis," "principia Evangelii," and the like expressions, he uses often; by these *objective* denominations of the substance or material of the Christian faith, denoting that, to his apprehension, the "contents" of that faith came *from without, and not from within*.† In what sense he uses these expressions, we shall allow the reader to judge for himself.

"He who has the immovable *rule of truth* in his possession, which he receives by baptism, will recognize the names, phrases, and comparisons, which are from the Scriptures; but the blasphemous reasoning of those men he will not recognize. . . But reducing every one of their assertions to its proper rank, and *applying it to the indivisible substance of truth*, he will strip their figment and reveal its weakness. . And by this demonstration may we know that firm truth which is preached by the Church, and that falsification of it which is contrived by these men."‡

* Irenæus *solis scripturarum præsidiiis* adversus hæreticorum catervam pugnavit. Eras. Epist. prefixed to the books of Irenæus.

† "From within, and not from without," says Dr. Nevin. Merc. Rev. Ap. Creed. No. III. p. 219.

‡ Qui *regulam veritatis immobilem* apud se habet, quam per baptismum accipit, hæc quidem *quæ sunt ex Scripturis*, nomina et dictiones et parabolas cognoscet: blasphemum autem illorum argumentum non cognoscet. . Unumquemque autem sermonum reddens suo ordini, et aptans veritatis corpusculo, denudabit, et insubstantivum ostendet figmentum ipsorum. . . et ex ostensione [cognoscere est] eam firmam, quæ ab Ecclesia prædicatur veritatem, et ab iis id quod fingitur falsiloquium. Iren. adv. Hæreses, Lib. I. Cap. 1, near the end. It is scarcely

And again: "While we hold the *rule of truth*, that is, that there is one God Almighty, who formed and arranged all things by his word, and from that state in which there was nothing, has brought this, in which all things exist, *as the Scripture declares*, "for by the word of the Lord were the heavens made," &c. (where he cites Ps. xxxii. 6, and John i. 3.) . . . "So long as we hold *this rule*, therefore, though they (the heretics) utter very many and various things, *we easily convict them of deviating from the truth.*"*

Once more for the *regula veritatis* of Irenæus. "When they (heretics) are refuted from the Scriptures, they turn to the accusation of the Scriptures themselves, as if they were not well expressed, or not of authority which without doubt, is most impudently to blaspheme their own Creator."†

"These are *the first principles of the Gospel*, that there is one God, the Creator of this universe, the same who was announced by the prophets and gave the ordering of the law by Moses, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and they know no other God nor any other Father."‡

"The Gospel is the pillar and strength of that church which is scattered over the whole earth, and the breath of its life."§

"The Gospel lifts men up and bears them on its wings to the heavenly kingdom."||

"Those who side with Valentinus, being destitute of all reverence, have gone to such a length of audacity, as to denominate that a true Gospel *which in nothing agrees with the Gospels of the Apostles*, so that the Gospel itself has not escaped their blas-

necessary to remind the reader that we only have Irenæus in an old Latin translation, which is rude and often obscure.

* Cum teneamus autem nos regulam veritatis, id est, &c. *quemadmodum Scriptura dicit*. . . . Hanc ergo tenentes *regulam*, licet valde varia et multa dicant, *facile eos deviasse a veritate arguimus*. Adv. Hæreses, Lib. I. Cap. 19, beginning.

† Cum ex Scripturis arguuntur, in accusationem convertuntur ipsarum Scripturarum, quasi non recte habeant, neque sint ex autoritate. . . . Quod quidem impudentissime est blasphemare suum factorem. Adv. Hæreses, Lib. III. Cap. 2, beginning.

‡ Hæc quidem sunt *principia Evangelii*, &c. Adv. Hær. III. 11.

§ Columna et firmamentum Ecclesiae est Evangelium et Spiritus vitæ. Ibid.

|| Evangelium, elevans et pennigerans homines in cœleste regnum. Ibid.

phemy.* . . . All who will, may perceive that it (their gospel) is unlike those which have been delivered to us by the Apostles, since it is plain from the Scriptures themselves, that it is not that Gospel of truth which was delivered by the Apostles."

The following passage is as remarkable for its beauty as for the distinctness of its testimony. But for the barbarous Latin, it might easily be mistaken for Melancthon's.

"The church every where preaches the truth, and she is the seven-bowled candlestick, bearing the light of Christ.† Those, therefore, who forsake the preaching of the church, inveigh against the unskilfulness of holy presbyters,‡ not considering how much better is a religious simpleton than a blasphemor or an impudent sophist. Such, however, are all heretics, and those who think they have found out something beyond the truth, following ambiguous utterances, and making a bewildered and feeble progress, *not always having the same minds on the same subjects*,§ but blind themselves are led about by the blind The opinions of such we must avoid, and look well to it, that we be not inveigled by them; but we must betake ourselves to the church, and be brought up in her bosom, and *nourished by the Scriptures of the Lord*.|| For the Paradise of the church has been planted in this world. 'From every tree of Paradise,' therefore, 'thou shalt eat,' saith the Spirit of God, that is, feed on all the Scripture of the Lord."¶

* Hi qui sunt a Valentino . . . in tantum processerunt audaciae, uti . . . Veritatis Evangelium titulent, in nihilo conveniens Apostolorum Evangeliiis, ut nec Evangelium quidem sit apud eos sine blasphemia. Ibid.

† Ubique Ecclesia prædicat veritatem, et hæc est *ἐπτάμυκλος* lucerna, Christi bajulans lumen. An allusion to Ex. xxv. 31, &c.

‡ Imperitiam sanctorum Presbyterorum arguunt. You will look in vain for this passage, (or any others of the many in which *Presbyteri* occurs in Irenæus,) in the Index locupletissimus of Feu-Ardentius. *Episcopi* is duly honoured. It would not have been edifying, to be sure, to have directed the attention of good Catholics to Irenæus's declaration that "the tradition from the Apostles is preserved in the church, *per successiones Presbyterorum*, (Lib. III. c. 2,) or to the startling fact that he uses *Presbyteri* and *Episcopi* interchangeably. Cf. e. g. Lib. V. c. 20 with Lib. III. c. 2.

§ Multiforme et imbecille facientes iter, *de iisdem non semper easdem sententias habentes*.

|| Confugere ad Ecclesiam, et in ejus sinu educari et dominicis Scripturis enutrir.

¶ Id est, ab omni Scriptura dominica manducate. Adv. Hær. Lib. V. c. 20.

And thus he expresses the transition in his argument from the Gospels to the Epistles.

. . . "Having then examined* the sentiment of those who delivered the Gospel to us, (from their own fountains,†) let us now come to the rest of the Apostles, and inquire into their teaching—and to conclude all let us hear the very words of our Lord."

Thus does the champion of the church's faith in the second century muster the war against errorists of every badge and banner. With him the *regula veritatis* is identical with the *principia Evangelii*; the *nomina, dictiones, parabolæ quæ sunt ex Scripturis* are the *Corpusculum veritatis*, the contact of which, like a powerful talisman, distinguishes *the firm truth which is preached by the church* from the *falsifications of heretics*. *The preaching of the church is the light of Christ. The food of her members is the Scriptures of the Lord.* All the weapons of his warfare "against heresies," are included in this inventory—"the doctrine of those Apostles who delivered the Gospel to us—that of the other Apostles—and the very words of our Lord."

Then, as to the *regula fidei* of Tertullian. He can surely be no great authority for any thing, who in his latter years departed and revolted from the Christian church, and fell into the incredible folly of Montanism. But his authority, such as it is, is all against Dr. Nevin.

The phrases *regula fidei, lex fidei, regula fidei aut spei, regula Scripturaram, regula Dei*, often occur in his writings. *And they are used to denote the same thing.* But as Dr. Nevin is partial to the *regula fidei*, let us briefly notice the way in which Tertullian speaks of it. Unhappily for Dr. Nevin's argument, the books of Tertullian in which the *regula fidei* is mentioned, were principally written after he was thrust out of the bosom of the Catholic Church, and the *sect-plague* was fairly developed on him. But Dr. Nevin must look after that. As our faith is not derived from the Church," nor from "the Fathers," the authority of Tertullian the Montanist is with us much the same with that of Tertullian the Catholic, as far as determining the *regula fidei* is concerned.

The following passage occurs in his book "de Præscriptione

* Lib. III. c. 11, end.

† Ex ipsis principiis ipsorum.

Hæreticorum:”* “The *rule of faith*,† that we may at once declare what we defend, is that whereby it is believed, that there is one God alone, and no other beside the Creator of the world, who brought forth all things from nothing by his own Word first of all sent down; that this Word was called his Son, who under the name of God was variously seen by the Patriarchs, who was always heard in the prophets, was afterwards conveyed by the Spirit and power of God into the Virgin Mary, was made flesh in her womb, was born of her Jesus Christ,‡ thereafter preached a new law and a new promise of the kingdom of heaven, wrought miracles, was fastened to the cross, on the third day rose again, was taken up to heaven and sat down at the right hand of the Father, sent forth the vicarious power of the Holy Spirit to actuate all who believe, will come again with glory to take his saints to the fruition of eternal life and the promised joys of heaven, and to award the wicked to eternal fire, both being resuscitated with the resurrection of the flesh. *This rule, instituted by Christ*, as will be proved, has no questions among us, but those which heresies introduce and which make heretics.§”

Again in his book “Adversus Praxeam”|| we have a *regula fidei* different in form and order from the former, and less full, but *containing the article of the Paraclete*.¶ He immediately adds, “*this rule has descended from the beginning of the gospel*.”** There too, occurs the famous maxim, that “what was ancient and original in Christianity was true; what was later, was corrupted.”††

* Tertulliani Opp. p. 206. Paris, 1664.

† Regula est autem fidei.

‡ Ex ea natum egisse (al. exisse) Jesum Christum. So Theophilus of Alex. “de virginali utero, quem sanctificavit, *egressus homo*. Lib. Pas. I in the end of Erasmus’s Jerome.

§ Haec regula a Christo, ut probabitur, instituta, p. 207.

|| Opp. p. 501.

¶ This was after Tertullian had embraced the strange delusion that Montanus was the Paraclete, whatever sense he attached to that name.

