

# The Church.

"HER FOUNDATIONS ARE UPON THE HOLY HILLS."

THEREFORE I WILL NOT BE NEGLIGENT TO PUT YOU ALWAYS IN REMEMBRANCE OF THESE THINGS, THOUGH YE KNOW THEM AND BE ESTABLISHED IN THE PRESENT TRUTH.—2 PETER 1, 12.

VOLUME II.]

COBOURG, UPPER CANADA, SATURDAY, APRIL 20, 1839.

[NUMBER XLIV.]

## Poetry.

### THE FOUNTAIN HEAD.

Mighty and majestic River!  
I have seen thy gushing tide  
Mingle with giant Ocean's flood;  
On those rocks my feet have stood  
Round which both meeting waters shiver,  
Struggling with a rival's pride,  
Till in one their waves subside.

There, on thy broad and swelling breast,  
Anchor'd a sea-girt Nation's might;  
Countless streamers, myriad sails,  
Floated to the freshening gales,  
As safe within thy haven's rest  
Rode argosies of portly height,  
And warrior galleys red from fight.

Higher up thy lessening bank  
Glitter'd palace, tower, and hall;  
And thy bright and sunny sheen,  
Mirror'd back an Empire's Queen,  
A city at whose glories shrink  
Thebes, with her hundred-gated wall,  
And Babylon, before her fall.

Straight my willing steps pursue  
The cultured plains before them spread;  
And as thy pleasant winding leads  
Gently through flower-enamell'd meads,  
How rich the landscape and how new!  
The happy valley do I tread?  
Or Tempe near the Peneus' bed?

To a brook thy flood decreases,  
Upward as I mark its course.  
Is it lost?—Yon bank conceals  
The silver thread by which it steals.  
Now at last its current ceases—  
To thy fount my path I force—  
I have traced thee to thy source.

Mighty and majestic River!  
Bursts from this thy future pride?  
Is the cradle of thy race  
This unmark'd and nameless place,  
Where a few stunted willows quiver:  
And which the shepherd-boy, my guide,  
In sport may carelessly bestride?

TARTLER! in thy bosom note  
Every thought for Good or Ill!  
From the fountain of the heart,  
Scant and weak at first they start;  
'Tis but onward as they float  
Gather'd streams their current fill—  
Crime, at its birth, is but unruly will.

Rev. Edward Smedley.

### GEORGE THE THIRD.\*

If there be such a thing as a character formed of the elements of the land which gave it birth, it was realised in the instance of our now beatified sovereign. Our king exhibited the exactest specimen of the genuine English gentleman in its highest and fairest form. He had not only the general stamp and impress, but the minor modes and peculiarities of a Briton. He was also a representative of the religion of his country; he was a Protestant, not in name, but in heart and soul.

He began his reign with an act of self-control, which gave a flattering presage of his future magnanimity. He sacrificed, in the tenderest point, passion to duty. In the bloom of life, young, ardent, and a king, he felt there was something to which even kings must submit—the laws of their country. He made the sacrifice, and, by so doing, was rewarded in his large and lovely family, by the long enjoyment of the dearest blessings of domestic life in their highest purity, and in the greatest human perfection. A strict conscientiousness seems to have pervaded every part of his character: it appeared in his frequently repeated solemn renunciation for his coronation oath—in his uniform desire to promote the good of his people—in his zeal for the spiritual welfare of the poor, expressed in a sentiment too notorious to require repetition. The fear of God seems to have been supremely his governing principle; and a deep sense of his own awful responsibility the corresponding result of that principle.

