

two heads, the extirpation of heresies and the reformation of morals, on account of which chiefly it has been assembled, but acknowledging with the apostle that it has not to wrestle with flesh and blood, but with spiritual wickedness in heavenly places. With the same apostle it exhorts all and every one in the first place that they should be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might; in all things taking the shield of faith, by which they can quench all the fiery darts of the most wicked, and that they should take the helmet of the hope of salvation, with the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. Therefore that this its pious solicitude may have its beginning and continuance by the grace of God it determines and decrees that before all things the confession of faith is to be premised, following in this the example of the fathers who in their sacred councils were accustomed to oppose this shield against all heresies in the beginning of their actions, by which alone they both sometimes drew infidels to the faith, vanquished heretics, and confirmed the faithful. Wherefore it (the council) commands that this creed, which the holy Roman Church uses as that summary in which all who profess the faith of Christ necessarily agree, and that firm and only foundation against which the gates of hell shall never prevail, shall be read in those words in which it is read in all churches, which is as follows."* Then the council recites the Nicene Creed as you have a short time since heard it recited from the Lord's table, and as you will find it in our Book of Common Prayer.

The Church of England agrees with the sentiment expressed by the fathers in the council of Laodicea, that the faith confessed by the Nicene fathers was deficient in nothing; with the members of the council of Ariminum she says that they delivered to us an exact rule of faith; with the 2nd council of Constantinople she has taken care that the foundation of faith should remain inviolate, and with the 3rd session of the council of Trent she believes that the truths set forth in the Nicene Creed are that firm and only foundation against which the gates of hell shall never prevail. I may therefore, as one of her ministers, with the greatest propriety, make use of the language of Vincent of Lerins, a saint of the Roman calendar, and say "To teach any thing to catholic christians besides that which they have received, never is lawful, never has been lawful, never will be lawful, and to anathematize those who do teach any thing besides that which has been once for all received, was always a duty, is always a duty, and always will be a duty. Can there be any person either so bold as to wish to proclaim a new doctrine to the church, or so rash as to receive any other doctrine than that which he has already received from the church. The apostle Paul, that chosen vessel, that teacher of nations, that trumpet of the apostles, that herald of the whole earth, that witness of what passed in heaven, he speaking by means of his epistle directs his speech to all the faithful at all times and in all places, he, I say, once, yea twice, exclaims, "If any preach to you a new doctrine, let him be anathema."†

* Concil. Trid. Sep. 3, (Feb. 4, 1546.)

† Commonit. Cap 14, p. 546, Mogunt 1602.