** Hanc regulam ab initio evangelii decucurrisse.

†† Id esse verum quodcunque primum; id esse adulterum quodcunque posterius. A maxim which in itself includes his testimony against a “growing and expanding creed.” This maxim is memorable for having stirred up the soul of the immortal Usher to patristic studies. “He determined to read *through* the fathers

Again, in his book "*de Virginibus Velandis*," written also *post lapsum*, we meet with the following *regula fidei*. "The rule of faith, indeed, is assuredly *one, only, immovable, incapable of change*,* namely, that of believing in one Almighty God, the former of the world, and in his Son Jesus Christ, born of the Virgin Mary, crucified under Pontius Pilate, raised from the dead on the third day, received into heaven, to come again to judge the living and the dead through the resurrection also of the body. *This law of faith abiding*,† other things, pertaining to discipline and conversation, admit of change and amendment;"‡ (This looks a little, it must be allowed, like the modern doctrine of *development*. Let it be observed however, that Tertullian learned this after he had fallen into "sect and schism." Observe, too, of what sort were the *first fruits* of this doctrine of development, for to the above words, Tertullian immediately adds,) "the grace of God operating and advancing even to the end. For while the devil is ever active, and suggests daily to wicked minds, how can we suppose that the work of God should cease or halt in its progress? *The Lord has therefore sent the Paraclete, that as the limited capacity of man could not take all things at once, Christian discipline might, by degrees, be directed, shapen, and carried to perfection, by that vicarious Holy Spirit of the Lord.*"§

and ascertain whether the claim of Stapleton (the defender of Romanism) was founded in fact. The task employed him eighteen years, from the 20th to the 38th year of his age." Life, pref. to his works. Dublin 1847. The conclusion to which the search led him is well known.

* *Regula quidem fidei una omnino est, sola, immobilis, irreformabilis.* Opp. p. 173.

† *Hac lege fidei manente.*

‡ *Admittunt novitatem correctionis.*

§ *Ab illo vicario Domini Spiritu Sancto.* The treatise "*de Virginibus velandis*" is reckoned among the writings of Tertullian after he became a Montanist. The subject and strain of it favour that supposition. If it be so, the above passage alone shuts out the charitable suggestion of Mosheim, that "the Paraclete which Montanus pretended to be, was not the Holy Ghost," that "however weak this heretic may have been in point of capacity, he was not fool enough to push his pretensions so far;" and that "this will appear with the utmost evidence to those who read with attention the account given of this matter by Tertullian, who was the most famous of all the disciples of Montanus." (Ecc. Hist. Vol. I. p. 192. Note.) On the contrary, in the above sentence, Tertullian speaks of the *Paracletus* as identical with *ille vicarius Domini Spiritus Sanctus*. We do

Thus the first attempt at *innovation*, and *amendment* ("novitas correctionis") in Christianity, even in secondary matters ("disciplinæ et conversationis") produced the blasphemous *ineptiæ* of Montanism. It was the doctrine of *development* that made the good Catholic Tertullian a "sectary," a "heretic," and a Montanist. He advances the doctrine however, cautiously. ("Strauss" had not yet appeared to help him out with it.)

The *law of faith*, (a *Christo instituta*) must *abide*. It is only in matters of "discipline and conversation" that *development* is admissible; and even in these it must be carried forward by "the operation of *the grace of God*," not of the "life," "the organic force," "spontaneously shooting up" of "the Church." Even in his wildest aberrations, Tertullian never dreamed of such folly. His very Montanism was far more sober and reverential than the "Catholicism" of Dr. Nevin.

While in the full communion of the Catholic church, his glowing pen recorded the following sentiments, (and many more like them) on the source and authority of Christian doctrine.* "To us (Christians) it is lawful to introduce nothing

not see how the learned Chancellor relieves the case much by supposing Montanus to have given out that he was ("not the Holy Ghost") but a divine teacher pointed out by Christ under the name of *Paraclete* or Comforter, who was to perfect the gospel by the addition of some doctrines omitted by our Saviour and to cast a full light upon others which were expressed in an obscure manner." Did Christ point out any other *paraclete* or *comforter* than "the Comforter which is the Holy Ghost?" Were not all *his* operations to be divine? Was he not to "teach *all things*" and to "abide with Christians *for ever*?" In our humble opinion, the man who undertook "to perfect the Gospel" &c., and "to cast a full light upon" things already illuminated by the Light of the world, was "fool enough" for anything—as much later instances than that of Montanus abundantly show. Few things have been more harmful to Christianity than the palliation of manifest departures from the truth of God. That Tertullian, who was undoubtedly one of the most splendid and powerful intellects of his age should have fallen into the delusion of "this ignorant fanatic" (as Mosheim calls him,) is indeed, matter of equal grief and wonder. It touches in fact, not more the sanity of his *faith* than that of his *reason*. But it only proves (and the whole history of the Church scarcely affords a more affecting lesson of the fact,) that when a man steps off the *rock* of God's word, there is no telling whither the waves of error may toss him.

* De Præsc. Hæreticorum. Opp. p. 202, &c. It is surprising that any should doubt (as Moreri seems to do) whether this book was written before his lapse. In the 52d chapter he distinctly calls the tenets of Montanism *blasphemy*.

from our own mind. We have the Apostles of the Lord as our examples, who derived nothing which they taught from their own mind, but *faithfully made over to the nations the system received from Christ*.^{*} Therefore, if an angel from heaven should preach otherwise, he must be called accursed by us."

Of heresies he says, "these are the *doctrines of men* and of devils,† born with itching ears from the wisdom of this world, which the Lord pronouncing folly, has chosen the foolish things of the world to the confusion of its own philosophy. For that (philosophy) is the material of worldly wisdom, a rash interpreter of the divine nature and government.‡ The heresies themselves derive their substance from philosophy.§ . . . The same material is worked up by heretics and philosophers, the same doublings (self-contradictions||) involved. . . . What is there in common with Athens and Jerusalem? What has the Church to do with the Academy? What have Christians to do with heretics? *Our institution is from Solomon's porch*,¶ and Solomon himself had taught that the Lord must be sought in simplicity of heart. Let them beware who have brought forward a Stoic, a Platonic and a Dialectic Christianity.** *To us there is no need of curiosity, after Christ, nor of inquiry, after the gospel.*†† When we have believed (that), we desire nothing more to believe."

"*All things spoken by our Lord were laid down for all.* Through the ears of the Jews they have passed to us."

"Thou must, therefore, seek till thou find, and believe when thou hast found:‡‡ and nothing more must thou do but keep

* Nobis vero nihil ex nostro arbitrio inducere licet. Apostolos Domini habemus auctores, qui nec ipsi quicquam ex suo arbitrio, quod inducerent, elegerunt: *sed acceptam a Christo disciplinam fideliter nationibus adsignaverunt.*

† Doctrinæ hominum et dæmoniorum.

‡ Temerarius interpres divinæ naturæ et dispositionis.

§ Ipsæ hæreses a philosophia subornantur.

|| Retractatus.

¶ Nostra institutio de porticu Solomonis est.

** Viderint qui Stoicum et Platonicum et Dialecticum Christianismum protulerunt.

†† Nobis curiositate opus non est post Christum Jesum, nec inquisitione post Evangelium.

‡‡ Could there be a plainer expression, at once of the *right* and the *duty of private judgment*.

what thou hast believed;* believing this too, that nothing else is to be believed, and therefore nothing to be required, since thou hast found and believed what was established by him who commands thee to *look after nothing else than what he has established.*"

"This limit has he himself fixed for thee who will not have thee to believe *any thing else than what he has laid down.*"†

"*What Christ has taught*, what must be sought after, *what is necessary to be believed.*"‡

"Heretics themselves treat of the Scripture, and reason from the Scripture. Could they, in fact, speak *of the things of faith* from any other source than from *the letters of faith*?"§

"It is evident, therefore, that the whole doctrine which harmonizes in faith with those Apostolic, maternal and original churches is to be reckoned a part of the truth; containing as it does, without doubt, *what the churches received from the Apostles, the Apostles from Christ, Christ from God*; and that all doctrine is to be prejudged of falsehood, which is contrary to the truth of the churches and of the Apostles and of Christ and of God. . . This doctrine of ours, *the rule of which* we have given above," &c.

The master-piece of his genius, also, his noble "Apology"|| abounds in passages of the like import.

He holds out to "the rulers of the Roman empire,"¶ and to "the nations"*** the Scriptures as the sole fountain of the Christian doctrine, and their divine origin as the sole authorization of the Christian faith. In a masterly contrast between them and the pagan mythologies and philosophies (with which he shows himself profoundly acquainted,††) he demonstrates the

* Custodiendum quod credidisti.

† Hanc tibi fossam determinavit ipse qui te non vult aliud credere, quam quod instituit.

‡ Quod Christus instituit, quod quæri oportet, quod credi necesse est.

§ Aliunde scilicet loqui possent de rebus fidei quam ex litteris fidei?

|| Apologeticus adversus Gentes. It stands at the head of his works and was by the consent of all, written before his heresy.

¶ Romani imperii antistites, Cap. 1.

*** Adversus Gentes.

†† It is not too much to say, that the early Christian apologists discover a far deeper knowledge of the ancient system, in history, thought, and life, than the Pagans themselves. Where, among the ancients, shall we find such profound

antiquity, majesty, purity of the "Holy Scriptures," "our letters," the "divine letters," the "holy voices," the "voices of God," "the teaching of God our Master."* Of the Old Testament, he says, "whosoever betakes himself to it will find God: he who contrives to *understand* it, will be compelled to *believe* it too.† The highest antiquity claims for those documents the first authority. The latest of them are found to be not later than the earliest of your sages, lawgivers, and historians. . . We present a yet higher claim, the majesty of the Scriptures, if not their antiquity. We prove them *divine*, even if you deny them to be *ancient*.‡"

"The disciples scattered over the world, obeyed the teaching of their Master, God."§ "The Son of God, the Arbiter and Master of our discipline, the illuminator and guide of the human race."||

"We come together to refresh our remembrance of the divine letters. *With the holy voices we feed our faith*, we exalt our hope, we confirm our trust. . . . Your brethren we are too, by the law of nature, our common mother. But how much more worthily are they entitled and esteemed brethren, who acknowledge one Father, God; who drink one spirit of holiness, and *feed on one light of truth*!"¶

expositions of these as in the "Apologeticus" of Tertullian, and Justin Martyr's ΛΟΓΟΣ ΠΑΡΑΙΝΗΤΙΚΟΣ ΠΡΟΣ ΕΛΛΗΝΑΣ and ΑΠΟΛΟΓΙΑΙ? The higher ground of Christianity gave them a *wider* as well as a *juster* view of these systems.

* Scripturæ Sanctæ, Cap. 39, litteræ nostræ, 23, litteræ divinæ, 39, Sanctæ voces ibid, voces Dei, 31, præceptum magistri Dei 21.