If, from a too tenacious hold of an opinion once adopted, he might be chargeable with a political error in a persevering contest with the western continent, yet even then his pertinacity was principle; and if he was wrong, it was his judgment which erred, and not his intention: but he knew, even in this case, how to retract gracefully a favourite opinion when the event required concession. In a visit he made from Cheltenham to Dean Tucker at Gloucester (who had written strongly in favour of a separation), the king had the candour to say,—"If, Mr. Dean, we had followed your advice by an earlier termination of the war with America, we had acted wisely; you were in the right." This the dean repeated to the writer a few days after, together with the whole conversation, which was so honourable to the good sense, general knowledge, and rectitude of mind of his majesty, that it is to be regretted that it had not been preserved.

His understanding, though perhaps it had not received the highest cultivation of which it was susceptible, was soundly good, and the whole bent and bias of that understanding was turned to objects of utility. In such of his conversations as have been recorded by Johnson, Beattie, and others, his talents are seen to great advantage. His observations are acute, and his expressions neat. In the details of business he was said to be singularly accurate, and particularly well informed in the local circumstances of whatever place was the subject under consideration. His domestic duties were filled with eminent fidelity, and uniform tenderness. His family enjoyments were the relief and solace of his public cares; while the proverbial correctness of his court furnished a model to contemporary sovereigns, and bequeathed a noble pattern to his own illustrious posterity. He observed the law of kindness as scrupulously

\* From the works of Hannah More.

as he observed all other laws; nor was its exercise limited to those about his person or court, but extended to as many of inferior rank as fell under his observation.

He was strictly punctual in the discharge of his religious duties: a practice which alone could have enabled him to fulfil his other duties in so exemplary a manner. The writer has heard an inhabitant of Windsor (a physician of distinguished learning and piety) declare, that in his constant attendance at the morning chapel, his own heart was warmed, and his pious affections raised, by the devout energy of the king's responses. Who shall presume to say what portion of the prosperity of his favoured people may have been obtained for them by the supplications of a patriot, paternal, praying king?

Firmly attached to the Church of which God had made him the supreme head—strong in that faith of which God had appointed him the hereditary defender,—he yet suffered no act of religious persecution to dishonour his reign. His firmness was without intolerance; his moderation without laxity.

Though involved in darkness, both bodily and mental, for so many of his latter years, he was still regarded with a sentiment compounded of sorrow, respect, and tenderness. He was indeed consigned to seclusion, but not to oblivion. The distinctions of party, with respect to him, were lost in one common feeling; and the afflicted monarch was ever cherished in the hearts of the virtuous of every denomination, whether religious or political.

Even in the aberrations of reason he was not forsaken. The hand which inflicted the blow mercifully mitigated the pain. His wounded mind was soothed by visionary anticipations of heavenly happiness. Might not these fanciful consolations indicate something of the habit of a mind accustomed in its brightest hours to the indulgence of pious thoughts? And may we not in general venture to observe, in vindication of the severest dispensations of the Almighty, that even during the distressful season of alienation of mind, the hours which are passed without sorrow and without sin are not, to the sufferer, among the most unhappy hours?

Notwithstanding the calamities with which it has lately pleased God to afflict a guilty world—calamities in which England has had its share, though by no means an equal share—yet the reign of the third George may be called a brilliant and glorious period. Independently of the splendour of our geographical discoveries, our eastern acquisitions, and other memorable political events, we may challenge any era in the history of the world to produce a catalogue of the twentieth part of the noble institutions which have characterised and consecrated this auspicious reign. Of these some have successfully promoted every elegant art, and others every useful science. Painting, statuary, and engraving, have been brought into fresh existence under the royal patronage: the application of chemistry and mechanics to the purposes of common life has been attended with unexampled success: signals at sea have been reduced to a science: the telegraph has been invented: military tactics are said to have been carried to their utmost perfection. Among the gentle arts of peace, the study of agriculture, which the king loved and cultivated, has become one among the favourite pursuits of our honourable men. The time would fail to recount the numberless domestic societies, of every conceivable description, established for promoting the moral and temporal good of our country. Persons of high rank, even of the highest, men of all parties and professions, periodically assemble to contrive the best means to instruct the ignorant and to reclaim the vicious; to relieve every want which man can feel, or man can mitigate; to heal the disturbed in mind or the diseased in body; nay, to resuscitate the apparently dead. Prisons have been converted into places of moral improvement, and the numbers of churches have been rapidly multiplying. But the peculiar glory which distinguishes the period we are commemorating, is that of our having wiped out the foulest blot that ever stained, not only the character of Christian Britain, but of human nature itself, by the abolition of the opprobrious traffic in the human species.

