

of Christianity as interpreted by the *Church of Rome*. "There are no anathemas in the Athanasian Creed," says Bishop Christopher Wordsworth. "Its language is not denunciatory, but admonitory; it is declaratory of the necessity of a right faith, and of the danger of unbelief." Says Dean Goulburn, "Every statement of the creed had a real occasion in the exigencies of the Church, and a substantial meaning. Each of them is an expansion, in scientific phraseology, of some grand truth which Scripture announces compendiously and broadly." Says Dean Vaughan, "This creed arose out of the need of the Church to declare the true faith in opposition to the heresies which distracted men's minds and rent the Church . . . an exposition which is a deep exploration of truth—the echo of the Word of God." A. Bisset Thom, possibly a higher authority, declares that on each rehearsal of the creed "millions of fellow-creatures are reeled into damnation." The late learned Bishop of Lincoln, speaking of the proposed silencing of this creed, said, "Those who would most exult in it are the libertines and unbelievers. How would the Romanists rejoice and triumph over us if we tampered with the Athanasian Creed!" Martin Luther affirmed it to be "the strongest bulwark of the Apostles' Creed." Judicious Hooker declared it to be "the best preservative against Arianism and Socinianism." Richard Baxter described it as "the clearest exposition of the Trinity he had ever read." A. Bisset Thom, endowed—it may be—with greater learning and judgment, declares that it is "Pharisaic bigotry," and should be "swept away." In the Athanasian Creed the Church sets forth the great doctrines of the Trinity, Incarnation of Christ, His Passion, Resurrection, Ascension, Session and Future Judgment (all the rest being merely explanatory and illustrative), as obligatory and necessary to salvation, echoing the words of Christ and His Apostles, "He that believeth not shall be damned." "Without faith it is impossible to please God." "The unbelieving shall have his part in the lake of fire." A. Bisset Thom, voicing the opinion of hundreds of the laity of the present day (so he says), conceives it "unnecessary and presumptuous" to set forth doctrines which, he believes, are "all founded on Scripture," as "necessary to salvation"; but prefers "the opinions of the educated portion of the community" as the standard of truth, to the Word of God, the dicta of Christ and His Apostles, and the voice of the Church. Choose we which we will.

WILLIAM ROBERTS.

Merrickville.

Going to the States.

SIR,—I see one of your correspondents, viz., the Rev. J. J. Morton, says that "your Special Correspondent in the U.S.A." writes to your paper under a "fictitious signature." As these are very strong words, I would like to ask you if it is not usual for the names of special correspondents to be withheld? Looking over my *N. Y. Churchman*, I find the letter of the English correspondent without any name, and on turning over the *Living Church* I also find the letter of the Canadian correspondent without any name. If it is "Press etiquette" to withhold the names of correspondents in foreign countries, we would like to know; no one could tell us better than yourself. The Rev. J. J. Morton also taxes "A Priest and Oxford M.A." almost with misrepresentation of facts in saying he is an "Oxford M.A." As a constant reader of your valuable paper, I feel sure that you will not mind telling us whether he is an Oxford M.A. or not. You need not of course, mention his name. On the questions as to whether "Your Special Correspondent in the U.S.A." is within his right in so signing himself, and as to whether "Priest and Oxford M.A." is really an M.A. of Oxford, we look to you for answers. Understand, Mr. Editor, I am only asking you for your decision on these questions, and do not wish you to divulge either the name of "Your Special Correspondent in U.S.A.," or that of "Priest and Oxford M.A." Your official answer will effectually silence—in the eyes of the Canadian clergy—either Mr. Morton, your "Special Correspondent in U.S.A.," or "Priest and Oxford M.A." Let us have your answer, Mr. Editor.

SACERDOS AMERICANUS.

In answer to "Sacerdos Americanus," we say that "Our Special Correspondent in the U.S.A." is not open to the charge of writing under a "fictitious signature," as the names of foreign correspondents are always withheld out of etiquette. On turning to "Crockford's Clerical Directory," we find the name of our other correspondent, "Priest and Oxford M.A." The rev'd gentleman graduated B.A. in 1887, and M.A. in 1889, from Hertford College, Oxford. "Priest and Oxford M.A." is the Rector of an important city parish, and we have abundant proof that the gentleman so signing himself is what he claims to be. We have known him for years personally.—EDITOR C. C.