† Qui adierit inveniet Deum. Qui etiam studuerit intelligere, cogetur et credere. Cap. 18. Very different from Dr. Nevin's statement that "our creed *precedes* and *underlies* our intelligence." Merc. Rev. May 1847, p. 211.

‡ Majestatem Scripturarum, si non vetustatem. Divinas probamus si dubitatur antiquas, Cap. 20.

§ Discipuli quoque diffusi per orbem, præcepta Magistri Dei posuerunt.

|| Disciplinæ arbiter et Magister, illuminator atque deductor generis humani, Filius Dei, 21.

¶ Qui unum patrem Deum agnoverunt, qui unum spiritum biberunt sanctitatis, qui ad unam lucem expaverunt veritatis, 39. A beautiful conception at once of the unity of the Church ("the brotherhood" 1 Pet. ii. 17,) and of the source of that faith, life, and love, which make them *one*! It is impossible to read so fine a passage without a sigh that one who was so *egregie Christianus* should ever have been *developed* into a Montanist. We cannot but hope that some kind historical Coroner may find this *felo de se* the result of *mental aberration*.

The reader has long ago been satisfied that Tertullian, quite as little as Irenæus, is inclined to dispute with "Strauss" the paternity of the idea which "for a thoughtful mind, makes the mere letter of Christianity, even as it stands in the New Testament itself, something secondary to its living substance as exhibited in the actual mystery of Christ and his Church—which mystery comes to its revelation as the supernatural by means of the Church—the primitive form of which revelation is presented to us in the Creed." Of all the "Heresies" attacked by Irenæus, none wore a front of so deadly hostility to the Christian faith. Among all the follies into which Tertullian fell, he never wandered so far, nor fell so low, as to conceive of a "Creed," "the primitive form of revelation," "unfolded in fit word and expression from the inmost consciousness of the universal Church!" No other parentage than "Strauss" and "the Papacy" could have generated such a progeny.

We have drawn largely on the reader's patience by citations from Irenæus and Tertullian, because Dr. Nevin appeals to them by name. But every link in the "Catena Patrum" is just as distinctly against him.

"Clement," says Irenæus,* "saw the Apostles themselves and conversed with them, and had in his view the yet audible preaching and tradition of the Apostles." . . "Under this Clement, the Church which is at Rome wrote a powerful letter to the Corinthians—declaring the traditions which they had lately received from the Apostles." Let us turn then to this "powerful letter" written, if Irenæus be correct, from one Christian Church to another in the first century.† It contains not one word or hint of any other tradition or *regula fidei* than the Scriptures, the study of which it enjoins with affectionate urgency as "the true utterances of the Holy Spirit." "Thus saith the holy word,"‡ "thus saith the wisdom which includes all virtue,"§ and similar formulæ introduce its citations from the Sacred Volume, and support alike its statements of truth and its exhortations to duty.

* Adv. Hæreses, Lib. III. Cap. 3.

† That fact has, it must be allowed, a very Puritan look. So has the "powerful epistle" itself, which is addressed, "From the presence of the Church of the Romans." Εκ προσώπου τῆς Ῥωμαίων ἐκκλησίας γραφεῖσα. Cot. Pat. Apost. Tom. I. p. 145.

‡ Cap. 56.

§ Οὕτως γὰρ λέγει ἡ παράρετος σοφία. Cap. 57.

From the second century, we have heard Dr. Nevin's own authorities. Nor is the testimony of Justin Martyr, (earlier in the same century,) at all less clear or explicit. He takes his ground and weapons in his controversy with Trypho the Jew, in these few words, "I am going to cite the Scriptures to you,"* and distinctly declines any "apparatus of argumentation," "for," he adds, "I have no skill of that sort, but grace from God alone has been given me for the understanding of *his Scriptures*,† of which grace I exhort all to become free and unstinted partakers." And to the Greeks he says, "*the teachers of our religion have delivered to us nothing of their own human understanding, but all things from the gift bestowed upon them by God from above.*‡

The testimony of Origen will doubtless be accepted in behalf of the third century. It is delivered in the beginning of his book "on First Principles," with a clearness and force which has never been surpassed. "All who believe and are sure that *both grace and truth are by Jesus Christ* and who know that Christ is truth, according to what he himself has said, 'I am the truth,' *receive the knowledge which guides men to a holy and happy life, from no other source than from the very words and teaching of Christ.*"§

He speaks of the "miserable audacity"|| of those who attempt to "rectify the Scriptures and to add or take away such things as may seem good to themselves."

His fourth book "De Principiis," treats expressly of "the Inspiration of the Divine Scripture and how it is to be read and understood." And he enters on this demonstration for the following reason. "Forasmuch as in the treatment of so important subjects, we are not satisfied to rely on general

* Γραφὰς ἡμῖν ἀνίστορεῖν μέλλω. Dial. cum Tryph. Jud. Opp. p. 281.

† Εἰς το συνέναι τὰς γραφὰς αὐτοῦ.

‡ Εκ τῆς ἀναθεν αὐτοῖς παρὰ Θεοῦ δοθείσης δωρεᾶς. Ad Græ. Coli. p. 11.

§ Omnes qui credunt et certi sunt quod et gratia et veritas per Jesum Christum facta sit et Christum veritatem esse norunt, secundum quod ipse dixit: "Ego sum veritas," scientiam quæ provocat homines ad bene beateque vivendum non aliunde quam ab ipsis verbis Christi, doctrinaque suscipiunt. (We give the translation of Rufinus, as the original Greek is here incomplete.) Περὶ Ἀρχῶν Origenis Opp. Tom. I. p. 47, (Ed. Bened.) Paris. 1740.

|| Τόλμης μεχθιρᾶς. In Math. xix. 16, &c. Opp. Tom. III. 671.

ideas and the operation of visible things,* we must draw the proofs of those things which we affirm from those Scriptures which are believed by us to be divine, &c. Let us therefore state some of the reasons which lead us to the belief that they are divine."

"*The one Guide*† of those things which are truly agreeable to reason,§ is the Word, the teachings of which, to those who have no ears to hear, seem to manifest discrepancies,|| but they are, in truth, most harmonious. For as the chords of a psaltery or harp, each of which has its own sound, and one which seems to be at variance with that of another, appear to one who is unskilled in musical harmony to be discordant on account of the dissimilitude of sounds, so, those who are not capable of hearing the harmony of God in the sacred Scriptures¶ think that the Old Testament is out of tune** with the New, the Prophets with the Law, the Gospels with one another, or an Apostle with the Gospel, or with himself or another Apostle. But whosoever draws near, taught in the harmony of God,†† and wise in deed and speech, . . . he shall draw forth from them a strain of divine music, having learned to strike in time,‡‡ now the chords of the law, then those harmonious§§ ones of the Gospel, at one time the prophetic strings and again the like-toned||| apostolic, and so the apostolic with the evangelical. For he knows that *the whole Scripture is the full-toned and harmonious organ of God, giving forth from many sounds one saving strain to all who will apprehend it.*"¶¶

"The fourth and fifth centuries," are Dr. Nevin's especial boast. "The fathers of this glorious period" he assures us,

* Περι τοῦ θεωπεύσκειν τῆς θείας γραφῆς.

† Οὐκ ἀρνούμενοι ταῖς κειναῖς ἐννοίαις καὶ τῇ ἐνεργείᾳ τῶν βλεπομένων; which shows his conviction that men have no alternative but these and the teachings of Scripture.

‡ Lit. "Shepherd" (Ποιμήν.)

§ Τῶν λογικῶν.

|| Δόξαν μὲν ἔχοντων διαφωνίας.

¶ Οἱ μὴ ἐπιστάμενοι ἀκούειν τῆς τοῦ Θεοῦ ἐν ταῖς ἱεραῖς γραφαῖς ἁρμονίας.

** Ἀνάμυστοι. †† Παιδευμένος τὴν τοῦ Θεοῦ μουσικὴν. ‡‡ Κρούειν ἐν καιρῷ.

Συμφώνως. ||| Ὁμοτόνως.

¶¶ Ἐν γὰρ τοτέλειον εἶδε καὶ ἡρμωσμένον ἔργον τοῦ Θεοῦ εἶναι πᾶσαν τὴν γραφὴν, μίαν ἀποστολὴν ἐκ διαφόρων φθίγγων σωτήρα τοῖς μανθάνουσιν ἐθέλουσι φανήν. Comm. in Math. v. 9. Opp. Tom. III. p. 441.

“knew nothing of the view which makes the Bible and private judgment the principle of Christianity or the only rule of faith* . . . *The order of doctrine for them was the Apostles’ Creed.*”

The distinct and manifest voice of history, never met a more flat and palpable contradiction, than the above assertion.

To accumulate citations is a wearisome task, and to read them scarcely less so. But the generous reader must have a little patience in this matter. These good “fathers of the fourth and fifth centuries,” have had hard usage at the hand of Dr. Nevin for some time. They have had all sorts of

* Thus does Dr. Nevin *misstate* what he is labouring to undermine and render odious. Who ever held “the Bible and private judgment” to be “the principle of Christianity” and “the only rule of faith;” or, as Dr. Nevin elsewhere charges in the same piece, “the only source and rule of faith?” The doctrine of the Protestant and Primitive Church (for they are indeed *one*, and in no respect is their unity more clearly and beautifully revealed than by their unanimity on this point,) is simply this, that the inspired and written word of God is the only source and rule of the Christian faith—that the truth revealed in it shines by its own light, and needs no ecclesiastical or popish spectacles to behold it; that to apprehend and imbibe that heavenly light requires only the open eye of the soul, the spiritual apprehension; and that this is the gift of God, by the operation of his Holy Spirit. Here lies the *controversiæ summa*, as Melancthon expresses it, the very pith and point of the dispute between Rome and all true, free and living Christianity, whether it lived before the corruption of the Papacy, struggled and gasped under its dark dominion, or broke forth again into glorious and powerful life at the Reformation. Melancthon’s own words taken from the same passage will be accepted, we doubt not, as a fair exposition of this doctrine. “Here is, as I think, the sum of the controversy. And now I ask you, my masters,” (he addresses the *theologasters*, as he terms them, of the Parisian University,) “has the Scripture been given in such form that its undoubted meaning may be gathered without exposition of Councils, Fathers, and Schools, or not? If you deny that the meaning of Scripture is certain by itself, without glosses, I see not why the Scripture was given at all, if the Holy Spirit was unwilling to define with certainty what he would have us to believe. Why do the Apostles invite us at all to the study of the Scripture, if its meaning is uncertain? *Wherefore do the fathers desire us to believe them no farther than they fortify their statements by the testimonies of Scripture?*” (A sufficiently plain evidence of what Melancthon considered the *regula fidei* in the early Church!) “Why too did the ancient councils decree nothing without Scripture, and in this way we distinguish between true and false councils, that the former agree with plain Scripture, the latter are contrary to Scripture? . . . Since the word of God must be the rock on which the soul reposes, what, I pray, shall the soul apprehend from it, if it be not certain what is the mind of the Spirit of God?”—Phil. Melancthonis *Apologia pro Luthero*, adv. furiosum Parisiensium Theologastrorum Decretum.

things laid to their charge; such as *not holding the Bible to be the only source and rule of faith, denying the right of private judgment, looking directly towards Romanism, standing in the very same order of thought that completed itself afterwards in the Roman or Papal Church, acknowledging, in fact, the central dignity of the Bishop of Rome,** (which might about as well be affirmed of the seven sages of Greece.) They have, in the meanwhile, been in no case allowed to speak for themselves, (though few men ever lived who were better able to do so.) It is right, therefore, that some of them should be allowed to give their deposition, in their own language, in relation to the source of truth, the ground and rule of faith, the supreme and sole tribunal before which all controversies pertaining to the Christian doctrine and life, must be tried and decided.