If we advert to other remarkable circumstances which distinguish this reign; while new worlds have been discovered in the heavens—one of which bears the honoured name of the sovereign under whose dominion it was discovered—on the earth Christianity has been successfully carried to its utmost boundaries. In this reign also, it has been our pre-eminent glory to have fought single-handed against the combined world; yet, not by our own strength, but by the arm of the Lord of hosts, England has been victorious.

England, it is true, labours at present under great and multiplied, but we trust not insuperable, difficulties. We have the misfortunes of a depressed commerce, but we have the consolation of an untarnished honour—we have still a high national character; and in a nation, character is power and wealth. To the distresses inflicted by Divine Providence, our own countrymen had made a large and most criminal addition. In looking out for the causes of this appalling visitation, may not one of those causes be found in our not having used the sudden flow of our prosperity with gratitude, humility, and moderation? Great are our exigencies, but great are our resources. We possess a powerful stock of talent and of virtue; and in spite of the blasphemies of the atheist, and the treasons of the abandoned, we possess, it is presumed, an increasing fund of vital religion.

Were these and all our other numberless resources thrown into one scale, and applied to the same grand ends and objects—would party at this critical juncture renounce the operation of its narrowing spirit—would every professed patriot show himself zealous, not for the magnifying of his own sect, but for the substantial interests of his country,—what a mighty aggregate of blessings would be the result, and how reasonably might we then expect the Divine favour in an union so moral, so patriotic, so Christian!

## HOMILITIC.

No. XV.

### THE ATHANASIAN CREED.

In the room of the Apostles' Creed, which forms a part of the regular Service of the Church, it is directed by the rubric that, on particular days, the Creed, called the Creed of St. Athanasius, shall be read. This is a confession of faith confined more particularly to the doctrine of the Holy Trinity; upon which it is so explicit and decided that, in the words of Dean Comber, "it is no wonder that it hath been so much opposed and maligned by all those heretics which agree not with the Church in the doctrines of the Trinity and of our Saviour's incarnation; because these two fundamental articles are so fully asserted here, that the false teachers have no room left for cavils or evasion, it being, as Photius saith of his other works, 'a trophy of victory over every heresy, especially the Arian.'"

There are several historical, as well as incidental testimonies in favour of the opinion that this Creed was really the composition of Athanasius. This celebrated father, together with Marcellus bishop of Ancyra, having been accused of heresy by the Arians, it is stated that he drew up a confession of his faith, which he presented to Julius, bishop of Rome; and this, it is asserted, was the origin of the Creed which bears his name. In confirmation of this fact, Gregory Nazianzen speaks of a "royal gift which Athanasius presented to the emperors, a confession of his faith, received with great veneration both in the West and East." There are passages from this creed quoted verbatim by St. Augustine; and Archbishop Usher introduces a great number of instances amongst the early Christian writers, in which it is made to bear expressly the name of Athanasius. In short, says Dean Comber, "it has been received as orthodox by all christian churches for many centuries. Bishop Usher tells us of an old Psalter written at least 1000 years ago, which is in Sir Robert Cotton's library, in which is this Creed with the title of the *Catholic Faith*; and so it is called, being received for such, and under Athanasius's name, not only in the Latin Church, but in the Constantinopolitan, in the Servian, Bulgarian, and Russian Churches; and so it is in the Lutheran Churches, in the Gallican, and the Church of England; and Luther himself positively affirms Athanasius to be the author, calling it a bulwark to the Creed of the Apostles."

