

1. It attempts to explain mysteries which cannot be explained, and were therefore better let alone.

This objection is based upon a misunderstanding of the purpose of the creed.

The object of the creed is to make, not an exposition, but a defense of the Christian faith, and for the following reason.

There had arisen during the fourth and fifth centuries a number of dangerous heresies which threatened to corrupt the faith and rend the church to pieces.

It was in order to oppose these heresies that the creed was formulated. With this purpose in view, it begins by stating the 'faith in its simplicity and purity. "The Catholic faith is this, that we worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity."

It then proceeds, as each occasion demands, to deny verse by verse, the various heresies which had arisen and to warn against the errors which they taught.

It is therefore evident that the church in speaking through this declaration of the faith, does not mean to impose an exact belief in every one of its statements upon all men for necessity of salvation. The intention is merely to contradict the erroneous views which had arisen as to the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, and declare that a belief in the Fatherly love of God, the saving grace of Christ, and the sanctifying fellowship of the Holy Spirit, is necessary for eternal life.

That is the Catholic faith, and unless a man believe it faithfully, the church of Christ has no right to offer him any hope of salvation.

2. The other objection is that the language of the "damnatory clauses" is harsh, uncharitable and unauthorised."

If the first objection resulted from a misunderstanding of the structure and purpose of the creed, this rises from a misconception of its meaning.

The clauses referred to are as follows :—

1. "Whosoever will be saved, before all things it is necessary that he hold the Catholic faith."

*Quicumque vult salvus esse ante omnia opus est ut teneat Catholicam fidem.*

(2.) "Which faith, except every one do keep whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly."

*Quam nisi quis integram inviolatamque servaverit, absque dubio in eternum peribit.*