

Rome with which the English Romanists endeavour to mask the conspicuous and dismal failure of their schismatic English mission. Some of them, it is true, are more candid. Thus the *Church Times* quotes the following statement made by a Roman Catholic clergyman in a conference at Wigan: 'Never (he said) since Elizabeth ascended the throne had the prospects of the Roman Catholic Church been darker in England. In most parts of the country the Church was losing numbers, not only relatively but absolutely. Liverpool was the only diocese in the country which showed an increase of Catholics, and even there not proportionately to the increase of population.' On the whole, it seems that the 'rush' story need not greatly alarm the Church of England. How it strikes the managers of the intruding Roman schism, they need not take the trouble to enquire.—*The Churchman, N. Y.*

THE ATHANASIAN SYMBOL.

A symbol of such venerable antiquity, so universally accepted and used, containing so clear a statement of the vital doctrines of the Faith as the *Quicumque vult*, requires no further commendation. A declaration of belief, composed in the early days of the Church, is, as Hooker* observes, needful always. It should be kept without gloss or paraphrase for the sake of authority. During the agitation against the Athanasian Creed in England, twenty years ago, both Dr. Passey and Canon Liddon declared that, if the Creed were touched, they should resign their preferments, and should be compelled to reconsider their position in the Church of England. Their feeling was shared by Bishop Christopher Wordsworth and Dean Goulburn. Dean Stanley, who was one of the opponents to the liturgic use of the Creed, was obliged nevertheless to acknowledge it to be 'A triumph pean of the orthodox faith;' and Canon Kingsley appeared, towards the end of his life, as a champion of the Athanasian Creed, maintaining that it ought not to be read in a Puritan sense †. In an earlier age Luther had spoken of it as the most important and glorious composition since the days of the Apostles. §

The practical importance of the Athanasian Creed in modern Christendom cannot be overestimated. It is a clear enunciation of the fundamental doctrines of the Catholic Faith. To the clergy its distinct and accurate expressions should serve as formulas for the correct statement of the highest truths. To the laity also familiarity with the Athanasian Creed would be a direct advantage. Among the Italian laity, who seldom or never hear the *Quicumque*, the want of a sound elementary religious knowledge is notorious. Many Roman priests regret the loss which lay people thus suffer, and there have been some proposals to insert it into the Office of Benediction. Many English Nonconformists have testified to the help, in laying hold to the doctrine of the Trinity, found in the Athanasian Creed. On its value in the instruction of neophytes, Missionary Bishops have insisted. Bishop Claughton found it useful among the natives of Ceylon, Bishop McDougall among his Chinese converts in Borneo, and the (late) Bishop of Lichfield among the Maories of New Zealand. The late Bishop Cotton, too, having gone to India with some prejudices against the use of the Athanasian Creed, found it so valuable as an antidote against the various forms of Oriental theosophy, that he became one of the most earnest advocates for its use in congregational worship. †

The heresies which the Creed was designed to meet more than a thousand years ago, are cropping out afresh. Call them by what name you will, Arianism, Sabellianism and Apollinarianism have been revived in modern times,

Against the infinite variety of beliefs, from high Arianism to agnosticism, which Unitarians admit find a shelter under their denomination, against the forms of Polytheism and pantheism, with which the atmosphere is charged, the Athanasian Creed is a well-tempered weapon, not, as a Boston newspaper called it, behind the times, but ready for instant and perpetual use.—*Exchange.*

* Works, ed. Keble. vol. ii. p. 182. † *The Guardian*, Sept. 3, 1890, p. 1377. § *Werke*, ed. Walsh, vi. 2315. † *The Damnatory Clauses of the Athanasian Creed*, by Malcom MacColl, M. A., p. 25.

PUTTING ON RELIGION.