Athanasius thus commences his "Synopsis of the Sacred Scripture." "The whole Scripture of us Christians is inspired of God."†

In his Oration against the Gentiles, he says, that "the whole science of piety and of truth shines forth (manifests itself,) more brightly than the sun, through the teaching of Christ,"‡ and that "the holy and divinely inspired Scriptures are sufficient of themselves to the annunciation (indication) of the truth."§

And thus he concludes that noble discourse: "Rejoice, O thou that lovest Christ,|| and be of good cheer, for immortality and the kingdom of heaven is the fruit of faith and piety towards him, *only if thy soul be adorned in conformity with his laws.*"¶

In his disputation with Arius before the Council of Nice,** when challenged by Arius to the controversy, he replies:

* Merc. Rev. Early Christianity.

† Παῦσα γραφὴ ἡμῶν Χριστιανῶν θεόπνευστος ἐστίν. Athan. Opp. Tom. II. p. 61. Ex. Off. Comm. 1600.

‡ Ἡ μὲν περὶ τῆς θεοσεβείας καὶ τῆς τῶν ὅλων ἀληθείας γνῶσις . . ἡλίку λαμπρότερον ἑαυτὴν διὰ τῆς χρύστου διδασκαλίας ἐπιδείκνυται. Tom. I. p. 1.

§ Ἀυτάρκεως γὰρ εἰσὶν αἱ ἀγία καὶ θεόπνευστοι γραφαὶ πρὸς τὴν τῆς ἀληθείας ἀπαγγελίαν. Ibid.

|| Ω φιλοχρῆστε.

¶ Μῖνον ἔαν κατὰ τοὺς αὐτοῦ νόμους ἡ ψυχὴ κεκοσμημένη γένηται. p. 36.

** Opp. Tom. I. p. 82—110.

“There are great men in the house of God, but if you wish to discuss the matter with me, who am only the least,* I will cheerfully meet you in this inquiry, only let us enter on it in the love of truth, and not act contentiously towards *the inspired words*† alleged by one another.” (A sufficient indication of the rule and arbiter of faith to which both were expected to appeal in that august council, composed of bishops assembled from every part of the world within the jurisdiction of Constantine, who sat in its deliberations as a private Christian.)

Athanasius then lays down the Christian doctrine of God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, which he *maintains, unfolds and defends against the objections of Arius, solely by Scriptural authorities, appealing to no rule, formula, or tradition, but to the word of God alone.*

When he attests the unity of the Son with the Father, Arius retorts, “You are a Sabellian.”‡ Athanasius replies, “Is our Lord then, a Sabellian, when he says, I and my Father are one?” “There appears to me,” said Arius, “much discordance§ in the Scriptures on this point.” “God forbid,” replied Athanasius, “that man should accuse the divine and inspired Scriptures|| of not uttering all these things with mutual harmony; for as an even balance,¶ so do all the Scriptures agree to one another.”

“On what authority,” demanded Arius, “do you call the Son eternal?” “*I have learned,*” answered Athanasius, “*from the divinely inspired Scriptures that the Son of God is eternal.*”**

When he defends acts of direct adoration of the Holy Spirit against the objections of Arius, *he neither appeals nor alludes to any church rule, tradition, nor usage, but reasons solely from the Scriptures.*††

In his letter to the bishops of Ægypt and Lybia against the errors of Arius, he says, “Our Lord himself has said ‘Search

* Μη τὸν σμικρότατον μόνον.

† Τα θεόπνευστα ρήματα προσφερόμενα.

‡ Αὕτη ἡ αἵρεσις Σαβελλίῳ ἐστίν.

§ Ἀσυμφανία.

|| Μὴ γένοιτο ἵνα ἄνθρωπος κατέβη τῶν θείων καὶ θεοπνεύστων γραφῶν.

¶ Ζυγὸς ὡς περ δίκαιος.

** Ἀπὸ τῶν θεοπνεύστων γραφῶν ἔμαθεν, ὅτι αἰῶνος ἐστὶν ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ.

†† P. 109, citing, with many other passages, the *θεοὶ ὑμνοῦνται*, in Isaiah vi. 3.

the Scriptures, for they are they that testify of me.' *How then shall men confess the Lord who have not, before-hand, searched the Scriptures?'*"*

Hilary, (of Poitiers,) reasoning against the Manichæans on the person of Christ, says, "*If the church knows from herself, then bring against her the charge of rashly claimed knowledge; but if she has learned from her Lord,*† *allow to the Son a knowledge of his own nativity. Now, these things have been so made known to her by the only-begotten God,*‡ *that the Father and the Son are one.*"

Of the Manichæan system, he says, "This aberration of human folly has come of men's knowing from themselves rather than from God.§ . . . Have done, have done, nor falsify the heritage of the church's faith by deceptive fancy and agitating assertion."

"Those churches within which the word of God has not been wakeful,|| have been shipwrecked."

"To corrupt the purity of the Gospels, and to deflect the straight rule of the Apostles," he uses as equivalent phrases,¶ so that it is quite clear what *he* regarded as the true and only *Apostolorum regula*.

Victorinus, (of Africa,) by no means stood in the first rank among the writers of the fourth century. But his testimony is interesting, because he was not converted to Christianity till far advanced in life, and, (as Jerome says,**) was so inveterate

* Πῶς οὖν ὁμολογήσουσι τὸν κυρίον μὴ προερευνῶντες τὰς γραφάς. Tom. I. 113. Could the authority of the Scriptures, and the duty and necessity of private judgment be more plainly asserted?

† Hilar. Pict. de Trinitate. Lib. VI. Opp. p. 883, 4. Ed. Bened. Si ex se scit (ecclesia,) infer calumniam temerariæ usurpatæ scientiæ; si vero de Domino suo didicit, &c.

‡ Hæc ita ei a Deo unigenito comperta sunt.

§ Dum quod sapiunt, ex se potius quam ex Deo sapiunt, p. 886.

|| Intra quas verbum Dei non vigilaverit—Though the remark occurs in his comm. on our Lord's miracle, Matt. viii. 23, yet it is not easy to tell whether he speaks of the *Word* in a personal way or no. This is often the case with the early writers, especially Origen. See above.

¶ Evangeliorum sinceritatem corrumpere et rectam Apostolorum regulam depravare. Ad Const. August. Lib. I. 3. Opp. p. 1220.

** Cat. Script. "Victorinus Afer." Augustine, (Conf. Lib. VIII. c. 2,) has given a very interesting account of the conversion of Victorinus, from the relation of

a philosophizer as to be an unintelligible writer and commentator. Yet the Christian sentiment and habit which acknowledged the word of God as the only rule of faith, (as yet universal in the church,) appears in no writer of the age, more evident than in this philosophizing Christian. "Edocet Scriptura," with him, announces an authority to which he reverently bows himself and anticipates no opposition from others. After a series of quotations from Scripture, in support of what he asserts of the works and attributes of God, he adds, "*This, spoken as it has been by the divine Spirit, must be believed.* The rest of our positions we shall maintain by reasons drawn from nature."*

Cyril (of Jerusalem) gives his testimony on this subject in so many and such impressive forms, that the only difficulty his works present is that of selection. One of the topics of his Fourth Catechesis is "concerning the Divine Scriptures."† The good father states that he "founds his instructions on the divinely inspired Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. For," says he, "there is one God of both Testaments, who pre-announced Christ in the Old Testament and revealed him in the New." And then adds this counsel to his catechumens: "*Read, therefore, the Divine Scriptures. § Read not the Apocrypha. Have thou nothing to do with the Apocrypha.*"||

And yet, if possible, more positively, in his 18th Catechesis. "We declare to you candidly, that we use not human and mod-

Simplicianus. He calls him "doctissimus senex, omnium liberalium doctrinarum peritissimus . . . doctor nobilium senatorum," &c. He says, "the Holy Scripture" was the first means of leading him to Christianity and God." The work from which we quote is entitled "Pro religione Christiana contra philosophos physicos." It is contained in the magnificent "Scriptorum Veterum collectio Vaticana." Tom. III. It certainly is not liable to the charge of obscurity on the part of Jerome. His account of our Lord's early life is especially just and beautiful.

* Hoc a Divino Spiritu dictum credendum est; cetera physicis rationibus paucis comprobemus. Cap. 27. p. 161.

† Περὶ τῶν θείων γραφῶν.

§ Αναγινώσκει τὰς θείας γραφὰς.

|| Πρὸς δὲ τὰ ἀπίκραφα μὴδὲν ἔχει καινόν. These counsels, be it remembered, were addressed to catechumens, just receiving baptism. How do they bear on the question, not only of the necessity and sufficiency of the Scriptures, but of *private judgment and Church-tradition*, aside from Scripture?

ern inventions; for it is unprofitable. But we recall to your minds *only the things which are drawn from the Divine Scriptures*. For that is infallible: after the example of the blessed Apostle,* who also saith, ‘which things we speak, not in words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth.’”

Gregory of Nazianzum, in his funeral oration on Basil†, (his intimate friend and companion of his retirement in Cappadocia,) tells us that “Basil profoundly studied the Holy Scriptures in his solitude, and *drew from thence* the weapons with which he intrepidly and indefatigably contended for the refutation of errors.”

