

historic connection through all the centuries with the Apostles, and through them to the risen and ascended Lord. May his glorious light continue to shine until the Kingdoms of this world become the Kingdoms of our Lord and His Christ. And He shall reign for ever and ever.

OUR CREEDS.

A Creed tells us, in a few, short, plain sentences, what we are to believe. The Apostles' Creed is often called the Belief, because it begins in English with the words, 'I believe.' So it is called Creed because it begins with the word 'Credo.' There are three Creeds in our Prayer Book, the Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed and the Athanasian Creed.

The Apostles' Creed is the shortest of the three. We say it at Morning and Evening Prayer. It is used in the Office for Baptism, and in that for the Visitation of the Sick. There is an old tradition that the twelve Apostles met together and wrote this Creed before they went into different lands to preach the Gospel, so that every new convert might easily learn what he had to believe before he was baptized. But though this tradition is very old, and may very likely be true, we cannot be quite sure about it. Only as St. Paul tells St. Timothy to 'hold fast the form of sound words' which he had heard, (2 Timothy i. 13), it seems likely that there was a Creed then, if even it was not exactly the one we now call the Apostles' Creed. And if the Apostles' Creed was not actually written by them, it teaches in plain, simple words, the faith which they taught, and may well be called by their name. Its facts are believed by all Christians alike. The comfort of repeating it aloud, in any time of doubt or danger, can hardly be understood by those who have not used it. Whatever one's trouble, one can hardly get beyond the first few words without being helped and comforted.

The Nicene Creed is not unlike the Apostles' Creed, but is longer. It tells us more, and it has a more solemn sound, perhaps because we say it in the most solemn service, the Office for the Holy Communion. In the year 325 the Great Council of Nicea met to proclaim the true Catholic Faith against those who did not believe that our Blessed Lord is God. At this great Council the Nicene Creed was solemnly adopted as the Faith of the Church. It was called Nicene because this Council met at Nicea. Later on again, in 381, at the second General Council of Constantinople, the part was added which follows the words, 'I believe in the Holy Ghost.'

The Athanasian Creed is a long one, and not quite so simple as the other two. It is a grand and glorious declaration of belief in the two most important articles of the Christian faith. It declares our belief in the Holy Trinity and in the Incarnation. Its strong words, to which many people conscientiously object, are no stronger than those we find in St. Mark xvi. And in these days when so many people are content to have a kind of natural religion, but will not have a revealed religion—when so many believe in a God, but not in the Christian's God, the Holy Trinity—we may well be thankful that we still keep a protest like the Athanasian Creed against such a colourless religion. We may be called narrow-minded, for the false charity of the day would have us see our neighbour die sooner than tell him he is in danger. St. John, the loving and beloved Apostle, fled in haste out of the public baths when an infidel entered, lest the place should fall upon one who blasphemed His Master. How terribly bigoted such an action would be thought now! Modern charity would say, 'If he is a good man, what does it matter whether he believes or not?' For modern charity quite forgets that the goodness

of the freethinker comes from the very faith which he despises. He has been born and bred in Christian air; he has not been able to keep from breathing it; and, in spite of himself, it has made him Christian in his ways of thought. Let one or two generations come and go without Christian influence all around them (if such a thing were possible; thank God, it is not), and where would you find your goodness then?—E. M. B., in *Family Churchman*.

THE RESURRECTION VICTORY.

If we extinguish the lamp of divine Revelation we must admit that the "Greenwoods" and "Mount Auburns" and "Woodlawn," with all their exquisite gardenings of green and pomp of marbles, are nothing but hopeless and melancholy haunts. They would be splendid charnel-houses, and nothing else; we should be loath to enter them while living, and still more loath to be laid there when dead. Thanks be to God, this Bible-lamp is inextinguishable; the light that has broken into the tomb can never be put out; the truth once known can never be unknown; a divine voice that has once spoken can never be silenced. And with this inspired infallible Book of God in my hand, I go out into yonder beautiful city of the dead that overlooks the great wide sea, and opening its pages I read, "I am the Resurrection and the Life. All that are in their graves shall come forth. Death is swallowed up in victory."