Once upon a time a village blacksmith was giving his reasons for not 'joining the Church,' as it is termed. He said that if he connected himself with any one of the existing organizations in town, he would lose the custom of the members of all the rest. In another case, a girl of thirteen was moving about among the different Sunday-schools, and said she was finding out which 'treated her the best.' While instances like these illustrate the singular beauties of sectarianism, they suggest some serious thought as to the motives governing people in making a profession of religion and coming into the Church. It is true we may not judge motives, but it frequently appears on the surface what influence is predominant in shaping action. And, sadly enough, too often it happens that it is not that influence which should underlie all others and stand first, namely, the doing God's will and honoring His name. That which lies at the root of the trouble is the mistaken impression that the Church is an institution either to be patronized by us, or out of which we can get the most things that will make life and the world agreeable. While the truth is, we owe to God our service, our love, the first and best fruits of body and soul; and the place to render this service is in *His Church*, as a soldier of Christ, a worker in His vineyard. But with this mistaken idea, either from ignorance or self-seeking, men put on the Christian cloak because it helps their business, because it gives them a standing in society, or because it is the proper thing with 'our set.' And we might go on with a rather dreary catalogue of the wrong reasons why people take to religion, which, while it illustrates the frailty of human nature and the ease with which men are deceived and deceive themselves, yet also sets forth the fact that all sorts and conditions of men, both the shrewd and the stupid, regard the Church and religion as instruments both of goodness and of power.—*Church News, St. Louis.*

TRUE DISCIPLESHIP.

As long as Christian discipleship is considered merely a putting on religion, and that too often for furthering worldly interests, so long will the vast amount of dead-wood remain in the Church. This outside religion is just a suit of clothes or a lady's dress, that soon wears out or is changed for the later fashion. And, naturally, when persons make a profession of faith, and come into the Church under this superficial motive, and discover that in order to get the genuine benefits and blessings of religion it requires work and self-sacrifice on their part, then they fall into that useless crowd within the Church that are a weight on its progress. There are so many bad fish in the net that the good ones are almost smothered; and there are more camp followers in the army than fighting men. While this condition of things may be a just cause of grief and regret, yet it is not a

reason for discouragement, for our Lord teaches precisely this truth, that His kingdom here on earth would be burdened and hindered in this manner. This parable of the net, that of the tares and the laborers in the vineyard, all clearly emphasize the fact that the bad, the idle, and the useless would find their way into the Church. Nevertheless, the faithful Christian is not to fold his hands in despair because he can not clean out the tares at once, or prevent their growth; nor is he to shelter himself under the complacent belief that God will take care of all these things, and relieve him from all concern and care and toil. In the wonderful ways of God to men, while He assures the heart of the believer that He reigns, and orders all things and events, yet He expects every disciple to do his duty, and fulfil his responsibility; as though the entire result depended upon him. The Church cannot be purified at once, but even the least effort that tends to deepen the spiritual life is a contribution in that direction. We must get rid of the idea that religion is simply a dress for the moral character, to be put on to meet the requirements of our social environment. True Christian discipleship means, in the first place, *oblivion of self* as the underlying motive; it means *loyalty to Christ*, not only without regard to surroundings, but in all sorts of surroundings—loyalty which seeks not how much can be gotten for self, but how much can be done for others, and especially a loyalty which is unchanging in its devotion to the honor of the Lord of glory.—*Church News, St. Louis.*

MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE.

The lamentable position of the marriage relation in the United States is evidenced by the following extract from a secular paper. It enforces the necessity of adhering firmly to the rule of the Church:

'The American Bar Association has taken action to secure uniform legislation in several States as regards a number of important subjects but mainly that of marriage and divorce, the uncertainties and variations of the law respecting which have long constituted a scandal and disgrace. Instead of one fixed law of marriage and divorce obtaining, the people of the United States are subjected in their domestic relations to forty odd codes of law—a condition of things which does not present itself in any other civilized country in the world. In scarcely two states are the laws upon this point alike, and the result is that cases are constantly arising in which only the courts can determine whether a woman is a wife or a mistress, a widow or a false claimant; whether children are legitimate or the reverse; and whether certain persons are heirs and entitled to inherit or not. The complexity is, of course, greatly increased by the ease with which divorces are obtained and re-marriages multiplied. As a consequence of these conditions the utmost uncertainty exists as to what constitutes a valid marriage, for under the laws of one State a woman may be a lawful wife, but under those of another, should she change her place of residence, a person living in a state of concubinage. The reform is likely to be slow, and must come from the several States themselves, until such time at least as Congress can be empowered to legislate upon the question by a constitutional amendment. Meanwhile the conditions existing constitute, as they have for long done, a stain upon the nation.'

A SUBSCRIBER in the Diocese of Fredericton writes:—'I am well satisfied with the contents of your paper, especially its able efforts in defending and upholding the dignity of and loyalty to the Church, . . . building us up in our most Holy Faith.'