The same discourse contains a fine eulogy of classical and various learning,‡ which, he says, “many Christians reject as delusive and misleading, but which Gregory defends for this especial reason, that “we learn from the worse to appreciate the better§ and on the very weakness and imperfection of those systems, to maintain the power of the word which is in our possession,|| even as the divine Apostle says,¶ “bringing every thought (all intellect**) into captivity to Christ.’”

Gregory Nyssen gives his deposition with no less clearness and force.

“The faith of Christians,” he says, “which by the command of the Lord, was preached to all nations on the whole globe of the earth, is ‘not from men, neither by men, but by our Lord Jesus Christ;’ who is the word of God, and the Light and the Life and the Truth and God and Wisdom.†† . . . We believe,

* Τὰ ἐκ τῶν θείων γραφῶν μόνον ὑπομιμνήσκοντες· ἀσφαλέστατον γὰρ κατὰ τὸν μακάριον ἀπόστολον, ὅς καὶ φησὶν—1 Cor. ii. 13.

† Or. XX. Εἰς Βασ. ἐπισκ. καὶς. καπ. ἐπιταφίως.

‡ Τὴν τῶν ἔξωθεν παιδείαν.

§ Εκ τοῦ χείρονος τὸ κρείττον καταμαθόντες.

|| Τὴν ἀσθένειαν ἐκείνων, ἰσχύν τοῦ καθ’ ἡμᾶς λόγου πεποιήμενοι (fulcientes, Lat. trans.)

¶ Ὁ φησὶν ὁ θεὸς ἀπόστολος, &c.

** Πᾶν νόημα.

†† Christianorum fides, quæ secundum Domini mandatum a discipulis omnibus gentibus in toto terrarum orbe prædicata est, neque ex hominibus, &c., sed per Dominum nostrum Jesum Christum; qui est Dei Verbum, et Vita, et Lux et Veritas et Deus et Sapientia. Or. I contra Eunomium. Greg. Episc. Nyss. Opp. p. 253. Colonæ. 1617. We quote from the Latin version, not having the original at hand.

therefore, ('*credimus*,' here then, is *his* creed, with its Author, ground and rule,) "even as the Lord put forth the faith to his disciples, when he thus spake," (quotes Math. xxviii. 19.)

"This is the word of the mystery, in which, by a birth from above our nature is transformed into a better, since from corruptible it is renewed to incorruptible, from the old man it is renewed after the image of him who in the beginning created the divine similitude. *Of this faith, therefore, delivered by God to the Apostles, we make neither subtraction nor change (which is but perversion) nor addition;** clearly knowing, that he who dares to pervert the divine voice by any cavilling and sophistical interpretation, is of his father the devil:† since it was by forsaking the words of truth, and *speaking of his own*, that he became the father of lies. For whatsoever is spoken beyond the truth is absolutely a mere lie, and not truth.‡ . . . *We have once learned from the Lord,§ what it is that we must contemplate with thought and mind;* through which a transformation of our nature is wrought, from mortal to immortal. This is *the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost*." He then goes on to develope the Christian faith on this basis, proving and explaining all points, and meeting all objections, from the Holy Scripture.

This is conclusive. There is, however, a short specimen of *exegesis* by this churchly father of the fourth century, which we add with peculiar satisfaction. It occurs in the last of his "*Testimonia delecta*."||

"Jesus Christ, our Lord and our God, is called the Rock of life and the Rock of faith . . . the Rock of life, as he is the fountain, root, principle, and cause, imperishable and eternal; the Rock of faith, as he is the foundation, even as the Lord himself says to the chief of the Apostles, 'Thou art Peter, and on this rock will I build my Church,' *on the confession, that is,*

* *Hujus itaque a Deo Apostolis traditæ fidei neque subtractionem, neque immutationem sive perversionem, neque additionem facimus.*

† *Ex patre diabolo esse.*

‡ *Quidquid præter veritatem dicitur, merum est prorsus mendacium et non veritas.*

§ *Semel a Domino discimus, ad quod nos cogitatione et mente perspicere oportet.*

|| *Opp. p. 252.*

of Christ,* because he said, 'Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.'†

Dr. Nevin mentions "Ephraim the Syrian" among the Romanizing fathers of the fourth century, who "knew nothing of the view which makes the Bible the principle of Christianity," &c. We should not otherwise have thought of mentioning him. Gregory Nyssen thought quite otherwise of him, since he states that "nurtured from childhood in the meditation of the Sacred Scriptures,‡ and growing up and drinking from the perennial fountains of grace,§ he (Ephraim) strove to attain, in the words of the Apostle, 'to the measure of the stature of Christ.'"

But the good and humble Syrian "deacon" will in a very few words vindicate himself from the charge.

In his discourse "Concerning Faith"|| (which consists to a great extent of portions of Scripture linked together with a very simple exposition) he says, "he who desires to become a Christian, . . . must form himself to a virtuous habit and a holy life by the word of God . . . and holding on his way by the guidance of the word of God such an one becomes a foundation and a pillar by the grace of God and an occasion of life to many souls and is able to bear the infirmity of many."

* Super Confessionem videlicet Christi.

† Dr. Nevin's exegesis is on this wise. "'Thou art Peter,' &c. Not on Peter's person, apart from his confession, of course, was the Church to be built; but not on Peter's confession, either, apart from his person. *Peter in Christ*, (Dr. Nevin thus italicises; it was never, we believe, affirmed to be *Peter out of Christ*,) as the representative especially of the whole Apostolic college; the personality of Peter, as centered and poised now on the supernatural fact, which had entered into his consciousness. . . . this was the *rock* on which, from this time onward to the end of the world, the Church should continue to rise," &c. . . The confession of Peter represents the universal Christian consciousness. . . . *That consciousness expressed itself in the Creed.*" Antichrist, p. 27.

We decidedly prefer the exegesis of Gregory Nyssen and of the fourth century. We believe the Church is much safer built on the "Rock of faith, Jesus Christ, our Lord and our God," the object of Peter's "confession," than on Peter's "personality," however "poised," &c.

‡ Inde a pueritia in Sacrarum Scripturarum meditatione educatus.

§ Ex perennibus gratiæ fontibus bibens, &c. Greg. Nyss. Encom. Sanct. pat. Ephræm Syri. Opp. p. 508.

|| Ephr. Syrus, Græce, Oxon. 1609, last discours

To a "young convert,"* among other "counsels pertaining to the spiritual life," he says, "if thou seest thyself ill affected towards the reading of the divine oracles,† know that thy soul has fallen into a grievous disease: for this is the beginning of mental disorder, the end of which is death." Advice which a *puritan pastor* would readily adopt, but not, we think, a *popish confessor*.‡

But of all the "fathers of that glorious period," none seems to have more of Dr. Nevin's admiration than Basil (of Cæsarea) whom he often appeals to, duly decorating him with his later title of "the Great,"§ but never allowing the eloquent father to utter a word in explanation of his own sentiments.

We, therefore, (sparingly, as our limits compel us,) will indulge him with an opportunity.

Dr. Nevin says of him with the rest, "the order of doctrine for them was the Apostles' Creed," and asserts in a general

* Πρὸς νεόφυτον, περὶ πνευματικῆς βίου. P. 179.

† Κακουχῶντα περὶ τὴν ἀνάγνωσιν τῶν θείων λογίων.

‡ "Were the fathers who then lived to return to the world in our time, they would find themselves more at home in the Papal than in the Protestant communion." Early Christianity, Art. III. p. 3. "Ephraim the Syrian" scarcely would. For to this same "young convert" he speaks of "communing with the Supreme God through prayer and eating the body and drinking the blood of the only begotten Son of God" (πίναν αὐτοῦ τὸ αἷμα. p. μτ. γ) He would hardly "find himself at home" in a "communion" where the latter is denied to "young converts." "Reading the divine oracles" and "drinking the blood" of the Saviour are not "Papal" means of promoting "the spiritual life," at least, "in our time."

§ He stands a century after in Rufinus (Hist. Ecc. Lib. II. c. 9) without either the *affix* or *suffix* (*St.* or *the Great*) which later superstition and adulation attached to his name. His friend Gregory too, *sine titulo*. A saint and a great man too Basil undoubtedly was; and for both reasons would have rejected both titles. Erasmus was of opinion that in strength and majesty of genius he was no way inferior to Demosthenes. Gregory (Or. Fun.) says that he was not more remarkable for his greatness of soul than for his lowliness of temper. Some of his writings (e. g. his books on Baptism) would furnish an admirable corrective of the notions lately ventilated of "sacramental" and "organic grace," "baptismal regeneration," and the like Papal ideas. Certain it is that his soul would have abhorred the fine things said of him by Dr. Nevin (Ear. Christ. p. 3. Art III.) Even that "sporting bishop" of the fifth century, Synesius, would have exclaimed, as he did on another occasion, μὴ, ὦ Σωτῆρ, μὴ, ὦ Ἐλευθέριε. ("Never, O my Saviour, never, O my Redeemer!" Ep. to his brother, Opp. p. 81.) He too, could hardly have "found himself at home in the Papal communion in our time," for *he had a wife and four children*.

way, that he with them “stood in the bosom” of the Papal system.

The Apostle’s Creed is not mentioned in all the writings of Basil.

As for “the order of his doctrine,” we infer it from his own language.

Against Eunomius* he says, “there is no sublimer *doctrine* in the gospel of our salvation than faith in the Father and the Son.”

He objects to a phrase used by Eunomius (in speaking of the manner of the Divine existence) that “though it seems extremely congruous to our mode of conceiving things,† it *nowhere occurs in Scripture*,‡ and ought therefore to be suppressed.”

In his homily on Ps. xlv.§ which may be called a discourse on the church, he premises, “the oracles of God were not written for all, but for *those who have ears after the inner man*,|| for *those who strive after progress*, for those, as I think,¶ *who take care of themselves*,”** (we must be literal here,) “and ever, by the exercises of godliness,†† are advancing to a higher ground. This is that noblest *change*‡‡ which the right hand of the Most High graciously bestows, which also blessed David experienced, (Ps. lxxvii. 11,) when having tasted the joys of goodness, he reaches forth unto those things which are before.”

“The prophet,” he says, “yielding to the energy of the Holy Spirit which came upon him, says, ‘my heart venteth a good matter.’ . . This venting is the inward effervescence of the food,§§

* Opp. Tom. I., p. 292, &c.

† Κἀν μάλιστα δακὴ ταις ἐννοίαις ἡμῶν συμβαίνειν.

‡ Οὐδαμοῦ τῆς γραφῆς κειμένην.

