

various languages spoken throughout their area. The following abstract will give some idea of the extent of the society's work in this direction. These books are being prepared abroad at its expense—Burton's 'Church History' in Marathi; the Prayer Book in Hindi; the Prayer Book in Sgau Karen; the Prayer Book in Karen; 'Some Chief Truths of Religion' in Karen; A Commentary on Epistles and Revelation in Tamil; Maclear's 'New Testament History' in Telugu; Maclear and Procter's 'Introduction to the Prayer Book' in Telugu; Whately's 'Evidences' in Telugu; Lessons from the Apocrypha in Chinese Mandarin; Bridges 'On the Proverbs' in Malayalam; 'Tajimi Muhammad' in Urdu; the First Book of Maccabees in Urdu; a Church History in Japanese; Norris's 'Rudiments of Theology' in Japanese; a Catechist's Manual in Japanese; Commentary on SS. Matthew, Luke, and John in Marathi; Robertson's 'Sketches of Church History' in Bengali; a Short History of the Prayer Book in Bengali; 'The Pathway of Safety' in Bengali; the Holy Bible in Old Armenian. The following are being prepared for publication at Home—The Prayer Book in Hausa; a Tamil Psalter, Portions of the Prayer Book in Zimshian; a Western Equimauz Primer; 'Questions on the Prayer Book' in Urdu; Portions of the Prayer Book in Tenni; 'Prayers and Promises' in Arabic and English; Sermons in the Kafir Language; a Commentary on St. Mark and Galatians in Maori.—*Irish Ecclesiastical Gazette.*

CREEDS OR NOTIONS.

In the minds of a large number of people nowadays, creeds and notions are synonymous terms. They speak of the different creeds believed among Christian people, when they mean the different notions that Christian people have about things; for they are notions or opinions that divide Christian people really.

For Christian people there is only ONE creed; it has been formulated in three forms known as the Apostles, the Nicene and the Athanasian, but each is built on the model of the original creed which is very short—I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. Every word of each of the three formulas called the Apostles, the Nicene and the Athanasian, is hinged on the declaration of one's belief in the fact that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

But there are always to be found some who are not satisfied to take things as they are. These miserable folks are forever nosing into things, trying to find out whys and wherefores. Where it is done for the purpose of improving another it is well, but when done merely for curiosity or for self advancement or notoriety, it is an unmitigated evil. From its first days, the Church has been afflicted with such pests. The Apostles were troubled with them. A Council had to meet to put down Jewish Puritans who tried to burden the Christian brethren with the requirements of the Mosaic law. Alexander the copper-smith, Demetrius and others vexed the brethren of their day with their nonsense. Arius of Alexandria, in the fourth century, is one of the most noted of such pests; so on down to our own times, an unbroken unapostolic succession of notion-mongers has continued, forcing their whims and notions on people with more or less zeal and ability, "drawing away disciples after them," dividing and confusing the body of Christ, His Church.

And the most of these notions are not worth discussing. Take for instance the notion of predestination. It is true, by stitching together a few passages snipped here and there from St. Paul's epistles, one can piece together a sort of a predestination crazy quilt.

But suppose predestination is true, what good

is it? To count one's self predestined to be saved shows not only conceit and assurance, but also places one's self on the judgment-seat and makes himself his own judge. It makes all deliberations about a judgment to come, our own known responsibility and free will, makes all this a farce and nonsense. The fact is the decrees of foreknowledge of God are utterly incomprehensible to us, and thank God, also, have nothing at all to do with our duty or salvation as far as we are concerned. So we can drop predestination as not worth our discussing.

So too what is the sense of discussing how many quarts of water shall be used for baptism. The command is, water in the Holy Name; how much, not specified. From the custom among the Jews of ceremonial cleansing by sprinkling with water, and from the Apostle's saying that the Israelites in crossing the Red Sea were baptized, when they were not immersed, as well as from other sources, the enormous majority of Christian people are satisfied with a pint or two of water for baptism. But if some water loving brother wants two or three hundred gallons, or a whole pond, there is not a bit of harm in it. His whim should be gratified if it is stuck so fast in his skull that it cannot be got out without splitting the skull open. But if he withdraws himself from those who do not care about having so much water, and arrogates for himself and his party a higher, or the only place in the Kingdom, he is a pest and a nuisance; and the horrid joke of it all is, that, in spite of his insisting on having so much water for baptism he will stultify himself by saying "that baptism is not necessary for salvation."