For nervous headache use K.D.C.

The Athanasian Creed.

SIR,—As one of the "tens of thousands" of laymen charged with consigning "millions of their fellow creatures into damnation," I cannot pass over without protest the letter of A. Bisset Thom on above creed in your issue of 8th inst. I trust that most of us who join in repeating this creed are not influenced by "Pharisaic bigotry," or that by our thus expressing our belief in what can be proved by Holy Scripture, we are guilty of sending a single soul to eternal misery. For the information of those of your readers who may, perhaps, feel some doubts on the subject, I give a few quotations from the writings of men of undoubted learning, whose opinions we may very safely depend upon. Dr. Wm. Vincent, Dean of Westminster, after giving the probable dates when this creed was formed, says: "I mention these particulars in order to show that a creed which is 1,300 years old, and which has been generally received into the Church for 900 years, ought not to be treated lightly or irreverently, . . . or be neglected, without considering its merit." Again he says: "the doctrine of the Trinity, as it is here proposed, has been the doctrine of the Gospel, the doctrine of the Primitive Church, the doctrine of almost everything that can be called a Church in all ages; in the Greek and Roman Church it survived in the midst of all corruptions that arose; upon the Reformation there was not a Protestant Church but that received it in its fullest extent; Luther, Calvin, Beza, and all the wisest and best reformers acknowledged the Athanasian Creed, and made it their profession of faith; the Puritans in our own country, the parent stock of all our modern dissenters, embraced it as readily as the Church of England herself. . . . I have no scruple to say that 'Scripture is not of private interpretation,' . . . that the reason of individuals is not true reason, but opinion. . . . If, therefore, any one has his doubts on the intricacies of this question, let him search the Scriptures and settle his principles from thence, . . . let him not recur to the crude and hasty publications of the present day, in which assertions are rashly made without foundation in Scripture, antiquity or the principles of any Church." Dr. Waterland in his "History of the Athanasian Creed," says, "The use of it is to be a standing fence and preservative against the wiles and equivocations of most kind of heretics." This was well understood by Luther, when he called it "a bulwark to the Apostles' Creed," and it was this and the like considerations that have all along made it to be of such high esteem among all the reformed Churches, from the days of their great leader. I will only add some of Archbishop Secker's words on the way in which we should understand the condemnatory sentences: "Now this Trinity in Unity we apprehend to have been, ever since it was fully received, a fundamental article of the Christian faith. And yet those who believe not even so much, the creed no otherwise teaches 'cannot be saved' or 'shall, without doubt, perish,' than as our own Saviour teaches concerning the whole of the Gospel." He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned, St. Mark xvi. 16. Our condemnation is no more hard and uncharitable than His, and neither is so, because both are to be interpreted with due exceptions and abatements. . . . The intention, therefore, of the creed as well as of our Lord in the Gospel, is only to say that whoever rejects the doctrine of it, from presumptuous self-opinion or wilful negligence, and does not afterwards repent of these faults, . . . yet personally and singly we presume not to judge of his condition in the next world. 'To his own master he standeth or falleth,' Romans xiv. 4." If your correspondent's estimate of the numbers of those who agree with him, viz., "hundreds of laity" against the "tens of thousands" he so unmercifully condemns is correct, and I think it is, this creed is not likely to be swept away; it is now more generally used than it was 50 or 60 years ago. The evil of the much vaunted secular education of the day is, through God's mercy, held in check by the advance in the increase of religious education and a truer teaching of what the Church of Christ really is.

GEORGE HALLEN.

Toronto, 15th Nov., 1894.

The Athanasian Creed.

SIR—I am somewhat surprised that none of the clergy have seen fit to notice the letter of Mr. A. Bisset Thom, which appeared in your issue of the 8th November. It is somewhat difficult to discover from it what is the exact nature of Mr. Thom's objection to the Athanasian Creed. Does he mean to inform us that its dogmatic statements are untrue? or are the minatory clauses only what he objects to? As for its authorship that after all is not a very material matter. If it is a true statement of the Christian Faith, it would be none the less true even if it were composed by plain John Smith, and it would be none the less true even if composed in the nineteenth century of the Christian era.