§ Opp. Tom. I. p. 226, &c. It is numbered Ps. xlv. in the Sept.

|| Τοῖς ἐχουσιν ὡτα κατὰ τὸν ἔσω ἄνθρωπον.

¶ Ὡς οἶμαι.

** Τοῖς ἐαυτῶν ἐπιμελουμένοις.

†† An allusion to the Sept. trans. of the title of the Psalms.

‡‡ Διὰ τῶν γυμνασίων. Not a word of church, creed, “sacramental” or “organic grace.” Free, individual aspiration and self-culture by all “the exercises of godliness,” (including, of course, church, creed, and sacraments,) is the very soul of this fine passage. All progress is “graciously bestowed by the right hand of the Most High.” This looks very much like “bringing one’s separate subjectivity to the case,” which Dr. Nevin deplors as “sectarian.” Ant. p. 58.

§§ We shall be excused from giving in full the good father’s exegesis, which is founded on the Sept. trans. ἐξερύξατο, *eructavit*. This will explain what follows.

&c., so he who is nourished on the living bread which came down from heaven and giveth life to the world, and is filled with every word that cometh out of the mouth of God, (after the wonted tropology of the Scriptures,) the soul, that is, which is nourished by the divine teachings, emitteth a breath agreeable to the food it has taken . . . Let us, then, seek, ourselves,* to be nourished from the Word, to the utmost capacity of our souls, (quotes Prov. xiii. 25,) that, after the nature of the food on which we live, we may not vent every chance word, but that which is good . . . *Seest thou what eructations come from the mouths of heretics? how offensive and ill-savoured, showing a very diseased condition in the bowels† of the unhappy men?* (Matt. xii. 35.) Do not thou, therefore, having itching ears, heap up to thyself teachers, who are skilled to create disorder in thine inner man, and cause the venting of evil words," &c. (Matt. xii. 37.)

"This word, 'I speak of the things which I have made, touching the King,' *completely guides us to the meaning of the prophetic personage.*"‡

"My tongue is the pen of a ready writer.' As the pen is the graphic instrument, the hand of the expert moving it to the showing forth of the things to be written, *so the tongue of the just, the Holy Spirit moving the same, inwardly writeth the words of eternal life in the hearts of believers!*"§

"'Grace is shed upon thy lips' (v. 2.) They who are strangers to the word of truth call the preaching of the Gospel foolishness, despising the simplicity of the style of the Scriptures: but we who glory in the cross of Christ, to whom the things

* This, be it remembered, was a Congregational Homily, ἱμῖλια συνήθης.

† Εν τῷ βάθει.

‡ Πάνου προτάγμα ἡμῶς τῇ διανοίᾳ τοῦ προφητικῶς προσώπου. Very like the Protestant principle of *the Bible interpreting itself*. So Tertullian, "The words of the Lord are put forth to *all* . . . To *all* be it said, 'Seek and ye shall find.' Still it is of importance to *labour with the sense by the help of interpretation*. (Sensu certare interpretationis gubernaculo.) There is no divine word so disconnected and diffuse, that the words alone can be maintained, and the relation of the words (ratio verborum) not taken into the account." De Præs. Hær. Cap. 9. beg. If this, addressed as it is, "to *all*" and concerning "all the words of Christ," be not a recognition of *private judgment*, it would be difficult to find words for it.

§ Εγγράφη τα ῥήματα τῆς θείου ζωῆς ταῖς καρδίαις τῶν πιστευόντων.

which are freely given unto us of God, have been made known by the Holy Spirit, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, know how rich is the grace which God has poured over the words of Christ. It was for this reason the preached word overran in a little time almost the whole world, because a rich and plenteous grace was shed over the preachers of the Gospel, whom the Scriptures have termed the lips of Christ. Therefore the preaching of the Gospel, even in despicable style, has a mighty power to guide and draw men to salvation. And the whole soul is subdued by its unchangeable doctrines, being established through grace, in an unwavering faith towards Christ. Whence the Apostle saith," &c. Rom. i. 5; 1 Cor. xv. 10.

V. 2. "Since the church is the body of Christ, and he is the head of the church, as we have said that those who minister to the heavenly word were the lips of Christ, (even as Paul, who had Christ speaking in him, 1 Cor. xiii. 3, and *whoever else resembles Paul in virtue*,) so also, *we who have believed* are severally the other members of the body of Christ."

"'Gird thy sword upon thy thigh,' v. 3. This we understand to refer tropically to *the living word of God*," (quotes Heb. iv. 12.)

"'Hearken, O daughter,' v. 10. He summons the church to *hear and keep the things commanded her*.* 'And consider.' He teaches her to have her intellect practised to contemplation by that word, *consider*. 'Incline thine ear.' 'Run not away after strange fables, but *receive the lowly instruction of the voice which speaketh in the Gospel word*.'"†

V. 11. "He teaches the church *the necessity of subjection* ‡ by that word, 'He is thy Lord.' . . . *It is not the church to which our homage is paid, but Christ the Head of the church*."

"'So shall the King greatly desire thy beauty.' Cast away, for me, he says, the doctrines of devils, *forget sacrifices*;§ . . . if by utter oblivion, thou blottest out the spots of unholy teach-

* Προσκλείεται τὴν Ἐκκλησίαν ἐπὶ τὴν ἐκράσιν καὶ τὴν τίμωσιν τῶν προστάσσομένων, not to "externalize" and "create" the contents of her own faith.

† Το ταπεινὸν τῆς ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελικῷ λόγῳ φωνῆς.

‡ Το ἀναγκαιὸν τῆς ὑποταγῆς.

§ Επιλάβου θυσιῶν.

ings, and assumest thine own proper beauty, then shalt thou appear an object of desire to thy Spouse and King."

V. 13. "All the glory of the King's daughter, that is, the bride of Christ, is *within*."* . . "Obedience to the word,"† "interior purity," Basil here makes to constitute this "inward glory of the bride of Christ." "The word exhorteth us," he adds, "to aspire to the inmost mysteries of the glory of the church, the beauty of the bride being wholly *within*. For he who beautifieth himself to the Father, who seeth in secret, and prayeth, and doeth all things, not to be seen by men, but to be manifest to God alone; this man hath all interior glory, even as the daughter of the King. The very golden tassellings,‡ with which her whole person is draped and adorned, are *inward*. Look for nothing in outward gold and material variety, but understand a drapery worthy of one renewed after the image of him that created him, as the Apostle saith. (Col. iii. 9, 10.) . . . Paul also exhorteth us to 'put on the Lord Jesus,' not after the outer man, but that the *remembrance of God may enrobe the soul*.§ The queen (that is *the soul* clad in the Bridegroom's word,) stands on the right hand of the Saviour, in garments inlaid with gold, that is to say, clothed in holy dignity and beauty, with *intelligent doctrines*|| interwoven and variegated. . . . The perfumes (v. 8) plenteously shed over the garments of Christ, (these are *the concomitants of discourses and diffusion of instructions*,) are wafted back, however, from the whole edifice. For he speaketh of a great 'edifice' here, and that too, built of 'ivory,'¶ the prophet thereby showing forth, as I think, the *richness of the love of Christ* towards the world.

"Now, I think the spiritual drapery is woven *complete*, when an *answerable practice is intertwined with the word of doctrine*."

* Εσωθεν.

† Cf. Dr. Nevin, "The Bible, to be a true word of Christ, must be *ruled by the life of the Church!*" p. 340.

‡ So the Sept. Κροσσωτά.

§ Περισκετάζειν lit. *circumvest*. Dr. Nevin would have "the mind of the Holy Catholic Church to *circumfuse* his private thinking." Antichrist, p. 58.

|| Εν δόγμασι νεφελῶν.

¶ "Ivory palaces." Eng. Trans.

For, as the bodily garment is finished when, the warp being first set up, the woof is inserted therein, so when the word has gone before, if conformable actions follow thereupon, there would then be a most glorious vesture of the soul, having attained, in word and act, a life complete in virtue."

In his exposition of v. 14, "the *virgins* her companions," we should expect, if anywhere, that Basil would "stand in the very same order of thought that completed itself afterwards in the Roman or Papal Church." For here was the precise point of divergence for Basil and many other leading minds* of the fourth century, from the Scriptural and Primitive into the Ecclesiastical system. We, therefore, give the exposition of that clause entire.

"Certain souls follow the bride of Christ, who receive not the germs of strange doctrines: these 'shall be brought unto the King,' in the train of the bride. Let those who have promised virginity to the Lord hear this, that 'virgins shall be brought to the King:' those virgins, however, who are near to the Church, who follow after her and stray not away from the discipline of the Church. But with mirth and gladness shall the virgins be brought and enter into the King's temple. Not those who constrainedly enter on virginity, nor those who, from sorrow or necessity, addict themselves to a chaste life, but those who, with mirth and gladness, *do so*, rejoicing in such rectitude—these 'shall be brought to the King' and 'they shall be conducted into 'no common place, but into the temple of the King.' For,

* Not for all of them, however. St. Gregory Nyssen, the brother of Basil, rejoiced in his pious and affectionate Theosebeia. Even that rigid churchman Jerome kept pretty close to the Pauline theory on this subject, and, among many other exceptional cases, conceded matrimony to those *qui propter nocturnos metus dormire soli non possunt* (Cont. Jovin.) No such concession to *weak nerves*, "in the Papal communion" since Gregory VII. Synesius, even after it became a decided *disqualification* for a "bishop" to "be the husband of one wife," being *rogatus episcopari*, replies (Ep. 105) "God and the holy hand of Theotimus gave me my wife, and I can neither forsake her *nor live with her as a harlot*." He too, would not have been "*at home* in the Papal communion in our time." His eloquence and "pure manners," however, induced them to waive the objection, and Synesius was "ordained bishop," but never rose, (probably on account of his *domestic incumbrance*) to the rank of a "saint" in the Romish Calendar. Basil decides (Ep. 199) that "matrimony must not be prohibited, but that *a man is better if he so abide*."

sacred vessels, which human use hath never defiled, they shall be brought into the holy of holies, and shall have the privilege of access into the innermost sanctuary, where profane feet shall never walk. But what this 'being brought into the temple of the King' is, the prophet signified, when in his own behalf he prayed and said, 'One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord and to inquire in his temple.'

To such virginal aspirations, we believe, even "a Puritan" would not object. If this is "glorifying celibacy,"* let Basil rest under the charge.