Upon this point, however, a difference of opinion prevails amongst the learned, nor does our Church assume it as one that is established: accordingly, in the rubric which precedes it in the Book of Common Prayer, it is styled "the Creed commonly called the Creed of St. Athanasius." "Whether it was really composed by him or not," says Dr. Nares, "the Church of England undertakes not to decide; nor is it very material, for our purposes, that it should be decided. The Church of England does not build her faith on St. Athanasius, but on the Holy Scriptures. Her exposition of the faith is Athanasian certainly, in contradiction to the Arian opinions, because she thinks that Athanasius took the right side of that question, and that his opinions were indisputably more conformable to Scripture, and more in agreement with the testimony of the ante Nicene fathers, than those of Arius and his followers: she had a right to make this choice, and she has made it. The faith of the Established Church, in regard to the two great mysteries of the Trinity and the incarnation, is Athanasian, *not on the authority of the formularies in question*, but on the sole authority of the *Holy Scriptures*, and their confirmation of the 'expeditio fidei' adopted."

The Athanasian Creed contradicts expressly all those heresies in relation to the Trinity which the Catholic or Universal Church condemned in the primitive Councils. Herein we are taught, in opposition to the Sabellians, "not to confound the persons, for there is one person of the Father, another of the Son, and another of the Holy Ghost." Nor are we, like the Arians and Eunomians, to "divide the substance," for "the Godhead of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, is all one." We are taught that not only "the Father is God," but, in opposition to the Arians, that "the Son is God;" and in opposition to the Macedonians, that "the Holy Ghost is God." In regard, too, to the incarnation of our Saviour, the Athanasian Creed declares that he is "very God of the substance of his Father," which Arius, Samosatenus, and Photinus denied; and "very man of the substance of his mother," which was opposed by Apollinaris. The Creed asserts, further, that he is "of a reasonable soul," which the same Apollinaris denied; and "human flesh," which the Valentinians would not admit. In opposition, too, to the Nestorians, it is declared, that "he is not two, but one Christ"—"one, not by confusion of substance," as Eutycheus asserted, "but by unity of person."

Such were the heresies against which the Creed of St. Athanasius was more particularly framed; and it is scarcely necessary to add, that every position which, upon these points, it maintains, is in perfect agreement with the Word of God.\* It is true that many of these heresies have ceased to exist; but there are still those who, under the garb of Christianity, impugn the doctrines which the Athanasian Creed is intended to defend. While, therefore, there remains the Socinian, the Unitarian, and others who deny the Saviour's Godhead, and thus unsettle the fundamental tenets of Christianity, the Creed of St. Athanasius is very properly retained in the Church, and appointed, on certain occasions, to be publicly read.

In this confession of our faith however,—sound and scriptural as it undeniably is,—there are passages which have been thought to savour of *uncharitableness*: it is asserted that, by the use of this formula, we "doom to eternal perdition all who do not believe exactly as we do, or who do not worship after our forms." In reply to this accusation, it

\* For proof of this, see "The Church" of June 9, 1838, in an article from the Church of England Magazine, headed The Athanasian Creed.

may be remarked, that where the fundamental doctrines of Christianity are at stake, there can be no terms too strong in which to express our own adherence to them, or our condemnation of those who would subvert them. This is the rule of Scripture itself; for there, as has been judiciously remarked, "there is no mention but of two ways, one leading unto destruction, the other bringing unto life [Matt. vii. 13, 14]; of two sorts of men, whereof some believe and they are saved; some believe not, and they are damned [Mark xvi. 16. John iii. 18]; and of two states, one blessed, where Lazarus is, the other cursed, where Dives abides. [Luke xvi.] A third way, sort, or estate, cannot be found in the word of God."

But to proceed to the accusation itself,—the following are the clauses upon which it is founded:

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

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

"He therefore that will be saved must thus think of the Trinity."