I judge from his quotation from Bishop Tomline, that he adopts the opinions of that divine, when he says: "Though I firmly believe that the doctrines themselves are all founded on Scripture, I cannot but conceive it both unnecessary and presumptuous to say that 'Except every one do keep them whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly.'" This being interpreted, means apparently that although Mr. Thom believes that the doctrines set forth in the creed are founded on Scripture, including that doctrine which embodies the teaching of St. Mark xvi. 16, yet he is of opinion that it is unnecessary and presumptuous to proclaim the latter doctrine. This feeling apparently springs from the not unnatural reluctance which Mr. Thom entertains, in common with all sensible men, even to appear to assume the office of Almighty God as the Supreme Judge of all mankind; and to that extent it appears to me to be deserving of respectful consideration. But I venture, nevertheless, humbly to submit that this kind of feeling may be carried too far. Every right-minded man should recoil from setting up himself as the judge of the eternal destiny of his fellow-men, but while that attitude of mind is perfectly praiseworthy, it is none the less his duty not to let any such feelings permit him from accepting and proclaiming the whole Gospel.

Whether we like the terms of the Gospel or not, there they are, and we cannot alter them. So far as the Scriptures go, we have no ground for believing that men are to be saved in spite of themselves. The offer of salvation is made conditional on faith in the Redeemer and Saviour. Is it the part of true charity to conceal this most important part of the Gospel of Jesus Christ? or is it really more charitable to refrain from making it known or expressing our belief in its truth, for fear that we may appear to be judging our neighbours? I do not think I am guilty of consigning my neighbour to death, if seeing him walk perilously near the edge of a precipice I declare that I believe he will without doubt be killed if he doesn't come away. In fact, if I did not do it, I think I might not unjustly be charged with his death. Is the precipice of unbelief any less really a source of danger than a physical precipice?

Let me ask why men perish everlastingly who do not keep the Catholic Faith? Is it because it is God's will that they should perish? Clearly not. It is their own will! they arrive at the conclusion that sin is not such a very great matter after all, that their sins do not need any atonement, and they do not need a Saviour, and they do not believe in any sacrifice for sin. When they come to stand before the judgment seat of God, they have no Advocate, they have nothing but their own righteousness to plead. Jesus Christ, the Divine and Eternal Son, became incarnate that He might be the Saviour of all who would believe in Him, but they deliberately reject Him, and prefer to stand on their own merits. Do we Christians believe that their own merits are sufficient? If not, why should we be afraid to say that we do not believe that they are? That is the judgment of God as revealed in Holy Scripture. It is not our judgment. Dare we say that it is not a righteous judgment? That would indeed be presumptuous. But in uttering these solemn warnings of Scripture against unbelief, it is clear that they must be understood to apply to those only who have had the Gospel of salvation presented to them. It cannot in reason apply to all those vast hordes of men of the present or by-gone generations on whom the Light of the Gospel has never shone. Of them we may believe with St. Peter "that God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation he that feareth Him and worketh righteousness is accepted with Him."—Acts x. 35.

The heresies which the Athanasian Creed are intended to guard us against are none the less rife to-day than when it was composed. We have to-day amongst us men calling themselves Christians, who reject the very key-stone of the Christian Faith. They have sat in judgment on the Gospel and have found it defective, and with sublime modesty have remodelled the Scriptures to suit their opinions as to what the Gospel ought to be. In this they are consistent, for if they reject the Person of Christ, it is hardly to be wondered at that they have no greater regard for the writings of His followers. When the Socinian and kindred heresies have vanished from the earth it will be time enough to talk about getting rid of the Athanasian Creed. It would be useful for Mr. Thom and others who think with him on this point, to refer to Bishop Barry's Teachers' Prayer Book, where a useful note may be found upon this creed, and the sense in which minatory clauses are to be understood. He very properly observes that it is the duty of the clergy to teach the true meaning of the creed, but it is a duty they strangely forget. I have been going to church pretty regularly for over forty years, and I have yet to hear the first sermon on this creed.

A LAYMAN.

K.D.C. Pills, the best all round family pills on the market.