On v. 16, "'Instead of thy fathers have been born thy sons.' . . Who, then, are the sons of the Church? *Without doubt, the sons of the Gospel.*" May God multiply such "sons of the Church," and daily enlarge and glorify the Church which consists of "sons of the Gospel!"

This entire Homily on the Church, if translated into English, and preached to "a congregation in Connecticut or Massachusetts" (with the one exception noted, and how far, even that is an exception we leave the reader to judge) would create no surprise, except by its somewhat fanciful expositions, its surpassing beauty and its high spirituality. But how strange and startling would be its effect if delivered amidst the sights and sounds and fumigations of a Popish cathedral!

Let us suppose that "St. Basil the Great, Archbishop of Cæsarea"† should according to Dr. Nevin's supposition, "return to the world in our day," and be requested by Cardinal Wiseman or Archbishop Hughes to "say mass" and preach in one of their cathedrals. In the first place, he would make an awkward mistake by calling "the mass" the "Lord's supper."‡ He would proceed to "fence the tables" in the downright style

* Ear. Chris. p. 3.

† So Roman authorities call him. He calls himself a "co-presbyter," with his brethren (συμπρεσβύτερος.)

‡ Το κυριακὸν δάπνον. Ερωτ. 310. Tom. II. p. 752. Athanasius too calls it ἡ ἁγία τράπεζα. Ep. ad ubique Orth. Opp. p. 729. And yet Dr. Nevin is very hard on our unchurchly selves for "degrading it by this appellation to the level of a common SUPPER." Merc. Rev., March 1852.

of (what Dr. Nevin calls) “hard and bony Presbyterianism,” saying, (they are his own words,*) “He that *cometh to the communion*† is nothing profited without a consideration of the word after which the participation of the body *and blood* of Christ is given to us.” “Let a man therefore *examine himself* and so let him eat of that bread *and drink of that cup*,‡ for he that *eateth and drinketh* unworthily, eateth and drinketh to his own condemnation.” Yet “unless ye eat the flesh and *drink the blood* of the Son of Man ye have no life in you. But through faith we are cleansed by the blood of Christ from all sin, and being baptized by water into the Lord’s death, we become dead unto sin and the world, and are made alive unto righteousness, and so being baptized in the name of the Holy Ghost, we are born again; and being born again, we put on Christ, being clothed with the new man, &c. And therefore we must be nourished with the food of eternal life which the only begotten son of God hath given us.”§

He would then proceed to lay down “the words of institution” from the gospels and 1 Cor. xi.|| and go on to distribute *both kinds* to the astonished *faithful*, saying, with the precise introductory formulæ¶ now used in the “Protestant sects,” “take, eat, this is my body broken for you,” and with the presentation of the cup, “this cup is the New Testament in my blood, which is shed for many for the remission of sins, *drink ye all of it*.*” For thus eating and drinking, we perpetually *commemorate*†† the love of our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us and rose again and let us learn that it is thus we must preserve in the presence of God and of his Christ the doctrine delivered to us by the Apostle,‡‡ when he saith ‘the love of Christ constraineth us,’” &c. (2. Cor. v. 14, &c.)

* Ὅρος 21. Cap. 21. Tom. ii. p. 354, and more fully in his 2d book on Baptism.

† Προσερχόμενος τῇ κοινωνίᾳ.

‡ Καὶ ἐκ τοῦ ποτηρίου πινέτω. Disc. on the holy Mysteries app. to his books on Baptism.

§ De Bapt. Lib. I. Cap. 3.

|| He does so, quoting them in full. Ὅγ. 21. Cap. 3, &c. de Bapt. I. 3.

¶ Opp. Tom. II. p. 923.

** πίετε ἐξ αὐτοῦ πάντες, Ibid.

†† The Archbishop would here be stricken on the spot by a papal thunderbolt, “Whosoever shall say that the sacrifice of the mass is simply a *commemoration*, is accursed (anathemate fulminari.) III. Anath. de Sac. Miss. Conc. Trid. Paol. Sarpi. p. 521.

‡‡ A very remarkable passage. It stands thus in full, on the page last cited.

Having thus "said Mass," the Archbishop would proceed (if he happened to select for the occasion, his Homily on Ps. xlv.) to deliver a good long discourse "on the Church," which would utterly leave on the outside of it, not only the Cardinal and Archbishop, but the Pope himself. And would then, in all probability, wind up with an extempore prayer, "selected from the Holy Scriptures," a practice which he fervently recommends in his beautiful observations on prayer.*

We doubt if the "Archiepiscopus Redivivus" would be called upon a second time to *exercise his gifts* "within the Papal Communion."

May God *raise up* many such "Saints," and "Great" men as Basil to proclaim his everlasting Gospel;—endowed with the most splendid natural talents, enriched with all learning, animated by an indomitable spirit of Christian freedom, yet bowing with profound humility to "the lowly instruction of the Gospel voice." If they should not "find themselves at home," as they certainly would not, "in the Papal Communion," we will insure them a joyful reception in the Protestant Church.

We have an extraordinary revelation of the inward life of Basil, in a long letter† to his bosom friend Gregory, written from his religious retreat in Cappadocia. It bears, as might be expected, something of the monastic tinge. Let the reader, however, judge whether the *religious experience* it discloses, and the ideas of the means of spiritual proficiency it expresses, are of the Protestant or Papal stamp. Dr. Nevin says that Basil, &c. "glorified monastic life." Of what sort was the monastic life which they thus "glorified?"

"What I am doing night and day in this remote place, I am ashamed to tell thee. I have forsaken, it is true, my pursuits in the city, as the occasions of innumerable ills, but *I have not been able to leave myself behind*. On the contrary, I am like those who are tossed about on the sea, and sea-sick from being unaccustomed to navigation. They are dissatisfied with their

* Opp. Tom. II. p. 769, "not using vain repetitions like the Greeks, but *making a collect from the Holy Scriptures*," (ἀπὸ τῶν ἁγίων Γραφῶν ἐκλεγόμενος.) He subjoins a specimen.

† Ep. II. Classis I. Nov. Ordo. Opp. Tom. III. p. 99.

ship, as if its size caused the greater agitation, and so get down into a little skiff or shallop, and yet are none the less seasick and ill at ease, for their bile and nausea go along with them. My case is much the same. For, carrying with me the *disorders that dwell within*,* I am everywhere alike disquieted: so that *my benefit from this seclusion is not great*. There are things, however, which we must do in order to press on the footsteps of him who is guiding us to salvation. (For if any man, saith he, will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me.) These are some of them.

"We must try to maintain serenity of mind. . . . The undistracted mind *turns upon itself, and through itself ascends to God*." . . . "Prayers," "hymns, and songs of praise to the Creator," and "labour," cheered and sanctified by these, are added.

"But," he continues, "the principal path† to the discovery of duty, is the meditation of the divinely inspired Scriptures," and dwells largely on the perfection of its precepts and examples. "Prayers again, *succeeding these readings*, find the soul more fresh and active, stirred and awakened by desire towards God."

When we find the great Basil speaking in this letter of the sort of clothes, shoes, diet, &c., most conducive to detachment from the world, and fixedness of soul on divine things, we feel that he sinks below the element in which he generally moves, and approximates "the order of thoughts which completed itself afterwards in the Papal church." Still, as long as he keeps to "the principal path," he cannot "Romanize" in any thing material, and *he does not*.

The above letter was written when he was about twenty-eight years old, and probably before he entered the ministry. In another, written about ten years later,‡ consisting of counsels to those who were in religious seclusion, he says, "I have thought proper briefly to advise you *as I have learned from the inspired Scriptures*." Almost all these counsels are expressed in the very words of Scripture. His first remark is, that "a Christian

* Τὰ ἐνὸς καὶ πάλιν, which might here be neatly rendered by the Puritan phrase, "indwelling sin."

† Μεγίστην ὁδόν.

‡ Ep. 22.

should have a spirit worthy of his heavenly calling, and a conversation as it becomes the Gospel of Christ."

In neither of these letters, is there an allusion to any means of grace other than the word of God, prayer, praise, self-communion, and communion with God, and pious converse; and all these joined with useful labour..

In a letter of spiritual advice to an individual,* he exhorts him to "take upon himself *the easy yoke of the Lord.*"

Basil advises "young men,"† apparently under his own educational care, to study the writings of the ancient Greeks, because the mental discipline thus acquired would better enable them to apprehend the sublimer revelations of the Scriptures, and compares the perception of truth in the former to *looking at the image of the sun in water*;‡ in the latter, to *directing our view to the light itself.*§

During a long absence from his flock at Cæsarea, he addressed them a pastoral letter,|| containing this among other like counsels. "Take heed, O divine and most beloved souls, of the shepherds of the Philistines, lest some one of them stealthily fill up your wells and make turbid the pure knowledge of the things of faith. For this is ever their care, not to teach simple souls from the divine Scriptures, but to sophisticate the truth from a science which is foreign to it . . . bewitching the sheep that they drink not of that pure water which springeth up unto everlasting life, but that they bring on themselves that oracle of the prophet, 'they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and have hewn out for themselves broken cisterns which can hold no water.'"

Do such counsels breathe the spirit of a creed or church religion? Do they not send every one of these "beloved souls" to the "fountain of living waters" to draw thence and drink for itself? How were these "souls" to detect the stealthy and bewitching arts of the "Philistine shepherds," but by comparing their doctrines with the "divine Scriptures"—in plain words, by reading their Bible, in the exercise of free, intelli-

* Ep. 23.

† Προς τους νεους. Cap. 2, end. Opp. Tom. II. p. 243.

‡ Εν ὕδατι τον ἡλιον ὀρᾶν.

§ Αυτῷ προσβαλοῦμεν τῷ φωτὶ τὰς ὄψεις.

|| Ep. 8.

gent, *private judgment*. This is good Protestant advice. But Papal pastors do not, "in our time," write such letters to their flocks.

About the year 368, the people of Neo-Cæsarea lost their bishop by death. Basil addressed a consolatory letter to them.* Whether it bears most of the Puritanic or Papal type, let the reader judge.

After many expressions of sympathy, and dissuasives from excessive grief, he continues:

"Shall we not shake off our sorrow? Shall we not bestir ourselves? Shall we not look up to the common Lord, who having permitted each of his saints to minister to their own generation, calls them back again, at fitting times, to himself? Call now seasonably to mind the counsels of him who, while yet ministering in your church, admonished you, 'beware of dogs, beware of evil workers.' . . These you must beware of under the care of some watchful shepherd. *It is yours to seek for him,*† laying aside all strife and love of pre-eminence. *It is the Lord's to point him out to you,* who from the time of Gregory, that great leader of your church, down to him who has just departed,‡ hath added one to another, and always with such fitness, that he has graciously bestowed a wondrous ornament, even as it were a string of most precious stones, upon your church. You must not, therefore, despair of successors. For the Lord knoweth them that are his; and *may lead into the midst of us those who, perchance, are quite unlooked for by us.* . .