Several things are made gloriously certain. One is that there shall be a positive, actual resurrection of the dead; what went into the tomb shall come out of the tomb. Whatever may be the transformation when the corruptible puts on incorruption and the mortal puts on immortality, still the fact remains that what went into the grave shall come forth. Personal identity shall be entirely preserved in the resurrection process. When the Bible asserts our sameness it does not explain precisely wherein the sameness consists. The most sagacious physician cannot tell just where the principle of the organic life of the body is. Dr. Charles Hodges has justly said that "it may be in the soul which (when the time comes) may unfold itself into a new body, regathering its materials according to its own law, just as the principle of the vegetable life in the seed unfolds itself into some gorgeous flower, gathering from surrounding nature the materials for its new organization." Paul likens this resurrection process to the sowing and the sprouting of grain. We cannot infer from looking at a kernel of wheat just how a spear of grain will look next August. Equally impossible will it be to determine from what goes into the grave just what will be the nature of the bodies that shall rise on the resurrection morn. But it is the same individual wheat plant, and the same individual man. Identity is not impaired in the least degree.

Another revealed fact is that what goes into the tomb as a "natural body" shall reappear as a "spiritual body." By this we are to understand a body that shall be adapted to the spiritual and immortal state of being. These earthly bodies of ours are adapted to this present world and are subject to disease, decay and death. They are adequate for the purposes of this life, but not for the celestial state of existence; they answer very well for earth, but not for heaven. The Apostle tells us that "we shall be changed." Not as to identity. Paul declares the very opposite. He affirms that "this mortal shall put on immortality and this corruptible shall put on incorruption."

Then the poor body that was racked with sickness and sin and riddled with disease and turned by death into a dust heap shall be transformed and fashioned like to the "body of His glory." Mysterious and marvellous change! We cannot comprehend it; but faith rejoices to

believe it. Perhaps that appearance which our Lord wore upon the Mount of Transfiguration may give us some hint of what we shall be when the body of our humiliation has been refashioned. Upon the top of Mount Hermon, the Man of Sorrows, for a few moments, shone with a splendor like the splendor of the sun. His worn and dust-stained garments glittered with a lustre whiter than the snow. Why may not our "vile bodies" take on as wondrous a transformation when they shall be refashioned like unto "the body of His glory?"

That shall be the final triumph of redemption: "Death is swallowed up in victory." The once conquering death is unhorsed and in the dust—his lance shivered to fragments. To Jesus, the Christ, to Jesus, the Victor over death and hell, belongs the glory of this most magnificent triumph. Human science never planned it or dreamed of it; "nature" never constructed any law to accomplish it. The Resurrection—reverently be it said—is Christ's own idea. It is Christ's stupendous achievement. "Now is Christ risen from the dead and become the first fruits (the first harvest-sheaf) of all His own who have slumbered in the tomb. This crown flashes on the brow of the enthroned Redeemer. He hath purchased the redemption of the bodies and the souls of His beloved flock." He shall present them in their attire of glory before His Father with exceeding joy. Thanks be unto God who giveth us this victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!—*Rev. Theodore L. Cuyler, in The Evangelist.*

VESTRYMEN.

A parish is strong, not because of its numbers, or because its people rank high in wealth, in brains, or in social position. It may have all these and have a rector who is both able and godly, and still, comparatively, be a very weak and inefficient parish. What good it accomplishes is no doubt chiefly owing to the fidelity and earnest devotion of a few of its members. Devotion is strength, love is stronger than money, than numbers, than intellect, than high social standing, than anything else that can be named. A parish that is devoted to our Lord's service, a parish that loves this service, loves Him for whose worship the service is given, and honors His Name, that parish is a strong parish. How may any parish not strong exemplify this devotion and so become strong? A parish may have but a score of communicants, but if as a rule its leading men, wardens and vestrymen, are habitually present at all the appointed services, it may be set down as a fact that that is a prosperous, growing parish. It cannot help but prosper. The habit set by the officers of the church is infectious and will be quickly communicated to the rest of the congregation, and scores will be added to that church at every visitation of the Bishop. It cannot be otherwise; for habitual attendance of all vestrymen, not only at morning prayer, but evening prayer as well, and at early Communion when appointed, means not only their own spiritual growth, but the spiritual growth of the entire parish, and its material growth as well, for the latter is invariably a result of the former. It means also parish harmony and unity—a oneness of plan and purpose, rector and vestry in hearty accord. To the rector it means the right sort of encouragement and support; that his hands are being upheld, and that the petition in the Collect for the Seventh Sunday after Trinity is being constantly answered in this parish of his: "Graft in our hearts the love of Thy Name; increase in us true religion, nourish us with all goodness, and of Thy great mercy keep us in the same; through Jesus Christ our Lord." No example could be more inspiring and helpful to a parish and its rector than that of the presence of every vestryman