So with all the notions, mis-called creeds, which divide Christians, they are not worth discussing; many of them are false, or exaggerated, and none necessary to salvation. Whether they are the notions peculiar to the Roman Church, such as the papal supremacy and infallibility, transubstantiation, purgatory, etc., or the various notions on which modern sects have been founded, all are either vain imaginations or distorted, one sided ideas, mere buildings of "wood, hay, stubble," that will not stand the test of the judgment day fire.

But the Creed, the belief that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, is the root of the Church, the Kingdom of God on earth, and its expansion in the form called Nicene, is acknowledged by all Christians, and is the only base of union as a belief, the common heritage of the mangled Body, the schism cursed Church of Christ. Along with the Creed, and inseparably connected therewith, are the two Sacraments, and the Old and New Testaments. Baptism and the Lord's Supper, and the Holy Scriptures must go with the Creed to give it life. The Sacraments as beginning and nourishing the spiritual life, and the Scriptures the written testimony, handed down by the Church to all ages and people. The Scriptures, it is to be noted are not given to uphold by the letter, or make, patch work fashion, pet notions, nor to found the Church on. The Church was founded first; years before a line of the New Testament was written. Modern Christianity needs, some of it, to be reminded forcibly, that "the letter killeth." Discussions about texts and opinions that may be drawn from them to uphold certain notions, to the disregard of other passages that may be held to give a different notion, is a vicious and unlawful use of the Scriptures, and kills spiritual life or greatly weakens it.

The fact of the Scriptures being written after the Church was established, shows another point not to be lost sight of, and that is the living organization of the Church as distinct from a mere human organization. No matter what the motive may have been, nor the glamour of worldly success, it is self evident that a body organized by some man or men cannot long claim to be a real branch of the Church of the living God. The members of these different men, ordained bodies inherit their spiritual life,

the branch from whence they sprung, and keep it alive by their belief that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. Human organizations are simply useless confusing machines that do a good deal more harm than good, in spite of the apparent success that sometimes attends their efforts. All this is what our Bishops had in mind in General Convention in 1886 when they insisted that "the Historic Episcopate" should go along with the Creed, the Sacraments and the Holy Scriptures. An unbroken organization is necessary, or there is confusion and anarchy, and these have no place in Heaven. It is one of the sad evidences how division dulls the spiritual sense, that the present wretched distracted state of Christianity is upheld, and suggestions for unity rejected, and that in the face of the solemn prayer, "that they all may be one as we are."

The Creed, the Sacraments, the Scriptures and an unbroken organization are the marks of the Church which like the glorious City of God seen by St. John in his vision, "lieth foursquare.—H. H. Ten Broeck in Church News.

SOME PRAYER-BOOK HISTORY.

It is often supposed by persons who are not acquainted with the facts of the case, that much of the Prayer Book was taken from Romish service-books. Our own people sometimes have such an impression, and perhaps think the supposed fact a matter of regret. Some of the prayers and other portions of the Prayer Book are the same as corresponding parts of the Romish services, or are more or less similar in language or substance. But where such is the case, it is because both are in accord with Holy Scripture, and with the teaching of the early Church, in the point involved. Or it is because both date back to a time, when, though not free from what we should now call Romish errors, the Church was yet far removed from acceptance of the modern Romish system. Nor had it at all submitted, as it did later in western countries, to the claims of supremacy which the Bishops of Rome gradually came to make. Both go back, in many particulars, to those early days of the Church in which grew up the first liturgies, the originals of all that came into use later, with their many variations of detail.

The term liturgy, it should be remembered, was applied in the first place to the service for the celebration of the Holy Communion. In the early Church this sacrament was celebrated every Lord's day, at the least, and was an essential part of its weekly worship. This service was called the liturgy, as meaning the ministrations, the worship.

There were four parent liturgies, and to these all bear a close general resemblance, amid their differences. The liturgy of St. James, as it was called, originated at Jerusalem, where James "the just," "the Lord's brother," was Bishop for many years. From Alexandria, where St. Mark ministered, comes the liturgy which bears his name. A third is the Ephesine, or that of St. John, who ruled the Church in the populous region of which Ephesus was the metropolis, for a number of his later years. The fourth liturgy is the Roman, to which the name of St. Peter is attached, he having labored in the world's capital for a time, later in his life. That these liturgies were used or written out, as we have them, by the Apostles, is not supposed. They can be traced, however, as far back as the middle, or possibly the early part of the second century. This would bring them near the close of the life of St. John, the latest survivor of the twelve, whose death occurred before the end of the first century. The fact that they are alike in certain main particulars, and that they early came into use throughout the Church, no place excepted, is strong evidence that the Apostles furnished at least the outline common to all of them.