"I beseech you by your fathers, by the true faith, by the departed, arouse your spirit, *let every man judge the business in hand to be his own proper concern,*§ and considering that he

* Ep. 28.

† 'Ον ὑμέτερον μὲν αἰτῆσαι.

‡ He commends especially the faithfulness and diligence of "the deceased" in *preaching*, and adds, "*on this account, (ταύτην)* not by reason of his age, he was esteemed worthy of higher honour in the assemblies of *his equally* honoured brethren (τῆς προτιμῆσεως ἐν τοῖς συλλόγοις τῶν ἰσοτίμων,) through the superior venerableness of his wisdom, taking the precedence by the common concession." (ἐκ κοινῆς συγχωρήσεως τὸ πρωτεῖον καρπούμενος.) Did "Basil the Great stand in the bosom of the prelatial and high church system at all points?"

§ Οικεῖον ἕκαστον ἑαυτοῦ τὸ σπουδαζόμενον κρίναντα.

must himself be first affected by the issue of this transaction either way, not, as too often happens, throw off upon his neighbour the care of your common interests, and so, each one neglecting the matter in his own mind, all of you bring upon yourselves the sad consequences of your indifference. Receive these advices, with all good will, whether as expressions of neighbourly sympathy, or of the communion of those who hold the same faith, or, which is nearer the truth, of obedience to the law of love, and fear of the danger of being silent; resting assured that ye are our glorying, as we are also yours, in the day of our Lord, and that, by the pastor who is to be given to you, we shall be bound together yet more firmly in the bond of love, or utterly separated: which may God forbid!"

This would be very *seasonable* advice from a New England pastor to a neighbouring church, mourning the death of an eminent minister, and *every word of this letter might be so addressed* without infringing on that "parity and rank democracy" which Dr. Nevin deplores as one of the great mischiefs and afflictions of "Puritanism." But do "Catholic" Bishops address such missives "in our time" to *vacant congregations*?

And the people not only "sought for" and elected their own bishops, (pastor is the name Basil uses in this letter,) in the "glorious period of the fourth century," but they called them to account roundly too, when they thought either their conduct or their faith deserved it. See Basil's apologetic letter to his own flock when they were dissatisfied at his long absence,* and to "all" the Christians of New Cæsarea,† when they were alarmed by his monastic tendencies and certain changes which he made in the music of the Church, which he defends solely by the congruity of the thing to the Gospel and to the worship of the Church, and the like considerations, and never by any appeal to *tradition* or *sacerdotal* or *ecclesiastical authority*.

How close and intensely individual was the preaching of Basil, the most cursory glance at his homilies will show. We instance that "On the Soul."‡ He certainly did not bring out truth with the full-orbed brightness of a Howe, or as Robert Hall, send the *lucid arrows* to the conscience with the in-

* Ep. 2d.

† Ep. 207.

‡ Περι ψυχῆς. Tom. III. p. 833. *σεαυτῷ μόνῳ πρόσεχε* is one of its leading counsels.

visible precision of a Baxter or a Davies, a Payson or an Alexander; (what forbids us to say, "God having reserved some better thing for us that they without us should not be made perfect?) But he did bring his hearer to deal alone with his God and with himself. He held up to him no other aim than holiness of heart and life, and no other means of attaining it but the word and the grace of God. This alone would have utterly prevented him from "finding himself at home in the Papal communion in our time." The same lofty intrepidity of soul and "valour for truth" which led him to confront the tyrannical Valens, would surely have driven him to defy the Pope. And if the vigour of that "system" were equal to its spirit, we have not the slightest doubt that it would speedily bestow upon him, in addition to all his other titles, that of *Martyr*.

"We must have a full persuasion that every word of God is true and possible, even though nature fight against it. For *herein lies the very strife of faith.*"*

Such is the eighth rule of the *Moralia* of "Basil the Great,"† and with one allusion more, we end our *Basilians*. For, when we unseal the "exundans fons ingenii" of the Christian Demosthenes," it will pour itself out inexhaustibly, unless we abruptly shut off its flow.

The death of Basil, exhibited in connection with that of Moehler, one of the most highly cultivated philosophic and devout Catholics "in our time," will form our last point of contrast. Basil, as Gregory tells us, met death with these words on his lips, "Into thine hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit; thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of truth."

The last scene of Moehler is thus drawn by his biographer.

"On the seventh of April he felt himself better, and *desired that for his entertainment a favourite book of travels might be read to him.* . . At the beginning of Holy Week, feeling his end approach, he *prepared by the reception of the sacraments*, for appearing before his Almighty Judge. . . The heavy ice-cold sweat-drops gathered about his brow and temples; the last

* Ἐνταῦθα γὰρ καὶ ὁ ἀγὼν τῆς πίστεως.

† Opp. Tom. II. p. 336.

struggle had come on. *His confessor never left his side.* At one o'clock in the afternoon, he awoke from a gentle slumber, clasped both hands to his head, . . . gasped violently three times, and the soul, bursting her fetters, sprang upwards to her God."*

Thus closes the life-drama of scriptural and of "sacramental," "organic," (*Catholic*) Christianity. The former, at the approach of the last enemy, repeats its *first faith* in the very "letters of faith," commits itself once more to the hands of its mighty and loving Redeemer, and its last glance is a *look towards Jesus*. The latter "entertains" as it may, its easier intervals, and when the inevitable moment comes, "receives the sacraments" and "*gives up the ghost*."

Let me die the death of the Christian, rather than that of the *Catholic*.

Of Chrysostom (whom Dr. Nevin groups also with the "Romanizing fathers,") we must not speak at any length, and we need not. For the beautiful monograph of Neander is before the world in an English translation, and shows how eminently scriptural were both his personal culture and his ministry.

But when in his Homily on 1 Cor. i,† he defines the unity and ubiquity of the Christian Church to consist in this, that it comprehends "all who, in every place, call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, both theirs and ours, and that its members are those who are "sanctified in Christ Jesus," "called to be saints," and explains at length, how each of these clauses reveals a *mark* and *distinction* of the true Church, and that the inclusion of all such makes the Church *one* and *universal*; and when, in his Homily on Col. iii.‡ in the exposition of the words, "let the word of Christ dwell in you richly," (what a text for a "Romanizing" preacher!) he unfolds the exhaustless richness of the divine word, pointing out how "doctrine, opinions, exhortation,"§ may all be drawn from it, and fervently exhorts his people to read the Scriptures, not carelessly nor occasionally, but with much diligent endeavour;"||

* Mem. of Joh. Ad. Moehler prefixed to his "Symbolism," p. 84, 5.

† Opp. Tom. X. p. 4. Ed. Bened.

‡ Opp. Tom. XI. p. 390.

§ Ἡ διδασκαλία, τὰ δογματά, ἡ παραινέσις.

|| Μὴ ἀπλῶς, οὐδέ ὡς ἔτυχεν, ἀλλὰ μετὰ πολλῆς τῆς σπουδῆς.

we feel sure that this style of preaching does not bear "a *very* near resemblance in all material points to the later religion of the Roman Church,"* that in fact it very nearly "corresponds with the modern ecclesiastical life of Connecticut and Massachusetts."† At least it is clear that Chrysostom could not have agreed with Dr. Nevin that "*all* true theology grows forth from the creed, and so remains *bound* to it perpetually as its necessary *radix or root*."‡

Dr. Nevin cannot endure that "invisible" sort of unity which is manifested by "an occasional shaking of hands fraternally on the platform of a Bible Society, or a melting season of *promiscuous*! communion now and then around the sacramental board." It "falls immeasurably short," he says, "of the true idea of Catholic unity." "It has *no tendency whatever, however remote, towards true Catholicity*. It is the *very opposite* of all organic Christianity."§ Now what *organic* Christianity is, it would probably have puzzled Chrysostom to conceive, but his "idea of true Catholic unity" is precisely that which Dr. Nevin charges upon the "sect-system."

One declaration we add, grand and impressive, like the genius and the faith of him who uttered it—"The apostolic writings are the fortifications of the churches."||

Could he then have "found himself at home," in a "Church" which is not only *without* those "fortifications" but which, with the aid of such a master-mason as "Strauss," has undertaken "in our time, to shoot up spontaneously," independent fortifications of its own? No, the princely Archbishop of Constantinople would rather have betaken himself to the humblest "Puritanic" quarters *within* those fortifications, exclaiming, as he once did, when he stemmed alone the wrath of the emperor and the fury of the multitude, "*We are servants of the crucified!*"¶

If we had time to descend to the fifth century and gather the suffrages of its eminent divines, great as the development of sacerdotal and ecclesiastical ideas during that century undoubt-

* Early Chris. p. 2.

† Ibid. p. 490.

‡ Apostles' Creed, p. 341.

§ Antichrist, p. 75, 6.

|| Τὰς τῶν ἐκκλησιῶν ἑστῆν. Hom. on 2 Tim. iii. 1. Opp. Tom. VI. p. 282.

¶ Ὁκέται ἵσμεν τοῦ ἑσταυρωμένου. Ὁμιλ. ἐς Εὐτροπίου c. 4.

edly was, we should find that they were of one mind with the Reformers on the great points at issue between them and Romanism. If we should consult all the councils of the Church from that first consisting of inspired Apostles, (Acts xv.) which appealed to "the words of the prophets" as the ground of their decision, down to the time when the Papacy gained the ascendant and "made void the word of God by her traditions," if we should appeal to the early historians and hymn-writers of the Church, we should derive from all one harmonious testimony to the fountal source and authoritative test of the Christian faith.

All these, with a harmony as perfect as the unity of the faith, and a variety as wonderful as the language and the imagination of man, proclaim the holy and inspired Scriptures to be "the bread" on which the Church feeds, "the garment" in which she is arrayed, "the breath of her life," "the light" by which she walks, "the sword" with which she fights, "the root" from which she grows, "the foundation" on which she stands, "the walls" which surround her, "the wings which bear her to heaven."

But we dismiss the subject and release the reader, (if indeed he has staid with us through this long discussion) with the fervent hope that he may so apprehend *the first aspects* of truth as they stand forth in *the creed*, as to become possessor of the whole ample and glorious (as good Hilary calls it) *Patrocinium Ecclesiæ* as it is revealed in the Bible.