"Furthermore, it is necessary to everlasting salvation, that he also rightly believe the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ."

"This is the Catholic Faith; which, except a man believe faithfully, he cannot be saved."

Here it should be borne in mind that, in using these expressions, we are not addressing ourselves to the *unbeliever* or the *heretic*; but that we are professing *our own* faith, the foundation of *our own* hopes, and the principles of *our own* communion. We declare our own belief that such is the Scriptural view of the doctrine of the Trinity, and of Christ's incarnation; so that the penalties of apostasy as expressed in the creed will fall upon ourselves. These are doctrines set forth in the Bible; we believe them to be there contained; we make profession of our faith in them; and, if we keep them not whole and undefiled, we are pronouncing sentence of self-condemnation.

Nor, in doing so, are we departing from the rule of Scripture itself. Our Saviour says to his disciples, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned." There is nothing in the condemnatory clauses of the Athanasian Creed more positive than this language of our Lord; and the subject to which they are applied is, in substance, the same as that which gave rise to our Saviour's expressions. To "believe," as our Lord expresses it in this passage, and to "hold the Catholic or christian faith," as the creed asserts it, is substantially the same thing; so that it is no worse to say, that they who "hold not this faith shall perish everlastingly," than to declare that they who "believe not shall be damned." For if it be asserted that the creed refers more particularly to the Trinity, while our Saviour spoke of the christian faith in general, we may reply that in the belief to which our Lord alludes, the Trinity is evidently implied. "He that believeth and is baptized," are his words; but it was his own express command, that all should be baptized "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost,"—that is in the name of the blessed Trinity. And although there may be qualifications of the rule here laid down, they are not added by our Saviour, and therefore not by the church. "She gives the rule as He does; and whatsoever qualifications He may leave hope for, the church does the same. And surely there can be no violation of christian charity, in applying to the main articles of our faith, a general rule to precisely the same effect, and almost couched in the same words, as that which Jesus himself applies to the whole Gospel."†

Where a rule of salvation is proposed, it is the duty of the Church to insist upon this; not to lay down exceptions for the encouragement of neglect. "God himself has given a general rule, and the Church's duty is to do the same.—What merciful abatements He may think proper to make, in his judgment, must rest with Him. The Church must teach her children to do their duty, and seek salvation in the plain and direct way that Jesus has pointed out; and not devise schemes and exceptions, built upon supposing what under particular circumstances (not applicable to those who are to use this Creed,) God may do. Her language is like that of her Master's, when asked the vain and useless question, 'Are there few that be saved?'—'What is that to thee? FOLLOW THOU ME!'"

C. R.

\* Nares on the Three Creeds, Sermon iii.  
† Penny Sunday Reader, vol. v. p. 310.  
‡ Ibid.

### MAN AFTER THE FALL.

All the virtues upon which you pride yourself, will not in any, the slightest degree, avail you, as proving that you are an exception to the general rule of a fallen nature, a corrupt and sinful heart, a mind alienated from God and His righteousness, which is the lot of every child of Adam. Your virtues may exist, we do not in the least desire to deny it, we do not wish even to underrate them; the fall of Adam did not destroy them, it left much, very much of amiability, and kindness, and honour, and integrity, in the corrupt and guilty heart; there they lie, like the beautiful fragments of some fair column, each fair and lovely in itself, yet each a ruin, and were all collected, forming but a ruin still. The column which was shattered to atoms by the fall of Adam, was the holiness of our nature, its purity, and piety, its love to God, and likeness to His image, and conformity to His will. These, in the natural heart, have all disappeared, and those moral virtues, of kindness to your friends, and of affection to your family, and honour and integrity to all, in which you are rejoicing, are merely like the leaves of the capital of the column, which are here and there scattered among the ruins of the mass, undestroyed indeed, but as regards the column in its present state, utterly useless.—Put them all together, and you could not re-erect the shaft.